



# AMATEUR BOAT BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

Nov/Dec 2011

## Steve Ward: Boat Builder Extraordinaire



Steve Ward (black cap) freely answered questions on every topic of boat building. Note one of two gantry lifts for safely moving the largest of vessels and heavy gear.

We joined Steve Ward at his impressive O'Connor workshop for the October Toolbox Meeting. It was very well attended and highly appreciated. Perhaps because of Chris Davis' article in the previous ABBA Newsletter in

which he reported high praise for Steve Ward as a gentleman and, "boat builder extraordinaire". Unfortunately, due to the foul weather or prior commitments, many members had been unable to attend

Steve's July talk. However, it seemed no one was prepared to miss out a second time and he didn't disappoint.

Steve provided what was probably the best toolbox presentation in the time I've been with ABBA. His workshop appeared to be endlessly self-sufficient with the machinery and equipment to work on every aspect of new builds, repairs and refits working in metal, timber, fibreglass, etc.

Steve says it's been about three years since they were commissioned to build a new boat. In the changing economic environment he has needed to adapt his line of work and take on smaller more complex work – it's a niche area for which he has the necessary skills and is happy to be recognised as a person capable of fixing complex problems.



Steve works, I think, with just two other staff. They were working on a 1946 Cousta boat that had started life as a fishing boat but was now a family friendly sailing boat also used for racing. It was having its deck replaced and some repairs to the transom. He was also working on a major refit of a large timber harbour workboat from Esperance built in the 1950's.

What made this visit so interesting were the boats were clearly works in progress. The workers left as we arrived and the workshop hadn't been meticulously cleaned or staged to present a certain image. Tools, new ply, timber components and repairs were clearly there to be seen and Steve was prepared to explain every aspect of the methods they use and his preferred materials.



I doubt if anyone did not have several questions to ask on topics ranging from mechanical rebuilds, deck replacement, fit-outs, pre-painted ply, silicon/silastic, building in fibreglass, lofting and even how to use an electrical current stainless steel polisher after welding. Those were just a few topics covered in the two hours or more were there.



It was a very special opportunity to meet and see Steve Ward at work. We thank him most sincerely for his generosity and time.



Text and pics: Paul Thompson

## THE SPEIGHT REPORT

Harry Speight presented an informative selection of photographs at the September Technical from his recent trip back to England where he had returned to see his Mother.

He used his spare time to visit some of the most interesting sailing areas and marinas in the country. Harry visited Hampshire, Dorset, Isle of White, Southampton and Hamble.



Harry was most impressed by the Contessa 32. A boat that he even gave some thought of purchasing and bringing back to Australia.



He seemed to find many examples of this craft and went on to visit the boatyard in Lymington to meet and talk with the builders where they are still in production.

It appears the region is boater's heaven with almost every conceivable sailing craft or ship using the waterways.



Marinas looked more like car parks but there were still period pieces such as this lapstrake dinghy, used regularly. Many thanks Harry.





## **ADMINISTRATION NOTES**

### **ABBA COMMITTEE**

President/Editor Paul Thompson	0419 193 605	Vice Pres. Rosemary Nayler	9455 1470
Sec/Treas Chris Davis	9387 5042	Library Mike Rogers	9527 7313
Asst Editor Jay Niven	9291 8460		

### **MEMBERSHIP FEES**

Please see our Treasurer, Chris Davis, if you have not renewed your membership fees for 2011/2012.

### **TECHNICAL MEETING**

The November Technical meeting, Wed 30 November, Mike Rogers will show a film from the ABBA library. The film highlights the English canal systems that were once important for transport and now are more commonly used for recreation and tourism. There are a wide variety of boats on the water.

We will also include a brief, 5 minute, show and tell session. Be prepared, you may be asked to speak (while we wrestle with the cords and buttons on the laptop CD player). Call Paul Thompson if you would like to nominate in advance for 0419 193 605. See you at the South of Perth Yacht Club, 8:00 pm with dinner before if you are interested.

### **TOOLBOX MEETING**

December Toolbox meeting will be held on Saturday 10 December at the Shipwrecks Museum in Fremantle. We will meet at the Shipwrecks Museum at 2:00 pm followed by fish and chips at Cicerellos Fremantle Fishing boat harbour.

### **LIBRARY**

The ABBA Library has an extensive collection of books and magazines just ask Mike Rogers for details or to arrange a visit to view Ph 9527 7313.



