



# AMATEUR BOAT BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

SEPT/OCT '04

## ABBA COMMITTEE

<b>Geoff Leggatt,</b>	<b>President,</b>	ph 9437 5271 (Wk)	93 16 8624 (Hm)
<b>John McKillop.</b>	<b>Secretary,</b>	ph 9437 6666 (Wk)	93 13 7442 (Hm)
<b>Chris Davis,</b>	<b>Treasurer,</b>	ph 9440 2317 (Wk)	9387 5042 (Hm)
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Contact any of these four people for clarification of association activities.

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## SKIN DEEP, BUT IT MATTERS

On the 27th July we were addressed by Owen Sweetman of International Paints on the subject of paints and finishes for all boats. Owen proved to be a man of long memory when he reminded us that he'd last spoken to us eighteen years previously. How many of us can remember back that far? Who is still a member from those times?

Owen started off by introducing a collection of goodies which he had to give away, starting with the current International Paints newsletter (number 15) and going on to CDs and a book on painting, "International Boat Painting and Product Guide". I haven't had time to fully digest the copy of IBPPG which I souvenired as yet, but it looks very complete indeed and it would be a very good place for the complete beginner to start off, as well as being a very useful updater for the rest of us. He also had several samples of material to show us, including a board of filler samples, both home-mix and pre-mix, based on International resin, and a new

timber finish in both clear and teak appearance, Seatol, which is a low sheen, one pack oil type finish, suitable for decks, coamings, etc.

Reading between the lines, environmentalists didn't fare too well with Owen. The removal of lead, and the reduction of copper and other metals in paints have made it harder for chemists to maintain the old standards of coverage, permanency and flexibility in paints, and he foresees a time in the not too distant future when outdoor spraying is no longer permitted. This latter was probably why he spent most time on brushing and paint-rolling techniques rather than spray-painting.

A very useful tip he had for varnishing coamings and similar hard-edged surfaces was to use sandpaper only after the first coat, then to switch to a pot scourer for later scuffings. The reason? The sandpaper comes down too hard at the corners and usually goes through to the bare timber, requiring the varnisher to start all over

again. Pot scourers don't do this. So second and third coats should only be lightly scuffed with a pot scourer. Similarly, corners should be radiussed off anyway, to reduce the pressure-sanding problem and to stop the tendency with paints to shrink and crack along sharp corners with age.

On brushing techniques, Owen recommended the employment of two painters, one applying the colour quickly and moving on, while a second person follows up with a second brush "tipping off" the paint to remove brush marks. Sounds like a luxury we can't always indulge in, Owen! However there were several other hints for a good brushed finish which we could all use. Firstly we can mix some brushing thinners (about 10%) with the paint, and secondly, the addition of a small amount of undercoat with the first of the top coats. The brush itself requires some attention, too. New traditional bristles are cut off square and leave significant brush marks. Consequently it's better to use an old brush with feathered bristles for the final coats, if possible. Failing that, a new one can be "run in" on the side of an emery wheel if you're really desperate. That said, it was pointed out that at least some new, synthetic brushes are pre-feathered these days - maybe that's the way to go. Finally, it was pointed out that final brush strokes should always be vertical, not horizontal, tempting though the latter often is. Horizontal bristle marks tend to run down into each other and form a cascade effect, making brush marks worse, not better.

Owen pointed out that with anti fouling paints we can expect about 30% wastage due to evaporation with spraying and other factors, but that the can recommendations are generally OK. Of course, with anti fouling it's easy to apply the stuff too thinly - a no-no if it's going to be effective. 50 micron thickness is a minimum and commercial vessels usually double that. How

thick is that? Well, it turns out that there's a micron thickness gauge available, a sort of a tapered, stepped scraper which one drags across the painted surface to see which steps get wet with paint - a bit messy but it's a good idea. So using one of these you can be sure of applying an effective coat of anti fouling. Bear in mind that International alone sell eleven different types of anti fouling paint so there's too many to go into here but they're all covered in the Painting Guide.

Polyurethane varnishes, it was admitted, frequently surface-dry too fast to maintain a good wet edge when brushing and it's difficult to hide these dry edges (most of us know the problem). The addition of retarders such as Penetrol was suggested as a solution to these problems. Yes, polyurethanes give a nice finish easily in perfect conditions but I still think the best varnish I've ever seen was thickly applied, old-fashioned Copal in a restoration yard on the Thames. But that was a long time ago.

Owen also had some thoughts on fibreglass osmosis; but there are no short cuts. Basically, all affected gel-coat has to be removed, either by planing or water blasting before repairs commence. Then everything has to be dried out thoroughly, and kept dry because the trouble is caused by moisture coming from within. The area then needs to be re-sheathed with glass and a vinyl-ester resin. Then all the steps of painting begin.

Aluminium also came up for discussion. If it's not anodised there are four steps - sanding, etch primer, undercoat and topcoat. Owen then rounded off a very pleasant and informative talk by advertising the International web page which is, simply, [www.yachtpaint.com](http://www.yachtpaint.com) Many thanks, Owen, for an enjoyable and informative discussion.

## Circumnavigating Rottneest in a 9ft Sailing Dinghy

Geoff Leggatt

The following is a brief description of the successful circumnavigation of Rottneest Island in a 9 ft timber sailing dinghy.

In 1995 a decision was made by my father (Peter Leggatt) and I to design and construct a dinghy capable of: sailing; carrying a minimum of four persons to shore; accommodating an outboard motor; having a rowlock position for sculling; and stowing on the foredeck of a Swanson 31. As the design progressed our ambitions for this dinghy increased and as such the final design specifications read as follows:

Length: 9' 1"  
Beam: 4' 8"  
Displacement: 69kg (excluding rig)  
Sail Area: Main 45 sq ft  
              Jib 13 sq ft  
Motor: 5hp Seagull outboard  
Auxiliary: 1 centreline and 2 outboard  
              rowlock positions  
Max capacity: 6-8 Persons  
Sleeping accommodation: 2 persons  
Watertight compartments: 5

Other unusual features include twin rudders (when outboard motor fitted), graduated angle of attack adjustment on centreplate, foredeck dodger, awning (deck tent), forward anchor well.

Having completed successful sailing trials on the river and several miles to sea in 25 knots of breeze we decided that we wanted to be a bit more adventurous and sail the dinghy around Rottneest over several days.

With the buoyancy tanks used as stowage all food, clothing, water, sleeping bags, camp rolls, utensils, fishing gear, navigation equipment, safety equipment, and awning were able to be stored and kept dry. Safety gear included two life jackets, flares, GPS, EPIRB, and handheld VHF radio.

With all gear packed we set off from Thomson Bay at 12.30 pm on Saturday 1st March 2003 heading around the island in an anti clockwise direction. With a strong sea breeze blowing we made good progress down the north side of the island making several tacks along the way. With a reasonable amount of flare in the bow immediately above the water line and a fine entry, we have found the dinghy remarkably dry in a seaway. Any spray which is produced is mainly prevented from entering the dinghy by the canvas foredeck dodger pictured in photo 1.

By late afternoon we had reached Narrow Neck (Rocky Bay) and after an unsuccessful attempt at fishing for our dinner we headed into the beach to rig up the awning as shown in photo 2. We picked up a mooring close to the beach unpacked the cooking gear and sat down to a nice hot meal of brazed steak and onions on crackers. Moving around in a nine foot dinghy proved to be a coordinated exercise between the two occupants to ensure you maintain a reasonable trim and heel. We found it easiest to take seated positions on diagonally opposite corners of the cockpit floor and pass items to each other as required.

Sleeping accommodation for two is achieved by removing the transverse centre seat (via thumbscrews) stowing this and the centre board in the stowage pockets provided in the awning, rolling out a camp roll and sleeping bag either side of the centre case and using the life jackets as pillows. Although 6 foot of sleeping length is provided, I found the narrowness and restricted length for someone who is 5'11" to cause you to sleep a bit like a tin soldier. Pure luxury. The awning is fitted with several shock chord ties around the gunwale to seal the lower edge however we ran out of time before leaving to attach the associated clips under the gunwale. As a result we had a very cold and sleepless night with a strong cold easterly breeze blowing

# Circumnavigating Rottneest in a 9ft Sailing Dinghy

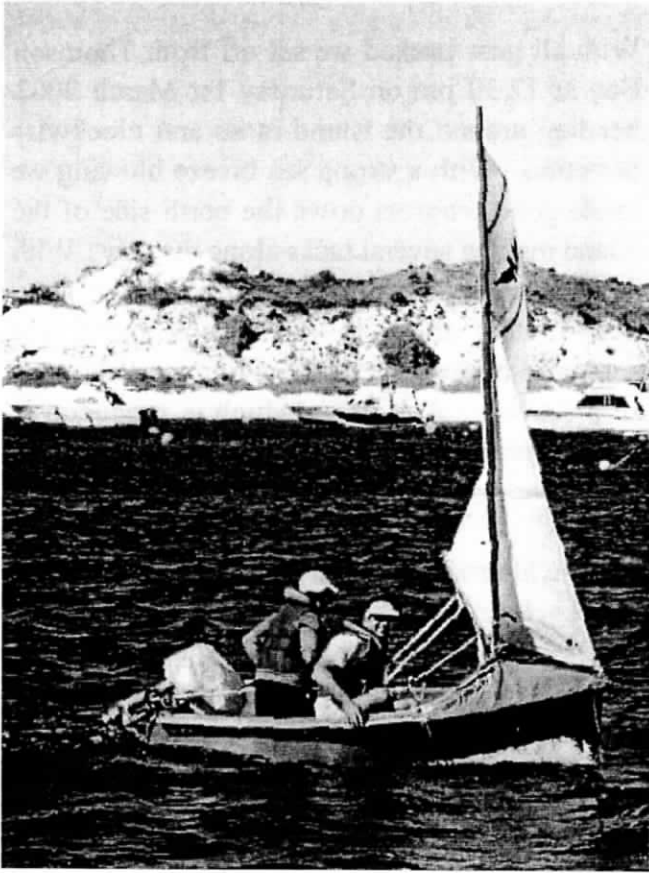
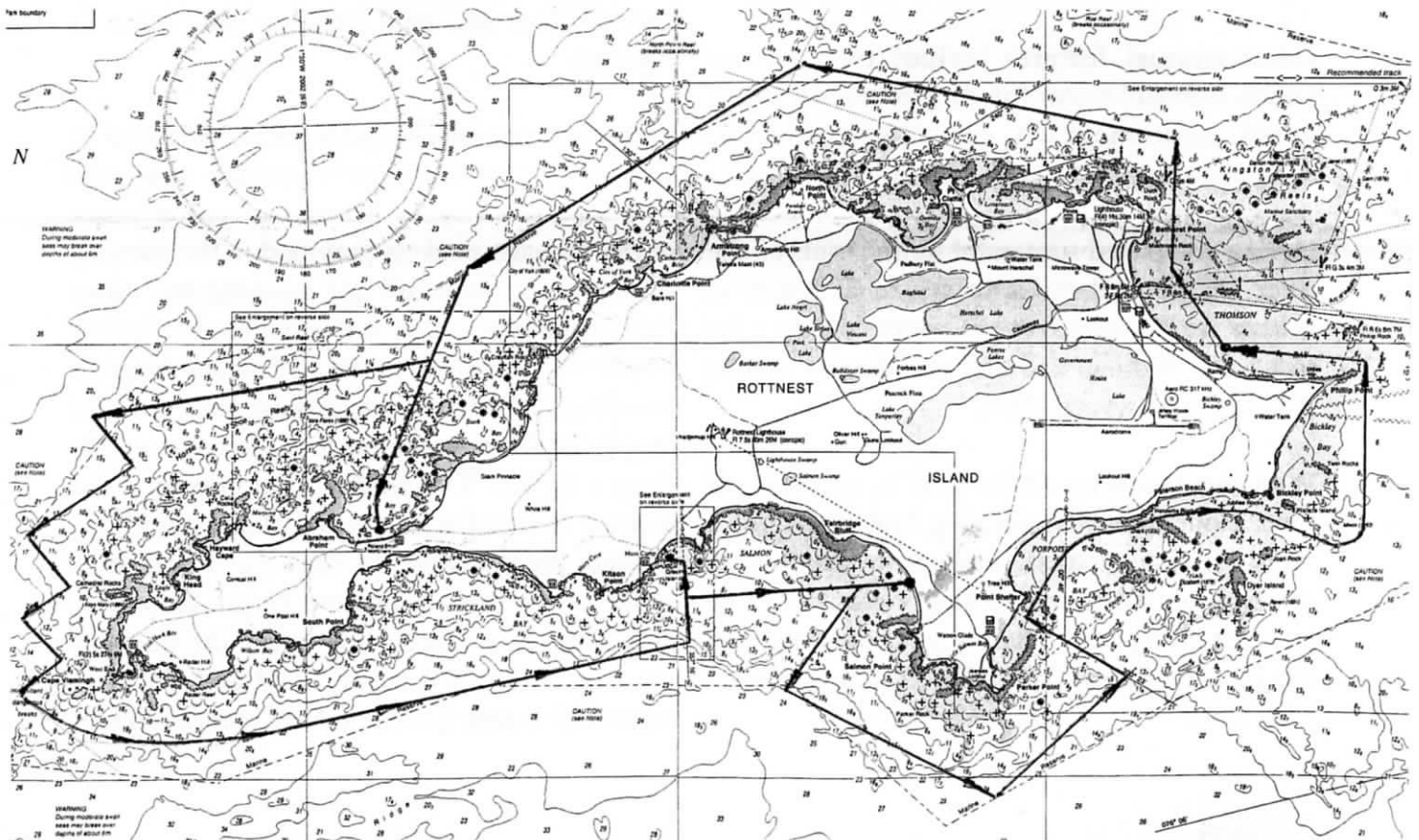


Photo 1: Heading out to sea from Narrow Neck (Rocky Bay)



Photo 2: Dinghy complete with foredeck dodger and awning



in under the lower edge of the awning.

Upon waking in the morning further comments were exchanged regarding the luxury of the accommodation and we found ourselves the centre of attention of the other occupants of the bay as they made their early morning pilgrimage to the onshore amenities. Some passing friends of ours commented that we were nutters as they viewed us eating our cereal through the open aft end of the awning.

After packing up our gear we sailed out through the passage and headed west towards West End. A strong easterly breeze saw us making good headway down the island occasionally catching a wave. Far from being its normal wild and windy self we struggled with very light variable winds at West End with still enough slop to make gaining headway with a short waterline length very difficult. In the end sanity prevailed and

we cranked up the Seagull and motored part way down the south side of the island. We stopped in at Green Island briefly and continued on to Salmon Bay where we had lunch on the beach. By the time we had finished lunch the sea breeze had come in, and sailed on to Parker Point entering the bay via the leads.

Upon entering the bay we found ourselves amongst the annual Parker Point sailing dinghy race, however not feeling very competitive with our load of stores we continued sailing into Porpoise Bay. Picking our way through the passages of Porpoise Bay we then continued on to Natural Jetty and back into Thomson Bay.

Despite a slightly uncomfortable night we thoroughly enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to similar trips up the Swan and Canning Rivers and around Rottneest again.

## **ADMINISTRATION NOTES**

### **FOR THE NOVEMBER MEETING, WELL IN ADVANCE**

As many of you will be aware, your Committee is always on the lookout for new and interesting subjects for us to indulge in at our regular meetings.

At the same time there are a couple of issues which Committee believes we could benefit by in the club. In a word, it is all about networking amongst members.

The first is that we don't all necessarily have an awareness of the various projects which members are planning or are currently involved in. Secondly, we could all benefit by having a better knowledge of the various suppliers that members have used and found to be good to deal with.

With this in mind, Committee is planning to run the November meeting as a more informal

information sharing event. Our proposal is to have as many members as possible bring along their plan sets, list of good suppliers and what ever else they think may be interesting to other members so that we can have an informal night of information sharing.

And you don't need to be the world's best presenter or a karaoke expert (we certainly won't ask you to sing!). This will just be like a chat over coffee session.

We will have another talk about this proposal when we meet shortly for our September meeting.

So start thinking about how you can get your gear together and join us for what should be another enjoyable night later in the year talking about all things 'boats'.

## **TECHNICAL MEETING AND AGM**

Tuesday, 28 Sept.

We expect to be addressed by Steven Clemens, General Manager for Bainbridge (Aus), who will be visiting here from Sydney at that time. Steve will explain the wide range of materials which Bainbridge make for sails, boat awnings, etc, etc. Back when I was a lad you took Egyptian cotton or nothing, but it's not like that these days, with probably upwards of a dozen different sorts of cloth available for different jobs. Even if it's only a power boat awning you want, it'll be worth turning up to find out what's available. As usual, it's at RPYC Junior Club, 7.30 for 8.00pm.

### **TOOLBOX VISIT, Saturday, 9 Oct.**

There will be something for everyone on this visit, because it's to the Maylands Boatyard (slipway) off Hardie Rd, Maylands. There are close to a hundred different projects under way here - boats of all ages and sizes, mostly restorations, but a good sprinkling of new vessels, too, in timber, steel, fibreglass, ply and even ferro. The boatyard manager, Alun Dufty,

is being very hospitable and will contact many owners and check to see how many of them can be in attendance on the day. He will give us a guided tour between 2 and 3 and then leave us to our own devices. Alun also maintains a chandlery at the yard at what are apparently very competitive prices so information gained in his shop will be valuable, too. That's at the junction of Hardie and Johnson Rds. Meet at 2, at his office.

## **CALENDAR**

**28 Sept, Technical Meeting and AGM.** Steven Clemens on Bainbridge cloths. RPYC, 7.30 for 8pm

**9 Oct, Toolbox Visit,** Maylands Boatyard, Hardie Rd, Maylands, 2pm sharp.

**20 Oct, Committee Meeting.**

**30 Nov, Technical Meeting.** Show and Tell, projects, ideas, sources of supply, etc. It's up to you!

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## **FREE TO GOOD HOME (2)**

We've been advised by one, Bruce Johnson, that he has a 1967-8 Mercury 65hp outboard surplus to requirements. It's only done 5 hours work since an engine re-build. All the controls are there, but the drive shaft either needs work (building up?) or replacing. Bruce can be reached on 0429 117 011 or by E-mail at <dbj@westnet.com.au> This info will be about six weeks old by the time it's read but he's worth a try if you've got a classic outboard boat in mind.

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## **A FEW INTERESTING WEB SITES**

<http://www.boatsonline.com.au/> WA database of new and used boats

<http://itwebmaster.iit.edu/~vlnavmar/assoc.html> Web Virtual Library of Naval and Maritime Associations

<http://www.bom.gov.au/weather/wa/> Western Australian Weather and Warnings