



# AMATEUR BOAT BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

September/October '05

## ABBA COMMITTEE

<b>Geoff Leggatt</b>	<b>President</b>	9437 5271 (Wk)	9316 8624 (Hm)
<b>Vince Rogers</b>	<b>Secretary</b>	0407 799 230	
<b>Alan Coy</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>	04142 666 77	9204 3043 (Hm)
<b>Mike Beilby</b>	<b>Newsletter</b>		9397 6209 (Hm)

*Contact any of these four people for clarification of association activities.*

## A FIRST TIME INDIAN RIVER SKIFF

We had a pretty good roll-up for the July Technical Meeting at South of Perth – quite a few more than the previous two meetings, in fact, and several people turned up early to partake of the excellent meal available. Unfortunately, Alf Smallwood was still not available to talk on resins but Secretary Vince stood in to give us an excellent Power Point presentation on the small boat he is building at his home in Clarkson.

First Vince introduced himself, firstly as a workshop safety freak, with several amusing pictures to make his point, before moving on to himself at age one year, together with the model boat he had then – beat that! Then it was briefly on to the boatworks which his father and grandfather had had on the Medway in England; but it seems he didn't go into the family business at home but emigrated out here and is only now attempting his own boat building project. The presentation covered this in great detail after a few preliminary shots of his brother, Neal's model speed boats.

The boat he is building is an Indian River Skiff emanating, I think, from the States. It's basically a flat-bottomed dory, but wider at the stern to support an outboard motor of about 10 – 20hp. It measures 15'4" X 5'X4". That's right, it draws only four inches, and is supposed to come out weighing in the range of 55 – 100kg. Vince's boat looks like approaching the top end of this scale; perhaps he didn't use lightweight gaboony ply. It's a stitch and glue construction and Vince screened a complete materials list which included 18 litres of epoxy resin and seven sheets of ply ranging from 6mm to 9mm to 12mm. I also learnt at this stage that white vinegar is fine for cleaning up after epoxy, and here I've been risking life, limb and allergies all my life using expensive acetone! He also listed the main tools available to him ranging from disposable gloves and wooden tongue depressors (good for mixing and shaping fillets, they're wider than popsticks) through to

respirators, jigsaws and various orbital sanders of which his favourite is a triangular shoe design by Warrior.

Then it was on to the shed he's building in, which had to be nearly doubled in length to accommodate the boat, so it's not too big, before going on to the building stages themselves. The first of these was marking out the main ply panels. For this Vince wisely chose to leave the supplied full-size paper patterns aside and marked out the ply from the plan dimensions. This is a good idea because paper is not very stable and may shrink or expand with time. The parts were then cut out using an electric jigsaw. He used butt blocks to join the main full-length panels and this is fairly usual with





these boats. In Vince's case built in seats and buoyancy tanks will eventually hide the butts, anyway. He then commenced a lash-up of the main panels and centre frame using duct tape to be sure he was on the right track. Holes were then drilled for the stitching which in this case consisted of smallish plastic cable ties rather than wire. They're quick to employ and cut out easily for removal after internal glassing. The distance between ties was surprising; up to a metre at times, and yet this was enough to hold the shape. A Spanish windlass was needed to pull the 9mm sides in to the 12mm transom but at the bow the side and bottom panels came together quite easily just with the ties.

The next stage was filleting the insides of the chines, transom and stem, and Vince experienced some difficulty getting the fillet mix to stay in place when near vertical, despite mixing it to the prescribed consistency. And although the rounded ends of the tongue depressors did a reasonable job of moulding the fillets, they still needed sanding after. This done, all the seams were 'glassed internally with bi-axial glass tape. Up to this stage the hull was upright, so now was the time to build in seats, lockers, buoyancy tanks, etc. The side seats (towards the stern) were sided in 6mm ply and topped, I think, with 9mm and included a fair bit of solid timber framing from 20 X 20mm. The fronts were well cut out to provide easy access for stowage while the centre thwart was fully boxed in and foam filled for reserve buoyancy. Maybe some stern buoyancy would support the weight of the motor in a swamped condition, Vince? The foam used was from polystyrene block, cut up with

a panel saw and producing a veritable snowstorm of electrostatic waste – fun! The well ahead of the centre thwart is completely open and Vince has added a couple of rod holders in here for fishermen and then the bow is boxed in to provide more stowage. Then all the built-in furniture had to be filleted and glassed as well. To the transom he glued in a broad plank of nyatoh to mount the outboard, but he now wishes he'd used something else (a) because nyatoh is not sourced from plantations and (b) it could be denser to resist the compression of the mounts. I'd have used jarrah, myself, but that doesn't come from plantations, either.

Vince then turned the hull upside down and faired the outside of the chine area after cutting and pulling out the cable ties, but he didn't have much to remove, of course. When all was fair he glass taped the outside seams which creates a bit of a lump along the edges, but it is really insignificant on a fifteen foot boat. The boat was then turned back upright to do more work internally, namely glass sheathing. This was applied after two coats of resin were brushed on, these being diluted with a reactive dilutant (TPRDA). This would have been pretty messy work, I reckon, working in corners and trying to avoid sagging on vertical surfaces.

Vince then wrapped up the presentation with an amusing list of "Wish I Hads", most of which I've sadly forgotten already, and some more stills and movie footage of Neal's and other model hydros racing. All in all it was a very professional and interesting presentation put together at short notice. Many thanks, Vince. We look forward to seeing the finished result.

## HIDDEN TREASURE

A private maritime museum in a suburban garage on a cold, wet Sunday afternoon! Must admit I was not incredibly enthusiastic about the August toolbox. Gosh, if ever misgivings were misplaced it was then.

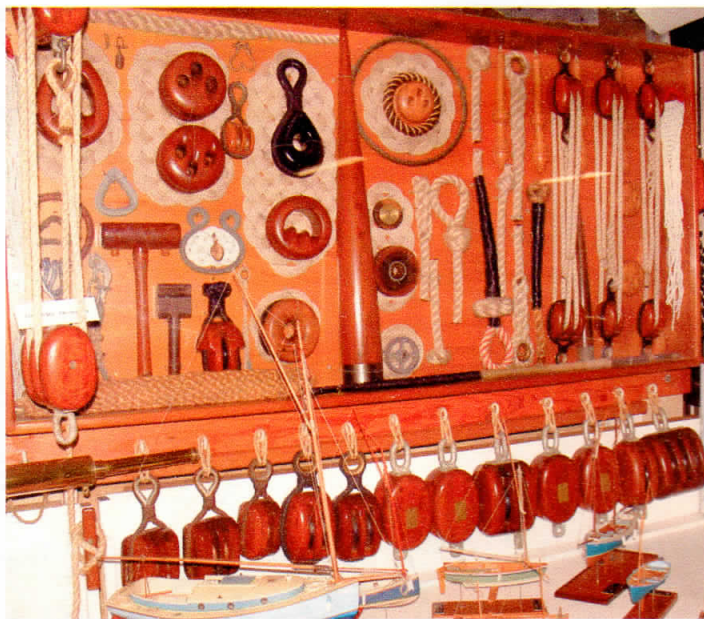
Barry Hicks a bright, gregarious gentleman in his eighties proved one must never make assumptions, his enormous and amazing collection of "all things nautical" is displayed in five large, well laid out spaces including a fully rigged mast and a dingy in the garden. I also took a peek inside Barry's huge well organized workshop with a comfy chair in front of the fire burning brightly in an open fireplace/stove, it looked like a great place to work, potter and relax. We could not relax though, there was too much to see and be told. Every space is filled with groups of objects - sets of woodworking tools, belaying pins, marlin spikes, display cases of exquisite scale model ships, decorative rope-work and maritime art line the walls. Ships wheels, equipment, sea chests, even a restored head fill the floor space, far too much to see and absorb, in one trip. His equally clever son (a sail-maker) works with him, and made the sea-chest and the amazing ships double, wheel. Together they rigged the Leeuwin and made the blocks for the Duyfken

Royal Marines during the War and the building trade thereafter gave Barry the skills knowledge and enthusiasm to start his collection, when he says, "he needed something to do in retirement". With seemingly boundless energy for interesting projects, he does not appear very retired. Currently he is working on a 32ft cutter (built in 1946) for the Maritime Heritage Association, which he says will take 3 years. The one commercial venture in which he is still involved is the manufacture of hand rope work. 7 x 100ft pilot ladders taking 4 days to complete each ladder, 3x 100ft safety nets which consume 8.5 kilometers of rope all on a contract that has a \$1000.00 per day penalty if not completed by the contract due date.

As if all this was not enough Barry's friend Brian Lemon had brought over 19 of his impressive model boats. Brian does not have a boating background he just wanted a hobby 30 years ago and bought a model boat kit, before he had finished it he was hooked. Since then working on the kitchen table he has made 107 models from scratch.

Starting with research then using plans (if available) and photos. Before working on the model of the Krait he tracked





*Evidence of Barry's Master rope work is everywhere.*



*Note worthy collectables abound.*



*Brian Lemon's model work has to be seen...*

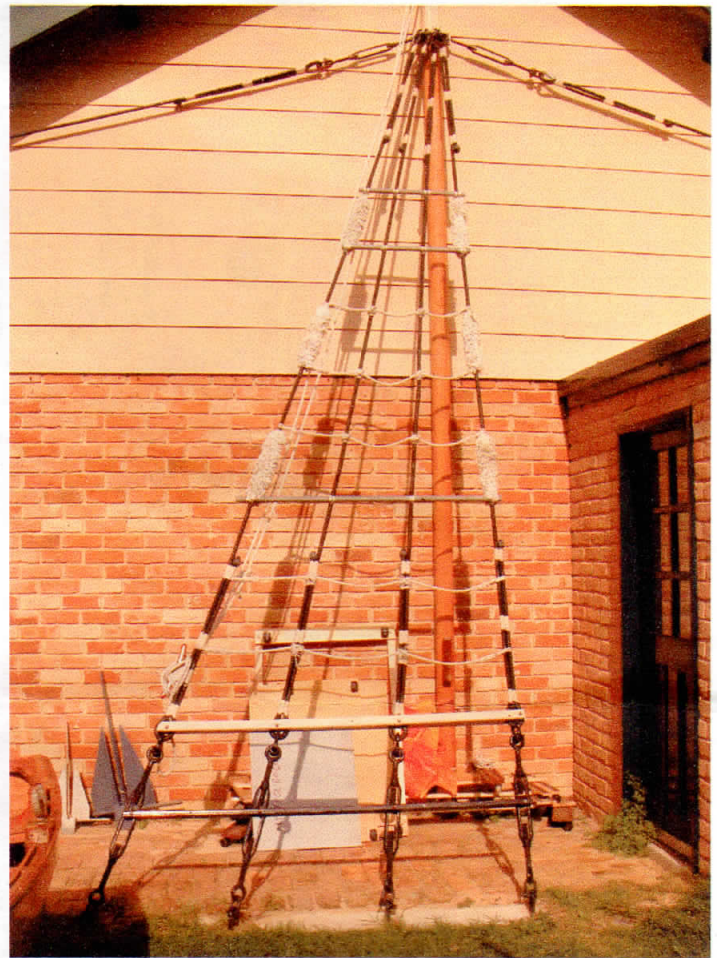
down and spoke to the, very elderly, remaining crew.

While a full size copy of the Rottneest pilot whale-boat was being built Brian built a 1 1/12th model, he also reproduced all of the known contents of the said boat including the ships telescope in its case. Amongst the models on display there were faithful copies of the two steam cargo boats in the Lake Windamere Museum UK. A 1:18 model of the Raven which has the second oldest working steam engine in existence. The crane on the deck of the model has two geared sections with different lifts and the whole thing works perfectly. The

SL Polly 1850 (the oldest boat still working, on the Lake) Bore and stroke single cylinder steam engine, she had a steam kettle that could produce a gallon of water (in the cabin) in 10 seconds and even this detail has been faithfully reproduced. The scale is 1: 10. The actual Polly was underwater for 63 years before being salvaged and restored in the 1970's when the boiler had to be replaced not because it was damaged but because it did not meet modern safety standards.

What a fantastic visit, topped off with a lovely afternoon tea provided by the wives of Barry and Brian.





## ADMINISTRATION NOTES

**Notice of Annual General Meeting**, to be held on Wednesday 28th of September 2005 at SoPYC. Being an incorporated Association, this will be the annual election of club officials, please attend the attendance must reach a quorum. Meals are excellent and at very reasonable prices. Don't forget, the meeting is in the Committee Room, first on the left as you enter the southern doorway. Parking is available IF you press the button on the intercom at the gate and wait a bit.

Our next **TECHNICAL MEETING** will be on Wed, 28 September. The guest speaker will be Damien Smith, a naval architect & enthusiast. Damien will be discussing his project, a solar electric picnic launch.

For the forthcoming **TOOLBOX VISIT** will be a visit to Seafarer, Alan & Molly Coy's classic launch. She is of Jarah carvell construction, built in 1936 by V.L. Hunt of South Perth. If you speak nicely to the skipper, she may be up to a slow lap of the river, tea & coffee provided.

## CALENDAR

**WEDNESDAY, 28<sup>th</sup> September**, Technical Meeting at SoPYC, at 7.30 for 8pm (earlier if you're eating there). Damien Smith.

**SATURDAY, 8<sup>th</sup> October**, Toolbox Visit to Seafarer, 1400 at SoPYC.

**WEDNESDAY, 19<sup>th</sup> October**, 7.45pm, Committee Meeting, all welcome, venue TBA.