



# Making Waves

## Tamar Yacht Club Newsletter

### Easter Cruising

The long awaited TYC cruise to Deal Island was changed to a cruise to Flinders Island as the forecast weather pattern was not conducive to a trip to the Northern part of Bass Strait

Six TYC boats left the marina very early on Good Friday with an agreed rendezvous point at Thunder and Lightning Bay on Cape Barron Island during the afternoon.

For some of the skippers this was their first visit to the Furneaux Group, but the weather was kind with a light northerly pushing the fleet along at a comfortable pace.

The boats in the fleet were *Allusive*, *Mojo*, *Sea Challenger*, *Danseur*, *Prowler* and *Meander*, a Victorian visitor to the marina heading to NSW and beyond. We welcomed Jimmy and Spotty on the 103 year old "*Whimbrel*" to the fleet during the trip over.

Thunder and Lightning Bay is an ideal anchorage in Easterly conditions with a long sandy beach and many interesting rock formations.



The crews enjoyed sundowners around the bonfire as we watched the sun go down and then most had 🍷



### Coming Up

#### Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> April

Two-handed Races 3 & 4 (PDYC)

#### Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April

Trophy Race

Dinghy Racing 8

Parent Child Pacer Race

End of Season BBQ

#### Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April

Two-Handed Races 5& 6 (PDYC)

#### Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April

General committee meeting

#### Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April

Winter Series Race 1 (PDYC)

#### Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May

Winter Series Race 2 (PDYC)

#### Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May

SBSS Committee Meeting

#### Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May

Winter Series Race 3 (PDYC)

#### Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May

General Committee Meeting

#### Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> May

SBSS Annual Dinner Beauty Point

#### Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May

Winter series race 4 (PDYC)

Follow link to full

[2014-2015 Sailing Calendar](#)

a quiet evening. There was some loud excitement on “*Sea Challenger*” when one of the crew hooked a large shark and was trying to work out how to land it! The next morning saw *Allusive*, *Mojo* and *Prowler* head to Trousers Point Beach for a BBQ lunch and a spot of fishing. This spectacular beach is fast gaining a reputation as the “Wineglass Bay” of Flinders Island. The remainder of the fleet set their own itineraries with various destinations in mind. The settled weather meant that everyone had an easy downwind return trip with some stopping overnight at Waterhouse Island or Fosters Inlet. *Mojo* elected to stay on a bit longer and try out some of the other interesting anchorages that abound in this area.



Easter also saw six other boats cruise up to Port Sorell. Obviously there is a demand from within the club for cruising in company and it is hoped these events will be programmed again next year.



*Sails*  
by the river

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Open Wednesday to Saturday serving lunch, dinner; an all day light menu and coffee.

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Tamar Yacht Club members receive 10% discount on meals - please show your card to claim

## Yachting Tasmania

The yachting Tasmania website is a great source of yachting and on-water information. YT shares news about regattas, schools racing, progress reports on Tasmanian sailors competing nationally and globally, club events, relevant MAST information ... and much more.



Links are below:

[Yachting Tasmania](#)

[Yachting Tasmania Facebook](#)

## Van Diemen's Land Circumnavigation

### Dinner

*Excerpts from the speech given by Commodore Bill Griffiths at the Circumnavigation Dinner in February.*

My name is Bill Griffiths and I have the privilege of being the Commodore of the Tamar Yacht Club and on behalf of the Club, welcome to the Tamar River.

Some of you might remember a gentleman called 'Fred Dagg'. (John Clarke of course is still around and is on the ABC on Thursday nights as Clarke and Dawe.)

In his former persona, he had some comments to make about sailing.

He said that with sailing there were several basic requirements and that it is well to be familiar with the conventions and the terminology.

He said that first you would need a white polo neck jumper and a short yellow nylon rain coat, preferably one with a few badges sewn on the arm.

He said that this should get you into any yacht club, and if your income is over about \$15,000.00 a week you should be able to hold your own in conversation until you pick up the vernacular and feel completely at home!

When, in 1798, Bass and Flinders undertook your journey, they were not equipped with white polo neck jumpers but with freshly made seal skin caps for protection against the wind.

Of course, complete authenticity is a choice for each of you.

I have looked at the list of those undertaking this adventure and I am pleased to see a number of yachts on which I have previously sailed.

One of them was once owned by the proprietor of a shoe shop and is named after the patron saint of shoe makers.

I recall taking her to Sydney and back in 1974. After crossing Bass Straight on the way home we were running a bit short of provisions because of some poor weather and so we broke open the emergency ration cupboard.

My recollection is that the emergency ration cupboard was directly under the marble topped bench in the galley ... and the emergency rations were a gourmet delight! That night we dined on a number of cans of turtle soup.

I strongly suspect though that all of you are well situated to enjoy your marvelous journey.

This is perhaps a good time, however, to reflect upon those who went before you and particularly upon those who went first of all.

The discovery by Bass and Flinders that Tasmania is an island had profound benefits for shipping.

Ships making the passage from the Cape of Good Hope to Sydney had previously been rounding Tasmania, often encountering the storms of the Southern Ocean.

As Governor King noted later:

"Every seaman knows the difference there is in the weather at latitude 39° South, and at latitude 45° South!"

.... In 1797 it was decided that there needed to be a conclusive investigation of the waters between Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales.



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A suitable ship was found for the purpose. She was named the Norfolk, being a 25 tonne sloop and apparently constructed on Norfolk Island of Norfolk Island pine. She was about 35 feet in length and had 11 feet of beam.

Orders were given to Bass and Flinders that, with the crew of 8 volunteers, they should embark upon a voyage of discovery. Their navigation equipment included a brass sextant, a theodolite, an azimuth compass and an artificial horizon. Regrettably, they were not provided with any appropriate chronometer.

On the way South from Sydney and whilst being delayed by deteriorating weather and a strong South-Westerly wind, they laid a base line and took angles necessary to establish a triangulation over the coast near the town of Eden.

If, in the course of your voyage, you find yourselves similarly delayed, such an exercise is guaranteed to fill in the time. Others of us in such circumstances might have repaired to the Eden Fishermen's Club.

Whilst undertaking this exercise at Twofold Bay they encountered a middle aged Aborigine to whom they gave some biscuit.

The Aborigine in turn presented the crew with a piece of grizzly fat, probably, said Flinders, being part of a beached whale.

Flinders wrote:

"This I tasted but, while watching for an opportunity to spit it out when he should not be looking, I perceived him doing precisely the same thing with our biscuit."

Heading South, Flinders resorted to his artificial horizon, the real one being blotted out by squalls.

The creation of the artificial horizon entailed pouring mercury from a small flask into a shallow pan which Flinders positioned so the sun was reflected in the liquid and was also in his direct view.

Sighting through his sextant, he then brought the image of the actual sun to coincide with its reflection and after some mathematical correction he could then obtain the sought after measurements of elevation.

I expect some of you will be very keen to practice this in the course of your circumnavigation in case your batteries all go flat.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> November 1799, Flinders steered the Norfolk towards the North-Eastern point of Van Diemen's Land and thence followed an uncharted course Westward.

Bass was also a competent navigator but frequently he would go ashore to investigate.

He discovered new species of eucalypts.

He watched the behaviour of hundreds of black swans, some of which he dissected.

And he dissected a wombat and wrote the first anatomical description of the animal.

If any of you have followed such activities to maintain authenticity I suspect it would be best not to say too much about it.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> November 1799, the Norfolk beat out of the Tamar River against a strong North-Westerly with thick rainy weather and gale force winds. There was then something of a setback which I hope shall not shortly confront you.

Unable to continue Westward, Flinders was forced to return..... to the Furneaux group!

A windy day was then spent at Preservation Island, drying and repairing sails while at night Flinders watched an eclipse of the moon through the telescope of his sextant and used Rigel and Sirius to calculate the islands longitude of 148° 37'3" East of Greenwich.

Then the winds moderated and the Norfolk pressed on. After two weeks they were back at the Tamar River.



(Please note I have spoken to the marina staff here and if that occurs again, feel free again to call in.)

Sailing on rather anxiously, Flinders watched the coast eventually trend North-West, as if to meet the mainland shore.

It is well to bear in mind that of the light houses subsequently established, the light at Cape Otway, near Apollo Bay in Victoria and the light at Cape Wickham at the Northern end of Kings Island are only 50 nautical miles apart and that each lighthouse keeper in certain conditions could see the loom of the others light.

Following the voyage of Bass and Flinders, it must be said that through that discovery began a maritime carnage which few places in the world had ever seen.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> Century perhaps hundreds of ships came to grief while making their way between those lights, sometimes referred to as sailing through the Eye of the Needle, and whilst taking advantage of the discovery of Bass and Flinders which cut about 700 miles off the voyage from England to Sydney. This was to be the last voyage by Bass and Flinders together.

In February 1802 the 142 ton brig Venus together with Bass and a crew left Sydney for a trading voyage in the Pacific. Neither Bass nor any of the crew nor the ship were ever heard of again.

In 1803, Flinders was returning to England and to his wife, whom he was not to see for about ten years, when he stopped at Mauritius for repairs. He was not aware that England and France were again at war.

He was arrested as a spy and jailed for almost 7 years. He died in 1814.

Despite all that he had done; all his slow and lengthy voyages into the unknown; all of his soundings and mappings and charting, his voyages between England and Australia, his circumnavigating Tasmania and Australia and his various voyages in the Tom Thumb and the resolution of tens of thousands of sextant sights and all of his writing, and not to mention his imprisonment by the French for 7 years, he was, when he died, aged only 40.

A final word – his lasting legacy is that he gave Australia its name!

I wish you happy times, fair sailing and a successful completion of your marvelous adventure.

I suggest however that for the remainder of your journey you stay clear of the Pacific Ocean, and well clear of the French.



## In the News

If you have any stories or photos of an on-water nature you would like to share, just send them in. It doesn't have to be racing – have you been working on a restoration project? Cruising? Living on board? A great fishing story? I'd love to have some junior sailing stories and maybe drawings (these can be scanned and emailed through – or contact me and I have the technology!)



Photos and/or stories for the newsletter can be emailed to me at:

[kathy.aka.mum@gmail.com](mailto:kathy.aka.mum@gmail.com)



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