

May 2011

Queenscliff Harbour your dock on the bay HARBOURSIDE

QUEENSCLIFF
HARBOUR

Easter at the Harbour

The lead up to Easter was a hectic time for admin staff at QHPL preparing for the Easter influx. Allocating appropriate berths for the various vessels was a time consuming task. Despite some very late pleas for berths, they were able to satisfy most requests. The Harbour was booked out for most of the main days

Easter was late this year, but the weather was kind. Thursday and Friday were overcast, but still pleasant. From Saturday on it was perfect autumn weather. Temperatures were close to 20 by mid afternoon each day and the evenings although crisp were clear and generally calm. There was enough breeze on most days to satisfy the sailors, but not enough to deter the fisherman and power boaters.

There were plenty of activities, for those who wanted to spend a day off the water. The harbour side retail complex was busy. The boardwalk was filled with harbour residents and holidaymakers from Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale.

On Good Friday, the Harbour was one of the venues for the "Kids Busking for Kids" The primary focus of the



event was Hesse Street in Queenscliff. The street was closed. Trader stalls and busking venues were set up along the street.

Both buskers and the stalls were collecting for the Royal Children's Hospital Appeal. The total raised exceeded \$36000.

Mike James from the Q Provedore, set up a stall on the Harbour boardwalk, below the Provedore. Here buyers could select a fresh crayfish and Mike would cook it to order in his large stainless steel boiler.

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Pilots Take Delivery of Two New Boats

A prominent resident of Queenscliff Harbour is the Port Phillip Sea Pilots Service. The bright orange pilot boats are one of the most asked about features of the harbour.

One of iconic images of Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale is that of the pilot boats forcing their way through the turbulent waters of the Rip, on the way to pick up or drop a pilot onto one of the many ships that enter and leave the bay everyday.

For those who visit the Harbour on a regular basis, it would be hard not to have noticed the latest addition to the Port Phillip Sea Pilots (PPSP) fleet, "Akuna IV". It is one of two brand new purpose built pilot boats commissioned for PPSP, designed to handle the roughest of weather. The vessel's sheer presence fills the mind with questions like "why is the bow shaped that way", "how fast can that thing go" or "will it self right", plus a million others.

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More Easter Pictures - See page 3

Corsair Rock

Corsair Rock lies about 500 metres to the west of Point Nepean. At low tide there is barely 2 metres of water above it. It initially earned an infamous reputation in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as a ship killer. Seven large vessels have sunk after striking the rock and many more have been damaged. The three most famous wrecks associated with Corsair rock are the Elisa Ramsden, the RMS Australia and the SS Time.

The Elisa Ramsden struck Corsair Rock while leaving Port Phillip Bay in July 1875. The crew abandoned the vessel. The following day it floated free and was carried up the bay on the tide. It sank in 25 metres of water on the edge of the southern shipping channel. It has been one of the most popular wreck diving sites for over fifty years.

The 6900 ton RMS Australia was a P&O Line vessel that held the England to Australia record. It ran aground on Corsair Rock in June 1904. Its cargo was salvaged and it broke up over the following years. In 1911 it was judged to be a hazard to other shipping and the remains of the wreck were blasted off the reef.

The SS Time was a 3100 ton

coastal steamer that ran onto the Corsair Reef in August 1949. A number of attempts were made to refloat her but ultimately she was abandoned. She remained on the reef for over 10 years and ultimately broke up during a violent storm in 1960.

Corsair rock is still a shipping hazard, but modern navigation aids and pilotage have reduced its danger.

Just to the north east of the Rock inside the Rip is the Nepean Bank, a

long sand bank that has justifiably developed a reputation with experienced surfers. The bank is on the edge of an area scoured out by the tide, so when south easterly winds coincide with south westerly swell a thick powerful hollowed out wave develops. At times like these it is one of the best waves along the Victorian coast.

In the summer, when the wave works, a line of boats and jet skis can be seen anchored off the end of the bank. On days like these it can



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Profile - Lix Ice Creamery

On warm day it is hard to beat an ice cream, juice or iced coffee from Lix Ice Creamery and Juice Bar. You can sip or lick your purchase under the umbrellas in front of Lix and enjoy the constantly changing vista of the Harbour and boardwalk directly in front of you.

If the day is a little cool there is plenty of room inside. The decoration is upbeat. Lix has an eclectic mix of vintage surf film and drink signs. The unique juice sign has been created with ersatz fruits gathered from various sources by owner Ann and her friends.



The fare provided at Lix is not restricted to the obvious summer favourites, Anne and her team have some other great choices, Belgian waffles, cakes and slices, ham and cheese toasties, bacon and egg jaffles, hot soup and of course some of the best coffee in Queenscliff.

Lix has become a mid morning mecca for many. It's dog friendly, the dog bowl outside is always filled with fresh



water for your thirsty pooch. It is a great destination for local cyclists and a ideal place to take a break during the morning walk and catch up on the paper and magazines.

Fishing Report

Although the water is beginning to cool down and the days are growing shorter in May, there is still plenty of action for the dedicated fisherman

Pinkies are continuing to be caught in numbers deep into May, although many are undersize.

The gummies are now in the bay to give birth and also to breed. A number have been caught in the Swan Bay entrance channels. Gummies are great fighters and wonderful eating, so they well worth targeting

Serious gummy shark fisherman are hardy souls. Although many are caught during the day the bulk of catches occur at night and at this time of the year the nights are getting cool.

Places to try for gummies are Coles and Symonds Channels and the Swan Bay entrance channels. The end of the ebb is usually the best time to target gummies

Rigs and baits for gummies are similar to those used to target snapper. The bait should generally be kept close to the bottom. This will often require the usual heavy snapper leads when the tide is running in the channels.

Throughout late April and early May whiting were still being caught consistently around Queenscliff and St Leonards. The whiting experts were bagging out very quickly in some areas, particularly off St Leonards

Squid have still been a regular catch through the same period. Although not as prolific as earlier in the year size has been good.

Good catches of flathead have been by some fisherman who are targeting them. Flathead are a fish that are underrated by many anglers. Their eating quality rivals that of the whiting. They are voracious hunters and will readily take most normal baits and lures such as soft plastics.

One of the best ways to target flathead is to drift fish across flats and in channels such as the Symonds.

There are many varieties of flathead, with dusky flat head being the largest. The bag limit for dusky flathead is 5, with only one allowed to exceed 60 cm. The limit is 20 for all other species of flathead

Good luck until next month.

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The day was also one of the biggest of the year for Q Fish and Chippery. This was to be expected as many people upheld the tradition a fish meal on Good Friday

On Sunday morning the weather was perfect for a leisurely stroll. The Queenscliff monthly market was a two minute walk from Harbour. It regularly has more than one hundred stalls and most stallholders were there at the Easter Market. As usual they were selling a variety of goods including fresh produce, handicrafts plants and ready to eat food.

This year Easter Monday coincided with ANZAC day. It gave those staying at the Harbour, the opportunity to attend the dawn ceremony at the Queenscliff Fort. The numbers attending are usually fairly low. This year, possibly due to Easter, the crowd was much larger. Estimates this year placed it as high as 4000.

The ANZAC dawn service at Fort Queenscliff is an unforgettable experience. It is held on the earthworks between the large fort flagpole and the cliff face facing Port Phillip Bay.

The service begins in darkness, although this Easter, the moon provided some light.

If the sea is calm, the sounds of pilot and fishing boats a great distance from shore come clearly across the water. They sound as if they are just below the cliffs and their running lights drift disembodied through the darkness. Some years a wet fog hugs the sea and shore and sounds are muffled, even figures within the crowd immediately below the flagpole appear as out of focus silhouettes.

As the haunting sound of the Last Post begins, dawn slowly comes on. As the service proceeds, the dark eastern sky becomes purple then pink and orange behind the black mass of Point Nepean and the Mornington Peninsula.

At the conclusion of the service a simple breakfast is provided in the mess for a nominal payment.

The weather on Monday and Tuesday was excellent and many stayed on at the Harbour, delaying their departure till late on Tuesday.

Easter 2012 is in early April, hopefully the weather will be as good or better than 2011. Get your bookings in early and don't miss out.



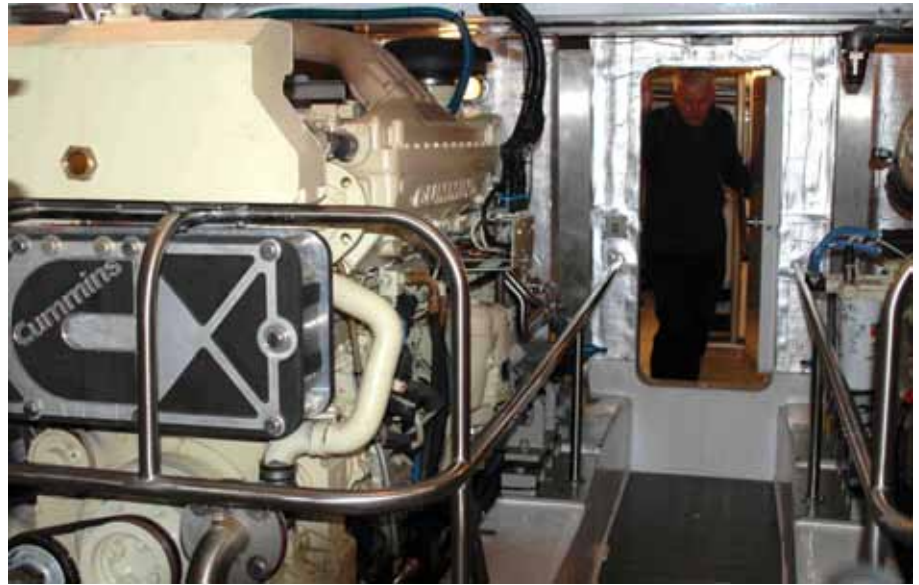
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So for the answers to these questions and more, I went to the man who oversaw the construction of the new boats, Chris Richards, the Workshop Manager for PPSP.

Chris deals with the day-to-day running and maintenance of the vessels and is charged with making sure these vessels are always at their operational best. There is no other pilot service in Victoria and shipping within Port Phillip Bay could grind to a halt if these vessels were to fail in their duty.

The directors of PPSP travelled the world looking at every available pilot boat prior to selecting the French Designed ORC 181.P-sr 18 metre self righting vessel. One of the main aspects of the vessel the directors liked the most was the innovative "Beak" bow which effectively neutralizes the vessels movement as it pierces the wave, lessening the effect of the vessel's pitching motion and providing a more stable platform. This is important as the boats operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, rain, hail or shine.

The self-righting aspect was also a deal clincher, as PPSP tragically lost three lives and a launch back in 1991. The modern launch is designed to self right even in the worst conditions. This requires an amazing build strength and one that would need to allow for the boat to go stern over bow! If such an event occurred, automatic flap valves seal the exhaust and air intakes. A clever feature is the main air ducts which travel all the way down to the bilge, effectively placing them above the waterline when the boat overturns. Seatbelts are also installed, along with several handle holds to assist the crew to brace in such an event. I thought a bottle of whiskey would have been standard too, but



apparently these guys are battle hardened to withstand such forces, unlike myself, who would be still shaking in a corner months after the event!

You need considerable horsepower to push 28 tons of craft through the water. The design spec calls for twin 670hp engines, PPSP chose to up the ante and place twin Cummins 800hp QSK 19's in the Akuna IV. The added horsepower boosts her to a healthy top speed of 30kts and a 26 kn cruise speed. For those who putt around with a 30 hp yanmar in the engine room, twin 800hp may sound excessive, but when you consider these boats have to literally lever themselves off the side of a ship doing 10-12kn, every ounce of horse power counts.

The main access into the engine room is via a door located at the rear of the cabin. A step ladder appears and takes you down into the cavernous hull that is sectioned off into three main water tight compartments; auxiliaries, engine room and store. It is apparent that someone has thought through every possible

scenario and that innovation and ease of use are the foremost features. Even in roughish conditions, it is safe to walk between the huge 19 litre motors with well manufactured guards and handrails provided for protection.

Upstairs in the main cabin, the interior rivals that of a modern sports cruiser with decorative timber infills and high gloss paint work. The helm station is well laid out and incorporates the latest Furuno chart plotter technology and AIS positioning, with each system having a back up should the primary system fail.

As the first of its type in Australia, the boat is a credit to PPSP. Special mention should go to Chris for overseeing the build by Mal Hart, owner of Hart Marine. Chris praised Mal for the attention to detail throughout and the after sales service supplied. Both men had to achieve a deadline and did so with only days to spare and without compromising the build quality.

Whilst I have yet to take a ride in "Akuna IV", I do take comfort in knowing if I was ever in grave danger in the rip, my calls for help may see "Akuna IV" come to my aid. She is built for all weathers and maintained to the highest standard.



Specifications

LOA1	8.55 m
LOW	17.40 m
Beam	5.5 m
Draft	1.55 m
Displacement	28 tons
Propulsion	2x800hp Cummins QSK 19 shaft drive
Fuel capacity	3000 litres
Top speed	30 kn
Cruise	26 kn

A Leisurely Tour of the South East Coast

On Wednesday 27th April Robert and Rose Ungar with friends Bob and Jenny, set sail for an extensive tour of the south eastern coast. Their boat Mai, a 21 metre Princess, was the perfect vessel for the cruise.

The first stop was Port Fairy, reached in 10 hours despite the poor conditions, rough seas and a 20 kn wind on the nose. They remained in Port Fairy until Friday, played golf, walked and enjoyed the local hospitality

They departed Port Fairy at first light on Saturday 30th April. Good conditions allowed them to cover the 170 nm to Robe in about 8 hours. After a great meal at the Caledonian Pub, they spent the evening back at the marina.

It was late start on Sunday, 10 am due to a wait for the tide. Another 170 nm run in calm warm conditions took them to the Holdfast Shores marina in the heart of Glenelg, so access to restaurants, pubs, bars, and Adelaide City was easy.

A quiet night on board prepared them for a shopping trip with friends the following day. Conditions were warm to hot throughout the stay, fortunately the boat's air conditioning worked perfectly throughout.

On Thursday 5th May they hired a car and visited the McLaren Vale wine area, Willunga, Victor Harbour, and the Murray entrance at Goolwa. Mai developed a list to port after purchases from a number of McLaren Vale wineries were loaded

Skipper Mike returned on Sunday afternoon. Mai was stocked up with supplies, in preparation for the wilderness part of the journey.

Robert, Rose and their guests departed Adelaide on Monday. Mai mooched along the Fleurieu Peninsular at 11 kn. It was very pleasant, the day was warm, 28 degrees and a south east wind of about 10-15 kn.

At the Backstairs passage Mai passed the Kangaroo Island Ferry on the 20 nm run to her anchorage at American River on Kangaroo Island. Here a narrow, shallow, well marked entrance opened up to a huge bay. They hooked up to a friend's mooring, relaxed and set about reducing Mai's list



King Island is about 150 km long by 50 km wide. The southern end of the island is largely National Park. On Tuesday Robert, Rose and their guests took a guided tour with Kangaroo Island Wilderness Tours. They visited a number of locations including Seal Bay, the dolphins at Vivonne Bay, and Flinders Chase National Park, Admirals Arch, and then on to "Remarkable Rocks", a huge, magnificent natural rock structure

The following day they hired a car and explored the northern part of Kangaroo Island. The places they visited included Penneshore, where the ferry berths, the Eucalyptus Distillery, Clifford's Honey Farm, and Kingscote, the island's "capital", for lunch

Mai left American River on Thursday. It was cold with 25 kn easterlies. After a voyage of 80 nm, they arrived at Snug Cove on the North-

ern side of the island. The one mooring had another boat attached to it. Although Robert had permission from the owner to use it, rather than cause a stir with the locals they headed to another cove called Kangaroo Bay, a couple of miles up. This bay was much more exposed, it was still blowing 25 kn, so they had an uncomfortable night.

Fishermans Point near Port Lincoln was the next destination, another 80 nm run. Conditions were much the same as Thursday, a 20-25 kn east south east, again on the stern quarter. They cruised at 20 kn to take the roll out. Mai arrived at 3.00pm. The bay, 10nm east of port Lincoln, was very protected in south easterlies, with beautiful beaches. They stayed there for a couple of days then moved in to Port Lincoln Marina.

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be tough to find a place on the better sets.

The Harbour has become a take off point for a number of surfers heading out to the break. When a south easterly starts to blow and swells are rolling in it is becoming a common sight to see boats heading out with surfboards stacked up inside.

Late autumn and winter brings the biggest of the south westerly swells. This is when the hardy local surfers head out to tackle the Corsair Break at its most challenging.



In mid May Dean Mitchell and Jade took a small group of interstate surfers out to take on Corsair in full cry.

For surfers used to water temperatures of 20 plus, the cool water provided an additional obstacle. Once the surfers were in the surf line and facing sometimes double overhead waves, the cool water was soon forgotten.

On their return there were stories of memorable rides and some even more memorable wipe outs.

The Corsair break is not for the fainthearted. Not only do surfers have to cope with the powerful wave, but also with tidal currents that may run well in excess of 5 kn. It is a break for strong, experienced surfers.



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Robert and Rose were joined at Port Lincoln by good friends, the "Moody's", There were now eight aboard including the crew. After a day and night of celebrations, and re-stocking Mia, they went on to explore The Eyre Peninsular.



It was the final week, but the weather was extremely unkind, 20-30 kn most of the time, with intermittent rain showers. Only three days were spent around the Sir Joseph Banks group of Islands and on the third night Mia returned to Spalding and stayed at Surfleet Point, a beautiful safe anchorage. Here they tried their hand at fishing but with little success

Mia returned to Port Lincoln on the Friday to drop some off the guests and then continued on to Port Vincent marina, on the East coast of the Yorke Peninsular. The marina was very quiet but welcome after the big swells they had experienced on the west side of the peninsular

The final leg back to Glenelg was via Old Port Adelaide and the Torrens River. Mia arrived at Holdfast Marina late on Tuesday afternoon. She had covered over 900 nm almost 1800 km since leaving Melbourne.

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