



Bayside Trailable Yacht Club NEWSLETTER

June 2021

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Spectacular**

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Plus regular features.

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COMMODORE'S CORNER



By Edwin Flynn

Ahoy Baysiders

What an amazing year it has been. COVID-19 lock up for months and with all of us just edging to be let out again; we have absolutely excelled in both quantity and quality of our cruising experiences. Maybe it was the appreciation that when we are locked away our desire to go out and have fun cruising with our friends became even more important. Several times we've had to consider cancelling cruises, and then very quickly change our plans so that we can all get out and have a great time on our boats.

We are so very lucky to have members who are so capable of planning fantastic cruising adventures. A big thank you to Joan Rockcliffe and Geoffrey Peplar for their efforts in planning and executing the Gippsland Lakes Adventure Cruise out of Sale. That was in November/December last year. And then the Murray River Spectacular Cruise that had been adjourned from September 2020 until March 2021 due to Covid 19. Then there was Kenton Lillecrapp's leadership of the Western Lakes and Rivers Exploratory Cruise in February. Of course, there were other cruises during January and also February, all well supported by members. I want to extend a big thank you to these

members for the work they did in planning fun and adventurous cruises for all of us.

We are planning more cruising adventures during the coming year, so keep your diary handy to take note to attend as many of them as you can. Some cruises will need to be limited in numbers due to their nature, so if you want to participate in a cruise please indicate your desire to do so early. If we need to book connecting travel we may request a monetary deposit as part of the registration for a cruise. This is necessary where we need to make bookings and pay deposits in advance of the actual event.

At the recent well attended general meeting at Hastings our club members debated and adopted a number of new policies:

1. All members boats are required to have a current 3rd Party Public Liability Insurance for their vessel.
2. All vessels participating in club cruises must be club members.
3. All boats participating in a club sail are to have a VHF Radio transmitter/receiver on board. This may be a hand-held VHF radio. This is required for easy and safe communications during cruises.
4. Radio communications during cruises will be via VHF Ch. 73. Most VHF radios have a dual watch function that enables users to monitor and listen to emergency broadcasts on VHF Ch16.
5. Each boat is to have a written safety procedure and a copy of the procedure is to be kept on board. The safety procedure must include man overboard procedures.

The committee will endeavour to write a pro forma of a safety procedure that can be amended and adapted by each skipper for his/her boat. Part of the procedure will state that each time a new crew member comes on board, the safety procedures will be outlined.

We are learning to live with COVID-19. Let's all stay safe and heed medical and government advice and directives.

A big thank you to our sponsors and supporters whose contributions help meet the cost of our newsletter. These are the Melbourne City Marina, Peter Green Sails and Yaringa Boat Harbour. These businesses offer great services to the sailing community. Please

remember to support these businesses if you require any of the services they provide.

A big thank you and welcome to our new committee comprising of Kenton Lillecrapp (Past Commodore), Tony Pitt (Treasurer) Gaye Pitt (Membership Secretary), Chris Slaney (Cruise Director) David Morrissey (Committee member), Iolanda Cruz (Social Committee), joint website managers Phil Gooding and James Reynolds.

Stay safe everyone.

CRUISE REPORT THE MURRAY RIVER SPECTACULAR Morgan to Murray Bridge

By Geoff Peplar

Participating Vessels: *Silk Department, Yellow Boat, Therapy, Wanton, Scallywag, Buddy, Grasshopper, Take It Easy.*



Following frustrating delays due to COVID-19 causing border closures, etc., early March 2021 saw the message sent, “ladies and gentlemen, start your outboards’. Accordingly, eight BTYC vessels cruised c.214kms over 11 days from Morgan to Murray Bridge (SA) on the Murray River.

Joan Rockliff was the cruise co-ordinator and she had done considerable pre-cruise research. This enabled efficient and secure car and trailer storage, and gave us two guided tours which had been prior booked.

Suitable overnight anchorages had to be organised as there are many private properties along this river stretch. Use of caravan parks, rowing club rooms and tennis club facilities were all prearranged. There were also several private jetty tie ups, pub bookings and a private group dinner at the Bowhill General Store.

Boat launching was at Morgan with retrieval at a marina in Murray Bridge. After launching we collectively took the cars and boats trailers down to the marina at Murray Bridge. A minibus had been arranged for transport of the drivers 146km back to the boats at Morgan. This was all done prior to the on water start date.

At daily cruise briefings, for safety, a “Tail End Charlie” was nominated for each day’s run. This was usually Wanton.

The weather was generally excellent, mostly sunny and warm to hot days were followed by cool, clear, calm nights. Winds were light except for one windy and showery day with the boats and crew sheltering at Big Bend opposite a long sweep of the highest cliffs on the river. Overnight stays were a pleasant mix of town moorings and remote locations. These were Donald’s Flat, Blanchetown, Swan Reach (2 nights), Big Bend (2 nights), Bowhill, Walker’s Flat, Mannum, and Avoca Dell. The towns provided shopping, resupply, coffee fixes, and lunch and dinner opportunities.



Cruise highlights were many. They included the welcome dinner at Morgan, Blanchetown lockage (Lock No.1), lunch at Swan Reach Pub (great views), an Op. Shop visit, and Big Bend Shearing Shed Dinner and a Nocturnal Tour. The Ngaut Ngaut Indigenous Site History Tour was enlightening and scenic Walker Flat Village, Bowhill dinner, Mannum farewell dinner and the magnificent scenery along the river all added to the experience.

Notable were the convivial happy hours. There were two games afternoons with Giant Jenga, keenly contested Finska, and a Trivia Quiz. The passage upstream of the large sternwheeler Murray Princess past the moored BTYC boats and then through Lock No.1 was quite a sight. BTYC members helping with the tie up of river boat Proud Mary adjacent to the moored fleet was entertaining. Ginger brittle at Bowhill courtesy of Denise hit the spot and a mystery presented itself; how did one boat manage to arrive at cruise end with an extra crew member (a pink flamingo) who also happened to match the boat's colours?



There is much natural and human (indigenous or recent) history on and surrounding this river. Shell fossils, canoe trees, feasting middens, carvings, exist and passing a moored paddle wheeler or remains of an old paddle steamer or stone building ruin always created interest. Scenic vistas change around each river bend and on the long straight reaches. There are remote areas, vineyards, orchards, farms and homes dotted along the high banks and cliffs. There are lagoons, islands, huge river red gums, palms, willows,

and numerous tall, colourful, many layered cliffs of considerable length. At some locations the river containment becomes gorge like. Mists, sunrise and sunset colours on the river, the trees, and especially on the cliffs are unforgettable.



The wildlife is numerous. Swans, ducks, pelicans, parrots, cormorants, eagles, swifts, kangaroos, lizards, jumping fish and a fox surefootedly climbing a steep cliff, were all sighted. Cockatoos residing in the cliff faces and screeching at the passing boats were an unexpected surprise!

Relaxed 4 knot cruising, swimming, the use of caravan park, rowing club, and tennis club showers, and great company and camaraderie enhanced the trip; it was definitely not a test of endurance! The mighty Murray River (40million years of geological history) lived up to its name. A water flow of three thousand million litres a day ensured ample water levels in each weir pool and a moderate flow over the weir at Blanchetown. Navigation on the meandering river required a little attention in places using the river guidebooks but passage was fairly hazard free on the generally broad, deep (max. 63 feet on Depth Sounder), calm waters.

In summary, the Murray River is a spectacular waterway and a cruise on this mighty river, in good company, gives great reward. The locals were helpful and the welcome and assistance provided by a local councillor and his wife at Bowhill most appreciated. Certainly, more BTYC cruising on this magnificent river is planned!

CRUISE DIRECTORS REPORT

November 2019 to May 2021

By Chris Slaney

The last two sailing seasons have been significantly affected by the emergence of the Covid-19 virus. As a club we have come through a trying period where we had to postpone, amend and cancel many planned cruises. I have made a list of what we have had to cancel and it includes the Labour Day cruise, the Childrens Sail, the Easter cruise and the Top of the Bay cruise all in autumn last year. Then this current sailing season we had to cancel the Opening Sail, the Xmas party and again defer the Murray Spectacular.

Despite the cancellation of much of the 2019-2020 planned sails we can report that we have had some really great sailing adventures that have been extremely well attended and enjoyed by members.

Maybe it was due to the effect of the lock down and us not being able to do what we love to do for such a long time during 2020, but the 2020-2021 sailing season took off with a huge bang with the well attended Gippsland Lakes Adventure cruise from Sale in December. Every cruise since that date has been well attended and I am sure will be remembered by the many members who attended, as some of the best cruises that the club has had.

NEW BTYC POLICIES

The Discussion and Debate

The adoption of five new policies at the recent general meeting of the club has not come about without considerable prior discussion and debate at committee and then again at the general meeting. As a club we have resisted becoming highly bureaucratic. Our purpose is to get out on the water to explore, be with the elements, find wonderful places, and share the experience with others. So the formal adoption of club policies, to which we then become bound, is not something that has been undertaken lightly. However

all five policies were passed on resolution at the general meeting.

The background behind each of the policies was outlined at the general meeting and some of this repeated below. The background provided the base for some very good and meaningful discussion. The policies were all adopted at the meeting after some discussion.

Some of the key points and reasons why these policies have become required.

- 1. All members boats are required to have a current 3rd Party Public Liability Insurance for their vessel.*

Because we collectively sail, launch, retrieve and tie up in close proximity to each other, the risk of damage or serious injury is ever present. The risk is heightened during severe weather events. The third party cover is really a courtesy to your other boating buddies. Current 3rd party liability insurance cover is mandatory for all overnight stays in marinas. As a club we need to be serious about protecting ourselves and others.

While most of our members have full comprehensive insurance, GIO also currently offers a 3rd public liability and property insurance only as a minimum policy with a minimum annual fee. Other insurers may also offer this minimal insurance cover. During membership subscription renewal in the coming year each member will need to provide some sort of verification of insurance cover to the Treasurer.

- 2. All vessels participating in club cruises must be club members.*

In some ways this is a direct follow on from the above. If our policy is for all boats to have insurance cover, then we need to verify that before any new or prospective member can participate in a club sailing activity. This means that they need to become members, as by doing so we will verify the insurance.

In the past our club has always always extended hospitality to invite other sailors to join a club sail, even if just for a day or two. This has often lead to them becoming members. In the future we will have to be clear that non member boats cannot actually participate in the club activity (although there is nothing to stop them from tagging along and sailing in

the same direction). They will not be signed on as part of the club sail unless they are current members.

3. *All boats in a club sail are to have a VHF Radio transmitter/receiver on board.*

A functioning marine radio has been a mandatory safety requirement for club boats. In the past our club has accepted that the marine radio could be either a VHF or a 27 Mhz. The former has always been preferred because of the lower level of marine traffic on VHF, and some boats have both. However two different systems mean that the cruise coordinator may need to communicate messages on both frequencies. This can be difficult and has caused problems in the past. As such it has been deemed that the time to change has now come and 27 Mhz marine radios will no longer be part of our communication on water.

As stated by Eddie in his report, a hand held VHF radio in the cockpit will suffice.

4. *Radio communications during cruises will be via VHF Ch. 73. Club boats participating in a club sail should maintain a listening watch on Ch.73.*

This policy has been a bit more controversial. Our previous procedure has been to maintain a listening watch on the marine safety channel, Ch.16. Using this channel, an operator (the cruise coordinator or other member) then calls up another boat(s) and arranges to switch to Ch.73 for interactive communication. The other vessel(s) respond(s) and the radio operators then switch to Ch.73 and engage in conversation.

This procedure has not been without criticism. It is somewhat clumsy, having to first call up, confirm, switch channels, and then reconfirm before starting to actually send the required information. For multiple radio operators, it is easy to lose someone along the way. And for very short messages there has been the temptation to simply use Ch.16, which is against maritime safety regulations for non urgent messages.

So we are bringing in a new system. Those boats with dual watch facilities on the VHF can still keep a listening watch on Ch.16 for any safety warnings or other marine updates, but there will need to be a permanent listening watch on Ch.73 for the duration of each club sail.

5. *Each boat is to have a written safety procedure and a copy of the procedure is to be kept on*

board. The safety procedure must include man overboard procedures.

This is long overdue as a club policy. All club boats have a safety procedure and man overboard procedure, but how often is it just within the skipper's head? It can be a bit late to start communicating the procedure once it is all happening, particularly if the skipper is the one in the water! Many of the Melbourne based sailing clubs have introduced a policy similar to this over the last few years and we have decided that we need to do the same. Each boat is different and the safety procedures need to be tailored to each vessel. The main requirements are that it is a written procedure, a copy is kept permanently on the boat, it must include a man overboard procedure, and it must include provision whereby the safety procedure becomes part of the induction for every new crew member.

The BTYC committee will be preparing a proforma to help members draft an appropriate written safety procedure for their vessel. Look out for this in the next newsletter.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to several new members to our club.

Kevin and Christine Holland are from sunny Portarlington. They sail a Noelex 25 called Black Bart and joined the Gippsland Lakes Explorers cruise in February this year.

Matthew Ross also sails a Noelex 25 called Raku. Matt lives in Brighton and we look forward to seeing Matt on several of our sails in the new season.

Jonathon and Melinda Morphett have a custom maid Cosair IV and live in Ascot Vale. They sail with their two young children and participated in part of the Easter cruise this year and we look forward to seeing them on the water for Children's Cruise in 2022.

CRUISE REPORT

The Gippsland Lakes Explorer Cruise

February 2021

By Kenton Lillecrapp

Participating Vessels: *Silk Department,, Wanton, Buddy, Take It Easy, Small Change, My Winsome, Black Bart*

Our sailing objective was Lake Wellington and the Latrobe River to explore possible mooring spots to replace our favourite Perry River spot. The Perry River has been “rocked”, destroying our previous anchoring and mooring stopover..

After a pleasant night on the beach in Duck Arm we sailed and motored in very light winds all the way to Hollands Landing – our first destination. Unfortunately the south easterly had filled in strongly and our planned stop on the wharf at Hollands Landing was untenable with wind and waves coming directly in from the lake. We motored on with Buddy given the job of reporting back from another favourite, Plover Point. “Plover Point is no longer here” they radioed. “The beach does not exist any more”.

We about turned and found a really good spot on the bank about halfway along the strait. All good until 6 wake boats went past in a line at 7.00am nearly throwing our boats up into the trees. GRRR!



Picture : Mooring in McLennans Strait

The forecast had deteriorated so we decided not to cross Lake Wellington to the Latrobe River and instead

did a quick motor out to the first big red mark to show people what they were going to miss. Commodore Eddie found the bottom out here as we turned around to head for our second exploration objective – Tom’s Creek.

The entrance to Tom’s Creek is a little difficult to find and is protected by several shallow spots. Commodore Eddie found every one of them going in. Once in, Tom’s Creek is about 3 or more metres deep and generally about 50 metres wide but very scrubby and swampy on both sides with no suitable spots to pull in. We had a drifting lunch right at the end but some of us found it a bit spooky.



Picture: Sailing into Tom’s Creek

Eddie found it more than spooky. Coming out he found the bottom again as we headed for our third exploration objective just nearby – Blond Bay.

We motored deep into Blond Bay with depth showing a good 2 metres and then - Gold! On the southern side there is a good beach and even better, a slight hook in the sand where the pelicans all collected. I was able to motor right up to the beach. This will be a really good cruise destination for up to half a dozen Baysider boats in winds anywhere from East around to South or even South West. Oh, and Commodore Eddie found the bottom again!

We had a wonderful sail back down to Picnic Arm in a 15 knot Southerly with a quick diversion into our fourth

exploration destination – Steel Bay. We explored the beach and the 2 public moorings in the bay. This beach would be a good destination in any westerly or north westerly.

Exploration over, we sailed to Ocean Grange, Metung, Nicholson and then finally retrieved boats and home.

Future exploration cruise Latrobe River! There's a possible mooring spot I want to check out. Who's coming?

AMERICAS GREAT LOOP PART 3 Sep 2019 TO March 2020 Chicago to the South

By Martin Jones & Denise Williams

(Continued from the previous newsletter)

With only a one-foot drop, the large hydraulic rams of the entry gates were barely closed before the exit gates opened. There before us was the City of Chicago and the Ship and Sanitary Canal, built in 1900 by engineers who used this experience to go on and build the Panama Canal. We passed under the bridges of Chicago (67 in total) and cleared the lowest air draft on the whole Loop with barely a foot to spare. We were now in a tight commercial waterway environment where commercial tows took preference over leisure boats. But we had a friendly tow captain ahead of us pushing an empty chemical barge and he arranged for all the bridges, road and rail, to open for us.



It was essential to converse with the tow captains – sometimes to hold station, while they or we navigated a bend, or to quickly pass them ahead of some other constraint. Every pass had to be set up beforehand as they were very clear about whether they wanted a port (“on the one”) or starboard (“on the two”) pass. Sometimes we would be passing as close as 10 feet where the river or canal was narrow.

Once in the Illinois river our objective was to reach a city called Peoria. En route we squeezed into a marina designed for runabouts. The people in this place were amazing. Complete strangers offered to lend us their cars. “If you would like to use my car it is in the car park with the keys in it – I won’t need it for a few hours”.

There were so many acts of kindness like this, both in Canada and the US, that helped us along the way. Most unexpected, it was a big part of the pleasure we obtained from the adventure. The City of Peoria is the home of Caterpillar and has a very smart yacht club called IVY – Illinois Valley Yacht Club. They are most welcoming of visitors.

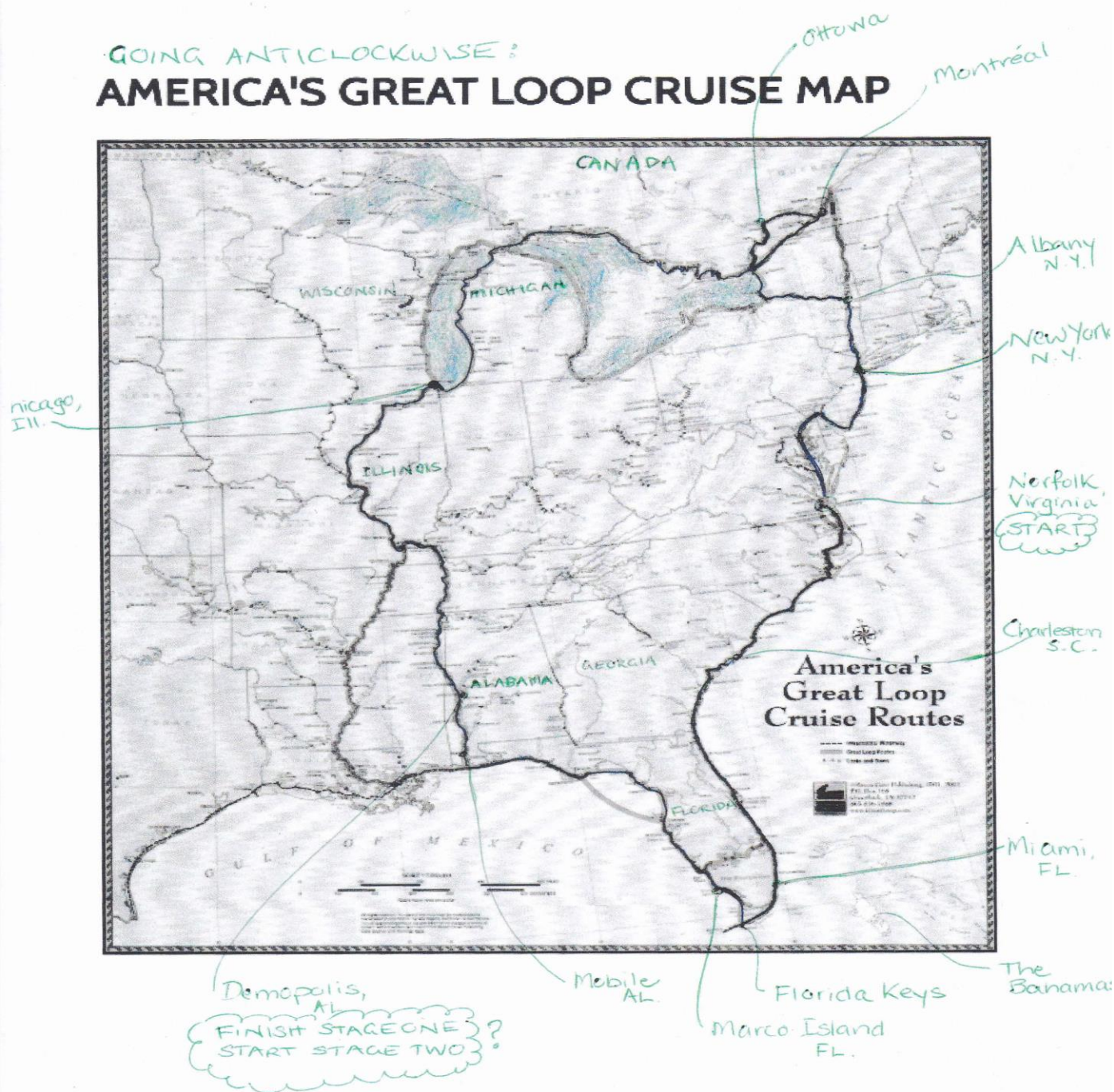
There are very few marinas or wharves to tie up to on the rivers, so a good marina is always welcomed by loopers who like a good long shower on shore and to stock up on provisions (and for the Americans – to dine out). Our access to IVY was delayed. Engineers had lowered the river and there was insufficient water to cross the sand bar into the Club. After a couple of days wait, we ventured in with one foot below the keel. It was a bit of a nail biter.

There had been some rain in the north which was followed by a massive rain and lightning storm in the Peoria area. They fed a rapidly rising river. We refuelled before they closed the floating fuel station and the bottom floor of the IVY Club was by this time flooded. The river seemed to be peaking and we left the following day, now with 26 feet under the keel. This massive river had risen 25 feet in four days.

The journey on the flooded river was swift, although not too difficult. Fortunately, there was very little debris to dodge and the locks were open so we could sail through without stopping. We were given a false sense of security for what was to follow.

GOING ANTICLOCKWISE:

AMERICA'S GREAT LOOP CRUISE MAP



Travelling on south, still in Illinois, we reached the junction of the Illinois River and the mighty muddy Mississippi. There was one more stop for fuel before we seriously tackled the big one. We followed a path that most Loopers take, with only three days on the Mississippi before branching off on the Ohio River. While it is possible to follow the

Mississippi all the way to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico, there are few places to stop and no fuel. Fuelling has to be by arrangement with a road tanker at a suitable location. While Band Wagon 3 had a range of 450 miles it was not suited to this route.

The Mississippi brought high adventure. The river was very much in flood and running at 6 knots. At low throttle we

still travelled at 13-14 knots, so making distance was not a problem. The Mississippi has a lot of commercial traffic and the tows labouring upstream into the current were throwing up wakes sufficiently large to capsize our 37-footer. The wakes reverberated for 2 or 3 miles down the windy river. Overtaking downstream was simpler; the tows were running on the flood at idle. We had to carefully watch the AIS for oncoming traffic (as did the tow captains) and set up passing protocols.

Debris was another issue with the rising river and this was going to become a huge issue further on in our journey.

A really nasty feature of the river were the whirlpools. These were unpredictable and would suddenly spin the boat at right angles to the bank even with full opposite helm. Travelling sideways down the river was hair-raising to say the least. Thankfully it did not occur while in the vicinity of other traffic.

We exited the Mississippi to the Ohio River which was an enormous contrast and a great relief. At the confluence of the rivers was a clear line of muddy Mississippi water with the clear water of the Ohio. All water traffic was heavy and control of the boat was tricky with the various currents, but we safely made it through to an anchorage in the river. Although the Ohio was in flood it was mostly devoid of debris.



Life on the water became much easier for a while as we tied up at the last town on the Ohio River – Paducah, Kentucky. The town had a spectacular quilt museum

which surprisingly all the blokes enjoyed as well, although none of them thought they would. While here, the weather turned wintry, with day time temperatures dropping to zero and foggy conditions. No-one went boating that day and some didn't even get out of their pyjamas. A good day for hanging about.

The next leg of the journey took us out of the rivers into the Kentucky Lake, the largest artificial lake by area in the USA. The journey down the Lake was peaceful with no currents, little breeze, sunny days and excellent anchorages. It led us to the Tombigbee River and a marina called Aqua. We left the boat and hired a car to tour Memphis and Nashville.

Both Memphis and Nashville had amazing music scenes. It was a thrill to visit Sun Records original studio, which still retains Jerry Lee Lewis's piano, and the Bon Jovi drum kit. A few weeks before, unannounced, Jerry Lee Lewis and Mick Jagger walked through the studio back entrance to the thrill of the tour at the time. We were introduced to a juke bar in one of the suburbs where we were the only white people and definitely the only Australians. We were made to feel completely welcome. The music was non-stop and amazing, as different musicians and singers took the stage.

We moved on down the Tombigbee River to a place famous to all Loopers, called Demopolis, Alabama. This is the first town with a marina north of the hurricane line and is a stop off for the trip to the Gulf Coast. Many boat insurance policies in the US require boats to remain out of the hurricane zone during the season, which ends on November 1. So the marina was full of people just waiting for Nov 1 to tick over. We decided to stay in a small pool off the river and about 2 miles downstream of the town.

Rain was forecast. It teemed down and by 0700hrs our pool had risen by several feet with the forecast for it to continue. We decided to head upstream to the marina and having secured a berth over the phone, we ventured out. In heavy rain and fog we found the Tombigbee River to be rapidly building to a flood. Everything from telegraph poles to trees, branches and twigs were bobbing down the river which was fast flowing already. As we tried to make our way upstream, it was impossible to see from the lower pilot station

and Denise had to stand on the bow in the cold and wet directing Martin to avoid the debris. Hitting one of those logs could seriously have damaged the prop or rudder. Only two miles downstream was a lock with an associated dam that was overflowing rapidly in the full flood.

We nudged our way up to the marina, trying to find debris free spots in the river to avoid harm. Gratefully we were provided with an undercover floating berth. Demopolis was to be home for a few days as the river kept rising. The 1st of November people, who had a bad case of dock fever, took off in the flood and there were many tales to tell. We stayed on to enjoy our first Halloween Party.

We delayed our departure until the river had peaked as it had hit new highs for the year, meaning more debris than usual would be carried downstream. Our objective was to reach the quiet waters south on the Gulf near Mobile. However, there was only one secure anchorage for the three-day trip, the pontoon at Bobby's Fish Camp. The river was so strong here that we had to crab the boats in and tie them back to trees on the land. The pontoon had to be braced back to shore with additional lines. Tree trunks were flowing down the river and clunking between the boats hulls all night, creating an anxious sleep.

We had a memorable meal of fresh catfish at Bobby's very basic fish camp and prepared for departure next day. Last in fortunately meant first off. The lockkeeper was calling for the pleasure boats to come through quickly as it was going to be a busy day.

Passing the lock was the beginning of perhaps our most stressful day. The river was treacherous and for the rest of the day it was about survival. Swathes of debris, logs trees, branches and whatever else were washing down. The channel markers, large aluminium spear headed Atons as they are called, were mainly off station or completely missing. Some were diving below the water surface, suddenly erupting vertically when breaking the surface. One of these would easily spear a hole through a fibre glass hull. After a while we learnt to recognise the whirlpool characteristics of the river and those of the diving Atons. While we knew where the markers should be, it didn't mean a diving one might not be off-

station. To top it off heavy commercial traffic was creating the standing waves which, if not confronted bow on, could roll the boat.

Finally, we made anchorage in a peaceful river off the main flood, enjoyed a spectacular sunset and spent a restful night in the company of three other boats. One, a sail boat, being slower than the rest of us, left an hour early next day. As he re-entered the main river, a complete house floated down – air conditioner in the window and all. By the time we got there, there was no sign of it. We speculated that it may have hit a tow and sunk.

We motored into the marina near Mobile for a couple of days' recovery and prepared for the journey east to Destin, Florida. This was benign and the start of a holiday rather than an adventure. America's Great Loop Association has Harbor Hosts who provide help to Loopers in various locations. The host in Destin offered us a berth at his house while we returned to Australia for Christmas. Band Wagon 3 was left tied up to a swimming pool for the duration and the host organised for his diver and mechanic to service various things.

We returned in February 2020 thinking that COVID-19 was only caught from animals and resumed our eastward journey. At last we were having a holiday and the weather had turned to spring with balmy days of light winds and flat seas. We crossed the open waters of the Gulf without incident and avoided thousands of crab pots, although by now we had a new rope cutter on the prop shaft. We enjoyed old town Florida and were within 6 weeks of crossing our wake in Norfolk.

However, COVID-19 was on the march. We received a call from our boat broker. He told us that marinas in Florida were closing and others were telling boats to leave if they had been slipped for less than 28 days – Florida was heading for lockdown. We hot footed into the nearest Marina and once again, with a lot of help from some Loopers in Fort Myers, we quickly cleaned up the boat, re-arranged flights and managed to catch the last QANTAS flight out of LA for Melbourne. Band Wagon 3 was sold within 2 days of listing at a fair price.

It is doubtful now that we will ever finish the trip, but we are hopeful that with friends we met on the way, we may persuade one of them to at least take us around the Florida Keys. We would be happy to sign off then.

BTYC Mid Winter Dinner

Amid all the lockdowns, changing social distancing requirements and the general confusion and frustration that abounds, BTYC are holding a **Mid Winter Dinner**.

Where: **Blackburn Hotel, 111 Whitehorse road, Blackburn**

When : **12.00 midday to later, Saturday July 24, 2021**

Registration: You must register with Iolanda so that she knows the numbers for the booking. **Ring Iolanda on 0416 159156.**
Please register sooner rather than later!

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