



WHITTLEY CLUB NSW Inc

Harrington and Manning River Trip 01 - 03 October 2016

Trip organiser: John and Jan Whittles - *Two Can Tango*



break an ankle in the M1 service centre carpark at Wyong. Not a great way to start a long weekend. After much discussion, a visit to hospital, a surgical 'boot' and Linda's son coming from Sydney to collect her, Michael and Diana pushed on to Harrington.

Much Ado (Ian and Judy) had an overheating tow vehicle and a blown head gasket which made it to within 300 metres of the boat ramp.

Friday night saw dinner at Em's Thai - a nice place to eat close to the ramp. Back to the ramp for an overnight stay in the carpark and a planned 9am departure to catch a favourable tide. During the night, we were joined by Matt and Evelyn and their 2 charming children.

Saturday morning saw 2 more arrivals to bring our number to 7 boats:

Two Can Tango (John and Jan) also trip organiser

Athena (Roger and Athena)

Glasindo (Ken and Helen)

Marie Christene (Michael and Diana)

Much Ado (Ian and Judy)

Max and the yet to be named Monterey (Marg was unable to attend)

Matt, Evelyn, Eleanor and Daniel in their yet to be renamed 700

Most members chose to arrive Friday afternoon / evening. This was a strategy to miss the usual afternoon crawl from Sydney but as the writer can attest, it didn't work despite a Sydney departure at 10am

The road trip up the coast was eventful for 2 boats in particular: *Marie Christene* (Michael and Diana) who had their friend Linda



We snaked our way down the shallow channel and into the river proper where we found lots of wind and chop with white caps. Unfortunately, the wind called for a change in plans so the planned stop at Manning Point became a 'drive-by' on our way up river to the village of Croki.



WHITTLEY CLUB NSW Inc



boats drifting downriver. Eventually all 7 boats successfully rafted and some made a quick shore tour to find a shop and icecream.

The wind was a little better but still managed to set the initial raft of 3



After lunch, we had a short trip across the river into Scotts Creek for a viewing of the old butter factory. Once the lifeblood of the region, milk was transported by boat (instead of road). Perhaps next time we visit, the planned conversion of the disused factory will be complete and it will become a quaint place for coffee.

Next stop - the town of Coopernook. After a slow trip through the no-wash zones on the Landsdowne River, we rafted up outside the pub. Again challenging conditions to establish a raft at one point having 3 of the 7 boats pull/drag the entire raft into it's final position (lots of skills being used on this trip). Not much traffic in this part of the river. With the winds abating, it proved to be a nice spot to settle down for the afternoon and evening.

Much Ado tried to assemble their (new) second hand dinghy and Ian floated off downriver in a barely inflated rubber ducky much to the merriment and mirth of the group members before John and his trusty 2.5hp



outboard came to the rescue. It was a slow tow against the outgoing tide to the pontoon where the dinghy was (eventually) correctly





WHITTLEY CLUB NSW Inc



assembled and inflated with the welcome assistance of Matt.

Sunday morning saw a beautiful day with a little wind. As we were about to depart, we had a visit from the local friendly RMS officer and his jetski for a quick hello. Plan for the day was to retrace our route back to Harrington, past the boat ramp and to continue up the Back Channel

to raft up outside Harrington pub for dinner and the NRL grand final. The trip back saw a few dolphins jumping and playing in between the boats.

Matt and family decided to pull out of the weekend due to continuing battery issues. Sorry to see them depart early and hope it doesn't deter them from venturing out again with us all. Boats now numbered 6.

Whilst John was helping Matt retrieve his boat, the rest of the group found a nice anchorage directly in front of the pub (can



you see a recurring theme here?) As luck would have it, the wind decided to do funny things just as we started rafting up.

Eventually the raft was set and we only needed a short 20-30 metre dinghy ride (depending on tide) to take the steps to the pub.



A

very picturesque setting with many pelicans crowding the fish cleaning tables as locals



bought in their catches.





WHITTLEY CLUB NSW Inc

Early afternoon saw trip leaders John and Jan take us on a walking tour to Pilot Hill. As well as being used as a signal (flag) station in days long past for vessel communication and navigation of the treacherous bar entrance to the Manning, it was also the spot upon which John and Jan were married some years prior. Continuing the walking tour, we took in the lagoon and the breakwall. The breakwall is almost 3.2 km long and its official name is the 'Training Wall' (although I'm not quite sure what it trains). We made our way back to the boats via the township and the pub (with several members enjoying a refreshing and cleansing ale or two).



Dinner was had at the pub for 11 of us with a good position to watch the NRL on the big screen. The place was a sea of blue, black and white. Congratulations to Cronulla. It rained a little overnight but not enough to wake most.

Monday morning started for most with a short walk to Harrington markets. *Much Ado* left after breakfast with a plan to get back to Sydney without boat or vehicle. A quick trailer swap with John saw *Much Ado* having a nice holiday in one of the local caravan parks. Back to the boat ramp to await the NRMA towtruck and short trip to Taree for repairs to the Challenger. In between all this activity, John also managed to repair and bleed the brakes on *Glasindo's* trailer too.

In the meantime, *Athena* and *Marie Christene* also returned to the boat ramp after a dose of retail therapy at the markets. Roger and Athena very kindly gave a lift to Ian and Judy to get them back to Sydney. For those lucky enough not to have to work on Tuesday, they stayed another night.

Thanks to our "resident ex-locals" John and Jan for organising the weekend. Their knowledge of the local area and waterways was greatly appreciated. It would be a nice place to re-visit and explore a bit further when there wasn't so much wind about.

Safe and happy boating to all,
Ian



WHITTLE CLUB NSW Inc

On a personal note, many thanks from myself and Judy for the assistance given by all fellow members (and especially John, Jan, Roger and Athena). On Friday, it looked like we might not even make it to the water let alone stay for the whole weekend. It was great to have so much help. I am not sure what we would have done without you all - thanks again.

To Matt, Evelyn and family (our newest members), it was great to see you all out on your first 'big' weekend. The Club has a great bunch of people in it and all are ready to give a hand if you need anything. Hope to see you all again soon.