

## Don't ever underestimate Bateman's Bay and the Beautiful Clyde River!

At one time or another we have all been guilty of arriving at negative vibes about something without the knowledge or first hand experience on the subject. This is how the Bateman's Easter event started; in fact it very nearly became a cancelled outing. How sad it would have been as the weekend turned into one of the better events on our calendar. Top marks to Shaz and Chris for your extreme effort in the planning and follow through. Without your fortitude and dedication the event would have died.

The Bateman's adventure started smoothly with eventually six boats on the starting line (well five anyway). Wednesday saw Tricia and Herbert "Herway" have an early start and they spent the night at Cow Creek (Sussex) at Jacqui and Brenton's home with Narelle and Garry "The Palace" eventually catching up with them. On Thursday they convoyed to Nelligen for an early morning rendezvous with the rest of us who had arrived the previous night.

Wednesday evening had Pat and Rob "It'll Do" meet with Athena and Rog "Athena" at the top of Mt Ousley then to Minnamurra rest stop to catch-up with Shaz and Chris "Good Times", our fearless leaders. After a quick feed stop at Nowra our convoy eventually arrived at Nelligen and finally launched around midnight.

Thursday was a nice casual day on the Clyde with the "The Palace" and "Herway" arriving early and (that made five) to leisurely cruise around the Clyde following Commodore Rob. As I said earlier, Friday started smoothly and then it happened! An urgent SMS from number six, Angela and Alex "Happy Daze" they had dropped a trailer bearing 49 clicks before Bateman's at Lake Berrilee (you guessed it no back-up bearing on Good Friday, S-M-A-R-T Alec). Everyone went through their spare parts and fortunately Chris had a second-hand set of the same bearings.

As our head boatman, Commodore Rob chose and was voted to stay with Herbert and Garry to protect the ladies and the raft while Chris and I headed off into the south coast wilderness to get covered in SMART Alec grease.

Two hours later we headed for Bateman's, bets were being taken as to how far they would get on the patched up bearings as the bearing cone, the stub axle and seal were really badly chundered, Chris bet they would make it to Nelligen, I thought 8 clicks short, Alex was still in shock and wouldn't guess BUT nobody expected the slap-happy repair to get him to Nelligen and all the way back to Sydney (ain't it great to have friends with spare bits?)

Thursday morning's planned slow cruise to the upper reaches of the Clyde was altered to an early afternoon blast up the river after Angela and Alex finally launched "Happy Daze". The infamous MURPHY looked down (or something) upon "Herway" as some underwater thing managed to kiss the propeller causing them to have a very slow limp to the headwaters.

While waiting to raft "The Palace" decided to venture slowly over the gravel shallows to a secluded spot up-river for a quick swim as the tide was dropping (they were just far enough away so we couldn't determine if it was a skinny exercise).



“Herway” had a spare prop on board so under Commodore Rob’s instruction we beached the stern onto the muddy bank and to get the prop close to the surface everyone sat on the bow of “Herway” and partied until Rob and his maintenance crew managed to remove and change the prop.

Thank you Herbert for jamming the prop and retaining washer so bl---y darn tight (no mean task working under muddy water by feel alone) a great challenge — well done team.

That evening turned into a great party night which started with Shaza’s massive lump of Haloumi cheese to be followed by more Haloumi from each boat and of course all the other nibbles included, even though we had a hard day the night wore on (with all that Haloumi Cheese I think its becoming a Greek Cypriot club!).

Friday morning we woke to the thickest fog I have ever seen, we were rafted 10-15metres from shore and we couldn’t see land, fortunately the sun burnt the fog away to provide us with a picture perfect day.



Not a very nice thing to say BUT the wave-boarders down river didn’t appreciate a fleet of Whittle’s making waves for them (pay back time) they wouldn’t even wave to us?? some people!!!!!!!!!!!!

Friday night raft at Nelligen saw three front and three rear anchors and heaps and heaps of chain and rope to compete with the tidal flows, then more party and an earlier late night.

Dingy ride to Big 4 Caravan Park and to the historical Steam Packet Hotel for a couple of soft drinks?

To Bateman’s for a short shopping spree, saw Sue and Peter (land based) join us at the marina for afternoon drinks and new members from Canberra Jim and Di Robertson also joined us for an evening at the Country Club for fab food, well researched Shaz and Chris.

I started out by saying that negative vibes were wasted on the Bateman’s trip, the weather couldn’t have been better, every night was ‘lap less’ perfectly quiet even at tide change, the food at the Country Club was gourmet class and we danced the night away and managed to miss the last courtesy bus back to the marina.

Next morning up river toward Nelligen again with Rob collecting a harvest of oysters from the Blue Oyster Shack, then to a raft at Big Island’s deep hole for the evening. Pat and Athena decided they were having withdrawals so I took them back to Bateman’s for some afternoon retail therapy.

As Bateman’s lacks pontoon facilities (the only negative) I dropped anchor to wait for the girls to return. After anchoring MURPHY stepped in for some more fun, the wind changed direction and I decided to up anchor and do a reset as I was being driven close to a moored yacht YEP! The anchor jammed and nothing I did would free it after an hour trying and running low on fuel (our fleet was out of radio and phone range) so I had no alternative but to SOS the local Coast Guard and had help arrive about 1/2 hour later. With my winch locked off with a snubber the volunteers towed me forward with my engine driving at about 3000 revs and their twin outboards screaming the anchor freed with an almighty BANG. According to the locals the anchor was caught on a heavy mooring chain, a mooring block or a wrecked boat (you didn’t research that one too well Shaz). As the waves and current made it too dangerous to disconnect, the volunteers towed me into the marina to do the task in calm water, naturally that was when the girls returned from shopping and ‘yours truly’ had vacated his post BIG WORRIES. After eventually collecting the girls from the wharf and me trying to push a single standing pylon over whilst in reverse we finally headed upriver to the raft with the low fuel alarm singing some ABBA tunes all the way. We made it to the fleet and I topped up with 5 litres of generator fuel which gave us sufficient to get to the Nelligen ramp and onto the trailer the following morning.

To Sue and Peter, Jim and Di we were glad you were able to join us at the marina and club, to the volunteer boys a very big thank you from me, to the week-end fleet thanks for the great company (even to “Happy Daze” and “Herway” for their challenges). Last and far from least, to our leaders Shaz and Chris for such a fantastic event and for organising everything to perfection, the bridge opening without a prayer, the Marina and Country Club and their food and to the man upstairs who (with your influence) decided not to give us the usual Whittle weather. Guys you did yourselves proud!

Thanks from everyone!  
Athena and Rog “Athena”