

BY DINGHY AROUND PORT PHILLIP BAY



A group of Mordialloc Sailing Club members chose to sail around Port Phillip Bay over a period of a week in two gaff-rigged open dinghies. **Malcolm Boyd** and **Peter White** take up the story.

The Sail Around The Bay Event (SATBE) was organised by Peter White to replicate a sail around Port Phillip Bay by club members Ken Venn and Graeme Moore which took place back on 28 February 1965, in their 12 Square Metre Heavy Weight Sharpie (HWS) named *Avaloe*.

All they took was a few supplies such as a fry pan, billy, stove and eating utensils and a tent to sleep ashore. Little fanfare or fuss was made about their adventure and achievement apart from an article and photo which appeared in the local newspaper. It was a typical low-key event of that time.

The two dinghies completing SATBE in 2015 were a HWS (*Zena*) and a Mirror (*Sapphire*).

Zena is owned by Malcolm Boyd and for the past 30 years or so has been in Sydney where she has been sailing in the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club's Gaffers Regattas on and off since the 1980s. Malcolm Boyd has owned her since 1988 and she won Division 2 of the Gaffers Regatta in 2011.

The HWS was originally designed in Germany and was introduced to Australia in the mid 1930s. They were popular in all states except NSW and many famous Australian sailors had their early successes in the class, including Rolly Tasker, Jim Hardy and John Cuneo.

Zena was built in Melbourne approximately 65 years ago and its name appears in a list of over 70 boats competing in an invitation race associated with the National Championships on Port Phillip Bay in 1951/52 – a testament to the popularity of the class then leading up to the Melbourne Olympics where they were the two-man class. History notes that Rolly Tasker was beaten on a countback for Gold in 1956 by New Zealander, Peter Mander.

The Mirror, *Sapphire*, is owned by Richard Loxell. The Mirror is a very popular sailing dinghy, with more than 70,000 built and was named after the *Daily Mirror*, a UK newspaper with a largely working class distribution. The Mirror was from the start promoted as an affordable boat, and as a design it has done a great deal to

ONLY AN AIRHEAD MARINE TOILET TICKS ALL THE BOXES

- ✓ NO ODOUR!
- ✓ NO chemicals
- ✓ NO through hulls or holding tank
- ✓ NO smelly pipes to block
- ✓ Fully sealed for shower combo
- ✓ Simple to install
- ✓ Solar power option
- ✓ 5 year warranty

a better way to go

 T: 03 9421 4235

abetterwaytogo.com.au

Anchorage Marine
Underwriting Agency Pty Ltd
A.C.N. 001 809 003

Marine Insurance Specialists
Underwritten by QBE Insurance (Australia) Limited

Pleasurecraft ♦ Charter Vessels
For your Quote call (02) 9959-4422



Zena heading towards Geelong.

make dinghy sailing accessible to a wide audience. It was designed by Jack Holt and Barry Bucknell in 1962.

Both boats are gaff rigged in that they hoist a spar, although the Mirror is strictly a gunter rig where the gaff is closely aligned with the mast.

Unfortunately Malcolm was unable to join them but Zena was loaned to the club for the event under the care of Peter White who prepared the boat for the journey including replacing the standing rigging, constructing a splash board on the foredeck (HWS tend to go through waves rather than over them!) and providing inflatable buoyancy bags to assist recovery after capsize. Peter, and fellow members Colin White and John Hutton took the opportunity to get to know Zena for a few weeks before the event.



Above: The stopovers. Ultimately Zena and Sapphire, sailed more than 100nm around Port Phillip Bay in eight days.

Right: Peter White and fellow members, Colin White and John Hutton took the opportunity to get to know Zena for a few weeks before the event.



Their companion for the voyage was a family Mirror dinghy Sapphire sailed by Richard Lozell and his son Connor. Richard was a part of the organising committee and Event Director for the SATBE and was determined to make the distance by looking at it as a seven day adventure with his son. In 2017 Richard and Connor are planning to do a 350 mile course in the Florida Everglades Challenge so this was a perfect opportunity to test the combination.

It was exactly 50 years to the day after Avalon set off that Zena and Sapphire prepared to depart from Mordialloc Sailing Club. The club Commodore Greg Gleason gave an inspiring speech to open the proceedings followed by an information session lead by Richard Lozell. Ken Venn was invited to say a few words about his



M.O.S.S. AUSTRALIA

THE LIFE-SAVING EQUIPMENT SPECIALISTS



Auto / Manual
115M inc GST

Secumar PX



Auto / Manual
Fully Customised

Ultra AX+



Auto / Manual
220N Buoyancy

Survival 220

Exclusive Australian Service Centre for:

- SECUMAR
- SWITLIK (marine)
- KADEMATIC

Service available on most other brands of inflatable lifejackets



(02) 9898 4747 | mossaust@biopond.net.au | mossaust.com.au | 14/7 Packard Ave, Castle Hill NSW 2154



For the first day Zena (with blue sails) was accompanied by two other Heavy Weight Sharpies seen here before start.

trip around the bay 50 years ago and Ken Raphael wished all participants a safe and enjoyable trip before the two Ken's (both Commodores and Life Members of the club) together rang the golden bell to start the event.

For the first day Zena and Sapphire were accompanied by two other HWs for a rare collection of these wonderful old racing boats.

After that Zena and Sapphire carried on, with the Mirror generally setting off each



Zena off Sorrento in April 1955. Note the cotton sails and the sail marking which was most probably stenciled onto the sail using boot polish!

leg at least half an hour earlier. A safety boat was on hand in case of an emergency (which was not required) while a vehicle ashore managed the stopovers along

THE RACE
The Sydney to Hobart is widely considered one of the toughest yacht races in the world and one of the very few sporting events in the world where both professional and amateur participants compete equally. From the spectacular start in Sydney Harbour, the fleet sails out into the Tasman Sea, down the south-east coast of mainland Australia, across Bass Strait, then down the east coast of Tasmania. At Tasman Island the fleet turns right into Storm Bay for the final sail up the Derwent River to the historic port city of Hobart.

WHEN
December 2016 - Crew Qualifying Passage & Race Training
26th December 2016 Race start
ETA Hobart 29th/30th December 2016

THE YACHT
The Yacht is Eureka II a modified Sydney 60.

Purposely built for the Sydney to Hobart based on a track record of heavy weather. She has been engineered specifically for Ocean Racing in a harsh environment but also to maximise all racing conditions.

PRICE
AUD\$8800

HOW TO BOOK
Just CONTACT us!
Further information and booking details are available from
Manly Sailing
+61 2 95774000
info@manlysailing.com.au



Zena, Division 2 winner at SASC's 2011 Gaffers Regatta in the lee of Sir James Hardy's Nerida.

the way. Local sailing clubs were most supportive in providing facilities for accommodation and meals where possible, not to mention the opportunity for reliving each day's adventure.

Despite a 10 knot breeze at the start, the rest of Day 1 was light and variable but the fleet managed to make it to Mornington before the wind disappeared only for a storm overnight to nearly sink Zena at her mooring.

A freshening breeze up to 20 knots on Day 2 saw an exciting morning's sail before a lunch break at Safety Beach Sailing Club where they met Alfred Riley who had sailed against Zena back in the 1950s. Subsequently he provided a photo which was taken off Sorrento in April, 1955. It is interesting to note the cotton sails and the sail marking which was most probably stencilled onto the sail using boot polish!

After lunch they continued via McCrae Yacht Club into headwinds up to 25 knots before arriving at Sorrento Couta Boat Sailing Club for the evening. It was a good test for both boats before they headed to the other side of the bay.

Day 3 saw a pleasant reach in 5-7 knot winds across the channel to St Leonards where they enjoyed lunch at the sailing club and then on to Portarlington in a dying breeze with only a minor issue of the steel centreboard of Zena which became jammed due to some very coarse sand. Some sizeable pieces of timber and brute force managed to solve that problem.

Day 4 was dull and overcast with light and fickle winds. Zena tried the short-cut over the shallows with some difficulty and both boats drifted on towards Geelong.

The boats and crew were well taken care of at the Royal Geelong Yacht Club only to be surprised by a number of policemen in the morning due to a miscommunication about their accommodation. Once that was settled down they set off on Day 5 before a 5 to 10 knot breeze towards the Werribee South Caravan Park where they secured the boats on the beach pending an overnight storm.

Day 6 and the wind was pumping in at 30 to 35 knots which forced a delay in departure and ultimately a decision to say overnight as time was not that critical.

The scene on the morning of Day 7 was little better but by mid-afternoon the wind had abated and they set off on a broad reach in 10 knots of wind towards Williamstown. The wind

PainsWessex
MARINE DISTRESS SIGNALS

**Ask your marine supplier for
Aurora Inshore Distress Signal Kits**

Commercial products and accessories include:

- Distress Flares
- Parachute Rockets
- Line Throwers | Manoverboard
- Life Smoke | Survivor
- Location Lights | Seamark Dye
- Safety Grab Bags | Poly Bottles
- Bird Scare Line | Cyalume lightsticks
- Life Jacket and Life Buoy Lights
- Waterproof Matches



**Drew Marine
Signal & Safety Australia**

Ph (03) 9650 1488

Fax (03) 9639 8811

Email info@aurora-marine.com

www.aurora-marine.com



Richard Lozell's Sapphire on the edge. It was designed by Jack Holt and Barry Bucknell in 1962.

picked up and the next hour and a half proved a real handful in the HWS. Defensive sailing was required in these conditions in order to keep control of the boat and to take the power out of the building waves. A capsize in such conditions would have been very difficult to retrieve!

The last day of the adventure, Day 8, started at the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, with a light NW wind promising a gentle run home but not before some careful navigation around the commercial shipping in these parts. With good judgement, the three boats arrived at Mordialloc Sailing Club at the same time and the finish line hooter was blown to complete the experience. ⚓



Celebrating a great adventure.

Ultimately Zena and Sapphire, sailed more than 100 nautical miles around Port Phillip Bay in 8 days. Their route was as follows:

- Day 1 – Mordialloc to Mornington
- Day 2 – Mornington to Sorrento
- Day 3 – Sorrento to Portarlington
- Day 4 – Portarlington to Royal Geelong Yacht Club
- Day 5 – Geelong to Werribee River
- Day 6 – A forced lay-day at Werribee River
- Day 7 – Werribee River to Royal Yacht Club of Victoria
- Day 8 – Royal Yacht Club of Victoria to Mordialloc

It is believed that this is the third Heavy Weight Sharpie to sail around the bay and the first Mirror to complete that feat. It has provided the impetus for Mordialloc Sailing Club to do similar things in future with trips to various parts of the bay. Hopefully it can rekindle that spirit of adventure which seems to be suppressed by the hurly burly of modern life.

Thanks to the following people who helped make it happen:

HWS, Zena: Owner – Malcolm Boyd (SASC). Crew – Peter & Colin White, John Hutton. Reserve crew – Andrew Rae, John Ericsson, Bart Scheen and Geoff Daniel.
 Preparatory work – Dave Williamson and Mark Rimmington.
 Mirror, Sapphire. Crew – Richard Lozell and Conner Lozell.
 Support boat, Escort: Bart Scheen, Geoff Daniel and Jim Rae.
 Support car: Gill Scheen, Cassie Rae, Stephen & Heather Griffiths.
 Mordialloc Sailing Club website -<http://www.mordiallocsc.com.au/>.

navathome
AUSTRALIA

Online Distance RYA/YA Theory Courses

Complete your RYA theory certificates at home.
 Refreshingly simple Online Sailing Theory courses recognised by RYA and Yachting Australia.

Essential Navigation & Seamanship • Day Skipper Coastal Skipper/Yachtmaster • Ocean Yachtmaster

- ◆ Course includes demonstrations, exercises and solutions on line.
- ◆ Any questions are answered by a personal online Yachtmaster Instructor allocated to you.
- ◆ Work at your own pace
- ◆ Course fee includes hard copy text, practice charts, almanac and chart protractor.
- ◆ Courses start from \$195 - discounts for couples or group bookings.

For more information contact Helen
 M 0427217664 ◆ info@navathome.com.au
www.navathome.com.au

nannidiesel
energy in blue

- ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY
- SUPERIOR QUALITY

NANNI DIESEL AUST
 26/17 Bowden St, Alexandria Sydney 2015
(02) 9319 5222
engine@nannidiesel.com.au www.nannidiesel.com.au