



Boat Talk

VMR Brisbane's Monthly Newsletter



Above: Uh oh! Life Jackets on the Brighton shore on 17th Jan. What could this mean? – check it out on page 3.

Around the Rigging

Welcome to our new Members. We look forward to seeing you around the base.

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ACTIVE CREW

Michael Braunlein	Colin Cassidy	Juliette Cusack
Anthea Elise	Nathan Lunn	Les Robinson
Anita Sandeman	Jocelyn Sigley	David Waters

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FULL MEMBERS

Bruce Atkinson	Estelle Carnes	Alish Conley
Paul Dooley	Colin Fernleigh	Mark Harris
Elliott Martin	Richard Pleuger	David Rowland
Lance Spina	David Winkcup	

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WATERSIDE ASSIST

Daniel Affleck	David Bromage	Benjamin Campbell
Dennis Cannon	Michael Clarke	Rolf Collett
Brad Crosby	Mark Cunningham	James Ellison
Chris Farr	Terry Fisher	Scott Fixter
Chad Goette	Dwayne Homan	David Hudson
David Jones	Aasis Karan	Tony Keyes
Des King	Cameron Levick	Graham Lowry
Brad Mackie	Roey McBride	Grant Peacey
Nathan Pearce	Mark Roberts	Catherine Sutton
Masashi Ura	William Vernon	Peter Way
Brendan Wilkins		Paul Wright

DATE TO REMEMBER

FOOD TRUCKS EVENT

Friday, 19th February, 2021

4.00 pm to 8.00 pm

Hosted by Alpha Crew

It has seemed like a strange start to the year without our usual happy politician-sponsored Australia Day celebrations. Nevertheless, we are hopeful that we can now resume a lot of our normal activities.

Probably because many people were unable to travel overseas, boating has become a more popular leisure pastime. A good fact is so many owners have joined Waterside Assist – as you can see from the long list of names at left. Another positive point is that it seems the new owners are responsible people as our rescue callouts have not increased relative to the growth of boat ownership.

We are welcoming more Active Crew too and you can see November Crew's new member, Juliette Cusack, on page 3.

Let us introduce you to the Orange Pole – a visible guide to the always-hidden bottom of our boat ramp. See page 4 for full details.

Bob Walker was a valued member of Foxtrot Crew for many years and you can read about his very interesting life on page 5.

Queensland Maritime Museum has had a rough time lately with their main source of income (visitor's fees) non-existent for part of last year. However, they are trialling open days and the only way to ensure their survival is for us to visit them and check out their exhibits. See page 7 for more information about this renowned museum and one of its exhibits.

Got some spare cash since you haven't been travelling overseas lately? Interested in buying a boat? See if either of these superyachts on page 8 would be good enough to fit the bill. Or perhaps the gold-plated *History Supreme* is more your style...

As always, sincere thanks to contributors and photographers to this issue of *Boat Talk*.

Editor Deidre



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President's Report

You will have noticed that we are welcoming many new members this month including 9 new Active Crew. We have restricted our active crew additions for a while because we were not in a position to offer suitable training. If a crew has several new members, it makes it more difficult to give them each the degree of training required. However natural attrition and now the ability to spend time together as COVID19 is receding into the background means we can get back on track again.

We are very happy to welcome all members and are glad that awareness of VMR is also recognition that boat owners need to have a support network should they require help out on the water.

We are sad to announce that we have lost another valued Life Member of VMRB. Bob Walker passed away on 3rd January. Bob was the Designated Radio Operator when I took over Foxtrot Crew. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to meet and get to know Bob. He was forever the Gentleman. Foxtrot Crew and I would always look forward to Bob bringing in some memorabilia and of course the story that went with it. His experience and guidance helped me become an effective Crew Member, Duty Master and a better person, for that I am forever grateful to him.

It was a pity our usual annual Australia Day activities could not go ahead due to COVID19 restrictions. However, it was noteworthy to see the huge crowds of dedicated boat owners taking advantage of the good weather as we did not receive many calls for assistance. It was so crowded over at Tangalooma that it seemed everyone had made a beeline for the wrecks!

Consultations are continuing on our Aquatic Activities Access Area but we have to make do at the moment. Our vanishing red line has been replaced with an orange pole which we trust will remain visible so you can keep from losing anything over the steep end of the ramp. See page 5 for more detail.

Observant people might have noticed the black Jackaroo has disappeared from the carport in front of Sandgate 3. The Jackaroo developed an issue where it only wanted to go forwards, not backwards so was deregistered and sold for scrap (Maybe it was trying to teach us a life lesson...).

We would be very interested in negotiating with car dealers for a promotional vehicle so there would be the option of them getting publicity for community

February 2021 Crew Roster

Sat 6	Bravo	Sun 7	Papa
Sat 13	Charlie	Sun 14	Quebec
Fri 20	Delta	Sun 21	Sierra
Sat 27	Foxtrot	Sun 28	Tango

March 2021 Crew Roster

Sat 6	Alpha	Sun 7	November
Sat 13	Bravo	Sun 14	Papa
Sat 20	Charlie	Sun 21	Quebec
Sat 27	Delta	Sun 28	Sierra

support and us able to use their vehicle to tow our vessels to rescues and other community events.

The exciting news for Management is one of our new members, Colin Cassidy, has offered to take on the role of Corporate Relations and Sponsorship Officer. We are looking forward to utilising his expertise in this area and relieving Management of trying to fill a role that can be stressful to us!

We have also had another new member, Gretel of Bravo Crew, interviewed by Channel 7's Creek to Coast program and this will be screened closer to Easter as a safety message.

Thank you to Glenn Philip for manning our base radios for the QCYC City to Surf race which was held overnight on 16th/17th September.

Safe Boating,
Thomas Grice,
President, VMRB.

Sandgate Paddling Club



It was time for a good canoeing and instruction session – but it is likely the brief rainfalls might have taken some gloss off the day!

Groups of VMRB

Our Association is made up of the following clubs. Please click on the logo to find out more details



Australia Day saw Tangalooma chock-a-block with boats!

Photo: Gordon Kreutzer

Activations

JANUARY

2nd - Water Police activated night time search of shoreline from Woody Point to Bribie Island for missing jetski. Stood down after two and a half hours.

3rd - "On Sunday 3rd January, a very large number of recreational boats were out on the water. This was due to being the last day of the Christmas holiday period and great weather conditions all day across Moreton Bay. Everyone must have checked their fuel and charged their batteries, as there were no calls for assistance.

November Crew utilised the better weather for a navigation/local knowledge training run to the top of Moreton Island through the Outer Freeman Channel, returning via Tangalooma."

6th - Callout to tow a disabled 6m powerboat with 2 POB from Boat Passage to Whyte Island boat ramp.

12th - Owner of a 6m yacht required assistance to re anchor his yacht adjacent to the Sydney Street terminal in the Brisbane River. 1 POB.

14th - A midnight callout by Water Police to investigate a flare sighting in Bramble Bay. Stood down as crew were leaving base.

17th - Multiple calls about a sunken boat near 10th Avenue. After finding the life jackets on shore, our duty crew waded out to the boat and found it had gone under due to a short anchor tie at high tide. Owner arranged retrieval.



22nd - Callout by member to tow his disabled jetski from the mouth of the Brisbane River to the Pinkenbah boat ramp. 1 POB

29th - Both Sandgate 1 and Sandgate 2 on water to provide television footage for upcoming Channel 7 Creek to Coast program.

31st - "November crew welcomed new crew member Juliette to the crew. After finishing off Juliette's vessel inductions. the crew conducted training, including Pine River local knowledge, vessel



ACTIVE CREW ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations and thank you to the following crew members who volunteered more than 5 years ago and who joined in January.

Michael Overend	1994	27 years
Glenn Philip	1999	22 years
Cameron Peglar	2006	14 years
Katie Kaiser	2006	6 years

handling, anchoring, simulated grounding and also Incapacitated Master practice and finishing with training in re-fuelling.

This was the second crew day that the new electronic checklists and vessel logs have been used. The new checklists save on a number of pieces of paper and cuts down the amount of manual writing and filing away of forms required by the crew for each voyage. It also reduces duplication of some information that used to be manually written on multiple forms.

No activations but a solid day of training for the crew."

Thank you to all the crews who are able to assist with any activations and who are on standby. We really appreciate receiving activation details and photos to help promote VMR Brisbane. Also we are grateful for the skipper's reports as they add colour to the actual rescue details. Please email any information through to editor@vmrbrisbane.com.au and also to social.media@vmrbrisbane.com.au.

Zulu Crew

The hardworking, quiet-achieving Zulu Crew were having a well-earned break one Tuesday in January.



Cleaning the carpets is one of those jobs that has to be done, although by a contractor and not by Zulu Crew.



January in Summary

Activations:	25
Fuel Used:	1,756
People Assisted:	4

Food Truck Event

Our Food Truck event didn't happen in January because the operators decided it was not worth doing as the planned date was too close to Australia Day. However the Food Trucks should be back at our base on Friday 19th February. Alpha Crew will be in charge of the bar and will be serving drinks including boutique beers provided by the [All Inn Brewing Co](#), from 4 pm to 8 pm.

Come along and support your club while having a night out. Club members are invited to stay later to take the opportunity to catch up with fellow members; you can meet upstairs if you like.

The Orange Pole

If you haven't been down to the base recently, you won't be acquainted with the **Orange Pole**. It is a new addition to our Water Activities Access Area – and is actually a substitute for the **red line** that was previously painted across the ramp. Unfortunately, the **red line** tended to disappear with monotonous regularity so the **Orange Pole** was located to be a more visible option. In fact, the **Orange Pole** is exactly 8 metres from the drop off end of the ramp so, if you know the length of your trailer, you should be saved from the disastrous experience of your trailer wheels disappearing over the ramp's end.

The adornment on top of the **Orange Pole** is a wind indicator (not a tide indicator!), and the idea is to please note where it is blowing so your boat doesn't have a close connection with our new **Orange Pole**!

Soon there will be different signage to let everyone know about the new landmark at our base.



Base Car Parking

Recently, it has been noted on several occasions that vehicles are being parked across the chained area (blocking access for SYC members to rig up, and blocking access to Sandgate Rescue 2 storage area), parked in the designated area for on Duty Crew, vehicles without trailers parked in the hardstand area reserved for trailers, and vehicles parked in the hardstand area blocking access to leased spaces causing inconvenience to paying lease holders, all of which are a breach of the By Laws of VMRB.

Under the present By Laws, due to being an Emergency Response Squadron, vehicles may only park in the area around the pontoon and ramp to load or unload: this must be kept clear at all times in the event of the base being required for Emergency Vehicles and or a Police Command Centre.

Members' vehicles are only allowed on the premises to load and unload and must then be removed from the area. Only a vehicle with trailer is permitted to park in the hardstand area, and this must be within the designated or leased area and must not provide any safety risk, impede the flow of traffic or inconvenience hardstand users.

A matter of security concern also reported to Management is that persons are entering via the boom gate using their security card, and then tagging a second vehicle through, possibly a friend or family member who is a non-Member of VMRB, and of the hardstand gate being jammed open to allow another vehicle access to that area.

Again, these are breaches of the VMRB By Laws.

Signs will shortly appear regarding boom gate entry, CCTV monitoring and parking.

Members are asked to please cooperate and observe the directions. Management does not wish to enter into disciplinary actions against offenders but this may become necessary as per the By Laws.

A Lost Cause



You may recall early last year we included a photo of a yacht in Cabbage Tree Creek that was showing signs of neglect. Your editor has now relegated it to the 'Lost Cause' category! As this recent January photo shows, it has sunk so far into the mud that the hull is barely visible at low tide.

VALE



JAMES ROBERT (BOB) WALKER

1/12/1925 – 3/1/2021 (Age 95)

Long standing Member of VMRB, former Vessel Master of Foxtrot Crew and Life Member Bob Walker passed away on 3rd January. Bob will be remembered as a quiet achiever and true gentleman.

Bob joined VMRB as Active Crew in 1969 and finished his volunteer service on 1st September, 2012, as Radio Operator. His experience and enthralling stories were sorely missed once he retired.

Bob began his working life at the Bank of Adelaide as clerk and joined the Air Training Corps when he was 16. (His father had served in the army in WW1 and his brother with the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces in Japan.) Although he originally wanted to be a pilot, his lack of depth perception prevented this. Instead he became a bomb aimer and completed the first bomb aimer's course in Australia in mid-1944. After more training, his crew joined the 12th squadron in Darwin.

Bob was 19 years old when he dropped his first bomb on a target in Japan towards the end of WW2. He was one of 1,000 men who operated 287 B24 Liberator aircraft. Bob flew a total of 13 missions in the B24 Liberators with the furthest taking him 13 hours north to Borneo. Liberators carried 10 x 0.5 Browning machine guns, nose, upper tail turrets, two manual waist guns and ball turret, with a maximum number of 4716 rounds carried and a maximum short bomb load of 12,800 lbs.

He progressed through the ranks from ACT and ACI to Flight Sergeant. The experience changed his view on life and enabled him to meet people he would never have met normally. He has said his time with the RAAF helped foster a strong work ethic ("Do it right the first time.") and after peace was declared they used to fly food to prisoners of war and then flew some of these men back to Australia. At the end of the war, Bob went back to the bank.

He had hurt his leg playing hockey and a young lady offered to help him. That young lady was Stella who became his wife in 1952. They had a daughter, Sandra, who had twins then a son named after Bob: James! At the time he retired, Bob was the State Manager for BHP. Although he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease when he was 92, Bob was still keeping up an active gym membership. He also was an active member of the Kedron-Wavell RSL Sub-branch and Stella and Bob were long-serving helpers for Meals on Wheels.

Poly Va'a-Alo Activities

Recently there were two big back-to-back events for the club. Firstly, Alish Conley's staff day on Friday, 8th January which was a great day had with her staff from the Christ is King Catholic Primary School. It was a bonus to have the chance to use it as a fundraiser - the Club made \$1200 for the day.

On 10th January there was a 24km Bribie paddle to Woorim and back. "We had four canoes on the water and two support boats. Weather was awesome swells and chop great and varied. We even managed to get in a Huli and capture it on video.

We also got to see lots of dolphins up close and meet one of the aboriginal elders from the island. Thankyou Jane Storey and Raelene Jose especially for arranging the support boats and Phil Crampton for towing our canoes up and Clint for bringing them home.

Thanks to everyone for the strong teamwork, fun and camaraderie. It was especially great to paddle at Bribie and hang with our sister club. Thank you Helen Roe for hosting us taking us on a great awesome Cruzy paddle and for the warmth of your club members and the welcome sausage sizzle and food after. Next one we agreed is a Moreton Island crossing."

Creek to Coast

Channel 7's Creek to Coast crew were at Shorncliffe on 28th January recording a segment for their show. They interviewed Gretel, Bravo Crew, with a view to giving a safety message before Easter. As soon as we know a screening date, we will let you know.



VMR Brisbane Needs You!

No knights in shining armour have stepped forward so we are still looking for some volunteers to assist with some very important Support Positions to Management that were not filled at the AGM. If you feel you can hop on board to help, it will be gratefully appreciated for all or part of any role.



The positions open are:

Administration Officer: Manage VMRB forms and Standard Operating Procedures in liaison with President and Snr Vice-President

Internal Social Activities Organiser

Community Relations / Publicity Officer

Mid-week Maintenance Crew: A group of Members who get together each Tuesday or as available to keep up the very important equipment maintenance and general maintenance works around the base. Volunteers are always welcomed to undertake a myriad of different but necessary tasks.

If you feel you have an interest in any position or could possibly assist with one, please feel free to call or email any of the following:

- [President Thomas Grice](#),
- [Snr Vice President Ben Gillespie](#),
- [Junior Vice President Paul Hollingdale](#), or
- Members Representatives [Les Pascoe](#) and [Darren Bates](#)

to discuss any aspect of the vacancies. Remember any little bit helps, no matter how small or how often. We look forward to hearing from you.



Owen seen taking his turn to diligently man the radios for Sierra Crew on their duty day on 23rd January.

Queensland Maritime Museum

On 23rd and 24th January, the Queensland Maritime Museum (*beneath the Goodwill Bridge in the South Bank Parklands*) had a trial re-opening. The museum is one of Australia's largest maritime museums but 2020 proved to be extremely difficult.

"In 1971, QMM's founders had the great vision to conserve artefacts from Queensland's maritime history. At the time, Queensland Museum had no plans to build a maritime museum, so it was thanks to our founders' determination - and the passion of thousands of volunteers since - that made it happen.

The Museum survived both the 1974 and 2011 floods, both of which saw the Brisbane River inundate the historic South Brisbane Dry Dock.

But it's the impact of COVID-19 that could really sink QMM.

QMM was grateful to receive \$600,000 in funding from the Queensland Government across 2017, 2018, and 2019. During this time, improvements were made to QMM's entire site, and work was done to upgrade outdated management systems. QMM was also successful in securing a number of federal, state, and local government grants to help with essential projects. But that funding finished just as COVID-19 forced QMM to close, leaving the Museum with zero income from its main source - visitor entrance fees.

QMM was able to work with Queensland Health to have a site-specific COVID Safe Plan approved and QMM re-opened on weekends in September.

New operations governed by QMM's COVID Safe Plan required QMM to recruit at least 40 new volunteers to staff the site solely on weekends, as volunteers 70 years old and over were not allowed onsite at the same time as the general public because they are deemed vulnerable according to the Queensland Government's health directives.

Low visitor numbers through September and October were only 30 per cent of pre-COVID levels, and the added cost of extra cleaning meant it was financially unviable for QMM to stay open.

QMM's Board made the difficult decision to close the Museum in November and December 2020 to try and navigate a way forward.

So you should plan to visit the Qld Maritime Museum which is home to a range of priceless historic artefacts, including:

- River-class frigate HMAS *Diamantina*, built in Maryborough for duty in WW2. The ship later served as an oceanographic survey vessel
- ST *Forceful*, Queensland's last remaining steam tug, with rare surviving examples of coal-fired boilers and a triple-expansion engine saw service in WW2.
- The pearl lugger, *Penguin*, which was part of the pearling industry in the Torres Strait in the first half of the 20th century, and finished as a supply and service vessel for Torres Strait Islanders in the 1970s
- *Ella's Pink Lady*, the yacht sailed by Queenslander Jessica Watson during her record-breaking solo

around-the-world trip in 2010

- A comprehensive collection of maritime artefacts and art works
- The largest collection of lighthouse artefacts in Australia

<http://www.maritimemuseum.com.au/>

Steam Tug *Forceful*

The steam tug *Forceful* was moved on Thursday 21st January to the slipway at Hemmant accompanied by two modern tugs from along the Brisbane River. Once at the slipway, she'll be lifted out of the water for a hull inspection. Her hull and structure will be surveyed; a key step in the process of preserving her into the future.

Built in 1925, *Forceful* served the port of Brisbane for 45 years, being the last coal-fired tug in operation. Upon being donated to the Museum in 1971, she was preserved as a working vessel, making regular trips down the Brisbane River to Moreton Bay. However, the cost in maintaining her sea-worthiness has become beyond the Museum's resources and she will be maintained as a floating exhibit.



Built by Alexander Stephen & Sons Ltd of Govan, Glasgow, Scotland for the predecessors of Queensland Tug Company Pty Ltd, *Forceful* was launched in November, 1925. She departed Glasgow on 21st December, 1925 and arrived in Brisbane on 7th March, 1926.

In Brisbane, *Forceful* was employed mainly in the Brisbane River. In 1926 she towed several ships in trouble but her finest hour was February, 1929 when she assisted towing the stricken steamer *Arafura* through a cyclone some 300km to Brisbane.

As a consequence of World War 2, *Forceful* was chartered by the British government for service in the Middle East. However, approval was withdrawn and she commissioned as HMAS *Forceful* on 16th February, 1942. She worked around Fremantle until October, 1942, when she sailed for Darwin. From October, 1942 to August, 1943, she engaged in harbour work around Darwin, towed lighters to Merauke in Dutch New Guinea and, on occasions, acted as a rescue vessel for aircraft and crews returning from bombing missions. In August, 1943, she towed a landing ship to Brisbane where, on 11th October, 1943, she paid off and returned to her owners.

Forceful became the last coal-burning tug on the river in January, 1964. With the more efficient diesel-engined tugs, *Forceful's* work gradually decreased. On 28th September, 1970 she was retired from service.

<https://maritimemuseum.com.au/learn/collections/vessels/forceful/>

World's Largest Superyachts

Azzam is a private superyacht built by German shipyard Lürssen Yachts in 2013 and owned by Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates.



At 180 metres in length, it is the longest private motor yacht in the world. It has a beam of 20.8 metres and an unusually shallow draft of 4.3 m. The *Azzam* can reach speeds of up to 31.5 knots and is considered one of the fastest superyachts.

The superyacht can accommodate up to 36 guests, advancing the *Azzam* as the largest superyacht in terms of guest capacity. A crew of 60 people is required onboard to maintain the yacht.

Having cost over \$600 million, this yacht is one of the most expensive masterpieces, and for yearly maintenance will cost around 10 per cent of its full price. This means the owner must spend over \$60 million every year to keep *Azzam* in prime condition before cruising off to a foreign destination.

Roman Abramovich, the 52 year old Russian billionaire, owns the second largest luxury yacht in the world. (It held the title of largest yacht until the *Azzam* was built in 2013.) The *Eclipse* features an intruder detection missile system, two helipads, 24 guest cabins, two swimming pools, a dance hall, hot tubs, a mini-submarine, armour plating, bulletproof windows, and an anti-paparazzi shield with sweeping laser beams.



Built by Blohm and Voss and designed by Terence Disdale, Abramovich spent \$1.5 billion constructing the 533-foot yacht. It flies under the flag of Bermuda which is its home port. Gross tonnage: 13,564, length 163m, beam 22m. It was refitted in 2015!

Abramovich owns the English professional soccer club, Chelsea.

<https://www.atlasmarinesystems.com/most-expensive-yachts/>

Then there is the Curious Case of *History Supreme*, the Yacht Made of Solid Gold.

However, even in this context, the 98.4-foot *History Supreme* stands out. This superyacht is believed to be the most expensive in the world, even 9 years after it was sold to a Malaysian businessman. The final tally: \$4.8 billion.

UK designer Stuart Hughes claims that the 30-metre long *History Supreme* yacht was made from 10,000 kilograms of gold and platinum and weighing-in at staggering 220,462 pounds worth of precious metals. All features including deck, dining area, rails, anchor are made from precious metals. The base of the vessel was wrapped in gold, a thin layer was formed to embrace this huge section. The main sleeping quarter was adorned with platinum accents and included a wall feature made from meteoric stone, with genuine Dinosaur bone shaved in from the raptor T- REX and an aquarium made from 68kg of 24 carat gold.

Also on board is a luxury liquor bottle featuring an 18.5ct diamond, one of the world's rarest.



That's a lot of money to pay for a boat, even when your net worth is estimated at \$14.5 billion (as of 2020)! Unconfirmed reports have it that the richest man in Malaysia and the second richest man in Southeast Asia, Robert Kuok is the happy owner of this insanely-priced vessel, which he commissioned from luxury jeweller and designer Stuart Hughes back in 2011.

What was even more outrageous than the \$4.8 billion supposedly paid for a boat was the fact that none of it was true. When word of *History Supreme* got out, several reps for Hughes confirmed the accuracy of the reports to media outlets, including in emails to [Business Insider](https://www.businessinsider.com). Then, it was radio silence on their end.

History Supreme sounded like an insane boat not even a Bond villain would buy, and for good reason. It was never real, it was never made and no, it does not exist. Regardless of what Google and some reliable yachting sites (still) have you believe, *History Supreme* is perhaps the biggest boating hoax in the industry.

<https://www.autoevolution.com/news/the-curious-case-of-history-supreme-the-48-billion-yacht-made-of-solid-gold-141035.html>