

THE NEW ZEALAND CLASSIC YACHT JOURNAL

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE CLASSIC YACHT ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND INC.



www.classicyacht.org.nz

ISSN 1175-804X

Issue 122 – February 2019



My Girl holds nothing back on her maiden outing. Photo by Waitemata Woodys.

My Girl Hits the Water – At Pace!

I have 'stuck my oar in' to the *My Girl* project at every available opportunity. From the initial yard-wander where I insisted to Jason Prew that there was a good boat under all those rotten additions, to after-work visits to inspect progress, and now finally from the roof of my own boat as I see *My Girl* roar past!

Being neighbours at the yard of the Milford Cruising Club meant that I could keep a close eye on the final stages of her restoration. I recommend hauling at the same time as friends; when Jason had some primer left over there was always a place that I could use it; or if somebody had forgotten to buy a new tube of

Sika Flex, then a spare was close at hand. Company in general is a really great thing during a long, tiresome and often financially challenging process. Be it in the form of 'yard walkers', friendly slip masters or club locals, friendly interaction forms an essential part of how you feel about your project.



Launch day was no different and supporters of her restoration turned out in their droves. *My Girl* eased down the old-style railway slip into the Wairau Creek with little noise and floating perfectly to her lines, until her turbocharged Volvo engine roared into life!

After Jason had given

his speech thanking various contributors and critics alike, he piled the cockpit full of people and took her on his first sea trial. I thought, "That's a lot of people, she will be bogged down to heck"; and, "Has the engine been properly tested? Does anyone have a tow rope if need be?"

Well my concerns were unfounded, and she fair flew across a sparkling blue Hauraki Gulf with turbo at full whistle. Her original 1925 speeds of over 18 knots were achieved and even larger than those were the smiles on all our faces!

Well done Jason. What next?

By Nathan Herbert



Tamariki does Attenborough Among the birds at Chesterfield Archipelago

By Peter Mortimer

Kristina, my new crew member, had been on a boat once before and didn't get sea sick, she exclaimed. Turned out, her only experience of the sea was from Vila to Santo on board the local supply barge, but she believed she was ready for an ocean crossing.

After a half day briefing and a basic introduction to safety at sea, we loaded up

the stores and departed Vila heading for Bundaberg in Australia, about 700 miles away.

After a passage of mixed conditions, including a spectacular electric storm, we made an unscheduled stop at Chesterfield Reef. We had caught a 5kg bluefin tuna about two miles out and, after getting the anchor down, I filleted it.

Kristina ate about a

quarter of it sashimi'd with soy sauce. "OOOOH! this is good," was all she could manage between mouthfuls.

We were visited by three very large reef sharks as we anchored. We left the tuna frame hanging in the water and went ashore. On returning later the frame was gone and rope chewed up. Might have been interesting to watch the struggle.

Chesterfield Archipelago is a French territory, a remote weather station and a national park. The main reef forms a vee shape about 10 miles long and five wide which has several small islets along both flanks. It is a bird sanctuary and breeding colony with thousands of birds screaming for attention.

We had arrived just as many birds were hatching. Fledglings covered the ground all squawking for a feed, bedlam really. I found it a bit like being on a David Attenborough photo shoot.

Sadly our plastic pollution

reaches even this remote sanctuary. Gathering plastic rubbish as we explored, we buried it well above high water.

Two nights was a reasonable rest, so we headed for Wreck Reef and Bird Island about 230 miles SW of Chesterfield. Passing close to both of these we finally anchored in a "lagoon" formed by three small separate reefs.

The 220 mile passage on to Bundaberg took two days and arriving at 0300 we hove to five miles offshore from the outer lead to the Burnett River and waited for dawn.

Effectively eight miles offshore and only just able to see land, it was odd to be in the middle of Hervey Bay with only 17m depth of water. Shallow water was to be a feature of the next month's boating.

• *A full version of this feature can be found on the CYA website.*



Invite for a summer nosy

Now that Summer is in full swing, I hope you are all making the most of your classic and the huge choice of destinations in the Gulf and beyond. For those of you cruising in the Bay of Islands who are interested in seeing a build in progress, Bruce Mitchinson is well advanced with the restoration of Lady Ellen. Bruce has extended an open invite to classic enthusiasts to pop by and have a look. Lady Ellen is up the driveway off the carpark next to the Russell Boating Club in Matauwhi Bay. Bruce also adds that Hylton Edmonds has some really nice classics at his Okiato property and can arrange a visit and transport people there. That's an offer too good to turn down!

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