



Rendezvous Cruise in Port Hacking by Kari Svensen

How good was that?! I'm still pinching myself following this most amazing aquatic adventure aboard the magnificent *Nautilée*, a 14m Island Packet, skippered by her owner, the extremely sea-savvy Lee Laurie. We met during the 50th Annual RSYS Cruise in Pittwater in April, and I was fortunate enough to be invited along last weekend.

Our thanks go to Jill and David Henry for organising this expedition, and particularly to David and Nev Wittey for taking the time and trouble to perform a "dry run" beforehand, as there are many sand bars/shallow areas on the route up the South Western Arm of Port Hacking.

Lee and I left Pittwater on Thursday afternoon and anchored off Store Beach for easy access to the Heads the next morning. Our trip to Jibbon was uneventful as, luckily for us, the strong winds forecast, did not eventuate until after we had safely anchored, when gusts reached 37 knots!

Jill and David joined us on board for impromptu nibbles and wines over a couple of convivial hours in the late afternoon which set the tone for the entire weekend.

Heavy rain pelted down from around 0300 on Saturday, so we were pleasantly surprised to see six more boats arriving from Sydney Harbour, after enduring wild conditions – *Cap Norte*, *Windflyt*, *Akiiki*, *Allegro*, *Mercier* and *Ariki Tai*.



SW Arm Parade

At 1300 *Sweet Chariot* (aka "Mother Duck") led us seven ducklings in single file up the sinuous passage to the end of the South West Arm of Port Hacking, passing some unbelievably huge and ostentatious homes along the way. *Cap Norte*, being a 32' sturdy cruiser, took rear position to ensure none of us strayed off course.



Nautilee, Allegro, Mercier, Cap Norte



Windflyt, Sweet Chariot, Akiiki

All 18 participants congregated aboard *Sweet Chariot* for drinks and canapés on Saturday evening to kick off the progressive dinner. Jill did a superb job in decorating the table and providing a sumptuous spread!



Canapé Capers - Jill, James, Rowan



Some like it Hot - feast aboard *Windflyt*

We then continued on to our host boat, *Mercier* for main course (Gaila and James produced a mouth-watering beef dish) and dessert. My contribution was a traditional Norwegian rice cream with home-grown rhubarb and ginger sauce, as well as another with fresh berries. A scoop of chocolate mousse and ice cream completed the confection, which was rather filling! Chris and Doug on *Windflyt*, our charming second host boat, feted their guests with chicken curry, salad and rhubarb and strawberry tarts plied with copious mixed berries.

There was no shortage of food this weekend, with fridges still brimming upon re-entry into Sydney Harbour.



Anice Falls, SW Arm



Two Men in a Boat

On Sunday we again followed *Sweet Chariot* back and anchored off the RMYC, Port Hacking, where we dined that night. Sadly, this was our final get-together before regrouping at Jibbon Beach on Monday morning where we said our farewells and departed separately at leisure. Tori and Doug braved the chilly water, both swimming into Jibbon while Chris, also made of sterner stuff, braved the cool weather and kindly paddled over to *Nautilée* for a chat, wearing only her bathing costume – brrr!



Ian, David, Tori, Jackie, JT



Jibbon Beach

To everyone's delight, the sail back was in an obliging southerly. *Nautilée* again anchored off Quarantine, returning to Pittwater on Tuesday, arriving at RMYC just in time before the ferocious southerly gale hit!

I'm sure we all have many tales (some quite hilarious!) to tell of our various experiences during the cruise, which I can only describe as "going direct to Heaven" as I felt totally in my element. As Lee is certain to confirm, I'm definitely very much a learner, however a keen one! There must have been many instances when she had to take a deep breath as I honestly admit to making mistakes and probably testing her patience more than once! Hopefully I scored "brownie points" for not being affected by seasickness!



Two Ladies on a Boat - Lee and Kari Chris, Kari, Lee, Doug

JT and Jackie Taylor

My hand shot up when JT intimated that there might be another expedition in the not too distant future, so fingers crossed that Lee will be gracious enough to give me a second chance!

Again, sincere thanks to the Henrys for all they did in preparation for, and during, this most delightful long weekend. Also, thank you to all my new friends for being so warm and welcoming.



A beautiful Bird of Prey Gorgeous Angophora