

Chilcott Adventure

The Western Port Cruise fleet travelled in excellent weather and as reported by the Commodore in the period up to Yaringa.

On Thursday 22nd the fleet gathered outside the Marina Office at the picturesque BBQ area whereby the cruisers provided food and drinks to thank Stephen the Marina Manager / Owner and various members of his staff for their hospitality in looking after our fleet. We were fortunate to be joined by Allan Coxon the Commodore at Yaringa. He spoke about a very special charity he was involved in and as a result a hat was passed around for the cause and several hundred dollars was handed over for the cause.

Tiercel had to remain at Yaringa as my crew had to return to the land of living. However, on Friday 23rd the fleet headed off on the Chilcott adventure. The participating yachts were now heading off into new territory having to negotiate rocks, sand banks and swift tides. Once clear of Watson's inlet and the tide ebbing the fleet passed Crawfish and Eagle Rocks to enter the Middle Spit Channel on the West Coast of French Island.

After passing Scrib point and Fairhaven, one has to take care they remain in the channel and past the channel markers on the correct hand. When Chilcott Rocks appear on the port hand ashore the fleet had to pass at least a 100 metres east of the lateral mark to enter the Chilcott Channel, drop anchor, spread out the lunch, a swim or stroll on the beach. A fascinating new anchorage for many. Several cut the corner and promptly stopped on the sand. Fortunately no damage but to ones pride and all floated clear without difficulty.



Following lunch in ideal sailing conditions the fleet mid afternoon departed for Rhyll following the mid spit channel past Tankerton Tortoise Hill Cove leaving the Cardinal Mark off the Tortoise Head Bank to Rhyll.

It is important to observe the depth and tidal flows in Western Port and proceeding well clear of Observation Point and identify the channel markers into Rhyll so as not to cut the corner. A small number of yachts tied up at the jetty whilst the rest anchored off in the main channel.

The night festivities continued in the evening with an interesting selection of eateries to choose from. They tell me the licensed fish and chip shop was a hoot. Overnight the weather turned and blew strongly from the south west. A sheltered haven for all. Ventura bravely headed out on Saturday for Flinders in decidedly most unpleasant conditions all the way prior to anchoring early afternoon. The rest of the fleet remained firmly anchored at Rhyll where all enjoyed more of the restaurant life and socialising. There are pleasant walks along the shore and a general store south by inland can supply everything one needs.

On the Sunday, the rest of the fleet headed off to Queenscliff in excellent conditions to be tied up by early afternoon.

This was the fourth cruise to Western Port and the restaurants at various location lived up to their usual high standard. We welcomed the participation of two yachts from Flinders Yacht Club. Their member's splendid lunch will long be remembered. A wonderful association has now been established. Thank you Commodore Peter Dawson.

Darryl Morrison

Director of Cruising