

## PBYC Easter Cruise 2012

*Just sit right back and you'll hear a tale,  
A tale of an Easter Trip,  
That started from Pittwater Port,  
Aboard three mighty ships.*



Unusually for an Easter weekend, the weather forecast actually looks promising as the fleet formed up for our trip to Port Hacking. *Addiction* (Jim, Debbie, Scott & Dale), *Bow Wow* (Michael & Vicky) plus *Independence* (Mark, Kim, Riley & Lucy) met at Palm Beach pile on Good Friday morning with a following sea breeze and some residual big swells.

Off around the Joey and square away for the 35 mile run to Gibbon Beach. Need to make use of the diesel wind at first to keep our average speed above 5 knots but, given it is a lovely sunny day and mild temperatures, no-one is complaining. Just off North Head we are joined by a pod of dolphins who frolic with the bow wave for 15 or 20 minutes.



*Independence* breaks away from the pack (a six cylinder engine certainly helps) and leads us in to the anchorage by an hour or so. It's pretty full as this is a popular spot so they have to anchor well out. We arrive a little later after a great sail from Botany Bay with a 15 knot tailwind and pick ourselves a spot a little closer in. The bay is fairly shallow (4-5 meters) so we should be quite snug here. A few of the day trippers move off as we gather on *Addiction* for sundowners and start to relax into the weekend.

Saturday dawns with some low cloud, moderate Northerly winds and a Southerly change forecast for just after lunch. After moving further into the lee of the headland we elect to go ashore to explore the park and headlands beyond. Having crossed over to Shelley Beach and viewed the lagoon on the way, we were greeted with spectacular views up and down the coast as well the rugged cliff top walk. Only hiccup is the approaching cloud front and whitecaps from the South – the Force 7 change is here early and we're on the far side of the cliffs !!



Rounding the last headland reveals *Bow Wow* now on a mooring and *Addiction* cuddled up close with the neighbouring yacht !!!!.

You'd think 40 meters of chain in 4 meters of water would be enough but a 180 degree wind change will cause havoc every time.

As it turns out there is no need to rush back as the Palmy team are already there and have everything under control. We get back aboard and recover the anchor (full of weed), re-set and ride out the rest of the day without further incident (in spite of gusts up to 30 knots).

As it turns out, the only boats that didn't drag today were on moorings. That makes us all feel better !! After such a busy day it was good to get together on *Independence* to enjoy the sunset.



Sunday started off cloudy and a bit cooler – ideal for a lazy bacon and egg morning. Given our abbreviated walk the previous day it was time to explore Jibbon Beach a bit further. We would have liked to move on to a mooring but they are all in less than 2 meters of water at low tide, so that is not an option. Independence has touched bottom during the night so they have moved back out to go on anchor. The Admiral elected to stay aboard on anchor watch so, of course, nothing went wrong. Today we managed to find the aboriginal engravings and some interesting



wildlife. Amazing what you see when you're not in a hurry. After lunch it was time for a change of watch and the reserve team went ashore to explore west to Bundeena. How could you go into town (presumably to shop ) and forget to take any money with you?



By now the wind has swung to the NW so we are now on a lee shore with a line of storms approaching just on dusk. Tracking them on the weather radar shows the bulk of the rain falling on Sydney & the Northern Beaches. We are just on the southern edge and enjoying a spectacular lightning show.

Just as the worst seems to have passed us by a series of Force 8 gusts causes us to slowly start dragging.

A classic ex-racing yacht (Patrice II) that was anchored behind us has dragged and is now broadside onto the beach and not happy.

They reverse out at high speed with no nav lights & dragging their

anchor in front/behind them and disappear off into the night !

No panic as we pick up the gear, motor out and re-set for the night while the wind continues at 15-20 kts. Must say that I didn't sleep all that soundly waiting for dawn.

Monday morning and time to head back under clear skies. By now there is a 15-20 knot WSW so we should have a quick trip. It's cold early but the sun soon warms us all up and an enjoyable day's sailing ensues. On board Addiction we pick up a passenger in the form of a small bird that seems quite happy to spend an hour with us while flitting from the headsail sheet to the boom vang then on to inspect the winch!



Sticking closer to the coast as we head further north gives a great view of the southern suburbs and the seas are quite gentle. Armchair sailing at it's best...



Back into Mother Pittwater and we all raft-up in the Basin for a well earned swim and afternoon snacks to conclude our cruise.

In summary we had two really good sailing days, a new anchorage to explore with interesting sights ashore, varying weather conditions and plenty of opportunities to exercise our seamanship skills. What else could you ask for?

***FAIR WINDS .....***