



Royal Yacht Club of Victoria

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Level C, with 6 on board, participated in the Magical Mystery Tour, joining *Beau Ciel* on adjacent public moorings off Sorrento on 2/1/21. Up at 6am to catch the 7am slack at the Heads, we motored together to Cat Bay by 12.30 allowing time for fishing, 2 calamari and 2 leatherjackets caught. Later that afternoon *Meltemi* joined us.

Overnight the wind increased from the South making it less comfortable at Cat Bay, and we all ended up moving to Cowes where we stayed for 2 days in rather ordinary weather.

With time reduced for the proposed trip to Wilson's Prom, *Beau Ciel* and *Meltemi* were unable to join us when we sailed for the Prom in ideal 15 knot SSW on 6/1/21. By mid-afternoon the wind had dropped and shifted more astern, and we motored seaward of the Glennies and around the Prom to Refuge Cove where we joined 5 other yachts already anchored there.

The next day was bright and sunny and after a welcome walk to Kersops Peak and with Easterlies forecast for the next few days, we decided to try some different anchorages on the west side of the Prom.

Although the SW groundswell was hardly noticeable in the deep, surf became increasingly obvious as we progressed past Oberon Bay, Norman Bay, Squeaky Beach and Whisky Bay, and when we motored around Tongue Point we could see and hear 2-3 metre breakers crashing onto Derby Beach.

However, in the SE corner of the bay nestled close to the base of Tongue Point were 3 other yachts and we joined them anchoring in 8 metres, all sand. Fishing that evening was poor, with small pinkies, small couta, and nuisance Port Jackson sharks and skate. However, a pleasant night with only a slight roll.

The next day the other yachts decided to head towards Melbourne using the last of the Easterly, but we went fishing. Light winds and clear blue sky made for a lovely day with flathead enough for 2 meals caught on the drift, and a school of kingfish causing great excitement but no hookups.

Later that day we anchored in Whisky Bay on the South side in 8 metres, all sand. Roger went for a swim to the shore alone. A more rolly night than the previous one although the swell had dropped.

On 9/1/21, after an early start, we motored in glassy conditions all the way to Cat Bay for overnight, then on the 10th in light variable breezes motored through the Heads making use of the last hour of the incoming tide to give us some added push up the West Channel, arriving at Royals just before 3pm.

A very enjoyable trip and many thanks to Ian Reichelt for his organising efforts.

Howard Bertram, Skipper, *Level C*.





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Every summer we look forward to joining Rendezvous, the Royals cruising activity, at the start of the New Year. Mystery Cruise 2021 was marked with even greater anticipation after a year of isolation and restrictive sailing activity due to COVID.

Sky is a 9.8 metre timber boat built in Port Fairy (1985) by Doug Escot, a farmer, to a modified 'Adams' design. It has a proven pedigree of blue water sailing with multiple transits across Bass Strait; circumnavigating Tasmania and plying the east coast up to the Whitsundays. Cruising two handed and planned over a fortnight during the festive season when the crew is free of work commitments.

Generally, *Sky* departs at an earlier date than Rendezvous yachts in company which leave on the first weekend in January. Thus, the route is chosen on the weather forecast a week earlier. It is nevertheless hoped that a crossover could occur when *Sky* would join the rest of the company. Ian Reichelt is kept informed whenever mobile connectivity is available of our whereabouts and standing.

This year was the fourth such Cruise; 2018 - Flinders, Waratah Bay, Waterloo Bay; 2019 - Waratah Bay, Refuge Cove; 2020 - Flinders, Waratah Bay, Waterloo Bay, Deal Island, Flinders Island, Bicheno, Triabunna; 2021 - Apollo Bay, King Island, Three Hummocks, Stanley.

As expected, each cruise has its moments which in retrospect make the journey memorable and instructive on what to avoid in future. Running aground on a short cut to the channel at Corner Inlet and losing the dinghy in tow when rounding Cape Wellington in a blow in 2018 wasn't all that bright. Rendering assistance to another yacht in company which grounded at anchor on ebb tide at Waratah Bay was a more positive story in 2019. Loss of power on engine control panel and eventual hot-wire starting instructions from shore at Triabunna when stranded at fire ravaged Flinders Island in 2020 gave rise to some anxiety. (Back at home port traced the fault to a poor earth connection). On the more recent cruise, notable incidents were the mindfulness of other sea farers; Colin in Apollo Bay who organized berthing in a neighbouring pen and Mark a crayfish fisherman at Stanley who assisted with large mooring fenders protecting *Sky* against the wharf subject to tide range of 3m, then giving advice in tying up to laid up ferry in order not to have to tend to lines all night and next morning making his ute available to pick up fuel at Smithton because there is no service station at Stanley. All this, as well as drawing two large crayfish for us from his hold!

Also memorable was the sail back from Stanley catching the edge of a south westerly 25-30 knots. By nightfall, the seas had built up with the swell and wind waves





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combined with crests breaking on a following sea – the speed trace recorded *Sky's* top speed of 10.8 knots. Conditions abated at midnight.

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