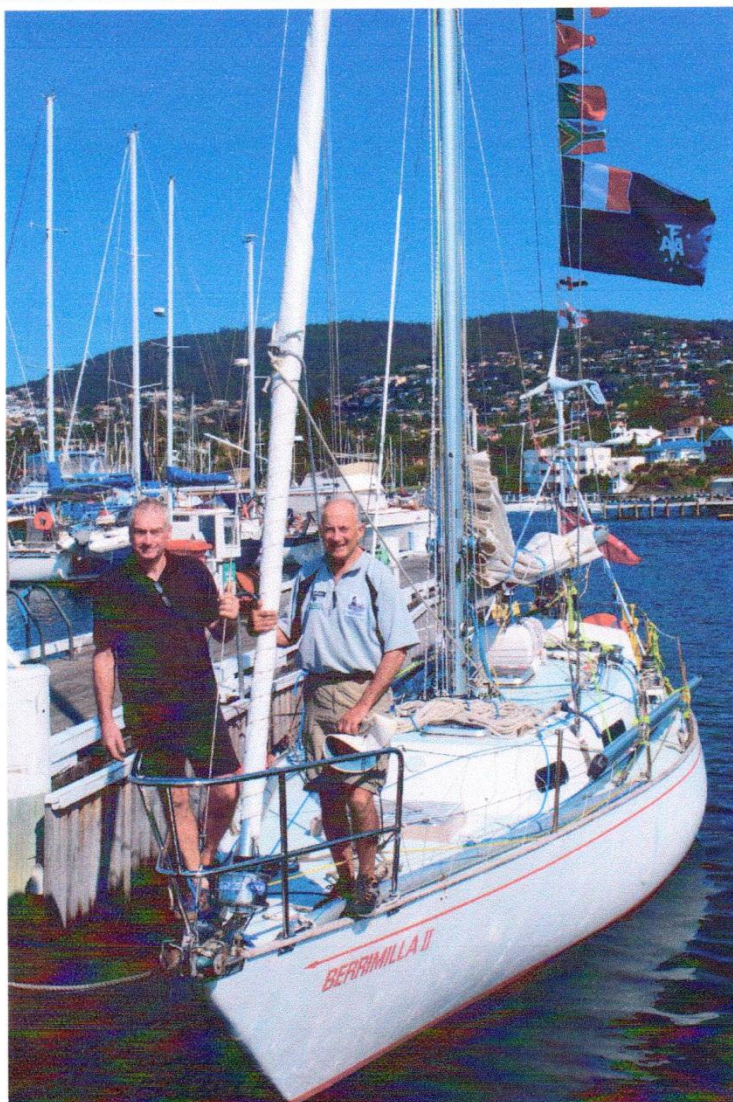


PAIR OF ACES
Whitworth and Crozier are surely two of Australia's greatest living seamen. Pictured in Hobart upon completing their second circumnavigation and a trip through the treacherous North West Passage.



Second time around

ALEX WHITWORTH AND PETER CROZIER HAVE BEEN AROUND THE BLOCK A FEW TIMES IN *BERRIMILLA* COMPLETING AN UNPRECEDENTED SECOND CIRCUMNAVIGATION.
BY PETER CAMPBELL

Alex Whitworth and Peter Crozier, two self-styled "old geezers" from Sydney, have returned to their home port after completing yet another remarkable voyage around the world in the 10-metre sloop *Berrimilla*.

The stout Brolga 33 sailed up the River Derwent to Hobart late on the afternoon of 1 March 2010, becoming

the first yacht to circumnavigate the world via the North West Passage under sail. She is also the only yacht to have ever sailed around the world twice to contest both the Rolex Sydney Hobart in Australia and the Rolex Fastnet in England.

These two epic voyages must rank Alex Whitworth and Peter Crozier as two of Australia's greatest

living seamen. *Berrimilla*'s first circumnavigation began in early January 2005, after Alex (67) and Peter (64) competed in the 2004 Rolex Sydney Hobart. In Hobart, they bid farewell to their crew, and set sail eastwards on the longest possible way home to Sydney, a trip which would take then via Cape Horn, England, the Cape of Good Hope and the Southern Ocean. In England, they competed in the 2005 Rolex Fastnet, finishing a remarkable 11th overall and second in the two-handed division.

The Royal Ocean Racing Club subsequently presented them with the prestigious Seamanship Trophy, the previous two recipients having been famous British sailors Ellen MacArthur and Pete Goss. The two Aussies have since received many other awards, but the one they most cherish is the "Sailors of the Year Award" from the widely-watched and often satirical website, Sailing Anarchy – two punters chosen over a rockstar line-up of racing and cruising sailors.

From Falmouth, England, they returned to Sydney around the Cape of Good Hope. Reaching Sydney after 114 days at sea, just five days before the start of the 2005 Rolex Sydney Hobart, the intrepid yachtsmen re-provisioned, assembled a crew, and made the Boxing Day start line. They reached Hobart in time for the New Year's Eve celebrations, acknowledging that their "Sydney – Hobart – Fastnet – Sydney – Hobart circumnavigation via Cape Horn and the Great Capes" had been a first, commenting "we doubt whether anyone will be silly enough to do it again."

That is, of course, other than by them!

Alex Whitworth, a former Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm and survey navigator in Australia, and Peter, a teacher, have been sailing together since the 1998 Sydney Hobart when they took *Berrimilla* through the savage and tragic storm to an overall PHS victory. Since then they have logged some 80,000 sea miles in cruising and racing, enjoying the challenge of the sea and each other's company. "We beg to differ on occasions ... bite the bottom lip," Crozier commented diplomatically, as I enjoyed a beer with the two sailors in Tasmania after their recent arrival.

"Throughout our long days and weeks at sea we maintain a three hours-on, three hours-off watch system, but we always get together for

a gin and tonic in the late afternoon," added Alex. "And we always have enjoyed a hot evening meal together."

The Brolga 33, designed by Melbourne university professor and part-time yacht designer Professor Peter Joubert, had proven itself a most seaworthy boat in, at times, the toughest of sea conditions. "We have seriously rolled three times, but only once have we lost the mast, and that was between Hobart and Sydney," said Alex.

The modest old salts describe themselves in various unprintable terms, but mainly as "two people doing what they like to do." They obviously remain good friends.

The second circumnavigation Sydney Hobart/Fastnet double and the remarkable cruise through the North-West Passage began as a result of a few drinks with a group of astronauts in the United States. During their first circumnavigation, Alex and Peter

the North West Passage to link up with NASA's Houghton-Mars Project on Devon Island, which Pascal runs, in time to observe the total solar eclipse on August 1 2008.

It seemed like a good idea and there were lots of suggestions about how it could be used for educational purposes – the whole concept was full of opportunities to demonstrate aspects of science, history, environmental change, planning



The remarkable cruise through the North-West Passage began as a result of a few drinks with a group of astronauts in the United States.



had linked up with the crew of the International Space Station, their nearest neighbours every 90 minutes or so. A number of interesting physical, psychological and planning similarities were apparent. As a result of this contact, Alex and Peter were invited by Leroy Chiao, who was the Commander of the ISS during their contacts, to give a presentation about *Berrimilla's* voyage to a Symposium on Risk at Louisiana State University, using the voyage as a simple analogue for a journey into deep space.

After the Symposium, in a bar on the edge of LSU Campus, one of the participants, Pascal Lee, drew a map in Alex's notebook and, perhaps foolishly, signed it. This became an invitation to undertake another, rather more symbolic voyage through

and human relationships in difficult circumstances.

Peter Crozier was unable to sail this time, for family reasons. His place was taken by Scotswoman Corrie McQueen, also a circumnavigator and who had sailed from the UK to the Arctic.

Leaving Sydney on Yuri's Night, April 10, 2008, *Berrimilla* sailed north into the Pacific to Dutch Harbour, Alaska, a distance of approximately 6000 miles.

A third crew member, Tasmanian-born Kimbra Lindus flew into Dutch Harbour for the North West Passage attempt. From Dutch Harbour, *Berrimilla* sailed through the Bering Strait, the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas and along the north Alaskan coast into Canadian waters. Because

Berrimilla's hull is fibreglass and not ice strengthened and she draws nearly seven feet, great care was needed to avoid dangerous ice and shallow water.

Berrimilla entered the North West Passage from the Amundsen Gulf and sailed south of Victoria Island, through Dease Strait, Victoria Strait and Peel Sound and out into Barrow Strait and Lancaster Sound. On the way, she sailed through Simpson Strait, once crossed on foot over the ice by the last starving stragglers of the 1845 Franklin Expedition. One of these men is thought to have been Francis Crozier, the Captain of HMS Terror, one of the two Franklin ships. Alex said that the eerie presence of the ghosts of these men reminded him of the hardship and suffering of the early explorers and that he was lucky to be able to follow them so easily.

The original plan was to meet Pascal and his team at Beechey Island, the site of the graves of other Franklin crew members, but ice delayed them until after the eclipse. Drifting icebergs and

The Shortlist

A few more small boats of note.

SPRAY

Joshua Slocum's 37-foot sloop made history with her 1890s circumnavigation, which produced Slocum's book *Sailing Alone Around the World*. This classic of nautical literature propelled Slocum to become considered the father of adventure cruising.

PERIE BANOU

Jon Sanders' little S&S 34 helped the *West Australian* become the first single-handed sailor to stay at sea for a double circumnavigation, clocking up 48,510 miles (78,070 km) without a stop.

FIRST LADY

Aptly named for her mission, this gutsy 11-metre sloop took Sydney-born Kay Cottee around the world in 189 days in 1988 to become the first female to solo circumnavigate the globe.

SPIRIT OF MYSTERY

Pete Goss's 37-foot wooden lugger recreated the incredible voyage of the original *Mystery*, sailed by seven mad fishermen from Cornwall to Sydney in 1854 in search of gold.

SKETCHY JOURNEY

Above: The map drawn in Alex's notebook by Pascal Lee in a university bar. Below: The beginning of the passage, Dutch Harbour, Alaska.

freezing rain when they were within 40 miles of Beechey convinced Alex to cancel the rendezvous. *Berrimilla* continued past more ice into the Baffin Sea and Davis Strait, where she completed the North West Passage transit at the Arctic Circle.

Berrimilla was mostly self sufficient for the whole journey through the North West Passage, leaving a minimal environmental footprint and without recourse to the limited supplies and facilities of small local communities to sustain the voyage.

Berrimilla continued across the Davis Strait where they passed several polar bears swimming, and into Nuuk and then Paamiut in Greenland, finally sailing across the Atlantic to the UK where Peter Crozier joined the yacht at Falmouth for the Rolex Fastnet Race and the return leg to Australia.

"We were the 77th boat to sail through the North West Passage since Amundsen in 1903, although this was the 114th recorded voyage as several have done it more than once," Alex recalled with pride. "And we are certain that *Berrimilla* was the first yacht to circumnavigate the world twice, once via Cape Horn and the other via the North West Passage."

Following the 2009 Rolex Fastnet Race, *Berrimilla* set sail on the return voyage to Australia on 11 September that year, with the crew's intention being to sail from the Atlantic to the Pacific west to east through the North East Passage and Russia's Siberian waters.

However, protracted difficulties in obtaining permission from the Russians delayed them until too late to make a safe NE Passage before winter and they decided to stay in England for the Fastnet race. They left Falmouth on 11th September, intending to sail down the Atlantic to South Georgia but generator problems forced them to stop in Lisbon.

Subsequent radio failure sent them to Cape Town and they decided that South Georgia was perhaps a bridge too far. They set off for Kerguelen Island on 23 December and anchored in Baie de L'Oiseau about a month later in the wake of Kerguelen, (1773) Cook, (1776) and Francis Crozier (once again!) (1840). "An amazing place and you can feel the history," they both agree.

The little sloop *Berrimilla* and her intrepid crew of Whitworth and Crozier have sailed into a notable place in the history of Australian yachting as, to quote cruising writer Nancy Knudsen, "cruising yachtsmen that race a little." ⚓

Eight Bells

Dr John Musgrove

50 Year CYCA member

Dr John Musgrove, one of the first group of members to be recognised with 50-year Member status of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, died in late February after a short illness.

"Doctor John", as he was known widely among fellow club members and his many friends, owned the classic yacht *Varuna* and actively raced her on the Harbour with the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron (where he had been a member since 1946) and the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club for more than 60 seasons. The season of 2008-2009 was the yacht's 75th anniversary with her owner then well into his 80s.

Varuna is a 31-foot adaptation of the Ranger design and is without doubt one of the best maintained wooden boats on the Harbour. She still has her original hollow mast and the sight of ten tonnes of Huon pine and lead charging the Harbour under her enormous green spinnaker has been a sight to behold.

Varuna was bought by Dr John Musgrove's father Jack while John was serving in the RAAF as a bomb aimer in Lancasters during World War II. As the navy ship bringing him back to Sydney from the war sailed slowly up the Harbour Jack Musgrove manoeuvred *Varuna* alongside and son John stepped straight on to the deck of the yacht.

Doctor John was a mentor to many young sailors and will be remembered as one of the gentlemen yachtsmen who sailed on Sydney Harbour. His memory will continue in perpetuity with the *Varuna* Trophy, the final race on the RSYS's summer program when the champion boats from each division and one-design class race against each other under arbitrary handicaps.

The *Varuna* Trophy was donated to the Squadron on behalf of the owner, by the crew of *Varuna*, to celebrate the legendary yacht's 50th birthday. Contributions to buy the sold silver trophy came not only from his crew but also from the owners of yachts that had raced against *Varuna* since 1946.

I personally will cherish the

memory when, on the helm of my yacht *Hornblower*, of being soundly beaten downwind by Doctor John and *Varuna* carrying her massive green kite in many Squadron races. Always the gentleman, he would sail past to leeward!

Peter Campbell

David Linacre

70 years in yachting

David Linacre, a long-time member of, and contributor to, the Australian yachting community has passed away in Melbourne. His involvement in the sport of sailing spanned more than 70 years and reached all levels of the sport from his club, the Royal Brighton Yacht Club, right through to the Olympic Games.

David played a key role in the success of a number of sailing initiatives and was awarded with the Services to Yachting Award in 2001.

David joined Royal Brighton Yacht Club in 1936 and sailed a 12-foot Cadet Dinghy. After a number of years being involved in the club he became Club Captain and then in 1972, Commodore of Royal Brighton Yacht Club. He was later elected an Honorary Life Member of the club.

From 1970 until 1972 David was the President of the Victorian Yachting Council and Victoria's representative to the AYF.

As manager of the 1972 Australian Olympic sailing team, David was instrumental in arranging overseas training for the Olympic team that contributed to a Gold medal for John Cuneo in the Dragon class and a Gold medal for David Forbes in the Star class. David recommended a Victorian Olympic Development Committee be established following the 1972 Games and this Committee has continues to this day.

He became an International Judge in 1982 and was a member of the VYC Racing Rules Committee and the AYF Racing Rules Committee and remained a consultant to the national committee for a number of years. *Royal Brighton Yacht Club*