

# Cruise Report

## SYC 19 Day Clarence River Cruise

19<sup>th</sup> October to 6<sup>th</sup> November 2025

RQYS originally proposed a 12-day Grafton cruise back in July and in doing so extended an invitation to SYC members to participate. An initial expression of interest was received from 12 SYC members but as the departure date approached and due to other commitments, only eight SYC boats actually participated.

On 8<sup>th</sup> October, RQYS advised that they would not be conducting the cruise as all of their participants had pulled out. So, it became an SYC cruise that loosely followed the original proposed itinerary.

This cruise was quite different to the usual SYC cruises as it involved 95nm of ocean passage each way and hence required careful voyage planning and consideration of the weather along the way as well as the tides at the various river bars. Once on the Clarence River, it was approximately 35nm up river to Grafton with many suitable stops along the way, including Iluka, Yamba, Harwood, Maclean, Lawrence, Brushgrove, and Ulmarra.

As indicated in the following more detailed itinerary, cruisers were able to organise themselves into smaller groups for the ocean passages and also as they moved up and down the Clarence River whilst occasionally crossing paths and enjoying each other's company from time to time.

Some boats came home earlier than others due to personal commitments whilst the remaining boats stayed on to enjoy the last few days of the Jacaranda Festival at Grafton.

Overall, all boats returned home safely and those who participated have mentioned how they thoroughly enjoyed the cruise and would do it again if/when the opportunity arises.

Day 1 – Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> October.

Vessels registered for the cruise were preparing for departure with some positioning near the Gold Coast Seaway ready for an early morning departure the next day.

Day 2 – Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October.

Five vessels departed the Gold Coast Seaway around first light for the trip to Yamba – *Bene*, *Fine Alley*, *Forty Something II*, *Honu* and *Lucinda*. *August Moon* cruised from the Gold Coast Seaway to the Tweed to overnight and to catch up with friends. All boats reportedly had good weather for the cruise.

Day 3 – Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October.

*Harbor-Nating* cruised down from the GC Seaway to Iluka and *August Moon* cruised down from the Tweed River to Iluka.

Day 4 – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

*Forty Something II* and *Honu* cruised up from Yamba to Harwood.

Day 5 – Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

*Forty Something II* and *Honu* cruised up from Harwood to Maclean.

*Harbor-Nating* and *August Moon* cruised from Iluka to Maclean

Day 6 – Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October.

*Forty Something II* and *Honu* cruised up from Maclean to Brushgrove.

Day 7 – Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October.

*Twilight* was at last able to get away from the Gold Coast and cruise down to the Clarence River aiming to join up with the other cruisers.

*Forty Something II* and *Honu* cruised up from Brushgrove to Grafton.

*Harbor-Nating* and *August Moon* cruised from Maclean to Grafton.

Day 8 – Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> October.

*Twilight* cruised from Iluka to Grafton.

*Bene*, *Fine Alley* and *Lucinda* cruised from Yamba to Maclean.

*Forty Something II*, *Honu*, *Harbor-Nating* and *August Moon* explored the Jacaranda Festival at Grafton.

The weather in Grafton was very hot with a maximum temperature of 37 degrees and with thunder storms about.

Day 9 – Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October.

*August Moon* and *Harbor-Nating* cruised from Grafton to Ulmarra

The weather in Grafton was again very hot with maximum temperature of 37 degrees although a southerly change came through late afternoon followed by cooler temperatures and rain. Winds were blowing around 20 knots with gusts to 28 knots.

Day 10 – Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> October.

*Forty Something II*, *Honu*, and *Twilight* cruised from Grafton to Ulmarra,

*Bene*, *Fine Alley* and *Lucinda* cruised from Maclean to Brushgrove.

The weather was much cooler with temperatures in the high teens and steady rain with light winds of around 10 knots.

*August Moon*, *Forty Something II*, *Harbor-Nating*, *Honu*, and *Twilight* enjoyed the sights of Ulmarra before meeting ashore at the Ulmarra Hotel for a very pleasant dinner. Returning to the vessels afterwards was not so pleasant with heavy rain continuing to fall.

Day 11 – Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> October.

*August Moon* and *Harbor-Nating* cruised from Ulmarra to Iluka in preparation for the cruise back to the Gold Coast the next day.

*Forty Something II* and *Honu* cruised from Ulmarra to Lawrence.

*Twilight* cruised from Ulmarra back to Grafton.

*Bene, Fine Alley* and *Lucinda* cruised from Brushgrove to Ulmarra.

Weather was still cool with drizzling rain for most of the day.

Day 12 – Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October.

*August Moon* and *Harbor-Nating* cruised from Iluka back to the Gold Coast Seaway and onto their respective home port.

*Forty Something II* and *Honu* cruised from Lawrence to Iluka.

*Bene, Fine Alley* and *Lucinda* cruised from Ulmarra to Grafton.

Day 13 – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October.

*Forty Something II* and *Honu* cruised from Iluka back to the Gold Coast.

*Bene, Fine Alley, Lucinda* and *Twilight* continued to enjoy the events of the Grafton Jacaranda Festival with the day's events concluding with fireworks on the river bank.

Day 14 – Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November.

*Bene, Fine Alley, Lucinda* and *Twilight* continued to enjoy the events of the Grafton Jacaranda Festival including the Grand Parade through the main streets even though heavy rain and wind failed to dampen the spirits of those participating. Dinner was enjoyed at Roches Hotel along with some other cruisers from the Shaggers group; a very enjoyable and interesting night.

Day 15 – Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

*Twilight* cruised from Grafton to Maclean.

*Bene, Fine Alley* and *Lucinda* cruised from Grafton to Lawrence.

Day 16 – Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November.

*Bene, Fine Alley* and *Lucinda* cruised from Lawrence to Harwood.

Day 17 – Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November.

*Twilight* cruised from Maclean to Iluka.

*Bene, Fine Alley* and *Lucinda* cruised from Harwood to Iluka and then attended Sedger's Reef Hotel for lunch and to watch the Melbourne Cup.

Day 18 – Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> November.

*Bene, Lucinda* and *Twilight* cruised from Iluka back to the Gold Coast with smooth seas and very light wind all the way.

Day 19 – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> November

*Fine Alley* cruised from Iluka back to the Gold Coast.

End of cruise.