

Basic Detail Report



Berrimilla II

Vessel number

HV000841

Date

1977

Primary Maker

Professor Peter Numa Joubert

Description

Berrimilla II was built in Mona Vale Sydney in 1977 as an ocean cruising and racing yacht, then under the name of Nea. It was designed by Peter Joubert as a Brolga 33ft masthead sloop, with a Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) hull, deep fin keel, fully encapsulated lead ballast and skeg hung rudder. Berrimilla II's cabin and superstructure are also constructed of fiberglass, its deck a mixture of wood and fiberglass. Joubert was a highly respected designer of extremely tough and seaworthy yachts, Berrimilla II a prime example with its displacement hull style. This heavier construction meant it would be a slower yacht to sail, but more than capable of sailing through the toughest conditions with the right preparation and crew. As an example, Berrimilla's stability index is 141.6 and the vessels' calculated limit of positive stability is 135.4 degrees - a reassuring trait in large swells. More than a hundred yachts have been built to Joubert's designs, many of which have seen successes in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. Zeus II, a Currawong 31 was one such yacht, the overall winner of the 1981 Sydney to Hobart, Berrimilla II also a winner during the highly dangerous 1998 race claiming first in the PHS category. Berrimilla II may be one of his most successful through its extraordinary feats of achievement from 2004-2010 in voyaging and racing. Over this period, owner and skipper Alex Whitworth sailed double handed twice around the world. The first circumnavigation occurred from 2004-2006 around Cape Horn from Sydney to England and back along the west coast of Africa. Whilst in the Southern Ocean during this first journey Whitworth and fellow sailor Peter Crozier communicated with Dr Leroy Chao, the NASA Commander of Expedition 10 on the International Space Station. Alex's second global circumnavigation evolved from his contact with the space station, and a later meeting with Dr Pascal Lee who was stationed at NASA's Houghton Mars Camp on Devon Island in northern Canada. Berrimilla II's first circumnavigation began and ended with consecutive Sydney to Hobart Yacht Races and included a Fastnet Yacht Race in between. In this Fastnet Berrimilla II finished eleventh overall and second in the two-handed division. Alex and Peter maintained an online blog during their voyage, often delivered with humour, excerpts of which are included below: March 11 2005 20:42 Hours UTC - Cape Horn Rounded - Abeam Cape Horn with dolphins not far away. A unique and special moment in anyone's life and we feel hugely privileged to be able to experience it. To Peter Joubert, who seems to know something about seaworthy boats (would someone tell him please because he won't be reading this) October 2 2005 22:00 Hours UTC - Violent Tea Drinking - No doubt you are sitting at your computers with nice square bottomed mug of tea in Newtonian conjunction with desk - well, it ain't always

so. I've just come in from the cockpit having managed to get about a quarter of my tea actually into my face. And there are 67 more days of this? What are we doing here? The second circumnavigation occurred from 2008-2010 via the Northwest Passage. This route was encouraged by the NASA scientists so Whitworth could witness a total solar eclipse on August 1 2008 from Devon Island. Berrimilla II holds claim to being the first yacht to sail from Australia to England via the Northwest Passage. The crew received the prestigious Blue Water Medal from the Cruising Club of America for this achievement. This, and other artefacts from the two voyages are included in the National Maritime Museum Collection. Berrimilla II also competed in a second Fastnet Race during this circumnavigation. Excerpts from the second voyage blog follow below: August 1 2008 20:35 Hours UTC - Yesterday's Whale...Argh!!! - Went back to concentrating driving over that particular wave, just then our stern was picked up by the wave, but something didn't sit right in my brain- we were being lifted out of the water at the stern at a greater speed and steeper angle than the surrounding seaway. I glanced around to confront possibly the most scary thing ever!!!- our stern was resting on the nose of the most enormous bluey grey whale, wider than Berri. August 18 2008 01:12 Hours UTC - North of Nearly Everything - Kimbra's watch and we are almost as far north as we need to go to round the northernmost point of Somerset Island, just east of Cunningham Bay. So - in an hour or so we should be able to head east, then south east. No more ice visible, Cornwallis just there on the N. horizon and a lighter patch of cloud where Beechey should be, about 45 miles away. From 2020-2023 restoration works have been undertaken on Berrimilla II. Works in 2023 have included filling voids in the keel with polyester resin, rebuilding the back section of the keel with fiberglass, and fairing the hull. As of 2023 Berrimilla II is based in Launceston Tasmania and used as a recreational cruising yacht.