



A New Quinnie. .

For quite a few years I had my old 5.3 metre Stacer alloy half cabin boat which I had set up for long distance trips, whilst living on board for many weeks at a time.

Another thing I like to do is fish and crab the estuaries and creeks around my home area of Sarina Beach and the old Stacer, with all its setup including the hard top, was like trying to run crab pots with the Queen Mary. The obvious answer to this was to buy an extra boat such as a small tinnie, to do this job.

However it took quite a bit of convincing my wife that I needed two boats. The point that convinced her was my guarantee that I would be able to catch more crabs, a delicacy of which she is particularly fond.

My first tinnie which I bought as a second boat was a little 3.0m Dehavilland punt with a three hp Tohatsu. This low horse power motor meant that I would not have to register the boat. This was ok initially, but I started to sneak out the front of Sarina Inlet occasionally, and its limited capabilities soon became very apparent.

I have in the past owned many tinnie's in the 3.9 to

Ebb & Flow

with Neil Dunstan

4.3 metre range, and was quite happy doing a bit of outside work in them, so I decided to swap the punt for something a bit better. One of the things that I liked about a tinnie was the ease that I could load her up and slip out for a couple of hours when the weather and tides were good, instead of all the hassle with the larger boat.

Seven years ago, I swapped the punt for a Quintrex 4.0m open tinnie, and fitted it with an early 1990s 15hp Mariner 2-stroke outboard. I made a few mods - such as a built in fuel tank at the bow to balance her better as I almost always go alone, I increased the transom height from the original fifteen inches to twenty inches, fitted a forward casting platform, plus a quality, low-power sounder that could work properly in shallow muddy water. This unit has been a great little boat taking me on many crabbing and fishing trips. Sometimes, when the weather was right, I took her out to the offshore islands about ten n. miles offshore from Sarina beach.

As I am now nearing seventy years of age I started to notice that the Quintrex is not as stable as she used to be, and there are not a lot of things to hang on to when it gets a bit rolly. The internal depth seems to have shrunk, too, making it more difficult to wedge myself against the sides. . . Have you ever noticed the old physics equation still holds true ie, the length of a boat reduces by the square of the distance from shore?

I thought that I should get

a set of rails fitted around the gunnel and while I was at it, I needed to replace the Mariner as it was getting a bit old and asthmatic. All this was starting to add up to a pretty penny and as I am a pensioner, I decided to think this through thoroughly.

One thing I have to consider is that I probably only have another five years or so at the most where I can handle my 530 Barcrusher, especially as I do it mostly on my own. When the time comes to sell off the Barcrusher I will still want a boat of some sort, probably a tinnie, to have a bit of a fish and crab locally.

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I intend to keep boating till I die or can't get my leg over the side to get in!

Therefore, as the current Quinnie needed a lot spent on it, and it would still be a bit small, the decision was made to replace it with something a bit bigger.

So a 4.45 metre Quintrex Dory was purchased. This is a nice large tinnie, the low floor model giving it quite a lot of internal depth so that I am standing in the boat rather than on it. It is the simple unpainted two thwart model with level floatation, and I have ordered an oversize trailer with a tilt

mechanism for easier loading and unloading. The whole unit is light enough for me to easily load by myself and it doesn't have damn brakes which are a real pain to keep working.

I have had to read the previous paragraph's to regain my line of thought, as I am writing this in the cabin of my Barcrusher anchored in a creek at Cape Palmerston, and a nice blue salmon grabbed a live mullet I had swimming out the back which required my attention and interrupted what I was thinking about.

Back to the new Quinnie. So far, I have fitted a forward inbuilt fuel tank, a bow roller for the anchor rope to replace the silly setup as fitted, carpeted the thwarts and fitted the sounder from the old boat.

I have tried it out a couple of times with the old 15 h.p. Mariner and was surprised that it got up on the plane one up, so it looks like it will be very easily driven.

Now comes the choice of a new motor and I am considering a 4-stroke 40, with electric everything, remembering I am getting to be an old bloke now. I will probably set it up as a side console as holding onto a tiller for long periods is not my forte, and this setup is in my opinion the most space efficient.

So far it looks like being a pretty good outfit and has already caught some decent fish, so when I eventually have to sell the Barcrusher it should keep me out of mischief quite nicely.

*Neil Dunstan
Sarina Beach.*

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