



# The Whitsunday Challenge

Introducing a fascinating, timely assessment a family had to make about the boat they loved: whether to sell it and upgrade to a new slicker model; keep it, renovate and refurbish what has been an excellent craft - or whether the time had come to move on, altogether.

After much debate, one of the siblings decided he wanted to do the Whitsunday 'thing' before it was sold - so a deal was done within the family - and the renovation began. This month, we learn how "Reel Appeal" was refurbished. In Part 2, we'll travel to the Whitsundays - and in Parts 3 and 4, join **author/photographer Peter Pedersen** as he fulfills his dream: cruising the Whitsundays.

**D**ecisions...decisions. The time had come for us to make some very hard decisions regarding the future of one of our most beloved family members. One who had served us well over the last 13 years and joined us on countless family fishing trips, holidays and extended bay cruises.

Like the rest of us, thirty years at sea had taken its toll, and though she was still strong at heart, there was a definite need for some cosmetic work around the edges.

Complicating matters was the fact that like all families, ours had grown and spread out, with the

older generation starting to slow down and the younger set busy with careers and families.

So, what to do with the faithful 1986 28 foot Mariner Fly bridge cruiser *Reel Appeal* now that she had come to a crossroads in her nautical life? As all boaties know, unless you use your vessel, it can become a real drain on finances and as the weeks and months go by with less and less use.....questions start getting asked as to whether or not it would be better to sell off the prized vessel and use the money for occasional charters, family holidays or to top up retirement funds. Such was our patriarch's

dilemma, who after much thought, decided it was time to put the boat up for sale.

This decision brought cries of mutiny from the younger set, who still had unfinished business such as the light game tournament (that never seemed to come to fruition), relocation of the vessel to Far North Queensland, where several of the family had settled, or that elusive dream of one day taking the old girl north to the Whitsundays to see just how the other half really lived, albeit in a fairly modest craft compared to most cruising the area.

At the end of the day, it became too much for one of the younger set who by chance had some time off work up his sleeve and a strong desire to tick off at least one of the boating dreams....an extended cruise in the Whitsundays. And so it was settled; there was at least one more cruising holiday left in the mighty Mariner.

Funds were transferred between generations, ownership changed hands and plans were put into place, but first the little issue of a vessel refit had to be tackled . . .

## Let the fun begin

Our boat was basically in very sound condition. A brand new 300 hp Volvo Penta with Duoprop had been fitted in the last couple of years, after struggling with an old clunker for several years prior. It still had only 200 hours on the clock and its reliability had transformed our cruising and enjoyment of the boat.

Also, the vessel electrics had been completely stripped at the same time as the engine was replaced, with kilometres of new cabling now running all over the ship, in addition to new hydraulic steering. As well as all this - in an effort to comply with recent regulations, a very expensive black and grey water holding tank system was installed, that would allow us to visit all our old cruising haunts in the bay, without falling foul of the new sewage discharge laws.

What remained to be done, before an extended four month cruise in the Whitsundays could