

3rd ANZ Vindi Reunion Tweed Heads 2003

What are reunions for? To get together, meet of course and we did that an' all. What started out to be two and a half days reunion was still going strong in the Calico Court Motel five days later to include the Melbourne Cup and impromptu BBQ's in following days. Camaraderie and bonding of our down under Vindi lads was something to behold, never a cross word just great mates all together with a common background.

The reunion started with a get together over a few drinks and nibbles on the Friday evening with some impromptu singing by John West from NZ who has a delightful voice. John went on to lively sea shanties, unfortunately the Bosun. Rob Lynde had to put stop to that before it got out of hand, as some were not suitable for mixed company. Pity that as I was enjoying them immensely! With some spot prizes and a short welcome an evening of catching up on old and new friends continued.

Saturday morning entertainment was produced by "Encore" a variety cabaret act of songs and tunes in full dress to suit our era. Music from old Broadway shows to Phantom of the Opera, impersonation of Jimmy Durante to Lambeth Walk. An act where torsos were painted with faces, head arms and shoulders placed in hair looking bags and substitute arms attached to hips making for strange looking creatures indeed dancing to music. A well performed very entertaining spectacle lasting 2 hours.

The afternoon as planned though not popular it would seem to most, brought on a Vindicatrix Race Day with two races and Calcuttas with Prince Monolulu strutting the course, toting his horses and bookmaker "I Cheetem" in attendance. As performed at sea, fictitious names were made up, and dice thrown to first pick a horse and then determine how many lined places to advance. The eventual winner having to have the exact number to finish.

Saturday's formal evening brought out the lads and lassies in refinery with many lads wearing as tradition Vindi badged jackets and ties. Again the entertainment was superb with the ever popular "Kut Loose" band from Nambucca Heads and Queensland's own Pearly King and Queen. George and Lily Shepherd-Ashby. The dining tables resplendent in Vindi placemats and flags. I think the free wine went down very well as well. Another beautiful night in Tweed Head. Could we keep the pace up.

Having a night cap later back at our accommodation (actually early next morning) with David Partridge we discovered that we had in fact both sailed together albeit only three days on a Home Trade run on the Napier Star in the depth of winter 1963. David recalls collecting snow off the deck to make a pot of tea.

As the days melded together with more entertainment and competitions some never completed due to the many distractions, but the fun was meeting new friends and having a chat anyway. It would be noted that Diane Hollis knocked the lads off in the Golf Championship.

A memorable impersonation of fezed comedian Tommy Cooper by Davis Partridge had the lads rolling in the aisles. Our last supper (Sunday roast) together was to be an optional fancy dress dinner/dance and went off well with many making the effort (bit hard for

travellers) until an announcement that the last Seagulls bus was leaving at 21:30hrs a minor buggeration to some but taxi were readily available. What is they say about mice, men and well laid plans? This happened when dancing was in full swing and some guests really letting their hair down.

Bill Davis