



# 'WILD TURKEY' FOR FAMILY FUN

Finding the right boat is not always that easy, despite (or maybe because of) the proliferation of craft available. When the Ashley family decided to buy a boat, they were given good advice and took the time to discover exactly what suited their requirements.

**By Wayne Kampe**

IT WAS ON a hot January day nudging 36 degrees that I met the Ashley family and their Whitley Monterey at Jacobs Well south of Brisbane. We headed off to the Jumpinpin area so I could chat with Ian and Tracey while their two boys Lachlan (eight) and Harrison (four) could have some fun on the sand.

The Monterey is one of the most popular of the Whitley stable. Many boaters find the 5.80 metre size just right for family use and it tows and stows easily while lacking nothing in the way of equipment or performance.

Ian and Tracey had an enjoyable if somewhat drawn-out time selecting their Monterey. As Ian explained, a friend with long boating experience had recommended that they carefully consider exactly what they wanted to do

with their powerboat prior to purchasing it. That's certainly sound advice and a short list of the family's proposed usage put comfort in general boating as the first priority.

There would need to be sufficient room for both weekend and over-night stays, along with plenty of shade for sunny days. Access on and off the craft had to be easy so that the boys could leave the boat without fuss to fish or play from a beach. Some water sports for the youngsters would be on the cards, as would be some fishing.

For Ian it also came down to ergonomics and the driving position would need sufficient adjustment to accommodate his 187 cm frame. In short, they required a boat just like the Whitley Monterey that their friends owned.



### The search for a boat

Desirable though it might be, a new Whittley was not feasible at that point in time so Ian and Tracey did the rounds of Brisbane's boat yards as well as checking out a fair few private sales. They looked at large numbers of contenders over a three month period in order to assess features and roominess. All offered some advantages over others, but there were no Whittleys until they saw one advertised in the Courier Mail's Weekend Shopper.

An inspection was quickly arranged and to their delighted astonishment they found virtually the boat of their dreams - less than five years old with and with only 52 hours on the engine's hour meter. The finish and presentation were virtually as for a new boat, so not surprisingly a deal was struck there and then.

'Wild Turkey' has since provided many pleasant outings for the family. Ian explained that he is very busy through the week as a project manager in the IT industry, and he finds that it's the ultimate in stress relief to

help the family aboard, get behind the Whittley's wheel and start the 130 hp Johnson two-stroke for another boating excursion.

Judging from everything onboard and the planned activities for the day when I caught up with the Ashleys, the Whittley sure is put to good use. The youngsters had their wet-suits onboard for some tubing with the tube and a compressor tucked into a side pocket, Ian had packed some decent bait into the ice box, and Tracey was planning to practice her on-water culinary skills with a Bessemer covered pan to be used on the craft's spirit stove.

The menu included scones, a pizza, quiche, and even a roast. I suggested that with those sorts of tantalizing odours wafting around the mooring area there would be no shortage of friends from the ranks of other boaters, and Tracey laughingly agreed.

Tracey and Ian told me that they are members of the local Whittley Owners Club and weekends at Jumpinpin (their favourite boat-

ing destination) were often arranged with other Whittley folk so that everyone could enjoy the 'away from it all' lifestyle. They had enjoyed a three day and two night stay quite recently and made full use of the facilities aboard 'Wild Turkey'.

### What makes it special

Factors that make the Whittley so special for the family include the easy performance, good stability and great ride. As well, so many useful on-board features and the top shelf finish heightened their pride of ownership. They love the feeling of roominess with so much usable space in the cabin and cockpit. When the boys are on the vee berth or in the two quarter seats at the transom, there's always lots of room around each of them.

Another big plus was both the water and fuel capacity. With 60 litres of water and 110 litres of fuel, the Monterey has plenty for a weekend and a good cruising range while travelling at around 20 knots (37 kph) and a

## GOING BOATING: Whittley Monterey



ABOVE: The cabin has everything needed for overnighting, and makes a good play area for the boys through the day.



ABOVE: Tracey and Ian spent some time looking for a boat that was exactly what they wanted.

little over 4,000 rpm.

Ian explained that a full throttle speed of 38 knots (70 kph) was there if they needed it but, whilst that was a comforting factor, he saw little need to travel that quickly with the youngsters aboard. Ian added that he liked the Whittley's driving position - there is heaps of room for him thanks to the good range of adjustment on the driver's seat and he finds the instrument panel very easy to monitor.

Like many trailer boat owners, Ian and Tracey had also done their bit to make their own home-away-from-home just that bit more personal. Insect screens were made by Tracey who told me: "I simply bought the netting material, cut and formed it to shape and used Velcro snaps to secure it in place. That keeps insects out of the cockpit when we over-night in summer."

Similarly, Tracey had asked Ian to replace the original wooden cabin door with a curtain. She explained: "That works just as well and is easier for us to manage with the boys aboard."

Ian had also done some work. He said: "I exchanged the original fuel gauge for a flow meter style instrument for greater accuracy. I needed a bait board for our fishing too, so I have installed an extra large one to make things easier for us. Also, I've installed a large heavy-duty deep-cycle battery for the TV and DVD player."



The Monterey has the pace to quickly reach each port of call, and the ride to make the trip comfortable.



The helm position suits Ian's 187 cm height.

Ian smiled as he told me he had installed the latter 13 inch unit as an entertainment centre for everyone. As both the power aerial and player needed access to the deep-cycle battery, he had installed a couple of extra power outlets.

Ian and Tracey showed another innovation with their alternate use of the drop-down section of the Whittley's storm cover. With the clever use of a cross bar, a couple of props and some bracing shock cords, the cover suddenly transformed the whole of the rear of the craft with a decent-sized awning.

Shade, so vital on our day at Jumpinpin, was there for even the transom and boarding ladder area. Ian explained: "We can put a stern

anchor ashore on a sandy bank and the boys can come and go as they please, under our supervision, with an extra large shaded area for them to sit in when they tire of the beach." It's indeed a smart arrangement.

### Moreton Bay forays

With the Monterey, the Ashleys have made a few forays across Moreton Bay although, as Ian explained, such trips can be very weather dominated and require just the right conditions. Consequently, the Jumpinpin to Southport area was their preferred aquatic playground simply because of the vast number of sheltered waterways and moorings available at any stage of the tide. Boating with the fam-



Alternative positions for the covers create shelter right across the back of the Whitley.

ily even in windy conditions was still entirely feasible.

The family's preferred launching area is the Horizon Shores Marina as shelter afforded by the marina makes things just that much easier

when it comes to retrieving their craft after a busy and fun-filled weekend.

I asked about the 'Wild Turkey' name and it has nothing to do with a favourite tippie. It's simply what the Whitley was called when they bought it, and it seemed wise to follow the old adage that it's bad luck to change a boat's name. I'm sure that the family would love their Monterey just as much no matter what it was called.

The overall layout of the Whitley has large vee berths up front in the quite high and fully lined cabin which offers privacy when needed.

There's a toilet in the cabin too while the cockpit has a spirit stove, a sink and oodles of storage capacity. A carpeted floor throughout adds comfort and an inflatable air mattress allows the youngsters to sleep on the cockpit floor under the full storm covers when over-nighting.

Coupling these features with the renowned soft and dry ride from the deep vee Whitley hull and its great stability at rest, it's not hard to see the all round family appeal of the craft. For the Ashley family anyway, it's their dream come true.

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