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Fishing Port Douglas News



with Heff

BIG NEWS ...

It's the end of an amazing period in the history of the Port Douglas Fishing Industry. It's official, our most respected skipper in the area Steve Adamson has semi retired with the sale of his Dragon Lady Charter vessel which he ran for over two decades locally. During this time he built the business into the most reputable charter in FNQ offering the best reef fishing experiences for visitors and locals alike.

You ask anyone on the ground and when the question was asked, 'what's the best charter to join in the area?', the answer would entail Dragon Lady and Steve Adamson in the same breath. The charter will continue to be run locally but there are some massive shoes to fill. Everyone loves Steve and his daily presence on the local marina. His fishing prowess has been second to none and his demeanor with clients on his boat was purely first class. Having worked with Steve personally on his business interests since 2000 I can categorically say he'll be a sorely missed on a daily basis as a team member. The consoling fact is that we've forged a life long friendship which will continue.

Steve's boating and fishing resume during his career has expanded for 50yrs. It includes cray fishing in WA during the 70's, owner of his own prawn trawler locally during the 80's and early 90's, skipper of the charter boat Forthe which eventuated into the Norseman during the 90's,

before turning his attention to his own Dragon Lady at the beginning of this century. For 14yrs it was centred around the legendary 34ft vessel before purchasing the 48ft Westcoaster in more recent times.

Steve in semi retirement intends to part time his services still within the industry. He hopes to find more time to spend with his family and grand kids plus do a bit more camping and travelling. For those of us who know him well, we suspect complete retirement won't be on the cards as he can't sit still for a moment.

From Fishing Port Douglas we wish you all the best Steve and look forward to continuing the morning coffees and a couple of beers in the arvo.





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Fishing On the Daintree

with Jamie Beitzel



The last month for us living and working on the Daintree River has been a very challenging one I must admit. It's been a good old fashioned wet season here with the highest of rainfalls in a 24hr period registering 370mm and 250mm respectively. Outside of this you could almost say there's been more than 50mm of rain on any given day.

So what has this meant for fishing on the river. I can say it's been a few years but we've cancelled more trips than we've run. At times it has raised the water column from minor flooding to fairly serious flooding. I'm not sure if you are familiar with the area but on the northern side of the ferry the water level had risen a few hundred metres up the road to Forrest Creek Rd. That's where I live a bit down further but I had no hope of getting to the ferry to get to work on the other side of the river. This lasted for several days as the ferry couldn't even operate. Then to exasperate the circumstances I had a lot of fallen trees come down on the property driveway with some days requiring a couple of hours on the chainsaw to clear a passage. Some of these trees are holding in excess of 2 tonnes of water and with a sodden ground they simply can't hang on.

Anyway we got in a handful of days under difficult river conditions with the river running even orange at times. I had to concentrate my efforts closer to the river mouth where some salt water was coming in on the bigger tides. It's not my first rodeo in these conditions and was able to produce some reasonable fishing in the form of fingermark and grunter as the main species. Sometimes with water clarity as dirty as it was you need to revert back to the old fashioned pilchard and squid combination filtering through a scent in the current. As hard as it is for the fish they still do get hungry and they are happy to scour the bottom of the river for any opportunities.

My best day occurred very recently only a couple of days after a big wet and with calm conditions I fished around Snapper Island. The water was filthy in colour but there was plenty of bait on the sounder. Casting surface poppers to create a disturbance I nailed quite a few big Cale Cale Trevally and a couple of spanish mackerel which were obviously there for the bait. I'll be keeping an eye on this area for quite a few weeks after these results.

One would expect the rain to ease off a bit this coming month but we'll have to wait and see. If it can the Daintree area will fish extremely well.



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Dragon Lady Charters

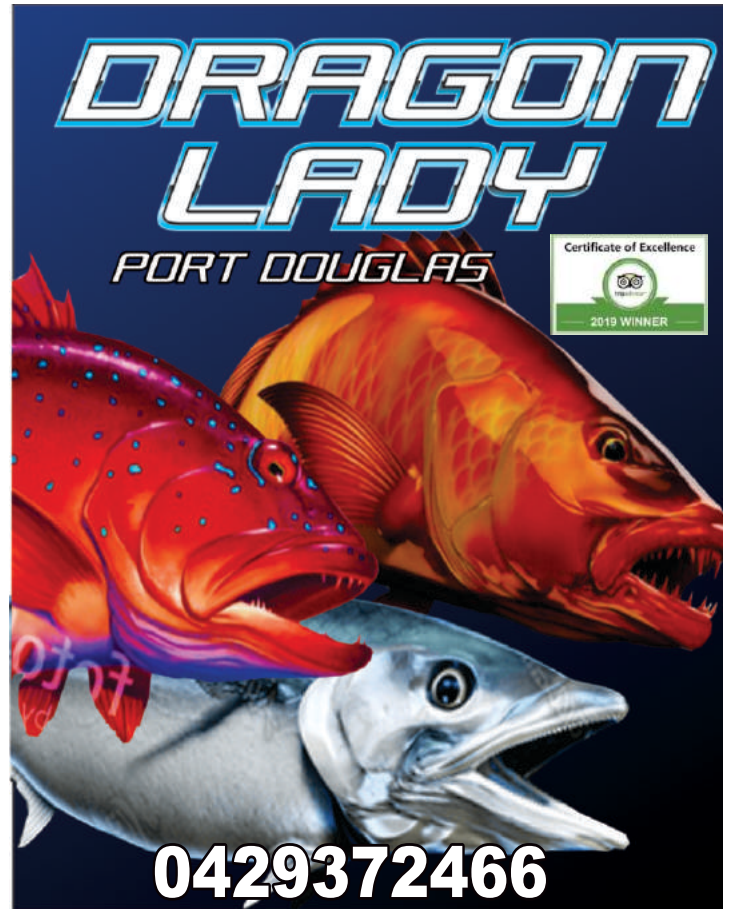
with Steve Adamson



Well this my final 'Hurrah' with documenting the Dragon Lady reports which we've done for over 20yrs. I've just sold the boat & business and look forward to semi-retirement. The boat will remain in Port Douglas continuing to offer quality trips to the outer Great Barrier Reef.

It has been an incredible chapter in my life and a very fulfilling experience. It has had various challenges over the time but I must say I wouldn't have it any other way. I probably will have to sit down over a beer or two and really reflect on the journey which has taken me to so many amazing places and witnessed the best fishing opportunities on the planet. Not many people can get to say that with their choice of vocation.

I've seen the entire beauty of what our coastline has to offer, the biggest of fish and all and sundry in between. I could easily write a book with so many



interesting tales to share having done over 40yrs of working on the water.

Moving forward I intend to spend more time with the family and the nest of grand kids as well as making more time to go camping and travelling. No doubt I'll do some freelance work on certain boats if I'm available too.

I've made a lot of friends along the way and worked with some fabulous people. This will take a bit of adjusting not seeing the regular faces you normally do on a daily basis. Thanks to all which have supported my endeavours and I know for 99%, you have enjoyed our day out fishing on the Dragon Lady boat.

Saltaire Charters



with Craig Newbold

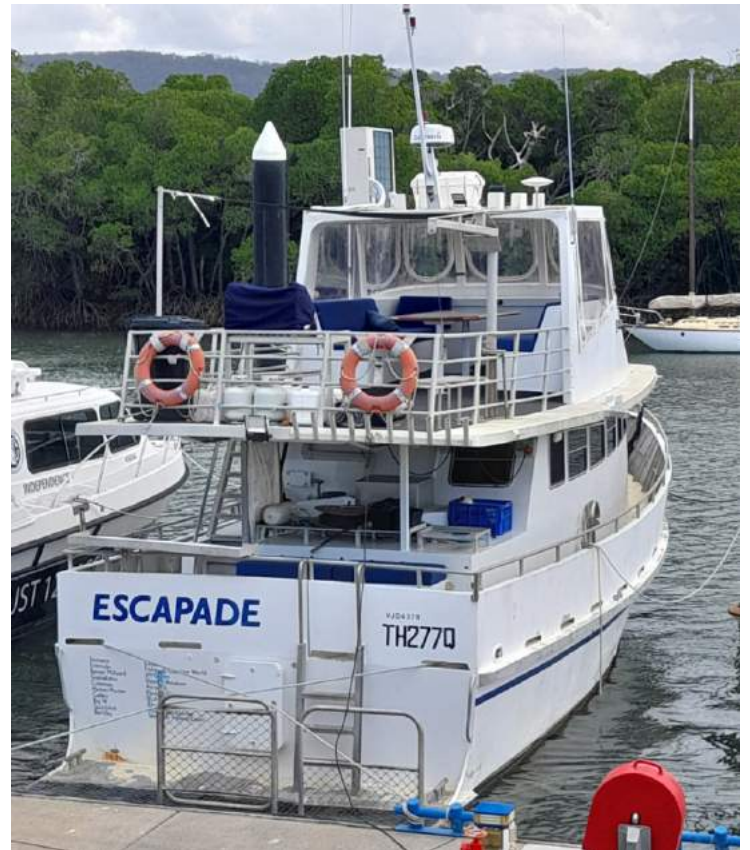
I'm going to keep things fairly short this month purely because we had a dedicated month to achieve a maintenance program on Saltaire which will continue to run high quality private outer reef charters covering reef, game and snorkelling opportunities in 2023.

Also within the scope of the business we are also preparing a few other new boats for the season including a 65ft number ideally suited for extended reef charters up to 10 pax. This actual project may take a few extra months to get up and running with a major refit on the cards but it'll be a ripper and extremely well priced. Also in the loop we have a 50ft mothership vessel nearly ready to roll which will be a great base for extended reef charters for anglers but also will be part of the James Cook University program for the Great Barrier Reef covering a range of research projects. Our first scheduled trip soon will be part of a comprehensive turtle expedition. This aspect we are very excited to be part of.

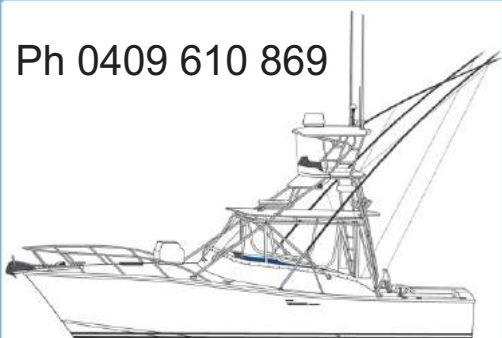
Locally based in Port Douglas we'll have a family orientated estuary charter ready to kick into gear by Easter, the 35ft boat will also have shared charters in affect by Easter offering a combination reef and light tackle day for

those who wish to experience a game boat charter in comfort and style at a very reasonable price. There is another project due to come on-line mid year but I'll keep this one for the moment close to the chest.

Call our manager Heff on 0409610869 for all these enquiries. Pictured below is our 50ft Escapade which will serve as a based mothership for fishing groups and the JCU research program.



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