

Boating

soundings

BOOKS

All at Sea on Land
By Kay Cottee
Published by Random House
Australia

I laughed hysterically at the image of a woman hanging precariously off the end of a bowsprit, having her bum impaled on the spikes of another yacht's ladder. This was not some novice sailor, it was Kay Cottee!

It's now 10 years since Kay Cottee completed her record breaking solo, nonstop and unassisted circumnavigation on June the 5th 1988. So what has Kay been doing for the past decade and what happened to the yacht *First Lady* after the National Maritime Museum turned down the generous offer of her donation by Blackmores?

Kay answers these questions in her latest book *All at Sea on Land*. It appears that Kay has



crammed more into the last 10 years than many of us can cram into a lifetime!

After briefly describing her background and introducing us to family and friends in the

prologue, Kay uses the first two chapters to recap on the pretrip preparation, the highs and lows of the voyage, and her homecoming, thereby setting the scene for people who haven't read her book of the voyage, and reenthusing those who have.

Kay recounts her hectic postvoyage life by dealing with one aspect per chapter. This works well, the only difficulty being trying to imagine all these things happening simultaneously!

Within days of stepping off the boat she was booked solid with fundraising functions for the Life Education charity. However, she first had to overcome a fear of public speaking and an even greater fear of flying.

Using her "happy thoughts make

happy people" theory she overcame these fears and went on to give corporate motivational lectures to groups of up to 3000 Americans and also became Chairman of Australia's National Maritime Museum.

The upheaval to Kay's life has been enormous, but it has also had its rewards, such as the many wonderful people she has met along the way. Kay uses several of her poems, and letters to and from her friends, to capture the emotion of the moment, as well as including letters and drawings from those people whose lives she has touched.

This personal style of writing had me enjoying the fun, feeling the hardship, aching with pain and injustice, wiping away tears of sadness and humility, puffing up with pride and then laughing out loud at her (numerous) little mishaps. Being such a forward looker and thinker can have its drawbacks!

— Brian Jensen