

MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

Volume 27, No. 4. December 2016

Website: www.maritimeheritage.org.au

*A quarterly publication of the
Maritime Heritage Association, Inc.*

C/o: The Secretary (Marcia Van Zeller)
47 Conochie Crescent
Manning, W.A. 6152

Treasurer: Bob Johnson, PO Box 1080, Guilderton, W.A. 6041.

Editor: Peter Worsley. 12 Cleopatra Drive, Mandurah, W.A. 6210
Email: mha.editor@gmail.com



The schooner Bluenose II drifts in a calm with the second Colombia

See article page 6



The Maritime Heritage Association Journal is the official newsletter of the Maritime Heritage Association of Western Australia, Incorporated.

(If you have an unwanted collection of magazines of a maritime nature, then perhaps its time to let others enjoy reading it. Contact the Association; we may be interested in archiving the collection.)

**Material for publishing or advertising should be directed, emailed, typed or on disk, to:
The Editor, 12 Cleopatra Drive, MANDURAH, Western Australia, 6210. mha.editor@gmail.com**

Except where shown to be copyright, material published in this Journal may be freely reprinted for non-profit purposes provided suitable acknowledgment is made of its source.

The MHA is affiliated with the Royal Western Australian Historical Society (Incorporated)

www.maritimeheritage.org.au

MHA End of Year Windup

When: 10 am Sunday 20 November 2016

**Where: Hicks' Private Maritime Museum
49 Lacy Street, East Cannington**

**For catering purposes please let Doris know if you will
be going.**

Email: hicksmarine@bigpond.com

or

Tel: 9451 6828



Did You Know?

There is a superstition among sailors that to sail on a Friday brings bad luck. The following is from *Incidents of a Whaling Voyage* by Francis Allyn Olmsted, published in 1841:

I have been told, that several years ago a ship was built and sent to sea to test this superstition, and convince the craft of its folly. The keel of the ship was laid on Friday; on Friday her masts were set; she was completed on Friday, and launched on this day. Her name was Friday, and she was sent to sea on Friday; but unfortunately for the success of the experiment, was never heard of again.



The Ditty Bag

An occasional collection of nautical trivia to inform, astound, amuse and inspire.

(The inspiration could take the form of contributions to this page!)



The *Great Eastern* (32,160 tons), launched on 31 January 1858, had six masts, named for the days of the week—Monday to Saturday. The forward five were of hollow sheet iron and served as funnels. The aft mast was made of Oregon in order to hold the compass high above the iron ship. The compass readings were projected to the deck by a beam of light passing through holes punched in the scale of the card. The ship was broken up in 1899, but remained the largest ship built until the *Lusitania* (44,060 tons) was launched 48 years later in 1906.

The Brazilian 260-ton slave brig *Henrietta* was captured by the Royal Navy in 1827 and re-named HMS *Black Joke* after a popular bawdy song of that time. It was placed in the West African, or Preventative, Squadron, and captured at least six slave ships, freeing a total of 3,040 slaves. As a navy vessel it was armed with just one long 18-pounder cannon. It was condemned and burnt in 1832.

HMS *Dreadnought* set the standard for battleships at the beginning of the 20th century. The ship also became the first battleship powered by a steam turbine. Armed with ten 12in guns, the keel was laid on 2 October 1905. It was launched by King Edward VII on 10 February 1906 using a bottle of Australian wine, and sailed to the Mediterranean on 11 December 1906. This building time is a record that has never been equaled.

How many men buy a yacht and take to the delightful pastime of yachting! They mean to live on board during three months of the summer, or enjoy a long cruise, or perhaps wish to race, and when they buy the yacht they engage a skipper and he engages the crew—say ten hands—and yet these owners could not tell you what work each man has to do in the handling of the yacht when she is underway.

The Complete Yachtsman, 1912

The last convicts to be sent to Australia arrived at Fremantle on 9 January 1868 on the 875-ton *Hougomont*. The *Hougomont* was built of teak at Moulmein, Burma, in 1852 for Duncan Dunbar. It

had a length of 167.5ft, beam 34ft and depth 23ft. At the time it arrived in WA with 279 convicts (it had commenced the voyage with 280) it was owned by a man named Luscombe.

The wreck of the 284-ton Tasmanian whaling barque *Runnymede* lies in Frenchman Bay, Albany. On a previous voyage the barque had been 18 months at sea without catching a single whale, the crew had lice and their clothing was worn out. The captain refused to open the slops chest as, with no whales, there would be no money due to the men. On arrival back in Hobart a song became popular:

*Shout boys, hurrah boys,
We welcome it—Godspeed!
We've had 18 months starvation
In the lousy Runnymede.*

The wrecker's iron ball was invented by the firm of Henry Bath & Sons during their breaking-up of the *Great Eastern*. This work started in May 1889, before the advent of the oxy-acetylene torch. Removal of the rivets was found to be taking far longer than it had been to drive them when building.

Hovellers: Originally a term for pilots and their boatmen, but later it also applied in some places to those meeting ships at sea to offer their services in other tasks such as discharging cargo. The rule was that the first hoveller to board a vessel had the right to the work. At 5.00am one morning in the early 1920s the 76ft coasting ketch *Garlandstone*, en route from Lydney in the mouth of the Severn River, to Countmacsherry, on the south coast of Ireland, with a cargo of 120 tons of coal, was hailed by a small rowing boat with four men on board. They were hovellers from Countmacsherry offering their service to off-load the cargo when the ketch arrived in that port. They were 10 miles offshore, and had been waiting out there all night in near-freezing weather with rough seas to offer their service to any vessel. They were paid 4d per ton for discharging the coal; resulting in a payment of £2, which they shared among the four—10/- each!



400–year anniversary of Dirk Hartog’s landing at Cape Inscription

Approximately \$26million has been allocated to the recognition of the 400-year anniversary of Dirk Hartog’s landing at Cape Inscription, with funds coming from both the State Government and private sectors. The commemorations were launched in Perth in November 2013 with a visit by the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra and an accompanying interpretive exhibition ‘Accidental Encounters’, developed by the WA Museum. The Orchestra’s performances, and interpretive exhibition, represented the first Western Australian Government-funded events to commemorate Dirk Hartog’s landing off the coast of Shark Bay.

Alec Coles, James Dexter and Jennifer Rodrigues of the WA Museum have been working closely with the WA Dept of the Premier and Cabinet along with the Netherlands Government, Dept of Parks and Wildlife, Gascoyne Development Commission, and the Shire of Shark Bay on a number of projects under the responsibility of the WA Museum to commemorate this historic event. Made possible by the State Government’s Royalties for Regions program, the projects under the WA Museum’s responsibility include:

Creation of new replicas of the inscribed pewter dishes left by Dirk Hartog in 1616 and Willem de Vlamingh in 1697, and new interpretive material at Cape Inscription.

A major content upgrade covering the early Dutch/VOC and European history in Western Australia as a permanent interactive multimedia display (on two large touch screens) within the Shark Bay World Heritage Discovery Centre.

A website:
<http://museum.wa.gov.au/1616>

hosted by the WA Museum which was launched by the WA Premier in January 2016 on board the Dutch replica jacht *Duyfken* in Fremantle. This website continues to evolve with new elements to be added in the coming weeks so keep checking it out!

The Dept of the Premier and Cabinet is also coordinating a commemorative function at Cape Inscription on the morning of

October 25: the development of teaching resources through the History and Science Teachers Associations of WA and a journey of the *Duyfken* which will sail to Shark Bay in time for the commemorations in October, stopping at various ports along the way:

(<https://www.dpc.wa.gov.au/ProjectsandSpecialEvents/Pages/Dirk-Hartog-400-year-Commemoration.aspx>).

The Shire of Shark Bay will also be hosting a five-day festival in the lead up to the 25th October commemoration date which includes a Golden Age Ball and many community activities:

(<http://www.sharkbay1616.com.au>).

'Accidental Encounters—the Dutch connection', is a traveling exhibition currently touring regional centres in Western Australia. An interpretive hub on the Denham foreshore includes a major public art commission piece.

Jennifer Rodrigues



This is generally agreed to be a portrait of Dirk Hartog in his old age. There are more contentious portraits which have also been labelled Dirk Hartog



HMS *Plym*

A follow-up by Peter Board to the recent article on HMS *Plym* and the Monte Bello Islands in the June 2016 Journal.

With the Monte Bellos and H.M.S. *Plym* still topical in the latest journal I thought I would stick my oar in with some personal reminiscences.

H.M.S. *Plym* was a Devonport ship in the old navy that was divided into three main divisions based on Chatham, Portsmouth and Devonport. Portsmouth was known always as ‘Pompey’ and Devonport was Guz. I never heard a nickname for Chatham. There was a popular ‘ditty’ among sailors that purported to describe the principal attributes of each division that ran like this: Pompey for wit, Chatham for sh-t, Devonport for sailors. The names were interchangeable depending on which division you belonged to.

Being Devon born and bred I was always a Devonport man. H.M.S. *Plym* was the Royal Navy’s sacrificial lamb to Britain’s nuclear ambitions, and when she sailed from Plymouth for the Monte Bello islands in 1952 I was still a junior seaman under training at H.M.S. *Victory* in Pompey, and missed an opportunity to volunteer for *Plym*.

Four years later I was a qualified torpedo and anti submarine rating aboard H.M.S. *Consort*, she of Yangtze Incident fame along with H.M.S. *Amethyst*, based at Hong Kong in the Far East fleet. Early that year, 1956, after returning from a cruise to Japan, we received the news that *Consort* was to form part of a squadron of British warships for service connected with Britain’s sec-

ond round of Atomic bomb tests at the Monte Bello islands and based at Fremantle.

The bomb tests, codenamed MOSAIC, were an Anglo-Australian event and a massive logistical exercise involving all of the armed services, for us it was a welcome and interesting break from the normal routine of visits to Asian ports and exercises at sea with units of the United States navy. Fremantle has the reputation of being a favourite destination for any seafarer in the southern hemisphere. The natives spoke our language and the girls were extremely friendly. The Monte Bellos were something else. Low sun blasted limestone islands sparsely clothed in Spinifex and scrubby bushes and inhabited by Homo antipodeansis of the male gender only – and all in uniform. This was not a sailor’s idea of a good run ashore, and fortunately most of our R and R time between weather-watch cruises was spent at Fremantle or Albany. But to be fair, the army had made an effort to improve life on the islands by erecting a shark proof enclosure at one of the beaches for safe swimming, along with a large tent where servicemen could purchase up to two bottles of cold Swan Lager per visit. This salubrious establishment was known as the Monte Bello Lido or Monte Bello Hilton, and the dress code for sailors was a minimum of bathers and sandals. The water was warm and the beaches pristine white. Add a few palm trees and hula skirted females and we would have had shades of South Pacific. Incidentally, little did I know at the time, but my future father-in-law, Bob Young, was the current marketing manager for the much cherished Swan Lager, but that’s another story.

The islands were known to be radioactive to some degree, but all service personnel worked ashore or afloat in shorts and shirts and sandals, and at days end we had to ‘decontaminate’ by washing our feet on deck before going below. The scientific staff that admittedly spent more time around ‘ground zero’ wore more or less full protective clothing. The writer of this article was a former member of The Atomic ex Serviceman’s Associ-





ation, many of whose members fought long battles with various forms of cancer.

With the completion of the bomb tests in June 1956 the R.N. deserted the islands and Western Australia and it would be twenty years before I saw those pristine beaches again. By then I was working for Hamersley Iron at Dampier as a plant operator and doing a bit of freelance journalism on the side. The Hawaiian Malacological Society was always looking for articles about shell collecting and studies in Australian waters so in 1976 I arranged to take my own boat and my dive buddy, Bill Currey, along with four other divers and two boats, out to the Monte Bellos for a week of collecting and photographing marine molluscs. We set up camp in a sheltered bay on the western side of Hermite Island and spent the next week

diving the western reef in daylight and walking the exposed low tide sandbars after dark looking for rare volutes. We also spent one exciting day diving off the Tryal rocks with several close shark encounters, but the highlight of the week for me, from a nostalgic point of view, came on the afternoon of our last day there when I took a lone tour of the higher parts of the island to see if there were any scraps of metal from the *Plym* laying about. What I found really surprised me. Laying in full view on a piece of limestone rock was an English florin, or two-shilling coin, dated 1952, the year of the first tests. Someone must have left it at that time, perhaps a member of *Plym*'s crew as a memento of his visit, and obviously unseen in the past 24 years until I stumbled upon it. It's still among my souvenirs today and may even be mildly radioactive.

Columbia

The fishing schooner *Columbia* was designed by the firm of Burgess and Paine, with the main designer being William Starling Burgess. It was built by Arthur Dana Storey, Essex, Massachusetts, for the International Fisherman's Trophy Races, initially an annual best of three races between working fishing schooners from Nova Scotia, Canada, and Gloucester, USA. The idea for the races had come from William H. Dennis, a Nova Scotian newspaper man, who donated the trophy.

The first races were held in late 1920, and won easily by the American schooner *Esperanto*. This loss shocked the Nova Scotians, and plans were quickly drawn up for a schooner to beat the Americans. The result was the 143ft *Bluenose*, designed by W.J. Roue, and built by the Smith and Rhuland Yard at Lunenburg, Nova Scotia. The vessel had to meet with the rules of the race, which limited the overall length to 145ft with a maximum waterline length of 112ft in racing trim. The schooner still had to remain a working, economic fishing schooner, although emphasis in the design had been placed on speed. That this was successful is illustrated by the fact that *Bluenose* held the record for the largest single haul of fish (646,000lbs) ever landed in Lunenburg in one season.

The Americans designed and built a number of fast fishing schooners, each of which was beaten

by the *Bluenose* during the various races. The first of these was *Elsie* (1921), followed by *Henry Ford* (1922), *Columbia* (1923) in one of two races sailed and, after an eight year hiatus, *Gertrude L. Thebaud* (1931). In 1938, the final Fisherman's Trophy Race, a best of five race series, saw *Bluenose* beat *Gertrude L. Thebaud* three races to two. On 24 July 1963 a second *Bluenose*, *Bluenose II*, was launched from the same shipyard at Lunenburg as the original had been.

The *Columbia*, however, became a favourite of the Americans, having lost to *Bluenose* in the first race in 1923, but been awarded the second race when they protested that the Canadian schooner had passed the wrong side of a buoy. Captain Angus Walters did not agree with the decision, withdrew from the series and sailed *Bluenose* back to Canada, thus forfeiting that series.

The *Columbia* was lost when it went down with all hands in a storm on 24 August 1927 off Sable Island.

In August 2014 a steel-hulled copy of *Columbia* was launched by the Eastern Shipbuilding Group in Florida. The masts (124ft main and 115.58ft mizzen) were built of Douglas fir for the lower mast and Sitka spruce for the upper. These and the rigging were made in Lunenburg. The dimensions of the hull are within a few inches of those of the original *Columbia*.



Blockading German East Africa, 1915–16

By John Perryman

The wardroom of the Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) premier training establishment, HMAS *Cerberus*, is home to many fine treasures reflecting Australia's naval heritage. Perhaps the most curious of these is a dark blue enamelled iron postbox emblazoned in gold with the words Post-Briefkasten. This artefact was presented to the wardroom in 1916 by Lieutenant Commander R. C. Creer, RAN and has its origins in Bagomoyo, German East Africa.^[1] The story of how it became one of the most recognisable artefacts in the *Cerberus* wardroom lies in the account of one of the RAN's lesser-known warships, *Pioneer*, and the operations in which it was involved during the blockade of German East Africa in World War I.

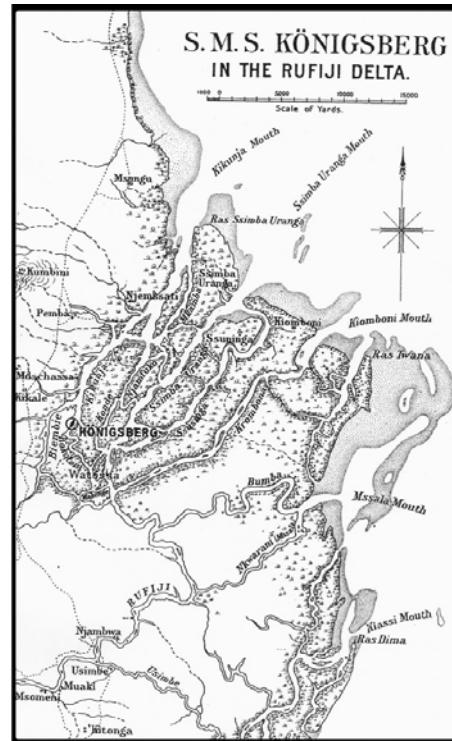
The Royal Navy commissioned the 3rd class cruiser HMS *Pioneer* on 10 July 1900. *Pioneer* displaced 2200 tons and was armed with eight 4-inch single mount guns, eight 3 pounder guns and several machine guns. The ship also mounted two 14-inch torpedo tubes above the waterline. *Pioneer* first arrived in Australian waters in October 1905 and continued in service as a unit of the Royal Navy on the Australia Station until 29 November 1912 when she paid off at Sydney for transfer to the RAN as a gift from the Admiralty. Commissioned as *Pioneer* into the RAN on 1 March 1913, she was subsequently used as a sea-going training ship for the Naval Reserve.

When war with Germany was declared on 4 August 1914, *Pioneer* was in dry dock at Williamstown, Melbourne. Within 24 hours of the declaration of war the ship was afloat, provisioned, coaled and ready for sea. The following day she sailed for Fremantle, from where she patrolled the waters off the West Australian coast.

On 16 August, eight miles west of Rottnest Island, *Pioneer* captured the German steamer *Neumünster* (4424 tons) and escorted her into Fremantle. On 26 August *Pioneer* captured a second ship, the Norddeutcher-Lloyd vessel *Thüringen* (4994 tons), also off Rottnest Island. Neither of the German ships carried wireless equipment and it transpired that their masters were unaware of the outbreak of war.

In early November 1914, *Pioneer* sailed as part of the escort to the first Australian troop convoy

bound for the Middle East. Unfortunately she suffered condenser failure and was consequently ordered to return to Fremantle to effect repairs. This twist of fate was to result in an adventure that would take *Pioneer* away from Australian waters for almost two years, where she participated in a classic example of sea control in the littoral environment.



The Rufiji River in which SMS Königsberg retreated out of range of the Allied warships blockading the coast.

On 24 December 1914, the Admiralty requested the urgent aid of *Pioneer* to take part in a blockade off the German East African coast. In September the German cruiser *Königsberg*, mounting ten 4.1-inch guns, had engaged and destroyed *Pioneer*'s sister ship, HMS *Pegasus*, and had skilfully manoeuvred herself approximately 12 miles upstream in the shallow Rufiji River delta, in German East Africa, beyond the range of effective fire from the sea. The British forces assembling off the African coast were now faced with a double duty: first, the maintenance of a blockade to prevent supplies reaching German land forces in East Africa; and, second, the neutralisation of a dangerous German raider.



Pioneer sailed from Fremantle on 9 January 1915 and joined the British force off Zanzibar on 6 February. The force consisted of the light cruisers HMS *Weymouth* and *Hyacinth*, HMS *Pyramus* (another of *Pioneer's* sister ships), the armed merchant cruiser *Kinfauns Castle* and six smaller vessels. Formal blockade was proclaimed on 1 March 1915, and five days later Vice Admiral Sir H. G. King-Hall arrived in the old battleship HMS *Goliath* to take charge.

For the purpose of blockade operations, the East African coastline was divided into three sections. *Pioneer* was ordered to patrol the northernmost of these and was appointed in charge of the *Kinfauns Castle*, the armed steamer *Duplex* and the whaler *Pickle*. There was little traffic to be watched, except for native dhows creeping along the coast, but signal activity by the enemy gave the impression that the *Königsberg* would soon make her bid to break through the blockade.

After several attempts to drive *Königsberg* from her lair, it was decided to tow to the scene the 6-inch gun monitors, HM Ships *Severn* and *Mersey* that had been specially designed for river work. By taking advantage of their shallow draught it was planned to manoeuvre them upstream within range of the raider.



HMS *Mersey* in African waters. Note her shallow draught and low freeboard.

The attack began early on the morning of 6 July 1915, with the two monitors creeping silently into the northerly Kikunya mouth of the river under the cover of darkness. *Pioneer's* orders were to proceed with *Hyacinth* to the southerly Simba-Uranga mouth and bombard its shore defences, as shown on the map overleaf.^[2]

Serving in *Pioneer* was Surgeon Lieutenant G. A. Melville-Anderson who described the action as follows:

*On we went, very cautiously, and when we were about 5,000 yards from the river entrance, we dropped anchor and allowed the tide to swing us broadside on. Hence all our starboard guns bore on the entrance. Previous to anchoring, a shell burst in the water not far from the ship, and another in the air. No one knew from whence they came. Very soon we were firing salvos and then each gun rapidly independently. Our shells were bursting everywhere, throwing up great clouds of sand and earth. No sign of life was visible in the neighbourhood. In the meantime, the monitors were steaming up the river under heavy fire from the banks, but they went on and soon were within range of the *Königsberg*. They then directed their fire on her, the range being five miles. Seaplanes assisted the monitors in locating the position, but they were not very successful. The *Königsberg* fired salvos of five guns, the accuracy of which was good. From firing salvos of five guns she dropped to four then to three and two and finally one. During the last hour-and-a-half of the engagement she ceased fire altogether. One of her shells hit the forward gun of *Mersey* and practically wiped out that gun's crew - four men were killed and four wounded.^[3]*

At 3:30 pm after firing 600 6-inch shells, both monitors were withdrawn. The *Königsberg* although badly damaged had not been destroyed and she remained a threat. Consequently the operation was repeated on 12 July. This time *Königsberg* straddled the *Severn* as she prepared to drop anchor, but *Severn* quickly found the range and hit the German ship several times, setting her on fire and forcing the enemy to complete her destruction using demolition charges. While this was taking place, *Pioneer* was again engaged in bombardment against German shore defences from a range of 2000 yards.

Following the destruction of *Königsberg*, *Pioneer* spent a period patrolling off the river mouth, and later, some times in the southern section of the blockade area. By the end of July she had been under way every day for more than six months with the exception of nine days spent in harbour. On 31 August she ceased patrol duties and proceeded to Simonstown, South Africa, for refit. Six weeks later routine patrol was resumed in the southern section with no enemy opposition en-



countered. It was uneventful and monotonous work.

On 20 December *Pioneer* anchored in Nazi Bay, south of the Rufiji River, and sent a cutter away to obtain fresh provisions from ashore. A hundred yards from the beach the cutter suddenly came under rapid fire from a small enemy force on the shore and two men were wounded before the boat could be brought about. *Pioneer* retaliated with 50 rounds from her 4-inch guns and the boat and crew were recovered. The wounded were later transferred to the *Severn*. *Pioneer* remained in the southern patrol area until 13 January 1916, by which time she had spent an incredible 287 days underway, travelling 29,434 miles.

Early in February 1916, in fulfilment of a promise made to the Australian Government, the Admiralty ordered *Pioneer* back to Australian waters; however, on 13 February General J.C. Smuts assumed command of the Anglo-South African forces in East Africa and his plans demanded more naval cooperation than had previously been envisaged. As a result, on 23 February 1916, *Pioneer's* crew learnt that they were to resume blockade duties in the southern patrol area.

On 22 March 1916 *Pioneer* proceeded to rendezvous with *Hyacinth* and the flagship *Vengeance* off the capital of German East Africa, Dar-es-Salaam. A German 'hospital ship' named *Tabora*

was suspected of being used for less honourable purposes and consent was requested from the Germans to inspect it. Permission was refused for an inspection party to board her, and *Pioneer* was ordered to close in and open fire if any movement was detected among the ships in harbour. She fired several 4-inch rounds before *Vengeance* ordered her to cease and await a response to a signal ordering the Germans to evacuate their sick from *Tabora*. With no answer forthcoming, all three ships opened fire and the suspect vessel was destroyed.

Following this action, *Pioneer* returned to blockade duties and participated in further bombardments of the ports of Tanga and Dar-es-Salaam in June and July 1916. The action in July was the last in which *Pioneer* participated, although parties from her crew were detached to relieve the garrison at Sadani during the capture of Bagamoyo on 15 August. It was during this raid that the German letterbox that now graces the wardroom of HMAS *Cerberus* was taken as a trophy by two of *Pioneer's* officers, Acting Commander W.B. Wilkinson and Lieutenant R.C. Creer, who were acting as Beach Master and Provost Marshal respectively.

By this time the naval situation in East Africa had stabilised, as the German forces were being driven inland, and contraband traffic by sea was not considered likely to do them much good.^[4]



HMAS Pioneer's
ship's company
c.1916.

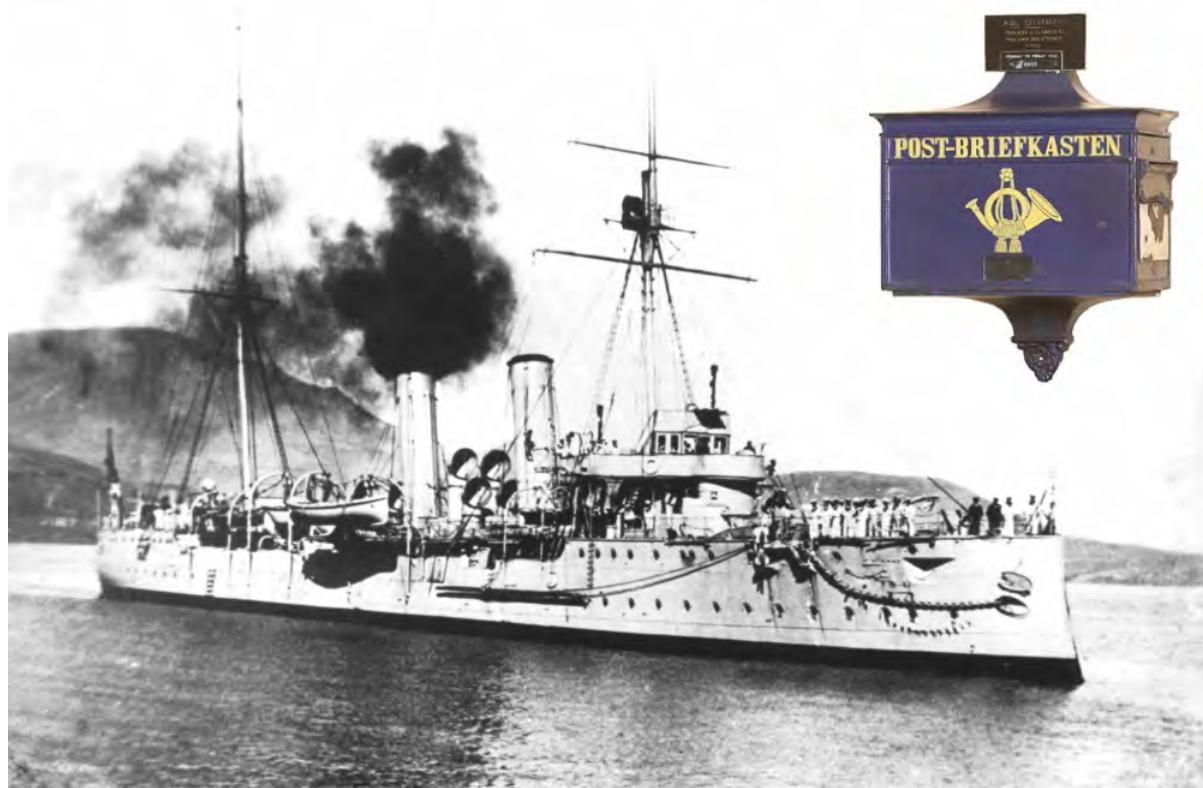


On 22 August 1916 she sailed from Zanzibar to Australia, flying her paying off pennant. Her arrival in Sydney on 22 October brought the career of this obsolete ship, dating from pre-federation years, to an end, yet she had probably seen more actual fighting and fired more rounds in the course of World War I than any other Australian ship.^[5] *Pioneer's* hulk was scuttled off Sydney on 18 February 1931. The postbox souvenired by two of *Pioneer's* officers remains in commission.

HMAS Pioneer, with (inset) the letterbox

References

1. L.G. Wilson, Cradle of the Navy, Victoria, 1981, p. 27.1.
2. Adapted from J.S. Corbett, History of the Great War, Naval Operations, Vol. III, Longmans, London, 1923, p. 63.
3. M. A. Melville-Anderson, An Account of the Movements of HMAS *Pioneer* during the Great War, August 1919, (Navy Historical Section).
4. For further reading see: H. Strachan, The First World War, Simon & Schuster, London, 2003, pp. 80–94. It therefore became possible to send *Pioneer* home.
5. A.W. Jose, The Royal Australian Navy, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1928, p. 238.



Norwegian ship
Maello

Windbound Bressay Sound,
Shetland Islands
1922.



HMS *Terror*

Sir John Franklin's ship has been found after disappearing in the Canadian Arctic 168 years ago. This article is from the *Guardian*, dated 13 September 2016.

Perfectly preserved HMS *Terror* vessel sank during disastrous expedition led by British explorer Sir John Franklin

The long-lost ship of British polar explorer Sir John Franklin, HMS *Terror*, has been found in pristine condition at the bottom of an Arctic bay, researchers have said, in a discovery that challenges the accepted history behind one of polar exploration's deepest mysteries. HMS *Terror* and Franklin's flagship, HMS *Erebus*, were abandoned in heavy sea ice far to the north of the eventual wreck site in 1848, during the Royal Navy explorer's doomed attempt to complete the Northwest Passage. All 129 men on the Franklin expedition died, in the worst disaster to hit Britain's Royal Navy in its long history of polar exploration. Search parties continued to look for the ships for 11 years after they disappeared, but found no trace, and the fate of the missing men remained an enigma that tantalised generations of historians, archaeologists and adventurers. Now that mystery seems to have been solved by a combination of intrepid exploration – and an improbable tip from an Inuk crewmember.

On Sunday, a team from the charitable Arctic Research Foundation manoeuvred a small, remotely operated vehicle through an open hatch and into the ship to capture stunning images that give insight into life aboard the vessel close to 170 years ago. “We have successfully entered the mess hall, worked our way into a few cabins and found the food storage room with plates and one can on

the shelves,” Adrian Schimnowski, the foundation’s operations director, told the *Guardian* by email from the research vessel *Martin Bergmann*. “We spotted two wine bottles, tables and empty shelving. Found a desk with open drawers with something in the back corner of the drawer.”

The well-preserved wreck matches the *Terror* in several key aspects, but it lies 60 miles (96km) south of where experts have long believed the ship was crushed by ice, and the discovery may force historians to rewrite a chapter in the history of exploration. The 10-member *Bergmann* crew found the massive shipwreck, with her three masts broken but still standing, almost all hatches closed and everything stowed, in the middle of King William Island’s uncharted Terror Bay on 3 September.

After finding nothing in an early morning search, the research vessel was leaving the bay when a grainy digital silhouette emerged from the depths on the sounder display on the bridge of the *Bergmann*. “Everyone was up in the wheelhouse by that point in awe, really,” said Daniel McIsaac, 23, who was at the helm when the research vessel steamed straight over the sunken wreck. Since, then, the discovery team has spent more than a week quietly gathering images of the vessel and comparing them with the *Terror*’s 19th century builders’ plans, which match key elements of the sunken vessel.



An image from the deck of the wreck of HMS Terror as it lies on the seabed.

Photograph: Arctic Research Foundation



At first, the *Terror* seemed to be listing at about 45 degrees to starboard on the seabed. But on the third dive with a remotely operated vehicle, “we noticed the wreck is sitting level on the sea bed floor not at a list - which means the boat sank gently to the bottom,” Schimnowski said Monday.

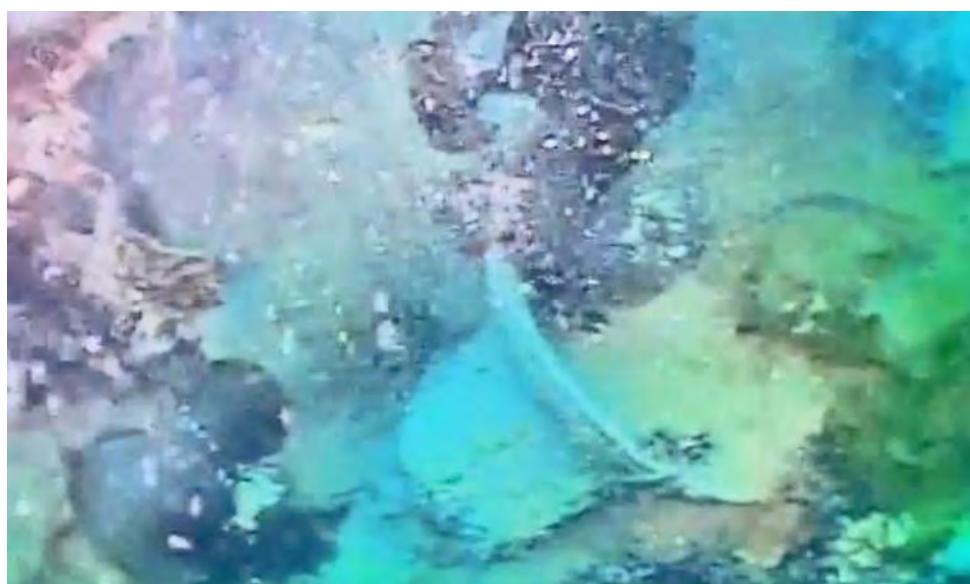
About 24 metres (80ft) down, the wreck is in perfect condition, with metal sheeting that reinforced the hull against sea ice clearly visible amid swaying kelp. A long, heavy rope line running through a hole in the ship’s deck suggests an anchor line may have been deployed before the *Terror* went down. If true, that sets up the tantalising possibil-

and it sank,” he said. “Everything was shut. Even the windows are still intact. If you could lift this boat out of the water, and pump the water out, it would probably float.”

The Arctic Research Foundation was set up by Jim Balsillie, a Canadian tech tycoon and philanthropist, who co-founded Research in Motion, creator of the BlackBerry. Balsillie, who also played a key role in planning the expedition, proposed a theory to explain why it seems both *Terror* and *Erebus* sank far south of where they were first abandoned. “This discovery changes history,” he told the *Guardian*. “Given the location of

The bell of HMS Terror on the deck of the sunken vessel.

Photograph: Arctic Research Foundation



ity that British sailors re-manned the vessel after she was abandoned at the top of Victoria Strait in a desperate attempt to escape south. One crucial detail in the identification of the ship is a wide exhaust pipe rising above the outer deck. It is in the precise location where a smokestack rose from the locomotive engine which was installed in the *Terror*’s belly to power the ship’s propeller through closing sea ice, said Schimnowski in a phone interview.

The ship’s bell lies on its side on the deck, close to where the sailor on watch would have swung the clapper to mark time.

And the majestic bowsprit, six metres (20ft) long, still points straight out from the bow as it did when the crew tried to navigate through treacherous ice that eventually trapped *Erebus* and *Terror* on 12 September 1846. The wreck is in such good condition that glass panes are still in three of four tall windows in the stern cabin where the ship’s commander, Captain Francis Crozier, slept and worked, Schimnowski added. “This vessel looks like it was buttoned down tight for winter

the find [in Terror Bay] and the state of the wreck, it’s almost certain that HMS *Terror* was operationally closed down by the remaining crew who then re-boarded HMS *Erebus* and sailed south where they met their ultimate tragic fate.”

The 21st-century search for Franklin’s expedition was launched by Canadian former prime minister Stephen Harper as part of a broader plan to assert Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic and promote development of its resources – including vast reserves of oil and natural gas, which will be easier to exploit as the Arctic warms and sea ice disappears. Parks Canada underwater archaeologists have led the mission since it began in 2008. Now they must confirm the wreck is *Terror*, either by examining the foundation’s images or visiting the site themselves. With the first winter snow already falling in the High Arctic, Terror Bay will soon be encased in thick sea ice.

The latest discovery was made two years and a day after Canadian marine archaeologists found the wreck of *Erebus* in the same area of eastern Queen Maud gulf where Inuit oral history had



long said a large wooden ship sank. The same stories described startled Inuit stumbling upon a large dead man in a dark room on the vessel, with a big smile. Experts have suggested that may have been a rictus smile, or evidence that the man had suffered from scurvy.

Parks Canada archaeologists found *Erebus* standing in just 11 meters of ocean. Sea ice had taken a large bite out her stern, and more than a century of storm-driven waves had scattered a trove of artifacts around the site. So far, archaeologists have brought up the bell from Franklin's flagship, a cannon, ceramic plate and other objects. Inuit knowledge was also central to finding the Terror Bay wreck, but in a more mysterious way. Crewman Sammy Kogvik, 49, of Gjoa Haven, had been on the *Bergmann* for only a day when, chatting with Schimnowski on the bridge, he told a bizarre story.

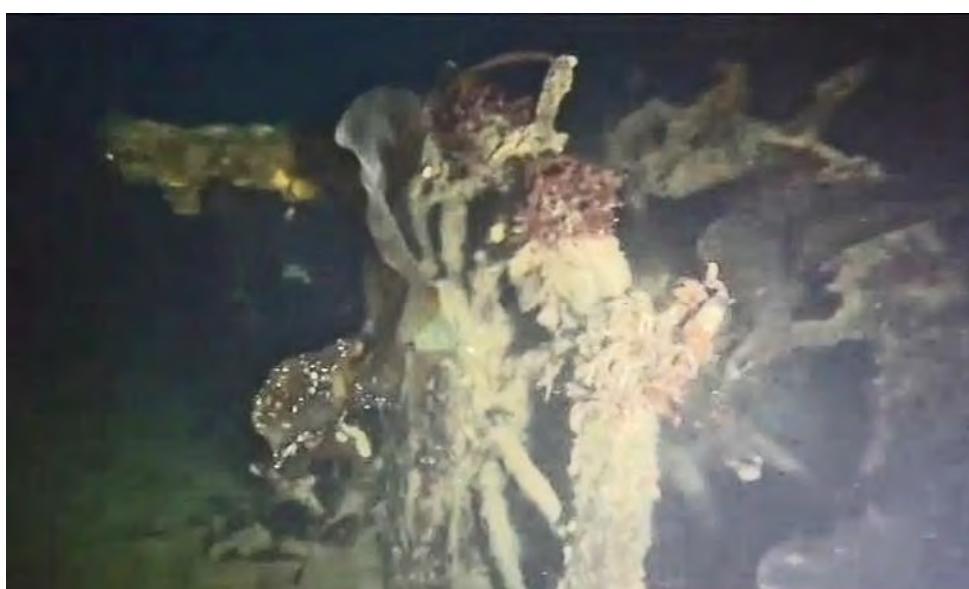
About six years ago, Kogvik said, he and a hunting buddy were headed on snowmobiles to fish in a lake when they spotted a large piece of wood, which looked like a mast, sticking out of the sea ice covering Terror Bay. In a phone interview, Kogvik said he stopped that day to get a few snapshots of himself hugging the wooden object, only to discover when he got home that the camera had fallen out of his pocket. Kogvik resolved to keep the encounter secret, fearing the missing camera was an omen of bad spirits, which generations of Inuit have believed began to wander King William Island after Franklin and his men perished. When Schimnowski heard Kogvik's story, he didn't dismiss it, as Inuit testimony has been so often during the long search for Franklin's ships. Instead, the *Bergmann*'s crew agreed to

make a detour for Terror Bay on their way to join the main search group aboard the Canadian Coast Guard icebreaker CCGS *Sir Wilfrid Laurier* and the Royal Canadian Navy's HMCS *Shawinigan*, at the north end of Victoria Strait. That is where the only known record of the Franklin expedition provided coordinates for what experts now call the point of abandonment.

A scrawled note dated 25 April 1848, and concealed in a stone cairn at Victory Point on northern King William Island, said *Erebus* and *Terror* had been abandoned three days earlier, stuck in sea ice. Crozier was in command of "the officers and crews, consisting of 105 souls", because Franklin had died on 11 June 1847, the note continued, "and the total loss by deaths in the expedition has been to this date 9 officers and 15 men". Crozier and Captain James Fitzjames signed the note, which had what seemed a hurried postscript, scrawled upside down in the top right corner: "and start on to-morrow 26th for Back's Fish River". Survivors apparently hoped to follow the river – now known as Back River – south to safety at a Hudson's Bay Company fur trading outpost. None made it, and for generations, the accepted historical narrative has described a brutal death march as the Royal Navy mariners tried to walk out of the Arctic, dying along the way.

Now Franklin experts will have to debate whether at least some of the dying sailors instead mustered incredible strength, fighting off hunger, disease and frostbite, in a desperate attempt to sail home.

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/sep/12/hms-terror-wreck-found-arctic-nearly-170-years-northwest-passage-attempt?CMP=twt_gu#



The double-wheeled helm of HMS Terror.

Photograph: Arctic Research Foundation



20,000 POUNDS STERLING (100,000 Dollars) REWARD!

TO BE GIVEN BY

HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

to such private Ship, or distributed among such private Ships, or to any exploring party or parties, of any Country, as may, in the judgment of the **BOARD OF ADMIRALTY**, have rendered efficient assistance to

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN,
HIS SHIPS, OR THEIR CREWS,
and may have contributed directly to extricate them from the Ice.

H. G. WARD,
Secretary to the Admiralty.

LONDON, March 23, 1849.

The attention of WHALERS, or of any other Ships or parties disposed to aid in this service, is particularly directed to **SMITH'S SOUND** and **JONES'S SOUND**, in **BAFFIN'S BAY**, to **REGENT'S INLET** and the **GULF of BOOTHIA**, as well as to any of the Inlets or Channels leading out of **BARRROW'S STRAIT**, particularly **WELLINGTON STRAIT**, or the Sea beyond, either Northward or Southward.

VESSELS entering through **BEHRING'S STRAITS** would necessarily direct their search North and South of **MELVILLE ISLAND**.

NOTE.—Persons desirous of obtaining information relative to the Missing Expedition, are referred to EDMUND A. GRATTAN, Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS; or ANTHONY BARCLAY, Esq., Her Britannic Majesty's Consul, NEW YORK.



My Time on *Singa Betina*

The seventh episode of Ted Whiteaker's story. See MHA Journal March 2016.

After our arrival in Darwin, with the immediate necessities of life being our first priority, we went to visit the local Social Security office for emergency assistance. As I secured the dinghy ashore, I noticed a couple of fellows who were cutting down overgrown scrub vegetation on the steep ground leading up to the plateau of the town area. One of them turned out to be an Englishman called Sam, whom we had met in Singapore on our way down from Kuala Terengganu. He was sailing solo in a small, old twenty-four foot decommissioned aluminium lifeboat that he had acquired in India, and had arrived in Darwin some weeks beforehand. The other fellow was Gus Withnall, an old Darwin hand of a practical entrepreneurial nature with a history of yacht building and sailing adventures. Gus had won a contract to remove the prolific growth of the invasive weed called coffee bush (*Leucaena leucocephala*), which grew in dense spindly thickets to a height of six metres, from the cliffs in that part of the port area. I had been a schoolmate of Gus' younger brother Dennis, and knew a little of Gus by reputation, and was pleased to make his acquaintance. In the course of a short conversation, it transpired that Sam was moving on, and Gus offered to take me on as a replacement off-sider on the job the next day. I jumped at the chance to earn a few dollars, and accepted gratefully.

Up at the Social Security office, when I approached the counter and gave an account of our circumstances, the fellow dealing with us took my name and said, "Ah ... Captain Bligh!" Ruffled by this unexpected character slur, I asked him to explain his comment. With a wry smile, he said that the Australian in our crew had been in before us that morning seeking assistance, and had mentioned me unkindly, saying that I owed him money. With some distaste, I set him straight on the facts, pointing out that the owing of money was quite the reverse. The fellow smiled again, and explained sympathetically that he was speaking in good humour, and had personally assessed the crewmember's character much as I had painted it, and shelled out some money to set us on our way. We bought some basic supplies and returned to the boat, filled our water bottles at the nearby wharf, and relaxed into our new circumstances.

The next morning I started work. Using a small chainsaw, Gus felled the coffee bush in swathes, painting the cut stumps with poison to prevent regrowth. A dye mixed into the poison helped to keep track of progress, ensuring no stump was left untreated. My job was to disentangle the felled growth and heave it all into large piles for later burning. I had not owned any shoes since some low-life Malay had stolen my last pair off the boat one night in Terengganu when we were ashore, and I thought I had tough enough feet to handle the job barefoot (Occupational Health and Safety regulations were unheard of in those days). However, after stumbling around all day on the steep terrain, pitch poling the long coffee bush stalks onto piles, my feet were suffering and I did a quick lunchtime trip next day to an op-shop up town and bought a cheap pair of sandals – the type that prisoners wear in the local jail.

I stopped at an arcade café for a bite to eat, when to my distaste, the trio of ex-crew appeared, all smiles and friendliness, and sat down for a chat. I maintained a polite reserve, and recounted my tale from Social Security to the Australian, who blathered something about needing to cook up a good story to get emergency assistance. He did at least pay me back the few dollars he owed me, although I had to remind him of the debt. The German asked me if I knew of any crew positions heading back to Indonesia. I told him that if I did, I would surely give the skipper of any such boat a character reference that would not be very helpful to his ambitions. The conversation flagged somewhat at this point, and I finished my lunch and left them, never to cross paths again, fortunately.

Back on the job, I flailed around and slid about in the unsuitable footwear for a couple of days before the sandals fell apart. After the first full day, the constant chafing of the strappings caused both little toenails to drop off, and I had to jury rig the failing straps with some old copper wire. Another day of chafing on the job saw both of my big toenails leave the party, before the sandals fell apart completely. I headed up to the op-shop again and bought a pair of boots this time – I had been paid for a few days of work and had money available for the finer details of my attire, including some socks. The only remotely suitable shoes I could find were dress boots, with ridiculous heels on them. I cut a dashing figure as I minced



about on the cliff slopes, hurling the coffee bush around like so many javelins, but the boots lasted the distance until the job was done after a couple of weeks, and I retained my remaining toenails in good order.

We had decided not to stay in Darwin any longer than necessary, wanting to keep up the momentum of travelling. The mining town of Gove, some 450 miles by sea to the east of Darwin on the western shore of the Gulf of Carpentaria, was the nearest centre of any substance, and seemed like a reasonable short-term destination. It had the added attraction of being situated in relative isolation in Arnhem Land, Australia's largest Aboriginal Reserve, which I personally knew little about, and seemed cloaked in a mysterious aura of the unknown. Our recent voyaging had left us bereft of all the equipment and supplies necessary for such a journey. The engine needed attention to a few relatively minor repairs, the hull of the boat needed a thorough overhaul of the caulking, and we needed fuel, oils, paint, LPG gas, food supplies, and the myriad spare items and bits of fencing wire to replace everything that the Malays and Indonesians had gleaned from us. We worked at whatever short-term jobs were available and got stuck into the repairs and maintenance in between. It took five months of hard slogging before we were ready to move on.

We put the word out for paying crew, deciding to keep the numbers down and hopefully attract a couple who could look to each other for comfort and sort out any frustrations between themselves, without too many demands on us. A fellow called Ken Duncan and his girlfriend, Ros, made contact and seemed to fit the bill. Ken was a photographer, and was in Darwin doing some contract work for the Tourist Commission. His parents had been missionaries at Mowanjum, a Presbyterian establishment near Derby in Western Australia, and a part of Ken's childhood had been spent in the community. He was keen to have an adventure and get some material together for the Tourist Commission on the coastal delights of Arnhem Land and Aboriginal communities along the way, and was a perfect fit with our planned wanderings.

As we approached our departure date, Ken asked whether we had arranged for any permits to visit the Aboriginal communities along the way. While I knew they were required, I had only half-heartedly considered the issue, preferring to cast ourselves upon the sea of fate and take our chances with formalities on the spot (the lessons of in-

adequate paperwork in Indonesia did not seem quite relevant here). While there were no legal requirements about sailing between Darwin and Gove, visiting the communities was another matter, but the worst that could happen was denial of entry, and the bureaucratic process of obtaining permits did not hold any attraction for me. I explained all this to Ken, who suggested that he could attend to the required formalities through the Tourist Commission, so I handed over the task to him. Having permits would be a bonus, especially if I did not have to arrange them.

A few weeks passed by, and Ken was a bit nonplussed at his inability to get the permits, despite the good offices of Tourist Commission assistance. I had a rather cynical view about it, considering that the Aborigines themselves were probably wary of any white-fellas visiting them, especially if it had anything to do with tourism, and told him not to worry about it. If by some chance the permits fell into place, well and good, but if it did not happen, we were going anyway. As it turned out, nothing happened and we set off on 12 December 1982 for Nguiu, a community on Bathurst Island some fifty miles NNW of Darwin, situated just inside the southern entrance of the narrow Apsley Strait, which separates Bathurst Island from its larger neighbour, Melville Island.

We motor sailed with a WNW wind of seven to ten knots, and arrived around 2pm, dropping the anchor not far offshore from Nguiu Township. It was a Sunday, and we lazed about on board, intending to go ashore to conduct formalities the following day when the community council would be more likely to be open for business. There were a few kids on the beach, who kept yelling at us, "Hey, you c**ts! You f**king white c**ts!" A charming welcome indeed, which had us wondering about our possible reception by the wider community.

Next morning we went ashore and trudged up to the council office. We were accosted by a white fella who appeared to be in charge, who took a dim view of us being there unannounced without the required permits. He dressed us down scathingly, and eventually went off to consult with the traditional owners. After a while, he returned and said we were fortunate that the locals recognised *Singa Betina*. When Henri Bourdens found himself wrecked on the north of Bathurst Island in 1967 and was subsequently rescued, he had donated the boat to the Catholic Missions, who were the administrators of the island before Government policy changed and control passed to coun-



cils representing the traditional people. *Singa Betina* had been re-floated and repaired, and used as a supply vessel by them for a time, and despite the boat's change of appearance since then, the keen eyes of the locals knew her. We were grudgingly given permission to hang about for a few days. Ken gave the fellow a spiel about wanting to take photographs of the locals and community life in a sympathetic fashion, but was instructed not to do so under any circumstances, much to his chagrin.

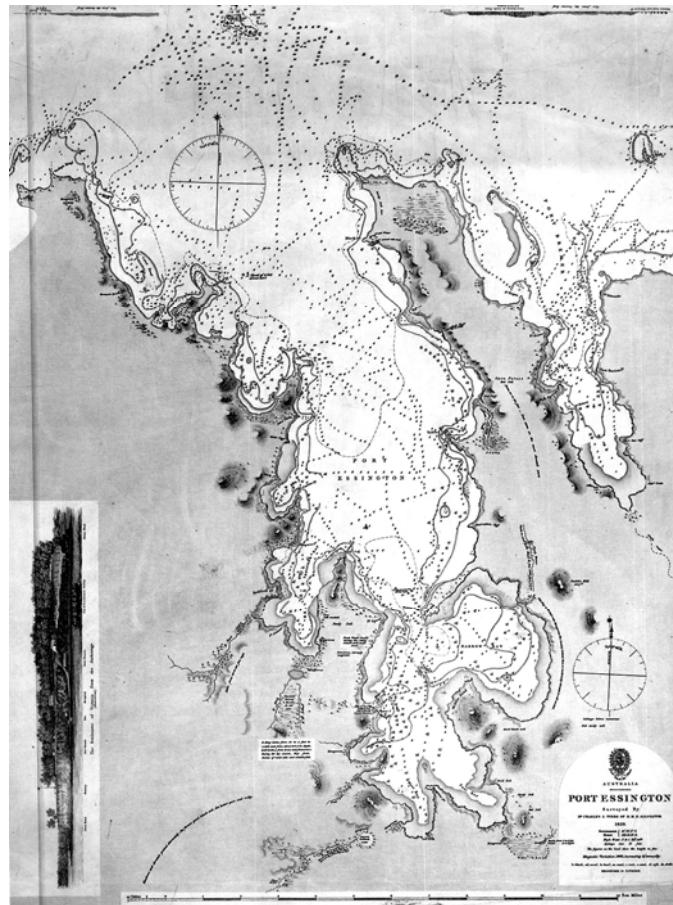
We spent three days there. None of us knew much about the politics of contemporary aboriginal culture, and the locals were not overtly friendly, while the white fellas avoided any contact with us. It wasn't much fun wandering around like pariahs, and it was with a sense of relief that we pulled the anchor and moved on, heading south out of Apsley Strait, east around the bottom of Melville Island, and then north up past Cape Don and eastwards to Port Essington.

Port Essington was the site of the third attempt at British settlement on the northern coast of Australia. The British, paranoid about possible Dutch plans to extend their East Indies presence to the shores of the unoccupied north of the land then called New Holland, established Fort Dundas on Melville Island as the first settlement in 1824. Constant friction with the natives, the disappearance of two supply ships sent to the Indonesian Islands to the north to procure provisions, and the privations of the tropical climate on the British constitutions of the settlers, forced the abandonment of the settlement in March 1829. The siting of the garrison at Luxmore Head, in St. Asaph's Bay in the north of Apsley Strait, had the added disadvantage of not being on any sailing route used by the Makassan trepangers who seasonally frequented the northern coast, or any other shipping that may have been traversing the area. It was a poor position both strategically and logically.

An overlapping second attempt at settlement had commenced in June 1827 further to the east in Raffles Bay, on the Coburg Peninsula mainland. This site, in sheltered waters on the eastern side of Raffles Bay, was named Fort Wellington. The location was well placed to serve any shipping passing through Bowen Strait, between the mainland and Croker Island, and there was some trade with Makassans engaged in trepang gathering and processing in the bay; but, as with Fort Dundas, supply problems and the adverse effects of the climate on the settlers whittled away their resolve

and forced their withdrawal. The settlement was abandoned in August 1829, leaving the locals to again enjoy their traditional ways, unfettered by European influence, for another decade.

In 1838, developing fears of possible French ambitions on New Holland moved the British Lords to dictate the establishment of Victoria, the third settlement, in Port Essington. This settlement survived until 1849 – an impressive record; but the isolation, problems with supply ships, and the climate forced another ignominious withdrawal.



An 1839 chart showing Port Essington, surveyed by Lt Charles Tyers on HMS Alligator.
The 'former gov't settlement' is indicated about half-way down the west coast of the southern bay.

South Australia subsequently annexed the Northern Territory in a land grab after the dour Scotsman, John McDougal Stuart, finally staggered to the coast all the way from Adelaide on his sixth attempt at crossing the continent from south to north. The South Australians commenced to offload cheap land to prospective investors at home and in London, expecting to develop the North into a cash cow with teats of gold. Accordingly, in 1864 another attempt at settlement was undertaken further to the west at Escape Cliffs, in Ad-



am Bay, near the mouth of the Adelaide River. After a series of administrative and human disasters, this attempt was also abandoned in late 1867. The speculating investors were clamouring for blood over the failure, prompting a final push in 1869 to establish a lasting settlement at Port Darwin that managed to endure against all odds and kick-started the development of the North.

On our journey between Bathurst Island and Port Essington, the coast was as it always had been, uninhabited except for the lighthouse at Cape Don and a Ranger Station at Black Point, on the eastern shore of the outer reaches of Port Essington. As we approached Vashon Head, marking the western side of the Port Essington entrance, we were navigating visually as we motored along in light and variable winds, when I noticed a peculiar triangular feature in the distance ahead. There was no topographical feature showing on the chart to indicate what it was, and we kept heading towards it when I suddenly realised we were in quite shallow waters of only a few metres depth, and the feature I was looking at was in fact quite close. It turned out to be a jagged piece of steel, the remains of the wreck of the 2,838-ton SS *Australian*, owned by the Eastern & Australian Steam Ship Company, which had foundered on rocks here in November 1906. We had to put to sea for a couple of miles before finding a comfortable depth around the foul ground and shallows that border the Port Essington channel.

The settlement of Victoria was situated on Adam Head, towards the bottom reaches of Port Essington, some eighteen miles from the entrance. There are many ruins to see – a few brick fireplaces, building foundations and a surprisingly intact armaments magazine; a stone jetty and graves; and the harsh aspect of the country was a palpable reminder of the folly of the location. It was mid-December, stinking hot and humid in the advanced build-up to the Wet Season, and it was easy to sympathise with the poor settlers with their temperate climate backgrounds.

A few days later, we moved on to Minjilang on Croker Island, the next small Aboriginal community along the coast. We arrived in Mission Bay in the early evening, and Ken and I went ashore next morning to see the local Council. The Chairman, a fellow called Jumbo, was there with a couple of other countrymen. They were quite reserved, and we introduced ourselves, explained that we were travelling from Darwin to Gove, and requested permission to stay a few days. Ken then produced what he thought would be his piece de resistance

– a sacred message stick from his childhood at Mowanjum Community that his father had passed on to him. This article was shaped like a woomera, about 50cm long and 7cm wide, made of a hard, dark wood, with parallel wavy lines inscribed across the width, from top to bottom, on both sides. A section of the timber had split off at some stage and Ken had stuck it back together with epoxy glue. It was kept in a black felt sheath, and, with due regard to its sacred significance, Jumbo sent one of the younger men off with Ken into another room to look at it.

I got the impression we were being evaluated in some way. There was no conversation until Ken and the other fellow returned. The fellow said something to Jumbo, and then Ken launched forth with his request to take photos on behalf of the Tourist Commission. I thought I detected a sudden realisation click into place in Jumbo's eyes, and when Ken had finished pleading his case, there was a pregnant pause before he delivered his verdict. We could stay. We could get water from a tap on the beach, and buy any supplies we needed from the store, but we were not to poke around otherwise, and no photographs were to be taken. I was a little disappointed, but put two and two together and figured that Minjilang was one of the places that Ken had been contacting from the Tourist Commission in the quest for permits, and it seemed that there was some intriguing resistance by Aboriginal communities to the idea of Government and tourism. Ken was bitterly disappointed, and we returned to the boat to discuss the matter with our partners.

Mission Bay is a beautiful spot. There is only a small tidal range that promotes clean, clear waters, and a sweeping sandy beach with a few mangroves at either end made for an attractive anchorage. However, our lack of acceptance by the locals was like a dark shadow casting a pall on our existence there, similar to our short stay at Nguui on Bathurst Island. We eventually agreed that it was most likely the connection to the Tourist Commission that was causing us grief, and decided to spend a few days there anyway, since it was such a nice environment on the bay. We lazed about and swam in the clear waters, finding a bed of huge cockles beneath the boat in fourteen feet of water that were a welcome addition to our diet. We caught a few decent fish while skin diving with a hand spear, and spent Christmas day there. On a trip to the beach to fill up our water bottles in the late afternoon on Christmas day, we met and chatted with the local mechanic, and the island-based Missionary Aviation Fellowship



(MAF) pilot and his wife, who were pleasant people. The MAF organisation had light aircraft stationed at Croker, Milingimbi, Elcho Island and Gove, and carried out most of the local charters between those centres and the various outstations surrounding them. We left the next day on the turn of the tide for a short six-mile trip to Darch Island, just outside the southern headland of Mission Bay, overnighting there before moving on to the Goulburn Islands, some fifty miles further east.

The winds were light and variable, and as midday approached, we were motoring along in the deep blue waters past De Courcy Head on the mainland when the spoon lure we were trolling behind us was struck, and we hauled in a small Spanish mackerel. We had dragged various lures around

behind the boat all the way through Indonesia and Malaysia and back without a single strike, so this was a very satisfying event. We had two lures out, a regular four-inch Halco spoon on one side, and a three-inch piece of twisted stainless steel called a Wonder Wobbler on the other. We had another two strikes in quick succession on the Wonder Wobbler that failed to hook up, and then caught another small mackerel on the spoon. This was record-breaking stuff for us. We ate one of the fish for lunch, and, having no refrigeration, we gutted the other fish and packed the carcass in coarse salt as a means of preservation for later consumption. A little later, we passed out of the blue-water zone and back into the usual green seas typical of these coastal areas.

To be continued.....

Buckau

The *Buckau* was built in 1920 as a conventional 3-masted schooner, with a length of 155.8' and a beam of 29.6'. A M.A.N. 300 bhp diesel engine driving a single screw supplied auxiliary power. In 1924 it was fitted with two Flettner rotors, shown in the picture. To drive the rotors two electric motors were installed, supplied with current by a Krupp 2 cylinder 45 hp diesel engine. The rotors revolved at 100 rpm, and the wind blowing on these rotors (each 50' x 12') created far more power than on correctly trimmed sails, and gave her a speed of 8 knots. The rotor ship could tack through 20–30 degrees.

The *Buckau*'s maiden voyage was from Danzig, Germany, to Scotland. On 31 March 1926 the ship, renamed *Baden-Baden*, sailed to New York via South America, arriving at New York on 9 May.

However due to the variable nature of the winds in European waters, and the power consumed by the 50ft high rotors compared to their propulsive effort, the idea was not very practical, and it was later converted into a pure motor ship. The ship was destroyed in 1931 during a storm in the Caribbean



403



QUIZ

Answers to September

1. Widow's men were imaginary sailors on the muster book of each Royal Navy ship. There were two to each 100 men in the crew, and their pay at the rate of an Able Seaman was paid into a fund which paid a pension to widows of sailors who died during the voyage. The system dates from the reign of Henry VIII.
2. Lewis Point is the point of land on which the northern end of the Narrows Bridge rests.
3. The first ship to carry convicts to Western Australia was the *Scindian*. It arrived at Fremantle on 1 June 1850 with 75 convicts on board.

Quiz

1. To commence his exploration of the Western Australian coast in 1839 George Grey and his eleven men with their three whaleboats were transported from Fremantle to Bernier Island on an American whaler. What was the name of that vessel?
2. What is a breast hook?
3. This photograph is of a bust of an early explorer of Western Australia. There are several busts of him around the State. Who is he, and can you name either of the two vessels with which he is associated?



Maritime Heritage Association Inc.

PO Box 1080, Guilderton, Western Australia, 6041.

