

# MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

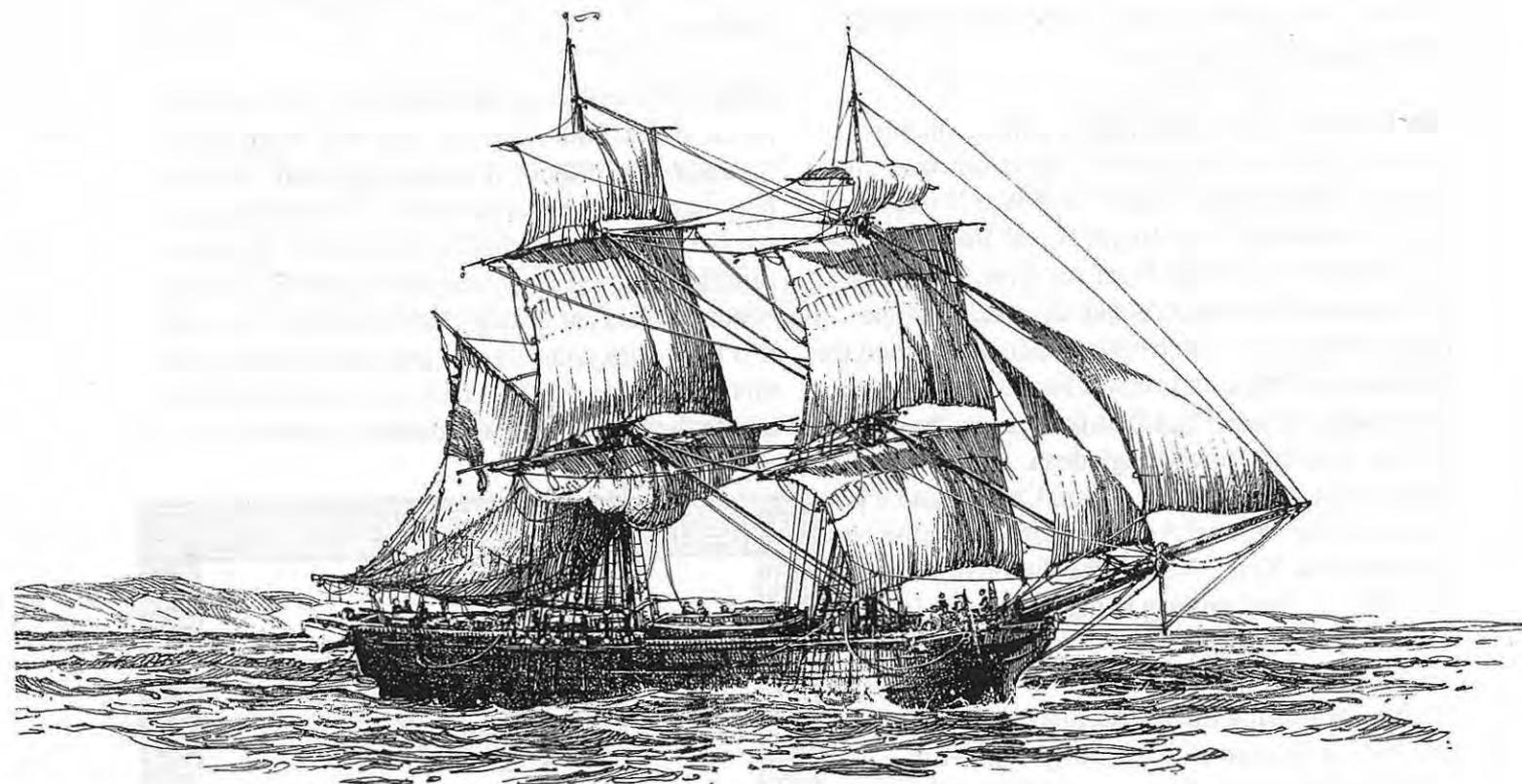
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## **The brig *River Chief***

*A powerfully built but unsightly vessel.*

*Drawing – Ross Shardlow.*



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

All of the Association's incoming journals, newsletters, etc. are now archived with Ray Miller who may be contacted on 9337 2614, and are available to members on loan. Please note that to access the videos, journals, library books, etc it is necessary to phone ahead.

(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.)

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## EDITORIAL

It is that time of year again! MHA fees are due and members are asked to please renew their membership for another year.

One of the world's best known figures in maritime history passed away on 8 April 2003. Basil Greenhill, CB, CMG, Director of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, from 1967 to 1983, and author or co-author of many books on maritime history, died at the age of 83.

His training was in philosophy, politics and economics at Bristol University. This study was undertaken in two parts with World War II intervening. He enlisted in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve and served in the Fleet Air Arm, finishing the war as a lieutenant. After the war, when he had completed his interrupted studies he joined the Dominions Office and served for 20 years in the diplomatic service. His first foreign posting was to East Pakistan, now Bangladesh. He also served in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Japan, Canada and a period with the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. He left the diplomatic service in 1967, his final posting being as Deputy High Commissioner in Ottawa.

He had an abiding interest in maritime matters and had, at the age of 16 years, got time off school to sail on the four-masted Finnish barque *Viking* from England to the Gulf of Finland. His first publication, the first volume of "The Merchant Schooners", appeared in 1951 with the second volume being published in 1957. His period in Pakistan produced the book "Boats and Boat-

men of Pakistan", published in 1971.

In his time at the National Maritime Museum Basil Greenhill widened the scope of that institution. He wrote profusely and was on many organisations concerned with maritime history. He was awarded a doctorate by Bristol University and honorary doctorates by both Plymouth and Hull Universities.

What is to become of the *Duyfken*? Has anybody heard the rumours that she may have to be sold? It would be a tragedy if the second of the replicas built here went out of the state. The vessel has to pay her way but can this be done here? Wooden sailing vessels are very expensive in their upkeep – hence *Endeavour*'s long absences from Australia. It is only with constant use and lots of paying visitors and passengers that they can earn the money to pay for the running and maintenance costs.





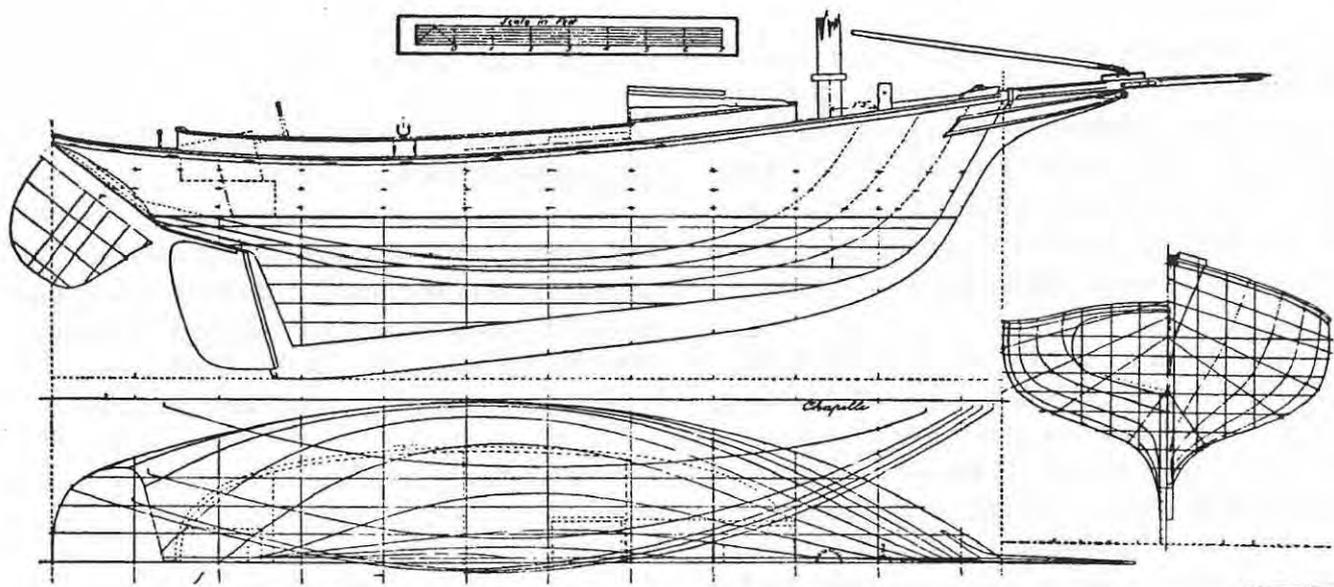
# Presidential Tidings

*Tidings: from the Old English Tidung meaning news and information. (Ed.)*

Firstly my apologies to all for once again missing an important meeting. Just one of the problems of going away to sea for fairly long periods, 10 weeks, as we think of them in these present days. I have recently been reading of other voyages in the days of yore that lasted for many years before the lucky sailors that survived arrived home and can't help reminding the younger members of our crew of the hardships the oldtimers faced. It was pleasing to be

reelected as your President for yet another year and I hope that I will be able to attend more meetings and take a more active role instead of leaving the work to the very able committee. I must pay special thanks to all of them for carrying me over the years and for all the hard work they have done for the Association.

Thank You.  
Rod Dickson.



Lines of *Pemaquid*, a small working Friendship sloop, built by Abdon K. Carter about 1904 at Bremen, Maine.

See advertisement on page 20.

## Help Wanted

**A request for information from Rod Dickson. Can anybody help?**

I found this article in the Western Mail, dated 28/ 3/ 1935, some time ago but haven't had the time to check the veracity of the story. It is reported that the Glasgow registered schooner MARLBOROUGH with 23 men on board sailed from the port of Lyttleton, New

Zealand, in January 1890 for the United Kingdom and was next sighted off Cape Horn 24 years later. When boarded the searchers found 20 skeletons scattered about the accommodation. Does anybody know whether this story is true and can they elaborate?



# 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!)*



Thomas Corcoran was the last convict to die on board a ship en-route to Australia. He died on board the *Huogumont* on 16 December 1867. Corcoran was being transported for thievery.

**Pouches.** In vessels which are laden in bulk, strong bulkheads (called pouches) are sometimes placed across the hold to prevent the cargo from shifting.

The Commisariat Store in Cliff Street, Fremantle, now the Western Australian Maritime Museum, had a money vault with an "iron door with a double shot home made six tumbler lock". This was made in the blacksmith's shop. There was also a Magazine divided in to two sections for Government powder and merchants' powder.

In 1831 a canal was built across the low land at Burswood. A later canal was constructed during 1839-40 around the riverside fringe of what is now the WACA ground. It was stated as being 500 yards in length by 10 feet wide and the contract was let to John Crane for £250. A bridge and causeway across the Flats was considered but rejected as being too expensive at that time.

A beacon was built on Fish Rock about two miles south of Arthur Head on the edge of Success Bank in 1849. The work was superintended by Mr. Trigg and much of it was carried out by Aboriginal prisoners.

The first steamboat built in Perth to be driven by a propeller was the *Lady Ord*. She was 47 feet long by 8.75 feet beam and with a depth of 3 feet. The vessel was built buy William Lawrence of Perth in 1878 and was used on the Perth to South Perth service.

A ship is said to have an elbow when riding with two anchors down and the cables have crossed

each other; if the ship swings through 180° a cross is formed, and through 360° an elbow is formed.

**Chime.** The projecting edge or rim of a cask or barrel, where the staves project beyond the head. In the Royal Navy supplies carried in casks or barrels were distinguished by painting the chime as follows.

Rum.....Red  
Vinegar.....White  
Lime juice.....Green

The Misions to Seamaen, an Anglican charity, was founded in 1856.

The Atlantic entrance to the Panama canal is actually west of the Pacific entrance. In fact the Atlantic entrance is 27 miles west and 33.5 miles north of the Pacific entrance. The ships are raised a total of 85 feet in transiting the canal.

The following are liquid measures used in shipping.

Pin.....4½ gallons  
Firkin.....9 gallons  
Anker.....10 gallons  
Aum.....30 gallons  
Barrel.....36 gallons  
Tierce.....42 gallons  
Puncheon.....72 gallons  
Butt.....108 gallons  
Hogshead.....varies depending on contents:  
Hogshead (Claret).....46 Gallons  
" (Port).....57 gallons  
" (Sherry).....54 gallons  
" (Madeira).....46 gallons

1 gallon = 8 pints = 4 quarts = 32 gills = 4.546 litres.

**Corposant.** Another name for Saint Elmo's Fire, sometimes seen on ships' masts and spars.



# Model No.100

## From the Yard of Brian Lemon

Article by Ross Shardlow, photo by Ron Richards.

On Sunday 2 March 2003, the Hicks' Private Maritime Museum hosted the launching of Brian Lemon's one-hundredth model.

Last September Brian presented Model 99, the 65' Fishing Trawler *Master Hand*, to the Hicks' Museum. Then he had to consider what he might do for Model 100. True to Brian's exceptional character, it was not the boat he was thinking of - but to whom to give it.

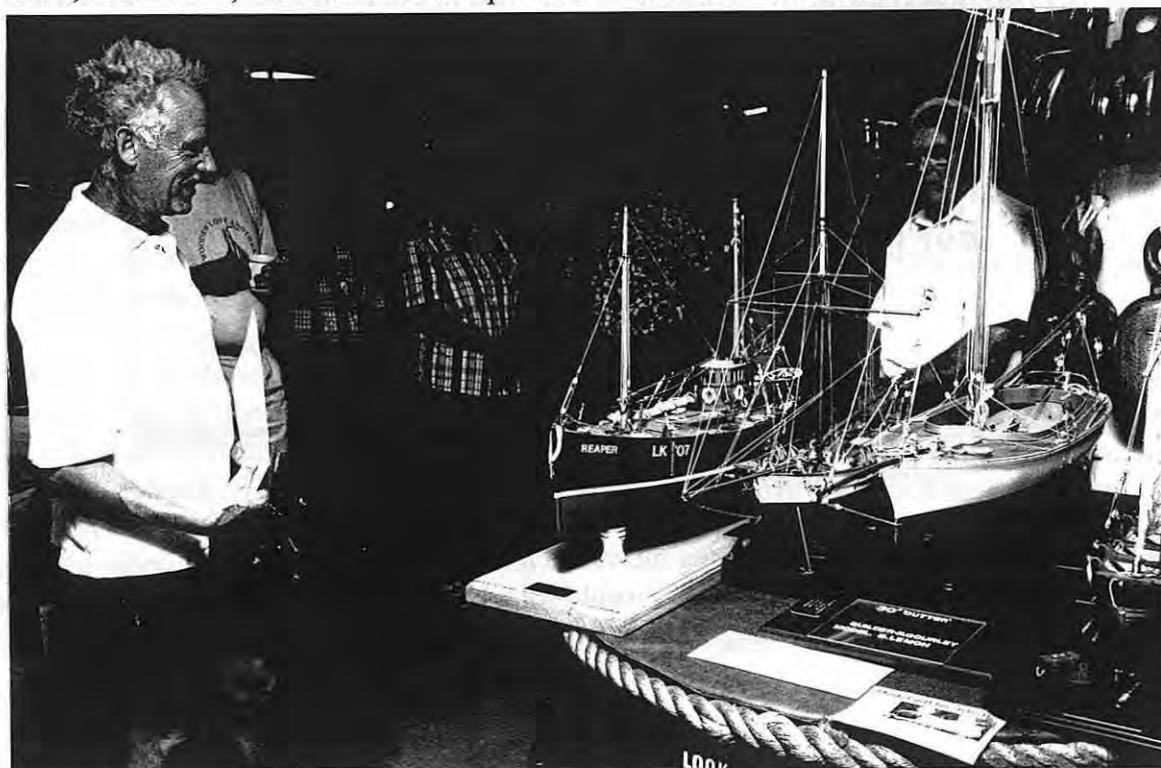
At Sunday's gathering of over fifty enthusiasts, Brian was pleased to observe some 'first timers'. In making them welcome, he suggested that if they needed any assistance with a model he would be happy to show them how to build one. On the other hand, if it was the Museum that took their interest, then they should speak to Barry - that he might tell them how to build one. Brian also noted that there were some world class shipwrights at the gathering. As a model shipwright himself, Brian elected to dedicate Model 100 to the Art of Shipwrightery itself, and who better to represent that Art than the Master Shipwright himself - Bill Leonard. It was fortuitous, therefore, that Bill just happened to be amongst the audience. By another remarkable coincidence, Model 100, which had been kept under

wraps until this moment, turned out to be something Bill was probably very familiar with - a Scottish Fifie, called *Reaper*.

Bill might have guessed something was afoot had he noticed St. Andrew's Cross and the Red Rampant Lion of Scotland flying from the Hicks' masthead. As it turns out, Bill was otherwise distracted by the wonders of the Museum and seemed quite pleased when the model was presented to him being momentarily, and uncharacteristically, lost for words.

The MHA, in speaking for all the people gathered at the launching, pays tribute to Irene and Brian Lemon for their extraordinary and generous contribution to Maritime Heritage and the fellowship it generates. The tribute is equally extended to their partnership with Barry and Doris Hicks who similarly give so much of their time and expertise and also their outstanding venue to make these events such joyous occasions.

We look forward to Brian's next hundred models and speculate on what wonders may be achieved should Irene allow him the use of the other half of the kitchen table as his workbench.





**The following is one of the numerous items that Rod Dickson found during the course of his research into matters maritime!**

**From the local Fremantle newspaper the EXPRESS, dated 4 / 2 / 1870.**

Sir, When a number of ships are in harbour one constantly sees unlucky Jack Tars being hauled up to the station; some of the Junior members of the force evidently being unable to discriminate at all times, between Jack's *habitual roll*, and the roll occasioned by too close a contact with *John Barleycorn*. I would therefore suggest that, before locking up, the police should put to the *Tar* a few questions, in order to ascertain the true state of his upper story - say the following; too which the proper answers are attached.

1. In the event of your being allowed to leave your station, and that you wanted to steer for the *EMERALD ISLE*, (not Ireland), what are the leading marks?

*Answer.* Steer due east and bring Harwood's on the port bow; then luff, and shake until you bring Harwood's flagstaff in a line with a quart pot in Baston's window; steer for the pot, and bring the

bar door on the starboard beam. Put your helm hard a port - bear up for the door - which having reached, put your helm hard a starboard, come about and enter the taproom.

2. Suppose that it came on squally, and you were unable to make headway; what would you do?

*Answer.* I would set my sou'wester and my monkey jacket - light my pipe and run up to Perth in a GIG.

3. What are the principal dangers you have to avoid?

*Answer.* All boys, (buoys), marked Police Force, on a pewter plate!

I suggest that any sailor, who seems to be drunk, shall have the above, or similar questions put to him; and if he gives the correct answers, he shall be deemed to be sober, and allowed to depart.

Your Obedient Servant,  
A Cute Cabinboy.

**Notice to Shippers of Colonial Produce to the Mauritius.**



**T**HE fine Colonial-built fast-sailing vessel

**"Joseph Morris"**

will sail from Gage's Roads early in January next for the above port. Has superior accommodations for passengers, and is well adapted for stock.

For particulars apply to

**LIONEL & WM. SAMSON,**  
*Agents.*

**Perth, Oct. 17, 1844.**

Advertisement from the Inquirer, 13 November 1844.

Joseph Morris had originally intended naming the vessel after himself. She was still under his name 17 June 1845 when the Perth Gazette announced she would soon be launched. By August 1846, three months before her launching her name had changed to *River Chief*.



# The Brig *RIVER CHIEF* - and the dilemma of the researcher

Mr Worsley's excellent article on *River Chief* (Vol. 13 No. 4), highlights some interesting 'differences of opinion' about her history. Ross Shardlow attempts to expand on the confusion.

## Who Built River Chief?

Rod Dickson, in his praiseworthy book, *They Kept This State Afloat*, states:

Although the newspaper accounts say that Joseph Morris was the builder of the vessel, her registration papers state William Hugh Edwards was the builder. From this it can be assumed that Joseph Morris was the financier and Edwards the actual designer and constructor.

Ronald Parsons, in his informative response (Vol. 14 No. 1), correctly points out that *River Chief* was not registered until she arrived at Port Adelaide in 1847 and that her builder is given as 'Edwards, Murray River [Mandurah], Western Australia'. Parsons agrees with Dickson that 'it appears ... William Hugh Edwards was the builder and Joseph Morris the financier.'

Shardlow, on the other hand, has another point of view - that Edwards could not have built *River Chief* because he was building *Rosanna* at that time. Quoting Dickson again, 'By 1844 Mr Edwards had shifted [from Perth] to Fremantle and according to the newspaper on 25/1/1845 built the *Rosanna*, sometimes called the *Rose Anna*.' The newspaper referred to stated that 'the *Rosanna* ... sailed for South Australia this morning.' The *Anthony Curtis Letter Book (1843-1852)* also confirms that *Rosanna* sailed for Adelaide, 25 January 1845. That means she was built in 1844. Like the *River Chief*, *Rosanna* was registered at Port Adelaide. Parsons confirms her building date in his *Ships of Australia and New Zealand Before 1850* with, '*Rose Anna*... built by H. Edwards of Fremantle, 1844'.

Let us return to the *River Chief*. We know from the *Perth Gazette*, 21 September 1844, that Joseph

Morris purchased the rigging from the wrecked American whaler *Halcyon*, 'and proposes employing it in fitting out his vessel, now nearly completed ... at the Murray.' So, we know *River Chief* was also being built in 1844. It would seem unlikely, therefore, that William Hugh Edwards could have built *Rosanna* in Fremantle and *River Chief* in Mandurah, 40 miles away, both at the same time. I think a more likely scenario is that Edwards was not her 'actual designer and constructor' but was only employed by her new owners to complete the final fitting out, probably after she was brought up to Sulphur Bay, and eventually, to Fremantle.

*River Chief* was launched at Peel Inlet (Mandurah), 2 December 1845, floated over the Murray River bar June 1846 and taken to Peel Harbour (Safety Bay) under jury rig where it was intended to complete her final fit out. However, the *Inquirer* for Saturday 31 October 1846, reports, '*River Chief* on Wednesday was got out of Peel Harbour and brought round to Sulphur Bay, Garden Island, where her fittings up will be completed.' If Edwards was involved with her building then it was likely to have been during this stage of her development - and as the last shipwright involved with her construction and measuring up, it may explain why his name appears on the Register Papers.

So, who did build her? The *Inquirer* for 26 August 1846 gives us a clue:

No less than three ships are at present in progress of building in or near Fremantle. The *River Chief*, the largest of the three, will carry about 300 tons, and is a powerfully built, though unsightly, vessel. She will now soon be ready for sea, only awaiting some communications from her owners, who are in Adelaide. This system of



the South Australians, of getting their vessels built here, is alike advantageous to both colonies. We have now more than one handsome vessel in their service, built of our mahogany, the merits of which are daily manifest; but its real superiority cannot be fully felt abroad until it is introduced into Great Britain, since it is at least as much its immense length, as its admirable quality, which constitutes its value. This vessel was built by a runaway carpenter's mate belonging to *H.M.S. Fly*.

So, who was the 'runaway carpenter's mate belonging to *HMS Fly*'? It wasn't Joseph Morris - Dickson's book tells us Morris arrived in Western Australia aboard the *Warrior* in 1830. Nor was it William Hugh Edwards, he arrived on the brig *Amity* in 1829. *HMS Fly*, commanded by Captain Blackwood, twice called at Fremantle; first in September 1843 on a surveying trip and again in February 1846, calling in to pick up Governor Hutt to take him back home to England. It would seem our 'runaway carpenter's mate' jumped ship on the first visit in September 1843, about the time when construction would have started on *River Chief*. We may even speculate that the return of *HMS Fly* in 1846 may explain why our runaway carpenter's mate remained nameless and invisible. Being built by a carpenter's mate (and not a qualified shipwright) might also explain why *River Chief* was variously described as 'powerfully built, though unsightly,' and an '... ugly brig, painted black...'

Sadly, we do not know the name of our 'runaway carpenter's mate' but it seems he, and not William Hugh Edwards, was the designer and constructor of *River Chief*. Should anyone have the muster rolls for *HMS Fly* for 1843 I would dearly like to hear from you.

### San Francisco

As Mr Worsley pointed out, *River Chief* was purchased by South Australian interests and, soon after, on-sold to the well-known shipowner, George Wilson, of Hobart Town, where she was re-registered on 27 July 1847. Wilson successfully employed *River Chief* in the Hobart Town/Port Phillip cattle run, making some twenty crossings, typically carrying livestock from Melbourne and

Geelong and returning with timber. Wilson recouped his investment after only four runs. It tells us something of *River Chief's* capacity when we see her manifest for 9 March 1849, coming into Melbourne with 50,000 [feet] timber and 10,000 palings, and returning to Hobart Town, 13 April 1849, with 480 sheep, 11 tons iron and 3 passengers.

An event happened in 1849 that changed history: GOLD was discovered in California ... and more than sixty vessels cleared for San Francisco from Tasmania alone! *River Chief* was amongst them. George Wilson sold *River Chief* in 1849, (O'May says to a Mr Wilkinson). She made her last run into Hobart Town 13 November 1849 under Captain William Edward Matthews and departed with a cargo of timber bound for Melbourne to pick up eager passengers for California - accommodating nothing less than 3 cabin passengers, 87 steerage passengers, 10 crew plus her cargo of timber! A commendable achievement for a 72' brig about to cross the Pacific Ocean. She cleared Melbourne 6 January 1850 bound for San Francisco via New Zealand and Tahiti making her destination in 180 days (6 months out)! Not without some problems it seems for the *Hobart Town Courier* reported later in the year that *River Chief* had to be sold for \$1,000 to pay the wages of the crew. Her listing records, 'Register Closed, vessel sold foreign, December 1850'.

And then, in February 1851, Edward Hargraves discovered gold in NSW and those ships so eager to rush to California, rushed right back again - *River Chief* included. In 1854, Mr M.E. Murnin applied to have *River Chief* enrolled on the Register of British Ships for Sydney. She is listed as No.96/1854. On 5 November 1854 she is recorded departing Sydney for Nelson, New Zealand. Murnin went into partnership with his long-standing associate, Edward Lane and by September 1856, Lane became the sole owner of *River Chief*.

### The Fate of the *River Chiefs* - and a lot of Norris

Parsons, in his respected *Australian Shipowners and Their Fleets*, states that *River Chief* was wrecked at the Richmond River Heads, NSW, 25 November 1865. Several other sources state the



same entry. However, the *Belfast (Port Fairy)* Gazette, 6 March 1888, prints a list of 'Shipping Disasters recorded for the past 30 years on the Victorian Coast.' It includes:

Weather clear, casualty at night. August 1857, Brig *River Chief*, 145 tons, Melbourne to Western Port -Total Wreck.

Now we have two *River Chiefs*. Scrutinising the shipping lists actually reveals at least four *River Chiefs*. One of these, though regularly listed as *River Chief*, was actually named *Young River Chief*. She was a schooner of 13 tons, built in 1847 at Peppermint Bay in the D'Entrecasteaux Channel, Van Diemens Land, for George Wilson - the same George Wilson that purchased the brig *River Chief* also in 1847. *Young River Chief* appears to have been a sailing barge, lightening timber from the Huon River around to the Derwent for transhipment to Melbourne. But get this - the builder of Wilson's *Young River Chief* is listed as Joseph Norris! Compare that to *River Chief's* original owner/builder - Joseph Morris. My first thought was that Morris and Norris were one and the same, just an error in spelling. Perhaps Morris followed his ship to Tasmania where he built *Young River Chief* for George Wilson. A check on Norris, however, reveals not only was he a real person but there were two Joseph Norrises! First, there was Joseph Norris of Perch Bay, who was recorded as having built the *Humber* and the *Vulcan*, both in 1841. This poor chap was evidently drowned 2 January 1847. Therefore, it is with some difficulty that he could be the same Joseph Norris of Peppermint Bay, very much alive and well when he built the *Young River Chief* in 1847 and the schooner *Venus* in 1849. Presumably, he is a second Joseph Norris. It could be a father and son of course, both of the same name. Then again, perhaps it wasn't Joseph who drowned in the boating accident. The actual report in the *Hobart Town Courier* reveals, 'Whaleboat capsized off Matterson's Point, Brown's River, drowning Mr. Hewlett ... Mr Norris (boatbuilder of Perch Bay) and a boy. One survivor.'

Whichever Norris it was, it certainly wasn't Joseph Morris of Murray River. We have already established that Morris arrived in Western Australia aboard the *Warrior*, 12 March 1830. He

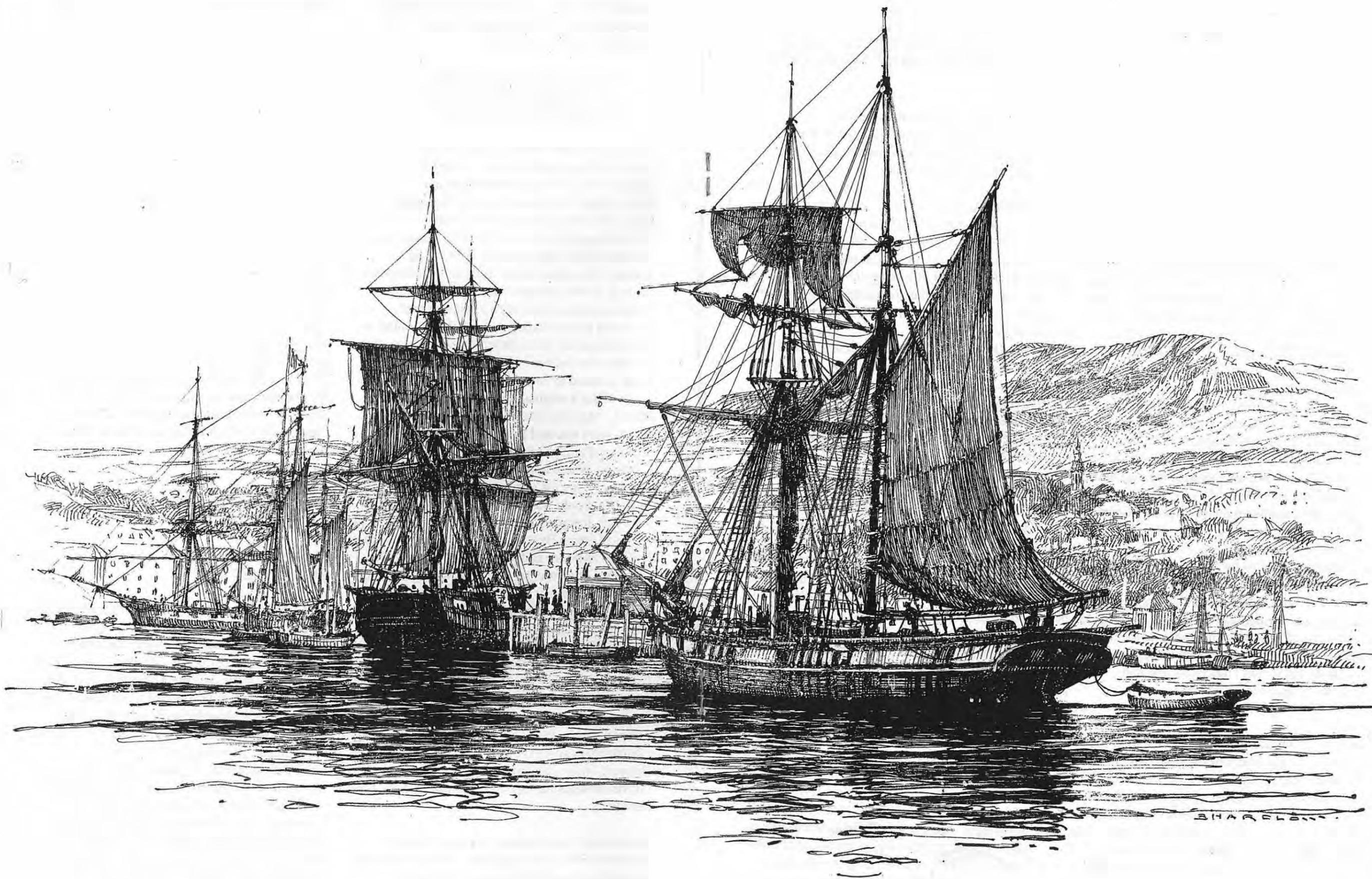
came out with his brother William and his sister's brother-in-law, George Lloyd, to whom Joseph was indentured as a mechanic (carpenter). After his failed attempt to 'build' *River Chief*, he is recorded as having worked on the boathouse for the new Pilot Station at Rottneest Island.

In confusion, let us return to the wrecked *River Chiefs*, one in Victoria in 1857, the other in NSW in 1865. Without primary source information I cannot determine which one is ours. To add to the dilemma, there was yet another *River Chief* built at the same Peppermint Bay as *Young River Chief*. Fortunately, this one was not built by a Morris or a Norris; she was built by a John Swinfield in 1865. There is even an inference that Swinfield's *River Chief* may have been a rebuilt *Young River Chief* for the latter went missing about this time with her register eventually being closed in 1868. Swinfield's *River Chief*, by the way, was lost on Bruny Island in 1918, so we can eliminate her from our enquiry. If *Young River Chief* was not rebuilt in 1865 then the timing of her disappearance is curious. Keeping in mind she was more commonly known simply as *River Chief*, I can't help but wonder if she is being confused with the other ships - and why not, everything else is.

There is a nice little addendum to the *River Chief* story:

#### **The Schooner *EAGLE* - in company with *RIVER CHIEF***

On 13 November 1849, *River Chief* made her last run into Hobart Town before returning to Melbourne to pick up passengers for San Francisco. Another vessel called at Hobart Town on that very same day, the 83 ton schooner *Eagle*. She was also on the cattle run across Bass Strait and frequently shared a berth with *River Chief* at Hobart Town. This is the same *Eagle* that arrived in Fremantle from England, 25 January 1830, under the command of Captain Pratt. She is also the same vessel that Governor Stirling hired to investigate reports of good land around Port Leschenault discovered by Lt Preston and Dr Collie some months earlier. On 3 March 1830, Governor (and Lady) Stirling, John Septimus Roe, Dr Collie and Lt Preston, a detachment of the 63rd Regiment, James Henty and certain other



The brig *River Chief* and the schooner *Eagle* at Hobart Town  
Drawing by Ross Shardlow



gentlemen volunteers, along with a boats crew from *HMS Sulphur* - departed on a 'voyage of discovery' from which we gained the name '*Eagle Bay*'.

*Eagle* got into a spot of bother on her return to Fremantle. The Colonial Storekeeper stationed at Garden Island, John Morgan, recorded in July 1830, that *Eagle* had been driven ashore, had been 'got off' and was under repair in Cockburn Sound. To effect the repairs, Captain Pratt employed a local carpenter - one Joseph Morris, the same Morris that later 'built' the *River Chief*.

Once repaired, *Eagle* set out for Hobart Town, soon to return with much needed supplies for the new Swan River Colony. Pratt continued to call at Swan River over the next six years on his run from Sydney and Hobart Town, to Mauritius and Timor. In 1835 the *Hobart Town Courier* recorded that Captain Charles Pratt's only son, Charles Edward Pratt, was drowned in an accident at Swan River. *Eagle* made just one more run to Swan River before Charles sold her to the ship's mate, John Maclean Dempster. She then entered the Bass Strait livestock trade and changed owners many times, including the Hentys. She foundered after striking a rock in Whirlpool Passage, was raised, repaired and put back in service - and on 13 November 1849, anchored alongside *River Chief* at Hobart Town.

On 16 January 1850, just ten days behind *River Chief*, *Eagle* also set out for San Francisco. Unlike *River Chief*, she was not carrying gold seekers. Her new owner, Robert George Gibbons, like many astute Tasmanian merchants at the time, was quick to realise that there would be a ready market for timber in San Francisco - and that Australia was closer to San Francisco than New York or London.

*Eagle* set out from Launceston with a cargo of timber under the command of Captain William Winter (accompanied by his wife and child), eight crew and John Robertson, the vessel's supercargo. Stopping at Auckland en-route to load more cargo, Captain Winter and his wife got into a domestic argument. Matters got a little out of hand and Robertson and some of the crew made the terrible mistake of trying to break up the dispute. Winter took exception and in the ensuing melee, stabbed

Robertson and one of the seamen. Winter was taken into custody, charged and gaoled. I do not know what happened to Mrs Winter. The ship's owner assigned a new master, John Gray, and the *Eagle* resumed her course for San Francisco, 19 March 1850.

She did not get far. Shortly after clearing Auckland, just after midnight, she struck a reef off Cape Colville to become a total wreck. Fortunately, no lives were lost.

### Ross Shardlow

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## THE SEA AND I

**This is Part One of some reminiscences by MHA member Lorna Kemp about her association with the sea. The second part will appear in the next journal.**

Dear Editor,

Your plea in Vol 14 No 1 March 2003 for newsletter/journal material struck a chord. As a one time sailing club newsletter "putter together" I can sympathise. I asked myself could I help. I didn't think so. After all, what do I know about ships and the sea? Why then am I a member of M.H.A.? Because my daughter and my son in law are involved and I too support the aims of the Association.

It all started me thinking and remembering with the following result.

Do I like the sea? Yes, I like to see, smell and dabble in it but it scares me in big doses and when too close up. Mind you, I'd hate to live too far away from it. Experience has taught me to respect it, to recognise the potential danger of it, and to be aware of the awesome force inherent in it. You guessed it! I can't swim.

When I was born in 1922 my mother was 34 and my maternal grandmother was 73. Nan lived with us until her death at age 86. As a child I heard her tell many stories of the past. The family lived near Banbury in Oxfordshire, England before emigrating to NSW on board the sailing ship Asiatic in 1855. The Asiatic was an 800 ton (954 tonnes) full-rigged sailing ship built in 1852 at Shields. They left England in December 1854 and arrived at Sydney on 23rd May 1855 after 5 months at sea.

"I had to attend school on board. We had our own cabin for father, mother, infant brother and myself. We had to part furnish the cabin, so there were many trunks and a big chest of drawers for all our clothes," she would say.

After arrival we are not sure of their movements but it is probable that they had relatives or friends at Parramatta. This was where they were living when great grandmother stitched up a tent house of strong canvas with the help of a bootmaker's sewing machine. Four months after the birth of a baby girl in March 1857, they moved into their

tent house in July 1857, erected on the cliffs at Bondi. This was not far from Waverley where their stone and brick house was nearing completion. Just weeks later on Friday 20th August a violent storm blew up and their tent house was ripped apart. Nan had vivid memories of that too. She never forgot seeing oranges and other possessions being blown along the ground and over the cliffs. It must have been a terrifying experience for a 7 year and a 2 year old to be part of

This night was also memorable to everyone in Sydney. At the nearby Gap a ship, the 1,321 ton clipper "Dunbar" was wrecked when attempting to enter The Heads. It is believed that the captain mistook being clear of the rocks at South Head because of the wild conditions. Squalls were lashing the ship and some of the passengers were on deck eager to see their new homeland, when the second mate called out that he could see breakers ahead. The captain gave orders to sheer off but the set of tide and waves made the manoeuvre impossible and the ship was flung broadside on to the rocks. The wreck was quickly battered to pieces by the waves and all on board were lost except one seaman, James Johnson who was cast up on a ledge. For some 36 hours he clung to the rock without food or water until a young 15 year old man by the name of Antonio Woollier climbed on a rope down the 200 foot drop and rescued him. Johnson later became a lighthouse keeper at Nobby's Head, Newcastle and died at the age of 78. THE CRUEL SEA?

The family moved into their unfinished and partly roofed house.

Seventy years later as a child I knew the Bondi and South Head area well. Many of my ancestors are buried in the old South Head cemetery steeply overlooking the Pacific Ocean. My brother Bill and I used to regularly visit the Harbour side beaches and often saw much flotsam and jetsam washed up there, as were many articles from the "Dunbar" wreck so long ago.



My other grandmother, the first white child born at Clareville near Newcastle, married my grandfather in Sydney in 1884. Her family emigrated from Oxfordshire to NSW in 1855 to take up a land grant for the Australian Agricultural Company in that area. My grandfather had arrived in 1879 with an elder brother from Hertfordshire, England. They came out to join their eldest brother Jim who had emigrated to NSW in 1867, married in Sydney 2 years later, and was Tipstaff to a NSW Supreme Court judge, Justice Harvey.

The youngest of Jim's three daughters, my father's cousins, married into a family with great Naval traditions, including three Admirals at least! Two of these also became Governors of NSW the third was Admiral Collinson of exploratory fame. Sir Harry Holdsworth Rawson K.C.B. Governor from 1902 to 1909, and Sir Dudley Stratford De Chair Rawson K.C.B., M.V.O. from 1924 to 1930.

They were a bit before my time of course and I have no memory of their governorship except for family mention of attending Government House Levees etc. at the time. However, when I first went to England in 1980 I visited St. Pauls Cathedral in London to take a photo of Sir Harry Rawson's memorial tablet there.

My paternal grandparents had lived first in Manly where my father was born in 1886, the eldest son of seven and there were also 3 daughters. They later built a house and settled at Newport where Dad finished his schooling. Robert or "Bobs" as my father was known, was apprenticed to a boat-builder in his early teens.

Apparently he also built himself a sailing boat and used to sail with his elder sister on Pittwater, according to an old letter preserved by the American cousins to whom it had been sent. This was pre 1914 before Dad joined the A.I.F. with four of his brothers. Three of them were killed (one in Gallipoli and two in France), one returned blinded and Dad returned with the Military Medal for bravery in France, spending some time in hospital in Sydney recovering from wounds.

Later he would hire a rowing boat when my brother and I were children to row across Pittwater to wonderful secluded beaches and to climbing up rocky waterfalls in which freshwater crayfish

could be caught. It was a delightful "bush" holiday when staying with my grandparents or, later on, at Dads own cottage built by him next door. It was so different to our normal suburban life in Sydney's western suburbs.

To get to Newport we took a double decker bus along the Parramatta, Road to Sydney, train to Circular Quay, then boarded the ferry to Manly. At Manly there was a train to Narrabeen and from there on to Newport by private hire car. Quite a journey. The whole trip was exhilarating to say the least!

Once aboard the ferry at Circular Quay, the clattering gangplanks were hauled onto the wharf and the side openings of the ferry closed. The ferry would edge away and soon the band would begin playing. Our spirits would rise with the steady thrum of the powerful engines, the slap of the waves and the views of the beautiful sparkling Harbour as we surged along. Soon we would beg a coin to be ready for when one of the bandsmen would leave the band to walk about shaking a long handled box for donations.

Everything was exciting for us. Watching the huge shining pistons rising and falling below in the hot oil-smelling engine room, trying to keep our feet on the constantly moving deck, looking at the Zoo from the water and anticipating crossing The Heads. Will it be rough? We hoped so, little knowing at the time what rough could mean. It was terrifying!

Those ferries, some built in England and having braved the long sea trip to Australia, caught the incoming long Pacific rollers from the Heads on the beam! One moment the rail would be framed by blue sky and the next by bottomless looking depths of dark green sea as the ferry rolled from side to side. People did get seasick but our parents, Bill and I were always lucky in that respect. On one trip we were on the last ferry to cross before it was considered to be too dangerous. However, I have never heard of a ferry rolling over.

My father tried to teach me to swim at Bungan Beach next to Newport Beach. Someone had blasted or drilled out a small swimming pool in flat rocks underneath one headland. It must still be there. Quite often we were the only people on the



beach and looked upon it as our own. Whilst we played in the pool or on the sand near mother, my father would fish with his rod further out on the rocks. One day, when he had given up trying to teach me to swim, he was fishing off the nearby headland point whilst I was looking for cunjevoi off the rocks for his bait. Seeing a particularly juicy looking lot in one of the rock sided, sandy channels, I was hacking away at the very tough stuff when a big wave (maybe a tenth?) swept in over my head. Clutching at the cunji and some seaweed on the rock I managed to hang on when the wave receded in a great undertow rush. It was a stern lesson but even more scary for poor Dad who watched helplessly his 10 year old daughter's pink cotton sun hat being swept around the point on the tide, wondering if I was with it. The DANGEROUS SEA?

We were told about various family connections who had come out from England. From Gt. Gt. Grandfather who arrived on "Orpheous" in 1826 with the NSW. Royal Veterans Company to siblings and cousins who had arrived in various ships - 1839 "Strathfieldsaye", 1842 "Palestine", 1844 "Neptune" and 1856 "Herald".

Apart from regular holidays at Newport, 11 miles from Sydney, my brother and I had little contact with the sea or ships. Occasionally my father's English cousin would visit. He was Chief Steward with the P & O Line. As children we eagerly awaited his visits as he always brought gifts from England, "Girls Own" manuals and such. Also, to the great novelty of being lined up under a light switch in our house, to see if we had grown as tall or taller than Rowley. He was a neat, small, dark haired man with the most fitting of all seafaring names- Rowland Knott, and he walked with a most pronounced rolling gait.

We went aboard all of these liners when they were berthed during the 1925-40 era and on many occasions saw the "Orama", "Orontes" and "Oronsay" off when he left. Our house was always well equipped to make looped Xmas decorations from the streamers we collected when they sailed.

I was one of the schoolchildren who walked on the roadway across Sydney Harbour Bridge when it was opened in 1932, and later attended Fort Street Girls High School situated close to the bridge ap-

proach. Little did I know then that a few years later I would be back at the same school attending night classes to learn Morse code. The Air Force required a speed of sending and receiving Morse at 15 words per minute before one could enrol in the WAAAF as a wireless telegraphist. Once enrolled we were sent to Toorak, Melbourne for further practise and training until we could send and receive 25 words per minute. Only the Navy required a higher rate of 30 words per minute.

My brother had always wanted a career in the Navy but was only aged 16 in 1942. So he joined the Sydney Training Depot Naval Cadet Organisation, training youths for eventual service in the regular Navy. Six months after joining he obtained his seamanship ticket in a theory and practical examination. He then volunteered for the Navy Auxiliary Patrol which had been formed under the Emergency Services Act to relieve the R.A.N.V.R. full time personnel of minor naval tasks in Sydney Harbour and environs. He was on duty during some of the midget Japanese submarine attacks on Sydney Harbour. The first time during a night raid he was on board "Seamist" patrol vessel. The second time on board "Seafarer" they were standing off Pinchgut when one of these submarines sunk the "Kuttabul", an old ferry being used as a depot ship for sailors from HMAS "Rushcutters".

Bill and others heard the BANG but were at the time unaware of what had happened. Unfortunately 20 sailors were killed in this incident.

Bill enlisted in the Navy in September 1943 but his employer, the P.M.G. Dept, wouldn't release him. So, for the time being, he served in the H.Q. of the 1st Australian Army postal unit until in June 1944 when he was released by the P.M.G. to enlist in the R.A.A.F.- a far cry from the Navy!

So, my real connection to anything resembling seafaring came with my marriage in 1944 to my late husband Brian, who must have had some of the proverbial seawater in his veins because of his "addiction" to it. His family appears to have originated in Sussex but research so far has found no connection with the sea at all in England. Over the years in Australia however, since 1832, the family became very involved. Living by the water, building small ships - both river and coastal craft, and taking part in many marine sports. Peter Kemp, a



great uncle of Brian's, was world champion sculler in 1889, and his Gt. Grandfather, also named Peter, was drowned in 1898 when the coastal boat "Little Nell" overturned on a trip from Newcastle to Sydney. He was then aged 83 and said to be a strong swimmer but was unable to get out of his cabin and all attempts to free him were unsuccessful.

Aged 14 Brian tried running away to sea but was reprimanded and told to go home by the ship's captain he had approached. He later joined a Light Horse regiment, then the Royal Australian Engineers stationed at North Head, Sydney, before transferring to the A.I.F. during the war. He was stationed at Darwin during the Japanese bombing raids and later was stationed at Bougainville.

After the war and our first of three daughters was

born, he had a great dream of sailing around the world in a small yacht. Knowing nothing of sailing, and having a great respect and awe of the power of so much ocean against non swimming me, I wasn't overly enthusiastic. Coping with a baby at sea in very cramped circumstances also tended to discourage me as we looked at boats of all kinds for sale. One remains fresh in my memory. It was a 28 foot sailing/cruiser on which someone had built a funny, round roofed construction on the stern. This was to house a toilet! but had become the most striking aspect of the whole. Luckily, the only suitable yachts were beyond our means and we built a house instead. Incidentally, Brian had connections with the First Fleet. Asst. Surgeon Thomas Arndell was his 4th Great Grandfather.

*To be continued....*

## Questions & Answers

Having a particular relationship with the editor, he tries out the quiz questions on yours truly before they go onto the back page of the forthcoming journal. This is quite an interesting exercise. Sometimes I know the right answer. Sometimes I haven't got a clue as to what the question is about. Most often I have a vague idea – my mind skitters around the topic and once I am given the right answer both question and answer make sense.

But Ray Miller has definitely made me realise how little I really do know about nautical matters. Ray has loaned Peter an interesting little booklet called *1000 Questions and Answers in Practical Seamanship* by C.P.O. John McLean, D.S.M., M.S.M., published in 1944.

Below I have given some of C.P.O. McLean's questions, followed by common-sense answers, and then the C.P.O.'s answers. I feel that he did not have a good grasp of nautical situations.

Question: What precautions are taken before letting go an anchor from a boat?

My answer: Make sure the other end of the anchor cable is tied onto something solid in the boat.

C.P.O.'s answer: To take the depth of the water.

My answer: Who cares! If the anchor is not tied on, it's GONE.

Question: What are wet provisions?

My answer: ANY provisions can get wet. So can sleeping bags and Ugg boots. The process is easy. It's often caused by an excess heel coupled with an open porthole, but there are many other methods to do with following seas and open hatches.

C.P.O.'s answer: Rum, vinegar, salt pork, salt, and lime juice.

Question: If your boat is sent to bring off paymaster and money, what would you take in the boat before leaving ship?

My answer: Before leaving in ANY boat, I would take a seasick pill. There has been controversy lately about Travacalm, but several other brands are quite good. Better still, if the sea looks choppy, take two.

C.P.O.'s answer: A buoy and a buoy rope.

Jill Worsley.



## Raven

**This article by Brian Lemon details his building of the model of the cargo steamer which sails on Lake Windermere.**

Some while ago I saw a model of the Lake Windermere cargo steamer *Raven* which was being built by a friend of mine. I was much taken with its somewhat unusual layout, particularly the boiler on the long open deck, and when he had finished I was able to borrow the plans. I decided to build my model just as the plans showed the ship, but to add some bits and pieces to it to give the impression of a workaday vessel.

*Raven*, of course, was steam powered but the model is fitted with a 6-volt Descaperm geared (2-1) motor. As is my usual practice with working models I determine the size or scale by the amount of internal space needed to accommodate batteries with a capacity sufficient to give at least two hours sailing without recharging. In this instance I found that the model would have to be about 47in (120cm) long, equivalent to a scale of approximately 1/18.

Construction was straightforward. With the keel laid I erected eleven frames along its length, and proceeded to plate it with many shaped plates of 1.2mm ply. I made the fore end of the hull, for a length of 10in (25cm) from the stem aft, absolutely watertight to act as an air tank, since from this point aft the whole deck would have to lift off to give access to the interior.

As building progressed I became more and more fascinated by this unique craft. The nicely shaped areas of the hull below the waterline at bow and stern, plus the fact that when seen in profile the hull appeared to have no shear (although in reality there was just enough) all added a delightful quality to *Raven*.

Once the hull was finished I turned to the decking. As almost the while of this was to lift off for access I made up a very rigid and complex frame and covered it completely with 1.5mm ply. On top of this I laid some twenty-six planks 3/8in wide. The butts were staggered and had simulated securing trunnels. Before laying the planks I lightly sanded their edges. To me the slight variation caused by

doing this gives the impression of a well worn deck. Another feature of the vessel which shows to advantage is the camber of the deck.

The lack of superstructure did not mean that the above deck detail was simple; far from it. The crane, which is fully working on the model, was made up from brass sections and shaped pieces of wood. The large and small gears on the starboard side are a matched pair given to me by a fellow modeller. The smaller pair on the port side are plastic, and required several hours of patient filing and shaping to obtain a perfect mesh, as they were not originally a matched pair. The various shafts are brass rod, bushed with brass tubing and set into the frame of the crane. The hook and its weighted ball came from a Meccano set.

The glazed central 'hatch' has lids which hinge upwards, and the stacked 'cargo' below is actually the lid covering the large 6 volt 11 amp battery which gives more than the required two hours sailing. The tiller attached to the rudder stock turns, as the rudder is operated by a straightforward servo mechanism below deck.

The boiler is approximately 37/8in diameter and 43/4in high (98.4 x 121mm) and was 'plated' with four sections of 0.8mm ply glued and riveted to a wooden framework. The funnel was turned to shape on a lathe from a piece of aluminium tubing. The engine cover is wood, as is the reversing lever. There are over 200 fine brass rivets in these two items alone. The bilge pump was made up from various bits and pieces, and the wooden operating handle was turned in a drill.

The portholes are commercial items, as is the large central air vent. This had to be modified and have the cowl fitted with a fine wire mesh grill. The access hatch or companionway by the crane has a hinged cover, but the others are permanently closed. The ventilator right forward, which started life as a plastic commercial one, needed much alteration to make it right. All the small deck and 'atmosphere'

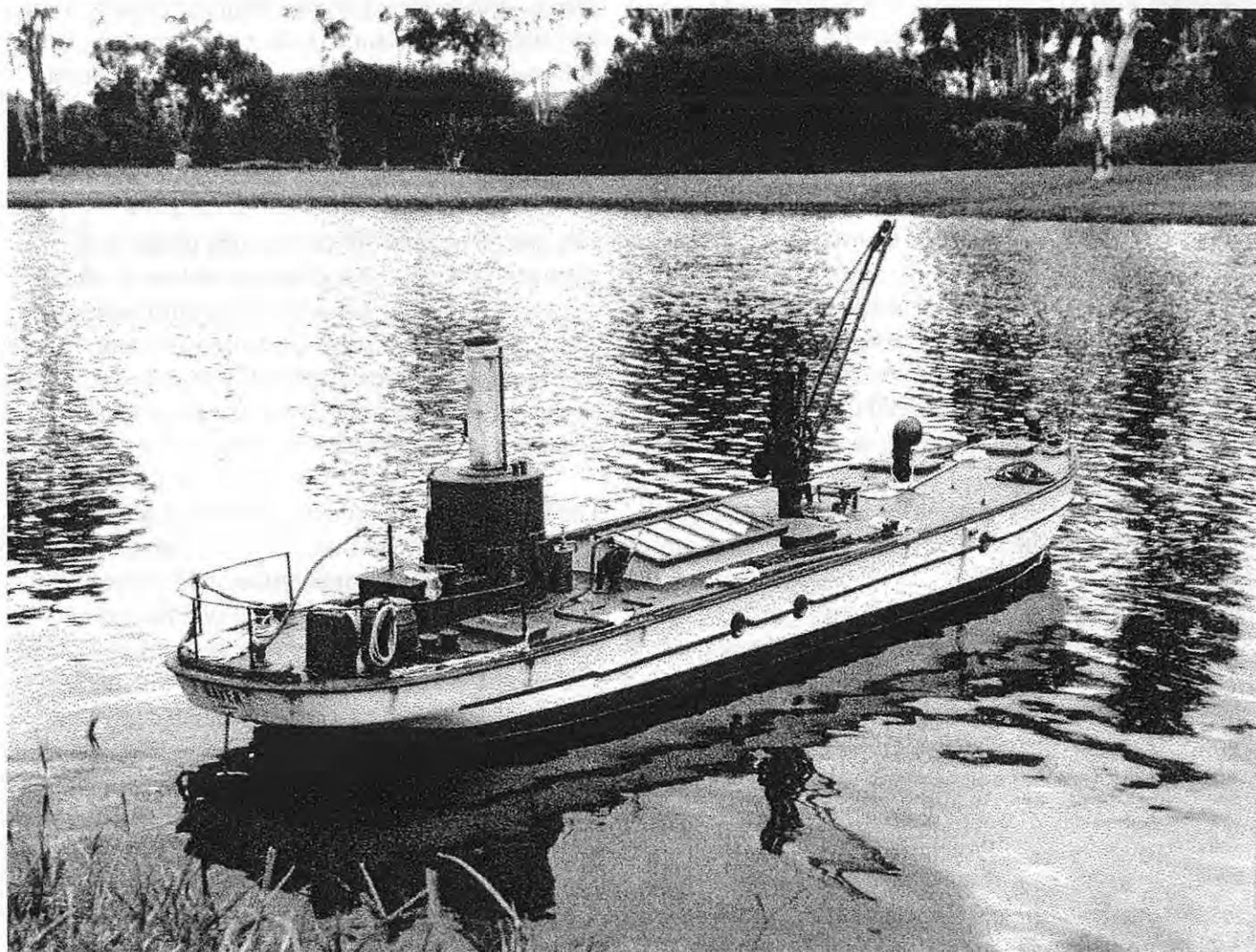


details such as the bucket, drums, spade, hand tools and so on were made up from odds and ends of scrap materials. The model looks very good when under way and handles well.

### History

*Raven* was built by T.B. Seath & Co., Rutherglen, in 1871, to the order of the Furness Railway Company. The riveted iron hull was 71ft 10in long by 14ft 9in beam (21.89m x 4.49m). The single cylinder steam engine, taking steam from a coal-fired vertical cross tube boiler, gave a speed of 10 knots. Her principal role was carrying all manner of goods and materials from the company's railway terminus at Lakeside (at the southern end of Lake Windermere) to the many

settlements and houses along the shores of the lake. In winter she was also called upon frequently to act as an icebreaker for the Railway Company's lake passenger steamers. By 1922 improved roads and road transport had made her redundant, and she was sold to Vickers Armstrong for use as a floating test vessel. But by the early 1950s she had been abandoned, become derelict and sunk. A few years later she was salvaged, restored, put into full working order, and repainted in the original Furness Railway Company colours. She is powered by her original steam engine, and now forms part of the Windermere Steamboat Museum's collection of historic vessels. Plans of the *Raven* can be purchased from the museum.



Model of steamship *Raven* by Brian lemon.



# MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

## Our History

The Maritime Heritage Association was formed in 1989 to promote a living and working record of Western Australian maritime heritage, and to foster national and international interest in our maritime heritage for the benefit of the local community and visitors.

## Aims

- ◆ To promote, encourage and support the preservation, restoration and knowledge of Western Australian maritime heritage by providing resources and facilities for employment, education and training in all aspects of maritime heritage.
- ◆ To invite and encourage public participation in all these activities.

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Please forward remittance to:-  
Peter Worsley (Treasurer),  
12 Cleopatra Drive,  
MANDURAH, Western Australia 6210.



# QUIZ

## Answers to March 2003

1. Dirk Hartog in his ship *Eendracht* placed his plate on 26 October 1616. Willem De Vlamingh in the *Geelvinck* placed his plate on 4 February 1697.
2. Pelsaert Island was named by Clement Wickham, commander of *HMS Beagle*, because he thought wreckage found there came from the *Batavia*.
3. The captain of the mythical *Flying Dutchman* is Vanderdecken.

## Questions

1. The wreck of the *Alacrity* lies near Woodman Point. When was the *Alacrity* built and what was her original name?
2. Flotsam, jetsam and lagan are terms in law. What do they mean?
3. What is a bull rope?

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