

MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

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Annual General Meeting

at

12 Cleopatra Drive
Mandurah

on

Sunday 7 April 2013—10 am

Come for morning tea and stay for lunch

Those spouses and friends not involved with the meeting upstairs, please bring along some handcraft, or a photo of a home where you have previously lived (or both!)



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 Ross Shardlow who may be contacted on 9361 0170, 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.)

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

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EDITORIAL

On Sunday 25 November 2012 MHA members and friends gathered at Hicks' Private Maritime Museum for the annual windup and Christmas party. It was estimated that about 90 guests attended over the course of the day. Included were two book launchings. These were introduced by Ross Shardlow.

Firstly, the recent publication of Rod Dickson's "Maritime Matters" series. These invaluable books, published by Hesperian Press, cover the coast of most of WA, and represent a vast amount of research by Rod. They cover the Shipping Arrivals and Departures and other maritime related matters from 1800 to 1900. The seven volumes have a regional coverage—South Coast, South-West, Mid-West, Carnarvon/Gascoyne, Shark Bay (Part A), Shark Bay (Part B) and Cossack. The final series covering the port of Fremantle is still being researched, and itself will amount to a number of volumes by the time it is completed.

Rod's books are actually a joint publication by Hesperian Press and the MHA, and feature the MHA logo on the title page. This is MHA's first involvement in publishing. Nick Burningham bestowed an Honorary Life Membership on Peter Bridge of Hesperian Press for his services to Maritime Heritage.

Secondly, came the launching of *Capes of Sunset*:

Western Australia's Maritime Heritage Between Peel Inlet & Flinders Bay. This book, researched and written by Peter and Jill Worsley and edited by Jeremy Green is published by The Australian National Centre of Excellence for Maritime Archaeology (Publication No. 15), Department of Maritime Archaeology, Western Australian Museum, Fremantle. A copy of this book was presented to Barry Hicks by the MHA President, Nick Burningham, as a token of our appreciation in allowing members to hold the gathering there, and to thank Doris for the effort she (and her helpers) put in to providing the marvellous food (see photographs by David Nicholson).

Vice-President Geoff Shellam gave an address on the MHA's progress and future directions.

Opposite—photographs by David Nicholson, clockwise from top left:

Nick Burningham presenting Barry Hicks with a copy of Capes of Sunset.

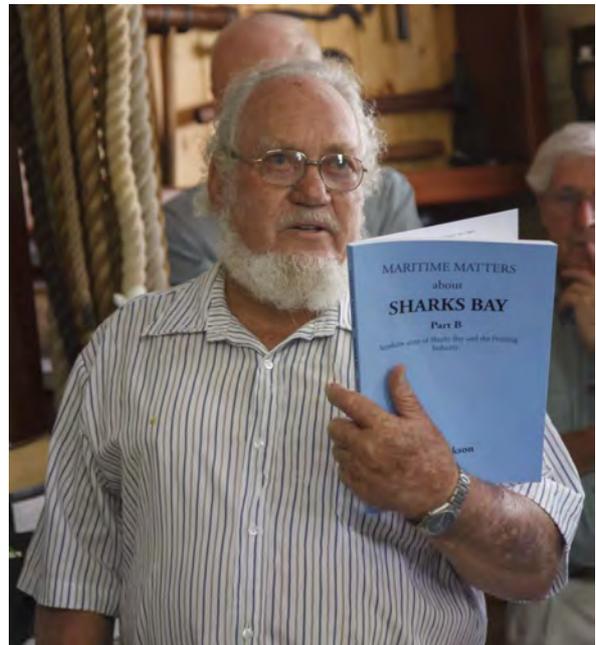
Ross Shardlow laying down the law.

Jan Miller with a model by Ray.

Rod Dickson with his latest publication.

Len Randell, W.A.'s leading naval architect

Brian Lemon who always opens proceedings by ringing the bell.





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!)



Zopissa—Tar or pitch scraped off the bottom of old ships, and thought to be astringent and good for ulcers.

In April 1838 the paddle steamer *Sirius* was the first ship to cross the Atlantic under continuous steam power. It beat the *Great Western* by four hours after a voyage of 18 days 10 hours.

The first screw propelled ship (and the first iron hulled vessel) to cross the Atlantic was the *Great Britain*, leaving Liverpool on 26 July 1845 and arriving in New York just under 15 days later.

The first steamship in the Dutch Navy was named *Curacao*. The paddle steamer was built by J.H. & J. Duke in Dover, UK, in 1825 as the *Calpe*. In 1826 the 438-ton *Calpe* was sold to the Dutch Navy and armed with five 36-pdr and two 6-pdr guns.

The first German liner to hold the Blue Riband for the Atlantic crossing was the *Kaiser Wilhelm Der Grosse* in 1897, with an average speed of 22.35 knots.

The Royal Navy's most powerfully armed battleships were the *Nelson* and the *Rodney*. They were the only British ships to be armed with nine 16-inch guns, which fired a shell weighing 2,461 lbs. Britain's last battleship, the *Vanguard*, had eight 15-inch guns.

The whale ship *Charles W Morgan* has been undergoing a major refit which will culminate in it sailing again. Most of the structure is original, including the 1¼" black locust trunnels which make up the majority of the fastenings. This speaks highly of trunnels, as these have lasted 171 years.

Les Johnson tells the story of the visit to Albany on 16 June 1929 of an RAF Vickers Supermarine flying boat. The pilot of the plane was Group Captain H.M. Cave-Brown-Cave. The port doctor

at Albany was Dr Holme, and the conversation went:

"Captain Cave?"

"It's Group Captain Cave-Brown-Cave, if you don't mind. Who are you?"

"Oh, I'm Dr Holme-Sweet-Holme".

The first small yacht to round Cape Horn was an Australian yacht, the Perth-built replica of Joshua Slocum's *Spray* named *Pandora*, with George Blythe and Peter Arapkis on board. They rounded Cape Horn on 16 January 1911.

The fifth single-handed yachtsman to round Cape Horn was the Australian Bill Nance in *Cardinal Vertue* on 7 January 1965. The first (in 1934) was the Norwegian Alfon Möller Hansen in *Mary Jane*.

In 1749 the VOC ship *Amsterdam* was wrecked near Hastings, UK. When archaeologists excavated the wreck in the 1980s they uncovered a bottle of red wine. When this was brought ashore it still had to pass through Customs.

The VOC ships *Lastdrager* and *Kennermerland* were both wrecked in the Shetland Islands, UK, the former in 1653 and the latter in 1664. On both vessels maritime archaeologists discovered the heads of golf clubs.

The Spanish ship *Nuestra Senora de la Santisima Trinidad*, built in Havana, Cuba, in 1769, was the only ship of the line to mount four complete decks of guns. The biggest ship in the world throughout its career, it was 220.6 ft long, 58 ft beam and 2,475 tons BM. It carried 136 guns.

During the eleven year period 1 January 1873—31 December 1883, a total of 3,153 ships were lost and 17,157 seamen went down with them.

1 International nautical mile = 1.852 kilometres.



Ships of the State Shipping Service

By Jeff Thompson

No: 31 Nyanda Official Number: 355141

The last of the unit-loaders to be obtained was a sister ship to the *Transmichigan* and this was the *Transontario*, also from Poseidon Schiffahrt GmbH of Hamburg. It arrived at Fremantle on 9th January 1973 from Hamburg with an Australian crew. Alterations were then carried out at H Shed, Victoria Quay, Fremantle, by Evans Deakin Industries to meet Australian and operational requirements of the State Shipping Service.

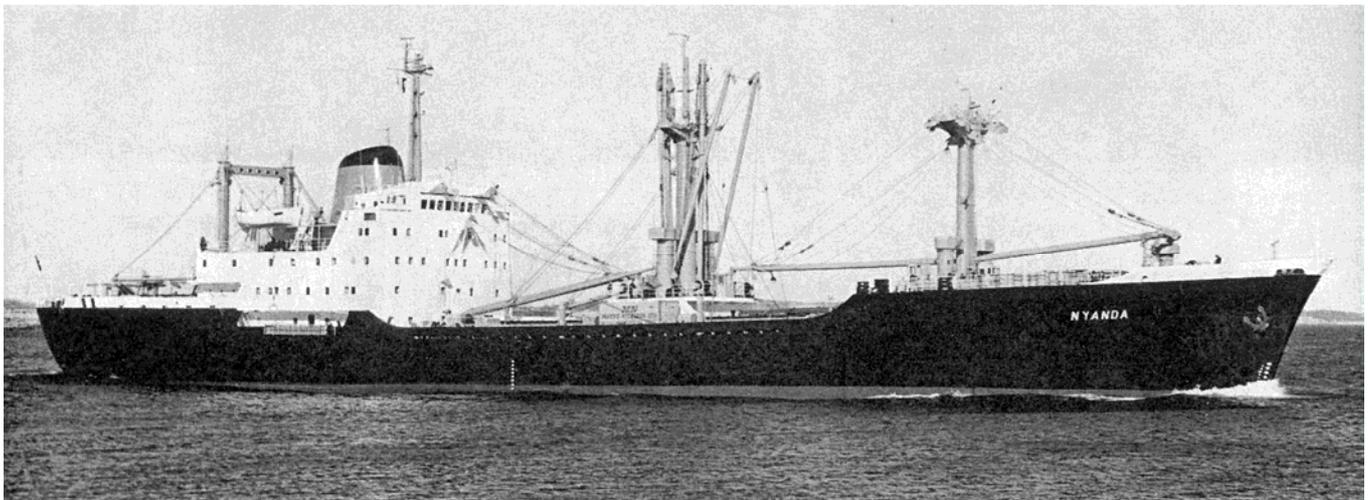
The alterations were completed in April 1966 by Mitsui S.B. & E. Co (Yard No 728), Tamano, Japan. The *Transontario* was 6,103 gross registered tons, 7,723 deadweight tons, 130.9 metres overall, 17.6 metres breadth, 6.84 metres draught. One 6 cylinder Mitsui - B. & W. type 6-62VT2BF140 diesel of 7,200 bhp gave a service speed of 17 knots. It was also strengthened for navigation in ice.

As *Nyanda*, the vessel left Fremantle for Darwin on her first voyage on 13th July 1973.

On 25th December 1974 the *Nyanda* was the first ship to enter Darwin harbour shortly after Cyclone Tracey had devastated the city, and provided the only communication link with the outside world for several days. Other assistance was also given by the ship and crew to the community until some other arrangements were able to be organized within the city. With the arrival of the *Darwin Trader* (from eastern Australian ports) and with her cargo operations completed the *Nyanda* sailed from Darwin on 29th December 1974.

On the 30th August 1981 the *Nyanda* left Fremantle on her last voyage for the State Shipping Service.

On 16th October 1981 the *Nyanda* was sold to the China Ocean Shipping Co., (COSCO), Beijing, and renamed *Yu Ying*, for use as a training ship. During 1984 the vessel was transferred to Dalian Ocean Shipping Co. (COSCO - Dalian), retaining the same name. Still listed in Lloyds Register 2005/06 under the same name and owners but now with accommodation for 12 passengers.



Letters Of Marque And Reprisal

Privateering is well-known as a private enterprise sanctioned by governments in time of war. It is less well-known that it (technically) lasted until the Paris Declaration Respecting Maritime Law was signed on 16 April 1856. This abolished Letters Of Marque And Reprisal which had previously authorized privateering.



Can You Help?

This pennant was found under the floor boards of an elderly house in South Guilford by MHA member Julie Taylor. It is off a Dutch submarine, and is presumably associated with the Dutch submarines stationed at Fremantle during World War II. The colours are dark blue background with white writing and faded red, white and blue Dutch flag.

The Dutch did not have their own depot ship at Fremantle, and while some were housed in the USN Receiving Barracks at Finnerty Street, many of the sailors chose to find their own accommodation with families in the metropolitan area. This pennant is presumably associated with a sailor or sailors who lived in the house presently under restoration.





Scott's Ship *Terra Nova* Found

The following article is from the ABC

An American research team has discovered the ship that carried Captain Robert Falcon Scott on his doomed expedition to the Antarctic. The wreck of s.s. *Terra Nova* was found by researchers from the Schmidt Ocean Institute while they were mapping the ocean floor off Greenland.

Captain Scott and his party set off from Cardiff aboard the ship in 1910, hoping to become the first expedition to reach the South Pole. But the 65-man expedition was beaten by a Norwegian team led by Roald Amundesen, whose party had reached the South Pole five weeks before. Captain Scott disembarked from the ship in Antarctica, planning to return after making his journey to the South Pole. However disaster struck and Scott and half his team never made it back to the ship.

The *Terra Nova*, which was originally built as a whaling ship, was re-bought by its original owners and used for seal hunting. It also supplied US ba-

ses in World War II and eventually sank in September 1942.

While mapping the seabed, researchers noted there was a feature that they could not identify. Upon further inspection, they discovered that the length of the object was 57 metres, which matched the reported length of the *Terra Nova*.

Marine researcher Leighton Rolley, who was on board the research vessel, says the find is an "exciting" achievement. He says researchers were able to lower a camera into the depths to confirm that the anomaly was indeed the sunken ship:

"The camera footage also identified the funnel of the vessel, next to the wreck," he said in a report for the Institute. "The forecastle of the vessel appeared to be 'peeled' upwards to the port side and at an angle from the rest of the ship. The team compared the funnel image with historical photographs of the s.s. *Terra Nova*. All observations jointly identified this wreck as the sunken ship."



Herbert Ponting's photo of the *Terra Nova* in which Scott sailed on his expedition to the Antarctic in 1910



The Last Fight of the USS *Edsall*

This is the story of the last battle of a ship that had a close association with Australia. It operated out of Australian waters and took part in the action that sank the Japanese submarine *I-124* off Darwin.

Note: The times given in this story are Japanese Navy/Tokyo times, as the only records of this battle are those of the Japanese Navy.

By 1942 the four-funnel Clemson-class destroyer USS *Edsall* was an old vessel, having been launched at Philadelphia on 29 July 1920. It was commissioned into the US Navy four months later. The 1,190-ton vessel was 314.5 ft long with a beam of 31.75 ft, and was armed with four 4" and one 3" guns and 12 torpedo tubes. Its 26,500 shp turbines gave it a nominal top speed of 35 knots. The normal number of crew carried was 101, but when World

December 1941, en route to Batavia (now Djakarta), it was diverted to Singapore, from where it sailed to search for survivors from the sinking of HMS *Repulse* and HMS *Prince of Wales*. During this voyage it captured a Japanese fishing trawler, *Shofuku Maru*, and escorted it and the four barges it was towing towards Singapore. Before reaching that port the vessels were turned over to HMAS *Goulbourn* and then taken on to Singapore by a crew from the Australian corvette. This trawler was later re-named *Krait*, and became famous for its association with raids into Japanese held territory, particularly the 1943 raid by Z-Force on Singapore.



USS *Edsall*

War II came to the Pacific this number was increased to 135.

During the 1920s and 1930s the *Edsall* served in various places around the Pacific, and by December 1941 was based in Balikpapan, Borneo. On 8

USS *Edsall* then served for some time in the waters between northern Australia and Indonesia, and across to Christmas Island. It was one of the four ships that attacked and sank the Japanese submarine *I-124* off Darwin on 20 January 1942.



The other three ships were the Australian corvettes HMAS *Deloraine*, HMAS *Lithgow* and HMAS *Katoomba*. Three days later *Edsall* sustained a damaged stern when one of its own depth charges exploded prematurely during an attack on another submarine.

In the morning of 1 March 1942, with 32 USAAF personnel from the recently sunk seaplane tender USS *Langley* on board, *Edsall* headed for Tjilatjap in Java. Here the flyers were going to assemble and pilot new aircraft (Curtis P-40 fighters) shipped to that port.

Earlier, on 25 February, Admiral Nagumo's Carrier Strike Force (carriers *Soryu* and *Akagi*) sortied from Staring Bay at Kendari, Celebes, and entered the Indian Ocean with the mission "to cut off any escape of the Allied Forces."

Nagumo's Support Force consisted of the Third Battleship Division (battleships *Hiei* and *Kirishima*) and the Eighth Cruiser Division (heavy cruisers *Tone* and *Chikuma*). As fate would have it, the old destroyer *Edsall* had the misfortune to meet this formidable force on the afternoon of 1 March 1942.

At a position about 250 miles south-south-east of Christmas Island the cruiser *Tone* was the first to spot *Edsall* at a distance of 15 miles to the north-west. Twelve minutes later *Chikuma* also sighted *Edsall*, turned, and opened fire with her 8-inch guns at 1730 hrs. The range was extremely long at 21,000 meters (11 nautical miles) and all shots missed. Immediately, *Edsall's* skipper, Lieutenant Joshua James Nix of Memphis, Tennessee, laid down a smokescreen and began a series of evasive manoeuvres that were to frustrate the Japanese for the next hour and a half.

At 1747 hrs the battleships *Hiei* and *Kirishima* opened fire with their main batteries of 14-inch guns and ordered all units to attack the American destroyer. They began firing at a range of 27,000 meters (14½ nautical miles) and their shots also missed the target. At 1756 hrs Lieutenant Nix courageously turned his ship directly towards *Chikuma* and closed the range so as to fire his torpedoes and 4-inch guns, but his shots fell short.

Chikuma stopped firing at 1800 hrs when she entered a rain squall and *Edsall* laid down smoke.

However, the intensive fire from all four Japanese ships resumed when the hapless American ship became visible again. Because they were shooting at such long ranges, Lieutenant Nix was able to observe the flash of the guns and turn his ship in time to avoid being hit. He did so approximately every minute. He also abruptly varied his speed from full speed to full stop and back again, while making turns as much as 360 degrees. Since *Edsall* had suffered the damage mentioned earlier off Java when one of its depth charges exploded too close astern, its performance had been reduced, its maximum speed was now 26 knots, and there was no hope for it to outrun the enemy and try to escape. It could only stay on station and avoid destruction as long as possible.

Japanese naval gunnery was relatively poor during the early stages of the war, often wasteful and ineffective. The attack on *Edsall* was a prime example. The official history of Japan's navy states that some 1,335 rounds were fired in the engagement, but, until near the end of the battle only one round found its mark. However, the action reports of *Tone* and *Chikuma* show that two direct hits (*meichu*) were made on *Edsall*, one by *Hiei* at 1824 hrs and another by *Tone* at 1835 hrs. Still, this is an extremely low percentage and much of it is to the credit of Lieutenant Nix's superb ship handling under the worst possible circumstances.

So frustrated were the Japanese commanders after an hour had passed that an order went out to the nearby Carrier Strike Force for the assistance of aircraft. Nine Type 99 dive-bombers from *Soryu* and eight from *Akagi* (other reports say a total of 26) attacked *Edsall* from 1827 hrs to 1850 hrs, even while it made smoke for the fourth time. The planes scored a number of hits with eight 550-pound bombs and nine 1,100-pound bombs, setting *Edsall* on fire in what the Japanese called a raging conflagration (*kasai*). Whether because the destroyer was now out of control or Lieutenant Nix made a final courageous gesture of defiance, *Edsall* now turned directly toward its pursers and came dead in the water.

The battleships and cruisers pounded it relentlessly with their secondary batteries until it went down at 1901 hrs in position 13° 45'S 106° 45'E, 430 miles south of Java. Subsequent Japanese naval reports on the battle referred to it as a "fiasco".

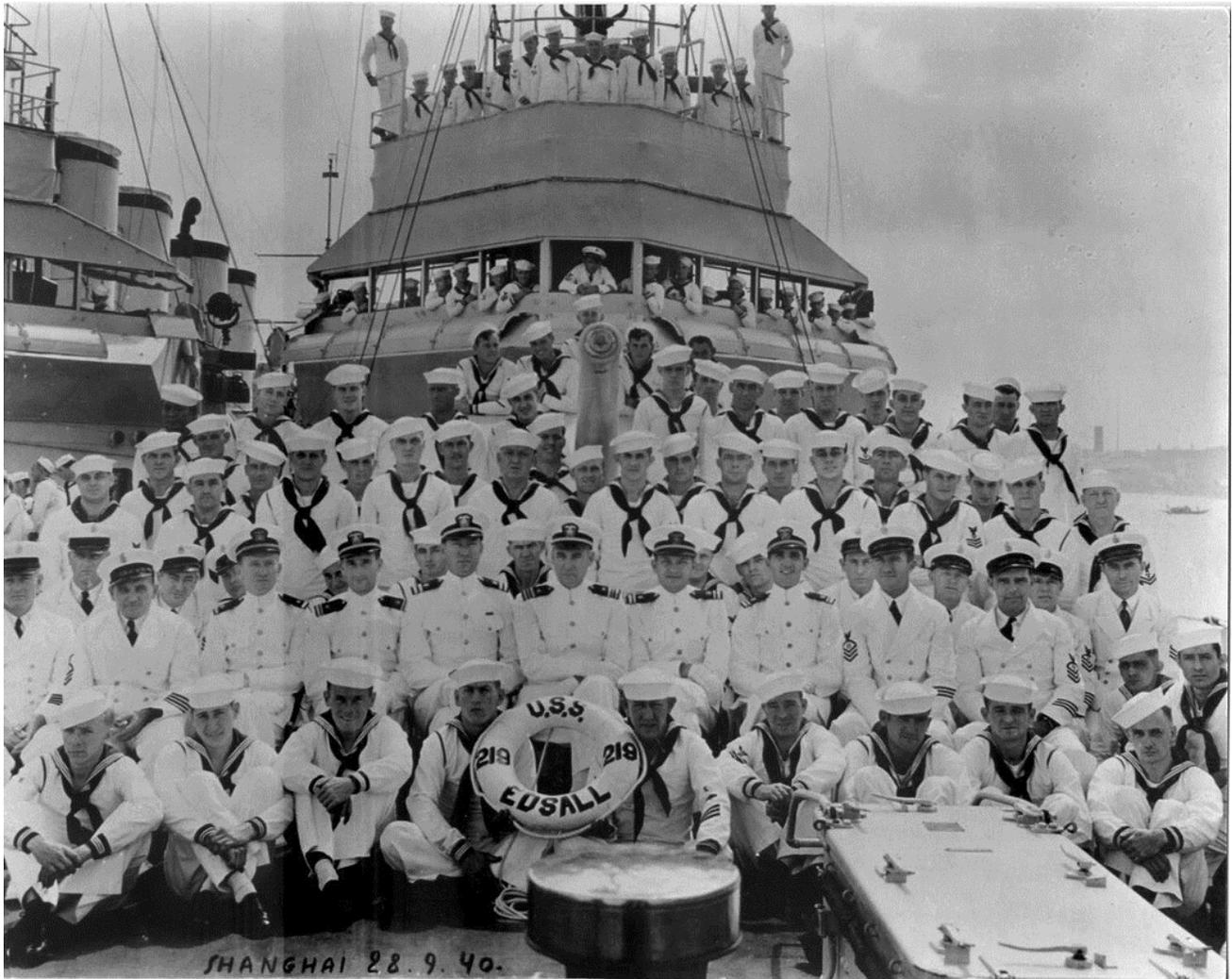


The cruiser *Chikuma* picked up an undetermined number of survivors, but most were abandoned in the sea due to a submarine scare. Under interrogation they revealed the name of their ship, which appears in *Chikuma*'s log as "Edsooru." The *Edsall* survivors were taken to a POW camp on Celebes and nothing further was ever heard from them. After the war, the US Army Graves Registration Service identified the remains of six sail-

ors from *Edsall* and five of the USAAF personnel among 34 decapitated bodies in two graves found 1,000 miles from the site of the battle.

Lieutenant Nix and his crew never received any official recognition for their heroic stand.

Peter Worsley



A 1940 photograph of the crew of the USS Edsall

More on the *Splendid*

In the Ditty Bag in the MHA Journal of June 2012 mention was made of the whaling barque *Splendid* coming to grief when being beached to check for leaks. Ron Parsons' *Australasian Shipping Record* (April-June 2012) published further details from the latest edition of *New Zealand Shipwrecks*:

...by February 20th it had been decided to dismantle the remains and close its register. The *Splendid*, ON 61018, was built in Massachusetts, USA, in 1835 with dimensions of 109.5 ft by 27.2 ft beam and depth of 8.2 ft, and was purchased from New Bedford owners by the Otago firm of Cormack, Elder & Co. Commanded by Captain Mellon, it left on its first whaling voyage from Port Chalmers on 27 October 1874. It had been enrolled as a British ship at Dunedin in 1874.



A LITTLE SELF INDULGENCE

Nick Burningham

Over the last decade I've built a couple of dozen models of traditional and historic sailing vessels for various clients, and back in the 1980s I built several for the Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory. But until recently I hadn't built a model as a pastime, for my own enjoyment, since I was a lad. Towards the end of last year I found myself with more spare time than I'd had for a while, so I built a model of an Indonesian perahu lambo — the type of perahu I used to sail around on back in the 1970s and early 1980s.

Perahu lambo weren't the most exotic or traditional *perahu* to be found in Indonesia. There's a fairly obvious connection between the development of the Australian pearling lugger and the *perahu lambo*. Arguably the finest luggers were those built in the Aru Islands for Clark and Co. The *lambo*'s rudder on the sternpost, the elliptical counter stern, and the sloop, cutter or ketch rig of *lambo* were all features with western origins. Indeed the elliptical counter is historically quite recent. Yet, the *perahu lambo* from various islands were distinctive and distinguishable; they represented local traditions, and they continued to develop and change until the last decade of the 20th century.



At this stage in the construction the similarity to a pearling lugger is obvious.

For my model I chose to build a design and style that was already a little old fashioned when I first went to Indonesia in 1975. The stem is raked forward only a few degrees from plumb, the counter stern is long and has a slightly hollow cross sectional shape below the waterline. The long deckhouse has low sides and a fairly high gabled roof, thatched and covered with bamboo slats.

My paint job is similarly old fashioned — dark green with red trims on white and cream ground, with decorative triangles and diamonds on the washboards and deckhouse doors. The white below the waterline is *pelepa* — a kind of lime cement or putty which set rock hard and kept teredo worm out.

Some islands and villages had more-or-less standard liveries. The one I've used is from Bonerate and with very slight difference could be from Binongko. But by the late 1970s some perahu owners were trying out bright new colour schemes every year when they repainted after the wet season lay-up. And some owners favoured battleship grey because they could buy it cheap ... stolen from navy stores.

The vessel I've represented would have been gaff-rigged when she first sailed, but by 1975 nearly all had been converted to gunter rig, often with a tall mast that raked and curved aft. Initially I preferred the old gaff rig, but it was inescapably the case that gunter rigged vessels could sail closer to the wind, and their gear was lighter and easier to handle. The gaff-riggers had enormously long



gaffs. In the case of ketches the gaffs were significantly longer than the booms. The gaffs were high peaked, so the peak halliards were pulling in almost the opposite direction to the throat halliards which put a lot of strain on the gear in a stiff breeze. In the end I came to see that the gunter rigged sloops with their tall, raking and curving masts could be very pretty.

Designing the model by measuring relative proportions from photographs I was surprised by how tall many of the masts were. I've given my model a relatively modest rig. Some of the rakish *lambo* that I particularly admired had enormously tall rigs. Bowsprits were sometimes half the length of the hull, and the boom always projected well beyond the stern (and the toilet box on the stern).





Alert 1813

The letter below and accompanying drawings are from an old copy of *The Yachting Monthly*, date unknown but I think about 1912-13. It is interesting to note the writer's distinction between brig and brigantine, based as much on whether the mainmast is a two-piece or three-piece mast as on the sail plan. Was there much distinction between the two rigs in 1813 when this vessel was planned?

Alert 1813

Elements of Construction
H.M.S. *Cruiser*.

Sir, - I am sending you a copy of sheer draft of the above vessel and trust it may prove reproducible and of interest to your readers.

The small discrepancies in the water line offsets from the sections appear on the original draft, and I have not corrected them; the sections being struck with compasses from spots on a given curve makes it difficult to ensure perfect intersections, especially with the curved water lines.

I can find nothing of the history of the vessel in any of my old books, nor any information on her birthplace.

Note on the design the poor head-room, especially in the ward-room cockpit, presuming the space provided with an ornate glass-fronted cupboard is sawbones' sanctum.

A sketch sail plan, showing her probable rig, is also enclosed. Owing to the angle of the main chain plates on the original drawing, it is obvious that her mainmast was a three-piece one and, therefore, that she carried main top-sail and main top-gallant sail, and was not a brigantine, as we understand the term, viz., fore and aft rigged only on a two-piece mainmast.

I also send you a table of elements of a similar ship of the period. This may be of interest.

L.W.L., 99ft. 8in.

Beam extreme, 30ft. 9in.

L/B at W.L., 3.25.

Draught for'd, 12ft. 4in.

Draught aft, 14ft. 10in.

Mean draught/Beam ext. 0.444.

Greatest section for'd of amidships in terms of L.W.L., 0.041ft.

C.B. for'd of centre of L.W.L., 0.015ft.

Block co-efficient, 0.405.

Mid. sect. co-efficient, 0.671.

L.W.L. co-efficient, 0.805.

Moment of stability tons at 10°, 422.

Height of centre of effort, 45.6ft.

C.E. for'd of C.B. in relation to L.W.L., 0.002ft.

Sail area in relation to area of amidship section, 39.8.

Sail area in relation to disp. (cub. ft.), 0.58.

Complement of men, 130.

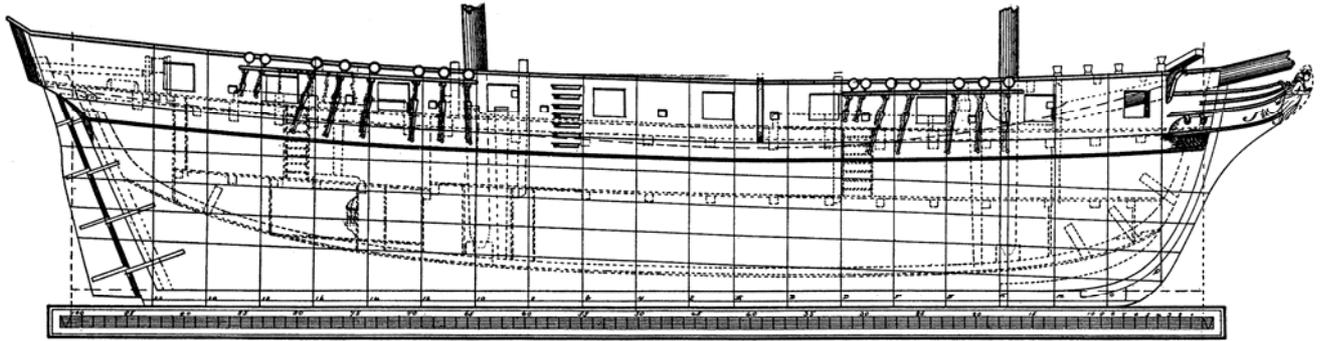
W. Lindahl Brown.

Things They Would Rather Have Not Said

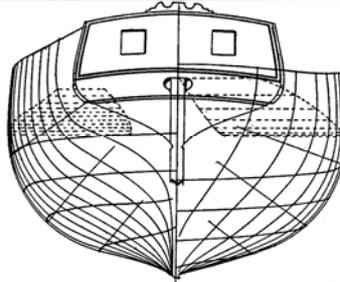
The R101 is as safe as a house.

Lord Thomson of Darlington, Secretary of State for Air, 1930.

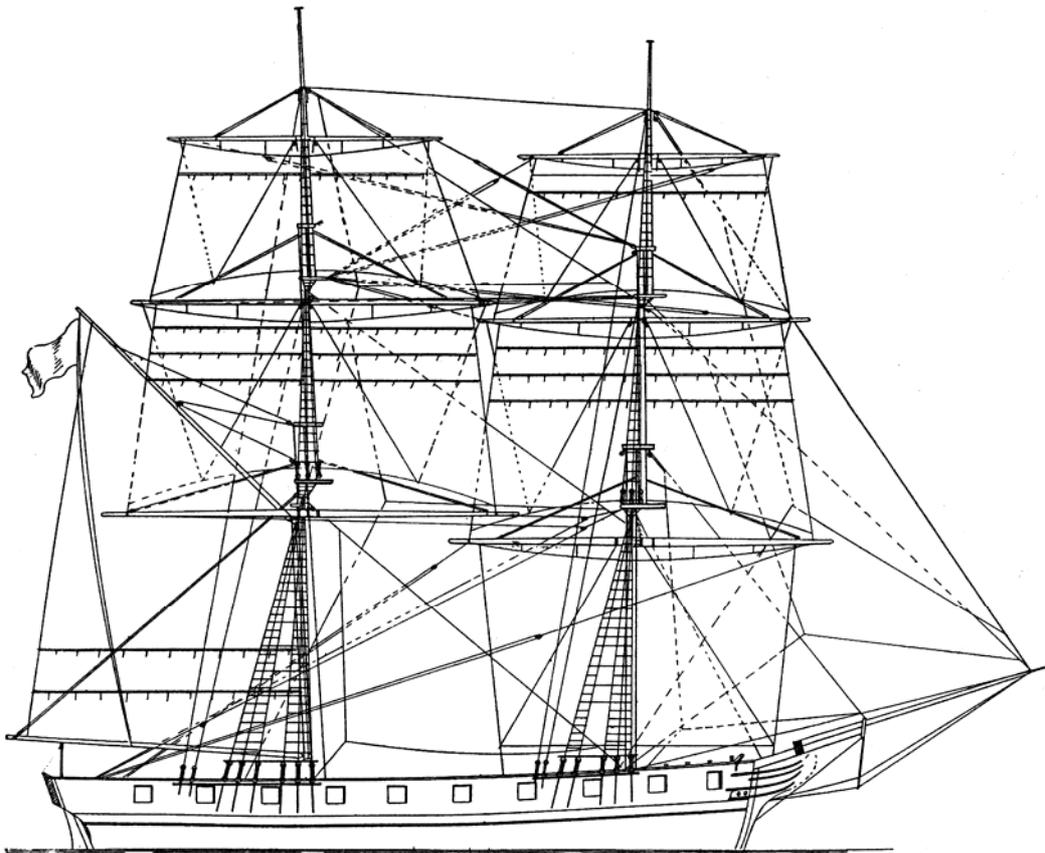
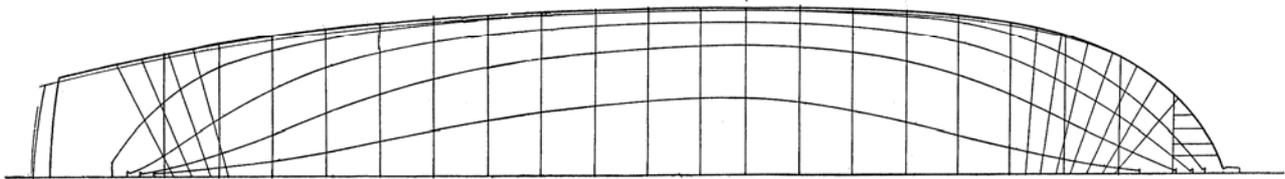
Lord Thomson was one of twenty-eight men killed when the airship R101 crashed into a hill near Beauvois early on the morning after he made the above statement.



HIS MAJESTY'S BRIGANTINE
ALERT OF 16 GUNS (1813).



Length on the range of the deck,	100ft.
Length of the keel, for tonnage,	77-3ft.
Breadth, extreme,	30-5ft.
Breadth, moulded,	30ft.
Depth in hold,	12-75ft.
Burthen, in tons,	382 $\frac{3}{4}$ ft.



PROBABLE RIG OF ALERT, 16 GUNS (1813).



She's Plain But Glamorous

This article by Trevor Tuckfield was published on page 27 of the *Western Mail* of 16 November 1950.

Dawn was breaking when I first saw her and I wondered who she was. Unobtrusively, during the night, she had crept in to an anchorage off the shores of Onslow within a stone throw of a reef patch and when the tropical sun rose to blend its blood-red rays with the apple green water, this unlovely thing of rough but tough timbers, sea-scarred and weather-beaten, rolled languidly to the swell, her dinghy in its davits and her crew below decks sleeping a well earned rest.

To the North-West squatters and the coastal steamships, the *Nicol Bay* is a cargo lighter that has just earned a place in the annals of the North-West. To a shiplover, she is glamorous, which according to the dictionary means a magic influence causing a person to see objects differently from what they really are. And looking at the *Nicol Bay* from a Hollywood angle she certainly does appear glamorous, and the adjective would most decidedly bring a slow grin to the weather-beaten face of the taciturn Norwegian seafarer, Captain Mathieson who, as master-owner has plugged up and down this coast with this grand old ship for a quarter of a century.

The *Nicol Bay* has all the "glamour" of Masefield's "Dirty British coaster with salt-caked stack" – and in like manner this sail and power propelled 70-ton lighter has "butted" along this coast in all kinds of days lightering wool and weird assortments of commodities to and from ships and to and some of the least accessible places on this inhospitable Nor-West coast. One peep at this serrated coastline of the north, which on the map looks as though drawn by a palsied inebriate - with its extreme tidal ranges of anything up to 36 feet; with its tidal stream and races of anything up to 10 to 12 knots in some confined spaces; with its seasonal roaring cyclones and cock-eye-bobs that sometimes break wind gauges before they can register over 120 m.p.h.; that smash, rip, tear, and carry unsuspecting luggers to a sudden end in a howling tumult of wind and water! with reefs, surf and sandbanks and its lack of shelter from such

prevailing storms – it would make even the average mariner shudder. But perhaps after skipping *Nicol Bay* in and around such waters for twenty five years, Capt Mathieson may well be regarded as above the average.

That snarly little inlet with its rock-bewhiskered entrance called Nicol Bay, just south-west of Cossack, is historical as a scene of some of the first attempts at settlement in the Nor'-West. It was after this bay that the little ship took her name. It was on April 4, 1863, when Mr Walter Padbury chartered two small vessels, the *Mystery* and the *Tien-Tsin*, to convey his party north from Fremantle. They finally landed at this bay. In March, 1864, Mr Withnell sailed for Nicol Bay in the *Sea Ripple* with 650 sheep, five horses and two cows and took up land some distance in land and settled near where Roebourne now stands, to establish the first sheep station in the immediate district.

As Nicol Bay was one of the earliest Nor'-West settlements, its seems a fitting name for this small ship that has weathered this part for so long. She is at home at Port Hedland, but liable to turn up, unheralded, at any wild-looking place along the coast - chugging in with some sheep, a brace of prize rams or some fencing wire and leave again with a deck cargo of wool.

Some-one asked Capt. Mathieson if he used a sextant.

"Wouldn't know how to!" was his laconic reply.

He just aims in the general direction of Timor and makes a landfall with as little fuss and bother as a ferry arriving at the South Perth Zoo jetty. A compass and the Hedland Tide Tables book is all he needs. The former gives his course and the latter his drift. From the tables he knows when and where the tide is wetting him off his course and with the nonchalance of any old Viking he corrects his course accordingly and usually makes a more or less perfect landfall some days later. There are some who suspect that he can navigate the coast by the bark of a dog on shore.



But the highlight of the *Nicol Bay*'s career (with which of course you bracket Capt Mathieson - as the two have grown to be one) was during World War II - in that shocking holocaust when a number of Dutch seaplanes with refugees were caught unawares by Japanese planes refueling in Broome and were bombed and destroyed with much loss of life. The *Nicol Bay* as one of the supply ships and carrying a cargo of high octane petrol. for refueling the seaplanes, immediately wove in and out around the burning aircraft, plucking survivors from a watery and fiery grave - expecting any moment to go sky-high if a Jap bomb or tracer bullet from an aircraft machine gun came their way. For that gallant service and rescue the captain (and others) received a medal from Queen Wilhelmina of Holland.

Other small ships of the early Nor'-West days, like *Flying Foam*, *Tein-Tsin*, *Sea Ripple*, H.M.S. *Cossack*, *Beagle*, *Roebuck*, *Cygnets* have had their names perpetuated by having bays and places named after them. But as was mentioned, the *Nicol Bay* has made more or less certain of perpetuity by adopting the name of an existing bay, and when the last of the lighters disappears from the Nor'-West coast, it is to be hoped history will not allow the glamour of this ship to diminish.

Particulars of the vessel:

Nicol Bay

Official Number:	140154
Where Built:	Fremantle
Year built:	1925
Registered:	Fremantle 1/1926.
Rig type:	Auxiliary ketch
Hull:	Wood
Length:	65.4 ft
Breadth:	20.5 ft
Depth:	7.1 ft
Tonnage:	56.19 tons
Engine:	70 HP Bowman petrol
Builder:	W.H.S. Lawrence, Perth
Owner:	Cossack Lightering & Trading Co.
Captain:	H. Matheson.

On 6 September 1959 *Nicol Bay* sank near Cockatoo Island after striking a reef in calm weather. At the time the vessel was under charter to Pearls Pty Ltd, and making its 35th voyage to their cultured pearl farm at Kuri Bay, 450km north of Broome. The crew of five and two passengers were rescued by the vessel *Otamu* belonging to Pearls Pty Ltd, and landed at dawn on nearby Cockatoo Island at the east of the Buccaneer Archipelago, W.A.

Correction

In the Ditty Bag in the December 2012 journal I stated that Mill Point used to be called Point Belches. This is incorrect. A perusal of a UBD shows that Mill Point is a small promontory on the western side and Point Belches a similar landform on the eastern side of what is generally known as Mill Point.

Small Boat across the Pacific—1883

I recently found an interesting item in an early Albany paper. Does anyone know any more about this attempt to sail to Australia in a small boat 130 years ago?

The vessel *Alfred Villory* arrived at Hervey Bay, Queensland, on 1 February 1883 and reported picking up a boat with a man named Gillays, who said that he left San Francisco on 12 August 1882 for Australia, and he had been 162 days out. When he was picked up he was 'extremely starved, having been thrice capsized and lost most of his provisions, his watch, compass, &c. The boat is only 18 feet long, and the man is an American, about thirty years of age' (*The Albany Mail and King George's Sound Advertiser*, 7 February 1883: 3b).



Messing About in a Field of Janggolans

Nick Burningham

The MHA Journal has indulged me by publishing my accounts of the voyaging in Indonesia and North Australia that I undertook when I was young and interesting. By the last decade of the 20th century I was entering dull middle-age and did relatively little voyaging. A research field-trip to Indonesia in 1994 included a short voyage on a perahu janggolan. It was my usual practice to carry a notebook for writing notes on a field trip, and second notebook in which I wrote up a journal in the evening. The following is an edited and annotated version of a journal. In places I have changed the tense because it records events that took place nearly 20 years ago and I have removed the more arcane technical data.

24 March 1994 My trip from Fremantle to the airport was delayed by mist, even fog. The first autumnal morning of the year, after five-months with no rain. The mist caused many dusty power line insulators to short and set fire to power poles. Much of Perth was gripped by a power cut and all the traffic lights had failed.

At the airport there was only emergency power so check-in was very slow. But we took off for Bali only a few minutes late and arrived on-time. On the flight I chose "Steamed cod in ginger and lemongrass sauce". I think I never ate a more flavourless dish.

In Kuta I booked a seat on the night bus to Pasuruan, in East Java, and then wondered how to wile away an afternoon of light rain. I found myself sheltering from the ceaseless rain in a place called *The Pub*, so I ordered a cold *Bir Bintang*. Brewed with technological assistance from *Heineken* it is a fine beer. And I struck up a conversation with a couple from Wickham, at whose suggestion I stayed for a couple more couple-mores. In the late afternoon gloom I made my way to Ubung bus station on the northern side of Denpasar, whence the night bus to Surabaya (via Pasuruan) would depart. I found the bus and had my luggage loaded. About the time it was scheduled to leave, I got onboard and found the driver with his two assistants trying to repair the air conditioning. The bus was less than half full, for which reason the driver was probably in no hurry to fix things and get on the road. We sat for nearly an hour, sweating, before we were all herded off to another bus which was scheduled to leave at 20:00. It was not quite as spacious and comfortable as the "Super VIP Class" bus we were booked on, but the air-con worked.

We were on the road by 20:30, and I was pleased to find that buses were not quite as recklessly driven as they had been a decade or two previous. I was sitting next to a young man who taught English at a high school

in Siben, East Java, but originated from Sreseh, Madura – the place where most of the *perahu janggolan* originate from and the main goal of my trip. He gave me information about how to get there and assured me that there are still many *janggolan* trading, though most would be laid-up for the wet season.

25 March After traversing Bali, crossing Bali Strait on a ferry from Gilimanuk, stopping for a meal in the middle of nowhere in the middle of the night, the bus dropped me at Pasuruan at 04:30, a little before dawn. I took a *becak* (trishaw) to the Hotel Pasuruan where I waited while a room was made-up and then slept for a few hours.

I was up again at 09:30 and headed down the wide main street, turned right towards the market, wandered slowly through the market savouring the fragrance of the spices, and then to the harbour which is a river mouth.

The first *perahu* I saw as the harbour came into view was an auxiliary ketch, about 15-16m long with a graceful *pantat bebek* (literally a "duck's bum" but actually a canoe-counter stern). She was from Ujung Pandang (Makassar), or more likely one of the off-lying islands. There was a small, local *perahu pedetan*, and beyond her a *janggolan* unloading salt. I was relieved and delighted to see traditional, engineless *perahu* were still working. [Each time I returned to Indonesia I feared that the traditional *perahu* were gone forever. But in 1994 it was not yet true.]

The *pedetan* [I wrote in my notebook] were unusual *perahu* in that they had their maximum beam aft of midships.

The *janggolan* was unloading salt to a cart drawn by two Brahman bulls. The captain told me that he had arrived the previous night and would leave again tonight. With luck, the trip from Madura took only a few hours and he would make three or four trips per month.

The harbour was fairly crowded with fishing boats because it was full moon – fishing off the north coast of Java is always unproductive at full moon. Most of the fishing boats were of modern motorboat design with flat transom sterns. There were a few old *perahu konteng* with their tall prows cut short, and rather more *perahu ijon-ijon* of relatively recent construction with fat, capacious hulls. Both types carried only tatty auxiliary rigs and had steel rudders mounted on steel pintels and gudgeons on the port quarter in place of the long, traditional quarter mounted rudder. They all fished with *payang* nets (purse seine) which are shot from the starboard side – hence the port-mounted rudders. I talked to a few fishermen. Most were Madurese but a significant proportion were Bugis from the Gulf of Bone, Sulawesi. Some of



A *janggolan* entering Pasuruan, seen over the bow of a *pedetan*.

the fishing boats had names such as *Bone Indah* (“Beautiful Bone”). I talked with old Pak Olil, a dried fish merchant who spent his days sitting around the harbour, watching fish dry and chatting with fishermen. The fish were not drying quickly on that morning. The weather was as steamy and windless as it could be — real end of the wet season weather which was entirely appropriate about a month from the end of the wet season.

One of the Pak Olil’s friends asked had a been to Mount Bromo. It is an active volcano and a tourist destination. I said that I hadn’t.

“It’s not far” said Olil. “We go every year for a traditional religious ceremony”, which sounded like an interesting pre-Islamic tradition.

The afternoon was wet, but after 16:00 the rain reduced to a light splatter so I went down to the harbour again to have another look at the *janggolan*. The tide was out and all the vessels were sitting on the mud, partly dried-out. I could see that the *janggolan* had a very slack-bilged midsection — one way of producing a reasonably easily driven hull capable of sitting upright on the mud.

The rain started in earnest again as I returned to the Hotel. I was expecting my friend and fellow *perahu*-researcher Jeffrey Mellefont from the Australian National Maritime Museum to arrive during the day, but he was not yet there. I went to the Hotel’s restaurant which was empty.

“Are you serving food?” I asked.

“Yah, yah” said the girl scuttling backwards into the kitchen.

She returned a minute or two later, “*Nasi Goreng*” she announced.

“Only *nasi goreng*?” [fried rice].

“Yah, hanya *nasi goreng*.”

I agreed to *nasi goreng*. “And I will have a cold Bir Bintang.”

“Bir Bintang finished. Coca-cola?”

“Terima kasih, I will eat elsewhere”.

But I wandered the wet and muddy streets and could find nowhere that looked remotely like it might serve a meal and beer. I settled for *nasi campur telur* [rice with a curried egg and trimmings] and cold tea.

Jeffrey finally arrived after I’d turned the light out.

We talked till midnight and slurped a little duty-free brandy.

26 March Jeffrey intended to sleep in, and perhaps I might have done the same thing, but the restaurant phoned at 06:00 to ask did we want tea or coffee with our breakfast. It took them an hour to make the coffee and *nasi goreng*.

The day was already hot and sweaty by the time we went down to the harbour. A few *janggolan* had come in with salt cargoes during the night, and also a big motorised *perahu golekan* from Banyu Atas, Madura, with a cargo of timber from Kalimantan.

We went on board some of the newly arrived *janggolan*, and collected the nautical terms used by the *janggolan* sailers from Sreseh on several boats. They all used the same terms and were quite clear that there was a technical name for every part of the rig and the hull. However, pronunciation was quite variable and there was no agreement about how words should be spelled. I decided to prefer the pronunciations and spellings offered by the captain and two crew of a *janggolan* called *Juara Perdana* (“Champion Financier”). They were helpful and expert, and had no difficulty distinguishing which bit of gear I was asking about.

Next we walked a little way out of town to the coastal village of Panggung Rejo where in 1980 a Dutchman, Thomas Johannes Meynen, had bought an open, 5 metre long *perahu pedetan* to sail to Australia. After a few near capsizes he had fitted outriggers from a rather larger *perahu katir* at Pasir Putih about 60 miles down the coast to the east. Little is known about his voyage of



A newly arrived janggolan, full almost to the top of the cabin roof with salt.

over 1000 nautical miles to north Australia. He must have island hopped down the Lesser Sunda archipelago, and he probably took his departure from Rote Strait at the southern tip of Timor nearly 500 nautical miles from Darwin. His landfall on uninhabited Grosse Island south of Darwin on the Thursday before Easter was doubly unfortunate. He was spotted walking on the island by a coastal surveillance flight but he took no notice of the aircraft according to the flight crew who also saw his boat on the seaward side of the island. There were no surveillance flights over the Easter weekend back in those days when there were few refugees trying to reach Australia by boat and Indonesian traditional fishing in northern waters was ignored. Whether it was policy to suspend surveillance during public holidays, or the aircrew executed minor sabotage on their the aircraft so they could get on the grog is probably better not investigated.

When flights resumed, the boat was on the other side of the island, the side facing the mainland across Bynoe harbour, and Thomas Meynen was dead. Had he ignored the coastal surveillance flight on the previous Thursday because he was already delirious with fever or dehydration will never be known. The official investigation revealed little. The Customs and Immigration team who

recovered the body made a half-hearted attempt to scuttle the boat, apparently by shooting a hole in the bottom, and a few days later a team from the Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory (including me) were allowed to go and recover her. Some parts such as the rudder were missing, there was a kerosene lantern and very few other possessions. There seemed to be no water containers. I wondered whether Meynen had sailed onto Grosse Island in the night, unawares, and had lost possessions and gear in the surf on the windward/seaward side of the island. Presumably he hoped to be rescued there having been spotted by a low-flying aircraft which made a number of passes. His end must have been miserable. Even during the day with a breeze blowing the sand flies were terrible, as we discovered when we went to recover the *perahu*. There was little shade other than mangroves, no water, and it is difficult to say whether he was lucky that a crocodile didn't take him.

Some people, including the local boat builder at Panggung Rejo, remembered Meynen. He was perplexed, thinking that I had come to investigate the origins of the boat, called *Perawan* ("Maiden"), because it had only recently reached Australia. It was fourteen years since Meynen had set out.

Next we went to the Harbour Masters office to look at the books recording the coming and going of *janggolan* and other *perahu*. The harbour master (or *Syahbandar* to give him his official title derived from medieval Persian) was away on a training course in Surabaya. But his staff, who Jeffrey knew from a previous visit, were amazingly helpful. Not only were they happy for us to look through their books and discuss how *perahu* were measured for tonnage (it was done by looking out the window and guessing). They agreed to our sailing to Madura on a *janggolan* and they would help to make the necessary arrangements. Most harbour masters are utterly opposed to any such voyaging by foreigners. *Perahu* were not licensed to carry passengers.

The deputy harbour master took us to the house of Haji Husni, the main salt merchant or agent of Pasuruan. The Haji told us that the salt business was in terrible decline. Salt was currently Rp 12,000 per tonne (about Aus \$8) he said. I had paid twice that in 1980 when I bought sacks of salt as ballast. Government regulations were forcing the Indonesian food processing industry to use clean white salt, much of it imported from Australia. No one wanted the coarse, slightly grey salt from Sreseh, Madura.

It turned out that Rp 12,000 was an absolutely rock-bottom price for salt at the salt flats with certain deductions, but the price of salt was low, particularly for the time of year. Salt was only made during the dry season. The salt flats became fish farms during the wet season which would end in April. However, salt-makers stock-



piled salt in thatched shelters hoping to sell for better prices towards the end of the wet season and to avoid completely glutting the market in the late dry season.

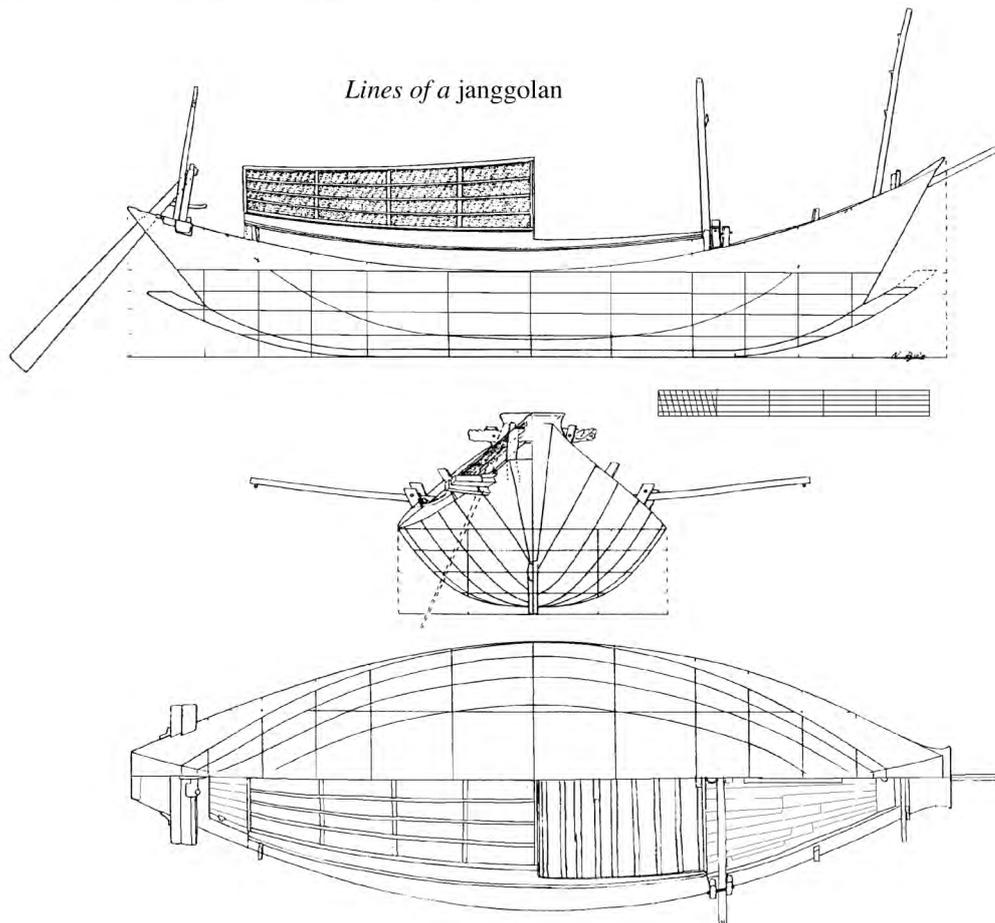
The Haji told us that there were still hundreds of *janggolan* carrying salt and also many larger ones in the timber trade. Haji Sedik from Terebung owned more than fifty *janggolan*, mostly big ones. The salt carriers were all of a standard size – 15m long, 5m beam and capable of loading 35-40 tonnes of salt with no freeboard midships.

Jeffrey and I went to Pasaruan's only smart restaurant for lunch. Like everywhere else it had no beer. I'd noticed that even "medicinal" tonic wine (*Anggur cap Orang Tua*) was not available in Chinese shops. Religious fanaticism was increasing its sway all over the Islamic world. I don't remember whether we were aware of it at the time. We asked why there was no beer and one of the restaurateur's daughters kindly asked should she send out for some?

We had a very pleasant meal and the restaurateur, a Haji who had no objection to our drinking a beer, came to chat with us. He was obviously in declining health and looked tired and dispirited at times, but he had flashes of humour. He knew some English. Rather to my surprise, he said that English was a useful lingua franca for the Hajj. He'd made the pilgrimage to Mecca and

Medina five times. Arabic was very useful, but most of the waiters, drivers, porters and people one had contact with in the Holy Land were Philipinos and Indians who spoke English. The Haji had interesting theories on linguistics. He said his own language, Bahasa Madura, was not really a language, just a mix of Javanese, Indonesian, Bugis, Banjar and Balinese with its own peculiar pronunciation. He agreed that it might once have been a distinct language, but it was buried under loan words brought home by travellers and mariners, for the Madurese are indeed great travellers and seafarers. Certainly Madurese seems to share more words with Malay than the languages of Java and islands further east.

It rained much of the afternoon. Writing up my journal, sitting outside the hotel room in the late afternoon, I was interrupted by an elderly gentleman who was a touch senile. His main trick was asking for money, starting at Rp 5,000 and bargaining himself down to Rp 1,500. He did tell me about his experiences in the war, albeit rather confusedly. And he told me that he'd known a man who later became a famous violin player, but he couldn't remember his name. When he wasn't asking for money he was possessed of a quiet dignity, and it was evident that someone was keeping him very neat and clean, but he couldn't keep his thoughts in order long enough for real conversation.





QUIZ

Answers to December

1. The older vessel is HMS *Victory*, launched in 1765; USS *Constitution* was launched in 1797.
2. A gale has winds of 34-40 knots, a storm has winds of 48-55 knots.
3. Matilda Bay was named after the wife of John Septimus Roe, first Surveyor General of Western Australia (see below). Matilda, born 1808 and died 22 July 1870, arrived in WA with her husband on board the *Parmelia*.

Quiz

1. Who was the first Australian to complete a single-handed yacht circumnavigation?
2. James Stirling arrived in Western Australia on the *Parmelia* in June 1829. Who was the captain of the *Parmelia*?
3. What is the name of the only known Dutch East-Indiaman to be driven onto the coast of Western Australia on the homeward voyage from Batavia to Holland?



Matilda Roe: wife of Western Australia's first Surveyor General, John Septimus Roe

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