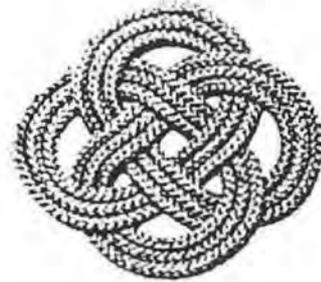


# MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

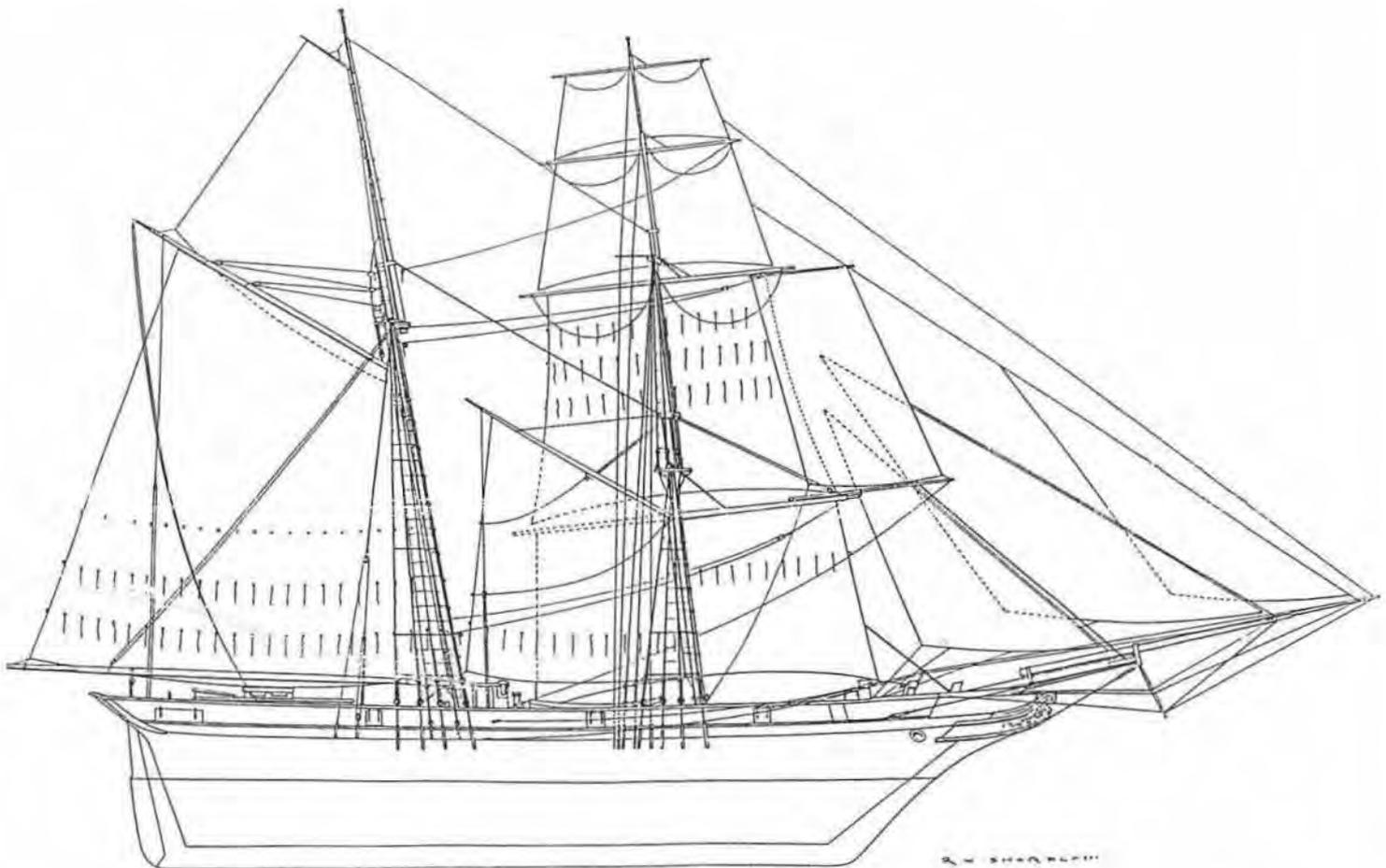
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Editor: Peter Worsley. 294 Chapman Rd., Geraldton, 6530.



Ross Shardlow's preliminary reconstruction of the brigantine EMPRESS

See story page 4



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 at *Wooden Boat Works*, Slip Street, Fremantle Harbour, and are available to members on loan. Please note that to access the videos, journals, library books, etc it is necessary to phone ahead on 9335 9477.

(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:  
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## EDITORIAL

Once again there has been a good response to articles from previous issues of the Journal. However most of the responses are from the same people who supply the bulk of the articles for your magazine. How about those of you who have not yet put pen to paper (or finger to keyboard) on behalf of your association's journal sending me something; whether it is an article on something you are interested in, your favourite nautical quotation, a small item of interest for the ditty bag, a review of a good book, etc.

The article on The Royal Perth Yacht Club is the first of what I hope will be a series on yacht clubs of Western Australia.

Rod Dickson has again come to the fore with an article to get people thinking with his question regarding this state's first coastal steamer.

Rod MacKay shows us what great use he has put the late Alec Upjohn's tools, timbers and books so kindly donated to the association by his family. A model to be proud of built by two model makers of distinction.

Please read the item regarding the building of the ship's boat for *Duyfken* and contact Ray or Nick on the numbers given if you can be of any help. Here is a chance to contribute towards this worthwhile project.

I have spent a great deal of time and effort trying to improve the quality of photographic reproductions in the Journal as this has been an area of concern for some time. You must appreciate that when I took over the editorship I was very new to computers. Another factor is cost – of course expensive, up to date equipment produces a fine quality product, but with the hardware available to me at present this is the best quality product I can give you. With experience I hope that improvement will continue.

Congratulations are due to all those associated with the sailing trials of the *Duyfken*. From what I have heard the trials went very well. Unfortunately (in some respects!) I was not here to see them. I spent two winter months sailing the warm seas of eastern Indonesia and the Philippines.

### DON'T FORGET !

ASSOCIATION VIDEOS, LIBRARY BOOKS AND  
JOURNALS ARE AVAILABLE AT

*WOODEN BOAT WORKS*  
SLIP STREET  
FREMANTLE

RING FIRST ON 9335 9477



## HELP BUILD DUYFKEN'S BOAT

*Duyfken* is now a sailing vessel but a replica ship's boat has yet to be built. Construction of the boat is scheduled to start in November as part of a "work for the dole" scheme.

To be a success, the project will need input from people with a range of expertise. Retired (but still working like a whole team of men) shipwright Ray Miller is keen to play a major role and is prepared to coordinate participation by MHA members.

If you'd like to be involved, please contact Ray on 9337 2614, or Nick Burningham on 9336 1606

## WOODEN BOAT BUILDING THRIVING IN FREMANTLE

Wooden Boat Works under Tup Lahiff continues to operate strongly. Len Randell's revolutionary speedboat/cruiser-sailer design is nearing completion and several other projects are progressing well — all this and a Youth Training Scheme running well in Mandurah.

And not far away, on Victoria Quay, in C-Shed, a consortium of shipwrights including Chris Bowman and Mike Rowe is a hive of activity. Chris's own design Couta boat is nearing completion and looks set to be a winner. She's got wonderfully sleek lines with the smooth run seeming to start somewhere forward of where the sharp entry ends.

Nicola Cicholas' H28 "CIMBA" (named after a very fine wool clipper) is undergoing a major rebuild. And in another part of the shed, a scribe board has been set up and the frames of a new Herreschoff 35 are being assembled. Yes, someone with real appreciation for wooden boats and the art that goes into them has ordered a new wooden boat!

## HOPEFUL STATEMENT FROM MUSEUM BOSS

MHA Chairman Nick Burningham recently wrote to a number of Newspapers commenting on the plans for the new Maritime Museum:

*"The different opinions as to whether the design for the new maritime museum represent a hugely inappropriate architectural imposition or an exciting, revitalising, addition to an historic quarter of Fremantle, seem to miss the critical point about good and bad development.*

*"Architecturally the design certainly has interest. The new museum can either become an isolated futurist glass box for dead boats stuck out on the western end of Victoria Quay, or an exciting and popular focus of a revitalised centre of sustaining maritime communities. The design, as it currently stands, is too much the old-fashioned, enclosed museum display case.*

*"Modern maritime museums should be integrated with maritime communities. The new museum should include a marina, public boat ramps, wooden boat building, perhaps a maritime oriented blacksmith's shop. If those elements were included the museum could host the Duyfken replica and visiting square-riggers, perhaps Leeuwin, visiting racing yachts (including Whitbread racers had Fremantle not already lost the Whitbread race though lack of appropriately located venue). And, most importantly, locally owned heritage watercraft could be offered free or cheap marina berths. Thus the local maritime community would be involved in a Living Museum and the museum would increase the scope of its displays beyond artefacts in glass cases.*

*"If the museum design aimed to incorporate and nurture continuing maritime traditions it would bring to the west end of Victoria Quay the bustle of activity that could make it a stimulating place to be, not just for occasional museum visits. With the interest of boats coming and going and other maritime activities, waterside bars and cafes might thrive, and an important location in Fremantle's maritime history might become an important and popular centre for locals and visitors in a new phase of its history.*

*"In the end, the community's opinion*

*about the architecture will depend on whether its location is a place they enjoy."*

In the Fremantle Herald, Western Australian Museum Acting Director, Paddy Berry, replied:

*"Maritime Heritage Association president Nick Burningham suggests that the new Maritime Museum can either become an isolated glass box for dead boats or an exciting and popular focus for sustaining maritime communities.*

*"I can assure Mr Burningham that his ideas have been anticipated and that the new maritime museum will be very much a living community museum.*

*"We envisage that the new Maritime Museum's outdoor environment will include a heritage boats marina, wooden boat building and a maritime-oriented blacksmith's shop.*

*"The Maritime Museum will also host the Duyfken replica, visiting square riggers, and visiting racing yachts. Negotiations will be held with heritage watercraft owners to encourage their craft to be located near the museum, in operating mode.*

*"The existing Maritime Museum is already a popular, living museum. Last year 255,000 people visited its two sites and the Duyfken.*

*"Hundreds of volunteers work with the museum in its activities which include guides, engine restorers, wooden boat restorers, education assistants, divers and archival researchers.*

*"Children and adults enjoy the Maritime Museum performances of Deck Chair Theatre, Spare Parts Puppet Theatre and others.*

*"The shipwreck archaeology programme has involved the diving community for many years.*

*"The Duyfken replica project was facilitated through an active partnership between the Maritime Museum and the Duyfken Foundation.*

*"The Maritime Museum sees redevelopment of the waterfront as an unprecedented opportunity to interpret a unique heritage environment in partnership with the local community."*

We can only applaud the vision and hope that what Paddy Berry and the Maritime Museum team envisage comes to fruition.



# THE CLIPPER BRIGANTINE EMPRESS

Ross Shardlow has replied to Rod Dickson's letter in Journal Volume 10, No. 2 and the editorial regarding replica building. Comments from readers would be most welcome.

Mr Dickson's suggestion that our next replica should be the **EMPRESS** has merit. **ENDEAVOUR** and **DUYFKEN** are amongst this State's greatest achievements; now there is a groundswell of opinion that we should build another replica and that it be relevant to "Western Australia's" history.

There is a long list of vessels to choose from. French interests might support **GEOGRAPHE**; Irish, the **CATALPA**; entrepreneurs, the **BEAGLE** (for international exposure) while historians may argue the **CHAMPION** was the most significant. **CHARLOTTE PADBURY**, **SPINAWAY**, **MERMAID**, **HMS SUCCESS**, **PARMELIA**, **EENDRACHT**, **SLOEPIE** enough for a fleet of replicas; which one is chosen rather depends on who will put up the money. but for a dinkum Western Australian ship. one designed. built. owned. manned. registered and worked in Western Australia. it is hard to argue against Rod Dickson's nominee of the **EMPRESS**. Pretty but not glamorous. she didn't bristle with guns. explore unknown seas or achieve historical notoriety - but she is an ideal representative of a working craft that played a role in the development of our State. Furthermore, through Mr Dickson's exhaustive research. we know a great deal about her and her people. At seventy two feet she would be practical to build. operate and maintain. her design empirically proven to be sound for this coast.

Mr Dickson's enthusiasm is infectious and with Mr Worsley's appeal for a drawing. I have put aside my **CHAMPION** research for the moment to reconstruct **EMPRESS**. The deck arrangement is conjectural. it is based on a similar vessel known to have been operating in Australian waters for which we have details. The sail plan is taken from **EMPRESS'S** documents and inventories while the hull profile is taken directly from a builder's half model thought to be that of **EMPRESS**. The half model shows a black hull. copper. below the waterline and a wide. white sheer line along her hull. The inboard works were probably painted green. Though her trailboards are in evidence on the model. the tip of her head is missing. Fortunately we know from her register papers that she had a scroll head.

This is only a preliminary study. a more detailed examination of her lines. general arrangement and construction are being undertaken at present.



*'Rope houses on the beach at Brighton'*

By  
E. W. Cooke



# “The Nigger of the Narcissus” Joseph Conrad

reviewed by Nick Brunningham

“My task . . . is, by the power of the written word, to make you hear, to make you feel — it is, before all, to make you see. That — and no more, and it is everything. If I succeed, you shall find there, according to your deserts, encouragement, consolation, fear, charm, all you demand — and, perhaps, also that glimpse of truth for which you have forgotten to ask” Conrad, from the preface to “*The Nigger of the Narcissus*”.

But that is not what Conrad’s novels are about, they deal at a theological, and cerebral level with the difficulty of true communion, coupled with the idea that communion can be unexpectedly forced on us. He explores the ways in which the codes we live by are tested in moments of crisis, revealing their inadequacy or our own, or occasionally the grace of a few simple giants among men. Conrad’s men are motivated by the complex conflicts of the love and hate, good and evil, within them.

Ross Shardlow’s splendid article in the previous edition of the *MHA Journal* has given us much of the historical background to Conrad’s writing “*The Nigger of the Narcissus*” and Conrad’s career as a mariner. Conrad sailed on a number of fine square riggers including the passenger clipper *Torrens* and rose to the rank of master mariner commanding the barque *Otago*. Conrad’s descriptions of life on the “heartless sea” and the operation of sailing ships are indisputably work of the highest authenticity and rank amongst the canon of must-reads for anyone seriously interested in the subject.

That said, for me, Conrad is far from easy to read. His writing seems unnecessarily laboured and if he can find ten different ways to say something he rarely leaves any of them untried. The late-Victorian/Edwardian style of prose which he epitomises is the style which Hemmingway’s clipped, matter-of-fact prose is a reaction to — and a very necessary reaction too, in my opinion.

Conrad, christened Teodor Jozef Konrad Korzeniowski, did not have an easy life. His parents were of the land-owning class but his father, a Polish nationalist, was exiled to Siberia by the Russians who ruled their part of Poland/Ukraine. Conrad spent some of his early childhood in Siberia and was orphaned at an early age. He was then brought up by an uncle. Although he had never even glimpsed a coast he expressed a strong desire to go to sea and, as a teenager set out for Marseilles and joined a French ship. His early career as a merchant mariner was none-too-respectable, he became involved in gun-running, through gambling he amassed considerable debts, and because of an unhappy affair or the debts attempted suicide by shooting himself through the chest. His later career with the British merchant marine was more favourable, but his time as skipper of a river boat on the Congo left him prone to recurrent fevers and gout for the rest of his life. He left the sea in 1894 and married the following year, living near Ashford, Kent, which by English standards is a long way from the sea. He began his literary career then, but it was twenty years before he was able to earn a good living. Before his death in 1924 he refused a knighthood offered by Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. (It has been proposed

that another Prime Minister, A.J. Balfour ghosted Conrad’s writing. Conrad had no opportunity to practise spoken English before he was twenty-one and his fluency and facility with the language are remarkable; however, his father was a translator of English literature.)

Writing was not an easy or pleasant undertaking for Conrad. On finishing *Nostramo* he commented, “an achievement upon which my friends may congratulate me as upon recovery from a dangerous illness.”

“*The Nigger of the Narcissus*”, his third novel, describes a homeward voyage from India rounding The Cape in winter, with the ship *Narcissus* getting knocked down on her beam ends. It is also a story of troubled inter-personal relationships, an exploration of compulsion, obsession and neurosis — most of the characters can be seen as either weirdly hysterical or Hollywood-heroic. And it is a heavy exploration of Conrad’s gloomy Slavic soul.

Even in a ship romping across tropical seas before a favourable monsoon Conrad sees dark despair and regret: “like the earth that had given her up to the sea, she [the ship] had an intolerable load of hopes and regrets”. Conrad is very fond of the words “intolerable” “torment” and “lonely”, but I don’t always know what he intends by them. (E-text allows me to check which words of gloom are used most — shadow or shadowy appear nearly forty times.) Members of the ship’s company going about their daily business always loom like unquiet ghosts, and I don’t understand why they do that.

A good deal of Conrad’s introspective writing goes over my head. Take this typical sentence:

“The true peace of God begins at any spot a thousand miles from the nearest land; and when He sends there the messengers of His might it is not in terrible wrath against crime, presumption, and folly, but paternally, to chasten simple hearts — ignorant hearts that know nothing of life and beat undisturbed by envy and greed.”

Conrad is saying that seamen are guileless men with good hearts. The innate morality or sanctity of untutored, rough, simple seamen is probably the main theme of “*The Nigger*”. But such a weighty pronouncement probably carries theological significance, and it eludes me.

Here Conrad describes the mate calling the muster:

“He called distinctly in a serious tone befitting his roll-call to unquiet loneliness, to inglorious and obscure struggle, or to the more trying endurance of small privations and wearisome duties.”

I suspect that if I’d been there I wouldn’t have picked up all that terrible signification in the mate’s intonation.

All that unquiet loneliness, inglorious and wearisome duties, I suppose come from Conrad’s tortured Slavic soul. What was it that troubled him so? Perhaps the answer lies in what Conrad never discusses. Neither romantic love nor sexual gratification are topics that Conrad approaches. His seamen are often heavy drinkers, but do they ever visit brothels? The omission is not simply a question of Victorian morality because his contemporary Thomas Hardy felt no such constraints.



It would be very old-fashioned to leave unturned the cold stone under which Conrad's sexuality lies buried. (Readers who dislike this kind of post-modern twaddle should jump a couple of paragraphs.) The possibility that he was troubled by homosexual urges is too easily argued for me to leave it alone. I couldn't help noticing that the paragraphs which bore the greatest burden of gloomy introspection and images of unquiet purgatorial death were close to descriptions of the seamen's big butch bodies in states of undress. This is Conrad describing what others might see as innocent bunks:

"The double row of berths yawned black, like graves tenanted by uneasy corpses." The same paragraph contains the following words and passages: "sybarite" [ie luxurious and effeminate person], "A leg hung over the side, very white . . .", "Singleton stripped again . . . his arms crossed on his bare and adorned chest.", "The nigger, half undressed . . . a pair of braces beating about his calves."

A curious aspect of "The Nigger of the *Narcissus*" and other Conrad novels is the auctorial stance. Partly the story is told from a removed stance — the events are reported by an narrator not involved in those events, telling us what the various characters do; yet the last page is written in the first person singular ("I") and some passages are third person plural ("we"), apparently the collective perspective of the men in the fore-castle. Conrad was, in fact, second mate on *Narcissus*, but the second mate in the story is Mr Creighton — stern, taciturn and quick to anger, but definitely English — and the story is not told from his point of view. Conrad's removed narrator is not the traditional omniscient narrator, instead the multiple narrators provide unreliable and conflicting views of what is happening — he is, in fact, writing from within the action but his role is invisible. This shifting, sometimes misapprehending, stance allows Conrad to show and explore the complexities of moral judgement and motivations.

There is plenty of irony but no joking or obvious humour in Conrad's writing. The seamen on the *Narcissus* joke and laugh uproariously at times, but Conrad doesn't retail their jokes. However, he does play tricks on the reader. Early in the book, Singleton, the oldest able seaman on the ship is seen slowly reading *Pelham*, a novel about redefining the role of a dandyish English aristocracy in an industrialising economy, written by the elitist Edward George Bulwer-Lytton. Yet at the end of the voyage when he is paid off he cannot sign his name and with difficulty makes a cross. No comment on this inconsistency is offered by the narrator. Singleton has appeared throughout as a tower of strength — self-contained, placid and possessed of a simple sagacity — yet he either pretends to be able to read or pretends illiteracy: the first interpretation would undermine his honour, the second is at least enigmatic since he is presented as guileless and most unlikely to dissemble.

But there is another explanation. Early in the book we learn that:

*"old Singleton . . . boasted, with the mild composure of long years well spent, that generally from the day he was paid off from one ship till the day he shipped in another he seldom was in a condition to distinguish daylight".*

Careful reading reveals that the Singleton who collects his pay is "uncertain as to daylight".

Singleton, is in fact the central character of the novel, though he speaks and acts on the edge of the action most of the time. His patriarchal presence is always there and in his few words he enunciates some of the main ideas of the novel,

*Singleton didn't stir. A long while after he said, with unmoved face: — "Ship! . . . Ships are all right. It is the men in them!"*

Singleton stands as symbol of the passing of a type of humanity and a loss of innocence, perhaps also as a symbol of the passing of the age of sail, (an image later evoked by Masfield "We mark their passing as a race of men / Earth shall not see such ships as these again.")

*"[Singleton] was only a child of time, a lonely relic of a devoured and forgotten generation. He stood, still strong, as ever unthinking; a ready man with a vast empty past and with no future, with his childlike impulses and his man's passions already dead within his tattooed breast. The men who could understand his silence were gone—those men who knew how to exist beyond the pale of life and within sight of eternity. They had been strong, as those are strong who know neither doubts nor hopes. They had been impatient and enduring, turbulent and devoted, unruly and faithful . . . they had been men who knew toil, privation, violence, debauchery—but knew not fear, and had no desire of spite in their hearts. [Why say something once if you can say it ten times?] Men hard to manage, but easy to inspire; voiceless men—but men enough to scorn in their hearts the sentimental voices that bewailed the hardness of their fate. . . Their generation lived inarticulate and indispensable, without knowing the sweetness of affections or the refuge of a home—and died free from the dark menace of a narrow grave. They were the everlasting children of the mysterious sea. Their successors are the grown-up children of a discontented earth. They are less naughty, but less innocent; less profane, but perhaps also less believing; and if they had learned how to speak they have also learned how to whine. . . They are gone now—and it does not matter. The sea and the earth are unfaithful to their children: a truth, a faith, a generation of men goes—and is forgotten, and it does not matter! Except, perhaps, to the few of those who believed the truth confessed the faith—or loved the men."*

Singleton remains at the wheel for thirty hours when the ship is on her beam-ends (presumably the wheel could have been lashed since the ship wasn't steering, but that would not have fitted the plot) and afterwards, in exhaustion, realises that he is grown old and thus achieves a "completed wisdom".

He is the only one who is assured in his reactions to the slowly dying Negro — neither angry with him nor motivated by guilty compassion. Whether such "everlasting children of the mysterious sea" really existed in such innocent grace is open to question.

Conrad's knowledge of seafaring is above question, but a couple of details, other than not lashing the helm, struck me as curious: topmast stunsails are mentioned, but I would have thought they were pretty unusual on an 1876 built ship, especially by the mid-1880s. The other thing I was curious about was the moon rising after dark and then setting before dawn off the island of Flores. Perhaps the moon didn't actually set. What Conrad wrote is this: "The declining moon drooped sadly in the western board as if withered by the cold touch of a pale dawn." This is well before dawn on a sub-tropical sea in summer.

Why, if it was feeling that dispirited, did the moon bother to get up in the first place?

Ross's painting of *Narcissus* is much more to my taste than Conrad's tormented writing.

# The Ditty Bag

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



The last square rigged vessels in the Royal Navy were the *Pilot* and the *Martin*, two training brigs built of wood at the Royal Naval Dockyard, Pembroke in Wales. They were ordered in 1890. The *Martin* (originally named *Mayflower*) was 105 feet long, 33 feet beam and 13½ feet draught and displaced 508 tons. Manned by a permanent crew of 27 she carried 100 boy seamen under training. Both vessels were gone by 1905.

On 9 February 1765 the Board of Longitude in London accepted the Lunar Tables devised by Tobias Mayer as suitable for use in HM ships. Lunar tables were used in a complicated and lengthy procedure to obtain accurate time for navigation. They were superseded by the chronometer.

In 1599 the price paid by the Compagnie van Verre (the forerunner of the VOC) for nutmeg and mace in the Banda Islands (average ½ stuiver for 10 lbs nutmeg and 5 stuivers for 10 lbs of mace) was 1/320th what they would fetch on the Amsterdam market. This early Dutch trading venture in Indonesia consisted of the vessels *Gelderland* and *Zeeland* and the full cargo took 3½ months to load. The ships were under the command of Admiral Jacob van Heemskerck.

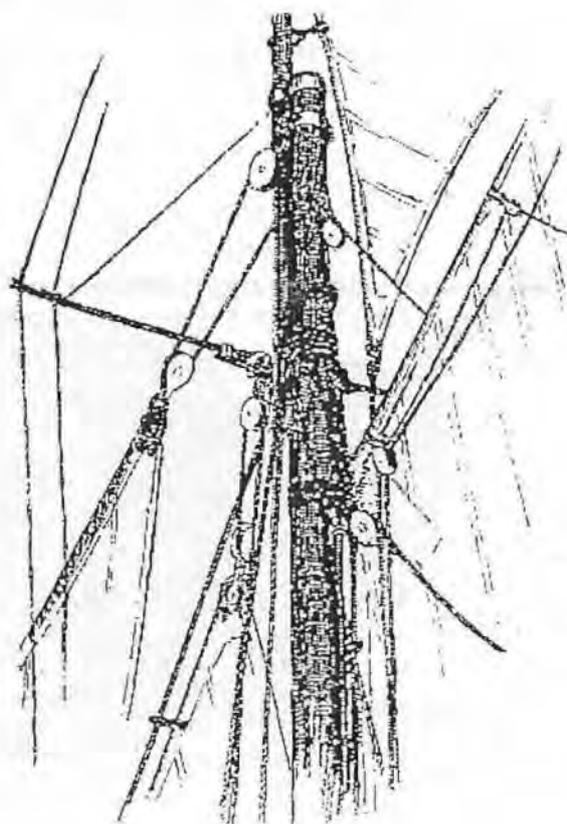
The oldest yacht club in the world is thought to be the Water Club of Cork, Ireland, which can be dated back to 1720, although there are indications it is much older. The oldest American yacht club is the Boston Boat Club, founded 1834.

Joshua Slocum completed his single-handed around the world voyage in 1898. The second person to sail single-handed around the world was Harry Pidgeon

who completed that voyage in 1925, some 27 years after Slocum. Pidgeon's yacht was *Islander*, a self built 34 ft Seabird design. He made a second circumnavigation in 1932 – 37 and became the first person to circumnavigate single-handed twice.

Chain anchor cable was introduced into the Royal Navy in 1811. It was stud link chain in lengths of 12½ fathoms known as a 'shackle'. In 1949 the Royal Navy switched to 15 fathom shackles. Shackles of chain were shackled together to form the anchor cable.

On 25 January 1826 Captain James Stirling, RN, was recalled from retirement on half-pay to command the 6th rate *HMS Success*, 28 guns.





## THE MODEL OF H.M.S.SUCCESS

Recently members of the MHA were invited by model maker Rod Mackay to view the completed model of H.M.S.SUCCESS. In 1998 Rod was entrusted with the collection of model making tools, timbers and books which had been donated to the MHA by the family of the late Alec Upjohn. The collection included the incomplete model of H.M.S.SUCCESS and it has long been the desire of the MHA to assign a qualified model maker to complete the work.

Nick Burningham was the first to undertake the project and completed the exacting task of coppering the hull. As Nick became more absorbed into the burgeoning DUY-FKEN project, he generously passed the project on to Rod Mackay.

### FINISHING THE MODEL - A PIECE OF CAKE

One day last year I was discussing with Ross Shardlow (picking his brains), details of a ship model I was thinking of building, when he told me about a model shipbuilder (Mr Alec Upjohn) who had started building H.M.S.SUCCESS but had died before the model was completed. Ross suggested I might be interested in finishing it seeing all my previous ships were relevant to Western Australia's early days.

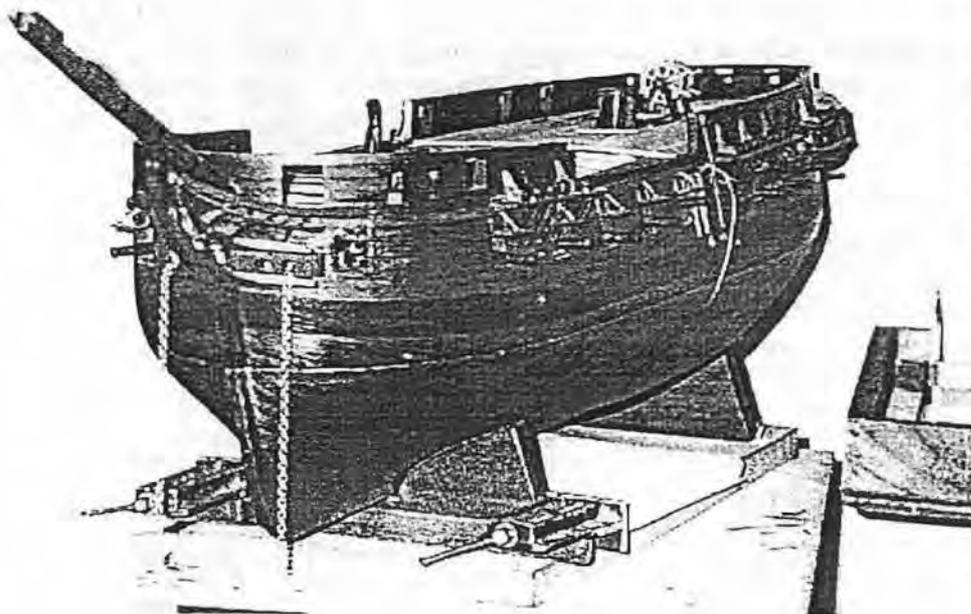
The hull was framed and planked, the orlop deck was finished and the hull was coppered -not with real copper as I do, but with a very professional realistic finish using paper. I will try it myself one day as it should be easier than copper sheets. This left the gun deck, accommodation, galleries, head, fore & aft weather decks, masting & rigging and ship's boats to be done. With all the information to hand it should be a piece of cake I thought - I'll do it!

In hindsight my biggest problem was information, too much of it, for I spent more time going through books, picking the right way to do everything, than I did building the ship.

My first duty to perform was to put some coins down below in the orlop in case of emergency to pay for

stores in foreign ports. Coins from Australia and Singapore seemed to suit the purpose.

My grandfather was a tailor in the goldrush days and always put a coin in the pocket of new trousers for good luck (in case the customer didn't have enough left for a meal after he had paid for them). So I put a coin inside every ship I build for the same reason.



After checking materials etc., I started on the galleries: the stem gallery having been started but broken. Then I built the quarter galleries fitting a bench forward for the wick and a seat of ease with the bowl and drop pipe aft on



each side. The crews comfort came next, constructing the heads, rails etc. and fitting a seat of ease on each side of the bowsprit.

Moving aft along the gun deck, I fitted a double capstan behind the mainmast then attached the messenger rope running forward and around brackets just aft of the manger, hanging on hooks below the skids and deck beams. The anchor chain was fitted in place, attached to the anchor bits and lead aft through gratings to the orlop deck then nipped to eye bolts in the , deck. Wonderful job I thought ... foolish boy. As I discovered later, while browsing through a book, chain was being used by this time but they didn't yet have the capability of making anchor chains. One of the hardest jobs I had was removing this chain and replacing it with cable working under a closed off deck through the skids; fitting and tying the nippers again.

Back to production work - I fitted the already constructed galley stove, a wonderful replica of the original thanks to Alec- alas, all that is readily seen is the chimney.

Next came the captain and first lieutenant's cabins and the great cabin. The officers' cabins were fitted with a bunk each and a desk, the gunports are open but no guns are showing. The great cabin sports a big table complete with turned legs that can't be seen from any of the windows. I fitted twenty cannon with tackles on the gun deck in run out position. Steps have been included from gun deck to weather deck as shown on the plans but I feel a little uneasy about the lack of them around the waist area, but if the plan doesn't show them who am I to argue?

That just about completed the gun deck so I installed two guns on the foredeck, then a belfry, pinrails, etc., while the remaining four guns were made comfortable on the aft deck making up the twenty eight required. I made up a helm assembly complete with two five foot diameter helms and connected it to the cables from the tiller. I then made a binnacle with a compass on each side and lantern between them. Apart from the many other gratings I made duckboards on each side of the helm, fitted hammock netting along the sides of the waist and boarding ladders with hand ropes.

Two clinker ships boats came next, a thirty foot yawl and a twenty two foot dinghy, by making a mould for each then planking them with strips cut from .04 mm plywood and removing the moulds later. I painted them dark grey inside and parchment white outside but they looked out of context with the rest of the ship so I built two new ones and just varnished them.

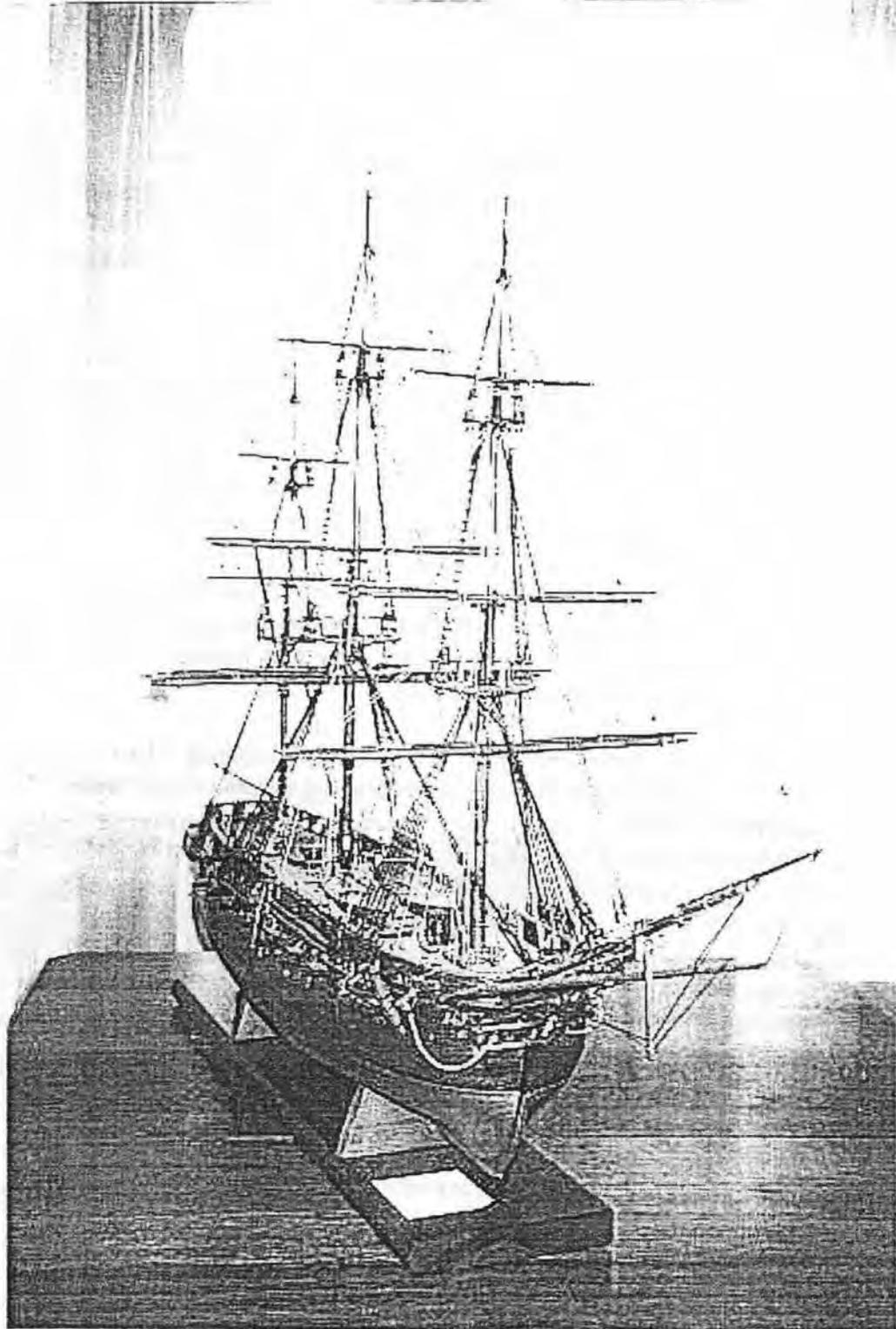
Next I moved to the most fiddly part of the whole ship - masts and rigging. I had dozens of spars already turned to shape but nothing matched the size and taper required so I had to get out the old wood lathe (an electric drill) and do all of them from scratch - thirty four total including spares on skids. I wished there was a short cut for the next part but I haven't seen one yet that looks authentic enough to bother with. I started with the forestays but couldn't find cord to the size needed so I gathered some of the largest sizes and went around to a fellow model maker who has a ropewalk and we turned up enough of the size needed plus a bit to spare. While we were about it he showed me how to tar my own rope. Messy? My God, you should see the mess I got myself in to. If you don't believe me just ask my wife what she thought when she accidentally got tangled up in about thirty meters of stuff that was strung up to dry in the shed. I used five different sizes of cordage as near as possible to the original specifications. As a matter of interest there are over 1,600 knots in the ratlines alone. To all intents and purposes she is finished know but I still do have a few nagging problems to take care of, like the mizzen topsail and topgallant yard braces. I have some of the most detailed diagrams you could imagine that show the run of the braces but nowhere can I find exactly how and where they belay. For the time being I have attached them to eye bolts in the deck until I can complete my research.

What shall I build next?



## References

- Original Admiralty Draughts – National Maritime Museum, Greenwich
- Anatomy of the Frigate DIANA - David White
- Plank on Frame Models - Underhill
- The Ship of the Line - Lavery
- The Anatomy of Nelsons Ships - Longridge
- When All Else Fails - Ross Shardlow





## DUYFKEN SAILING TRIALS

### Nick Burningham

The *Duyfken* Replica sailed for the first time on 10th July. It was a much publicised event with a large spectator fleet including chartered ferries and the Channel 7 chopper overhead.

Master for the day, and two subsequent trials, was Greg Tonnison, CEO and master mariner from Leeuwin Ocean Adventure.

There was not much doubt about the ship's stability but manoeuvrability and steering were more in question. The small, thick bladed rudder had caused a few raised eyebrows and predictions of steering problems.

Greg Tonnison, however, approached the ship with typical quiet confidence. Having towed away from the jetty with bow and stern tugs, Greg ordered the forecourse set while still inside the Fishing Boat Harbour and immediately dropped the stern tow. *Duyfken* gathered way and as she passed through the Fishing Boat Harbour entrance the second towline was cast off. Main course and mizzen were set and *Duyfken* put on course to pass close to the end of south mole. With no bonnets on the courses and no topsails the mizzen induced weather helm and, if sheeted too hard, caused *Duyfken* to round up into the wind — which is what it is supposed to do.

Sailing out across Gage Roads on a beam reach, fore topsail and then main topsail were set. With the main topsail drawing, *Duyfken* made four knots in only 8–12 knots of breeze.

Wearing round onto port tack went smoothly and standing back in towards Fremantle, the spritsail was set. Approaching the entrance to Fremantle Harbour, the helm was put up to run away downwind giving room to a container ship entering Fremantle. With all sails drawing and the wind aft of the beam, *Duyfken* made a remarkable seven knots according to the GPS onboard and the log of escort vessel "Tabby Cat". (The owner of another escorting vessel is quite adamant that eight knots was reached.)

Before striking sail and returning to harbour, Greg Tonnison ordered helm down to see how *Duyfken* would hove to with sails aback, or, perhaps, how she would tack. In fact she tacked very easily, flying round onto the other tack.

Having sailed in 8–12 knots breeze on 10th July, we enjoyed 10–15 knots on 22nd and 15–20 knots on 23rd.

With catharpins on the foremast shrouds and the bonnets latched to the foot of the fore course and the main course, it was possible to brace the sails more sharply and sail somewhat closer to the wind. *Duyfken* made about 70° from the wind.

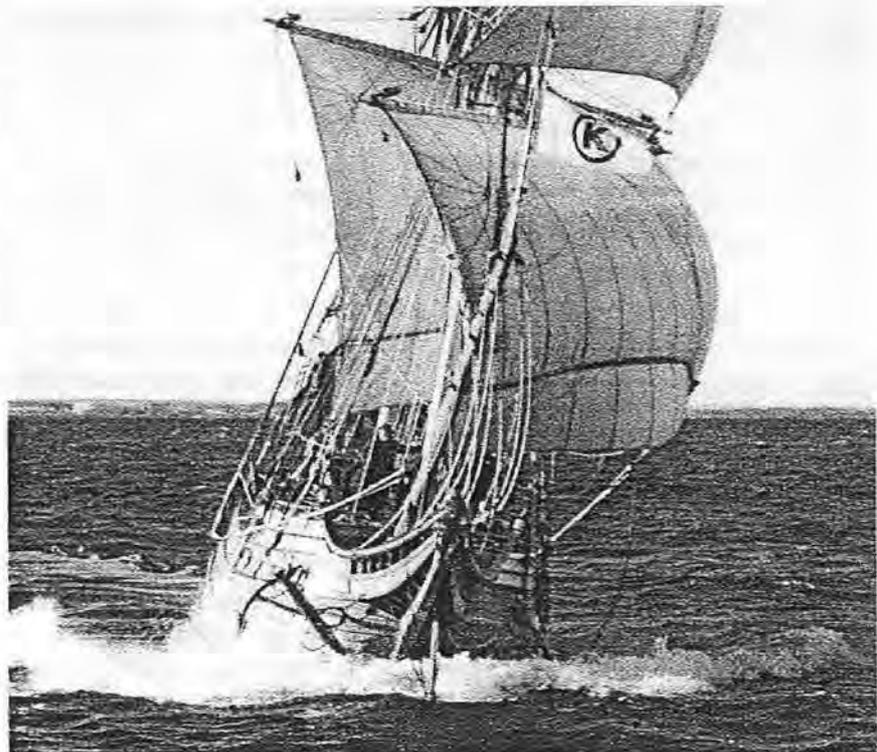
On 22nd the fore topsail and spritsail were not set. This sail configuration gave weather helm and it was necessary to clew up the mizzen to balance the steering at times. Hard on the wind *Duyfken* made more than four knots. When returning towards Fremantle harbour's North Mole, with the wind on the beam, speed increased to six knots.

On 23rd, all sail except the spritsail was set. There was a considerable head sea, running from the north, which made progress difficult on starboard tack when standing north. *Duyfken* behave well when sailing into the steep headsea off North Mole. She was slowed, but not stopped by the headsea, and did not fall much off course. The fore topsail was set before the main topsail and this sail configuration gave good steering balance. At the time the wind was blowing around twenty knots. With the main topsail set *Duyfken* made good speed sailing on the wind.

*Duyfken* twice missed stays when trying to tack into the headsea, on the first attempt the mizzen was clewed up and gave no help in bringing the head into the wind.

Sailing south on port tack, with the sea from aft of the beam, *Duyfken* sailed more smoothly, apparently making seven knots at times and she made noticeably less leeway. In the smooth water off the harbour entrance leeway appeared to be very slight when sailing fast but hard on the wind.

Greg Tonnison observed that the helm was light when sailing with the mizzen clewed up, but leeway was noticeably less with the mizzen set and some weather helm.





# Royal Perth Yacht Club

The following article was written by Helen Riseley of Royal Perth Yacht Club, and is the first of what I hope will be a series on yacht clubs of W.A.

Location: Pelican Point, Crawley, Western Australia  
Office: Phone: (08) 9389 1555  
Fax: (08) 9389 1459  
Email: club@rpyc.com.au



Location: Challenger Harbour Fremantle, Western Australia  
Office: Phone: (08) 9430 4590  
Fax: (08) 9430 4567

Postal Address: P.O. Box 5  
NEDLANDS WA 6909

Commodore: Chris Hardy  
Club Manager: Eli Quartermaine

## A Brief History

Established in 1865, RPYC is Western Australia's oldest club. The Club's original premises were in Perth Water at the foot of William Street and the City. With the construction of the Narrows Bridge imminent Royal Perth relocated to the existing Catalina Flying Boat Base in Matilda Bay on Pelican Point in 1953. The Club was incorporated in the same year (p128, Uren, 1966). Some believe the move to Crawley was "fore-ordained... as the streets in Nedlands had already been named after some of the Club's yacht's – *Adelma*, *Melvista*, *Genesta*, *Circe*, *Waratah*, *Rene*, *Viking* and *Cygnat*, to name a few (p129, Uren, 1966).

The following passages have been extracted from the history compiled by club member Malcolm Uren in his 1966 publication *Sails on the Swan*. They provide a background for the early days of yachting in Western Australia.

"Sailing as a river sport as distinct from the use of sail to propel a craft on some business mission was first noted by print record of a regatta in the "Inquirer" of May 26, 1841. The advertisement promoted the Perth Regatta for 1 June, 1841" (p 14-15, Uren, 1966). Unfortunately the Foundation Day regatta did not succeed due to inclement weather.

History further shows that "no record of any sailing sports could be uncovered between 1843 and 1850. This was deemed due to too few sailing boats that could be entered in a race that could provide a spectacle to excite a crowd and the those available were too slow and cumbersome to thrill either participant or crowds" (p 15, Uren, 1966).

"Yachting as a leisure-hour relaxation or a challenging competitive sport, was many years distant for those first sails on the Swan River. The pioneer settlers who selected their holdings around the river had a grim struggle to exist; the only time they did use the river was as a highway or to seek food from it... Many old diaries record that fish could be caught easily and tell of crabbing parties on the river banks. Only few of these records mentioned the catching of prawns; their existence may have gone unheeded" (p13, Uren, 1966). Prawnning is definitely a popular pastime on the Swan River now, even for yachties.



"The pioneers found out that it was best to travel to Fremantle in the morning on the easterlies and come back to Perth with the afternoon sea breezes (things haven't change too much); but when the visit had to be made irrespective of favourable winds, the pioneers rowed all the way. That would be a fearsome prospect for this generation which is heir to motor cars and speed boats" (p13-14, Uren, 1966).

With the growing number of yacht club's in Perth in the late 1800s and early 1900s "Yachting began to boom from about 1907 onwards" (p77, Uren, 1966).

"The Clubhouse at Crawley became a social as well as sailing rendezvous, a fact that would have greatly surprised those critics of the Crawley site who claimed that the social activities of the Club would cease to exist "way out there at Crawley" (p129, Uren, 1966). The notion behind this attitude evolved from the member base of the original clubhouse frequenting the club at lunch time, a small walk from work on the Terrace. These were the days prior to access to a family vehicle, the distance to Crawley was a concern to some, especially as a loss of their luncheon pastime.

In 1953 membership consisted of one life member, 326 senior members and a total of 472 members all up (p129, Uren, 1966). 1999 membership figures indicate over 1000 Senior members, and a total of 1800 (encompassing Junior, Associate, Outport, Reciprocal and Honorary memberships).

The Club has an extensive race history, however, focusing on her more recent achievements, leadership in yachting began in 1979 with their part in the successful Admirals Cup, followed by the hosting of the Plymouth to Fremantle "Parmelia Yacht Race".

### **The Auld Mug – (AKA The America's Cup)**

The Club's established history was based on a deep sense of tradition, which was further enhanced by the winning of the 1983 Challenge for the America's Cup. "It had organised many successful championships for international keelboat and dinghy classes, but could this club at the opposite side of the world from the New York Yacht Club, without a presence on the open water off Fremantle, where the event was to be sailed, conduct an America's Cup?" (p11, Fisher & Ross, 1987) The answer was of course, yes.

The implication of the Bond Syndicate's success dawned on the RPYC when they realised the complexity involved in organising a Defence. "The success of this longest and most intense regatta the world had ever seen depended heavily on volunteer helpers. RPYC had 300 rostered to help run the racing and media centre. On race days, up to 120 of them would be on water. The racing was well run with consistently high standard committee work that would not have been easy in the usually punishing wave patten of Gage Roads" (p14, Fisher & Ross, 1987). The Perth metropolis became involved in the exciting atmosphere created by the Defence based in Fremantle.

Despite Dennis Connor's Stars & Stripes 4-0 win, "the America's Cup season in Fremantle will be etched for ever on the memories of all those privileged to be there. The great regatta organisation from RPYC, the hospitality of the people of the wonderfully refurbished, beautiful port city, the camaraderie of the competitors, the magnitude and quality of the spectacle of racing conducted in fresh winds under clear blue skies on clear blue water" (p17, Fisher & Ross, 1987). Each event, the '83 Challenge, the '86 World 12 Metre Championship and the '87 Defence were significant Club achievements.



## International Match Racing Experience

Club Member Alan Bond commenced his first America's Cup campaign in 1973 and was finally successful in September 1983. The Club established the Australia Cup in 1982 to train Skippers in the sport of match racing. This event has become one of the highlights of the World Grand Prix of Match Racing circuit. In 1996 the Club held the 12 metre World Championships and the Defence of the America's Cup in 1987. They also stage the Australian Match Racing Championships, a Grade 3 qualifying event for the Grade 1 Australia Cup. RPYC has run the Australia Cup, Australia's premier Match Racing Championship, since 1982 (one of 16 events in the World Match Racing Grand Prix and Australia's only Grade 1 event). The Club's match racing development and experience provides a competitive advantage over other West Australian yacht clubs. However, these developments are shared by the other clubs whose crews and skippers compete in the local and national events hosted by RPYC.



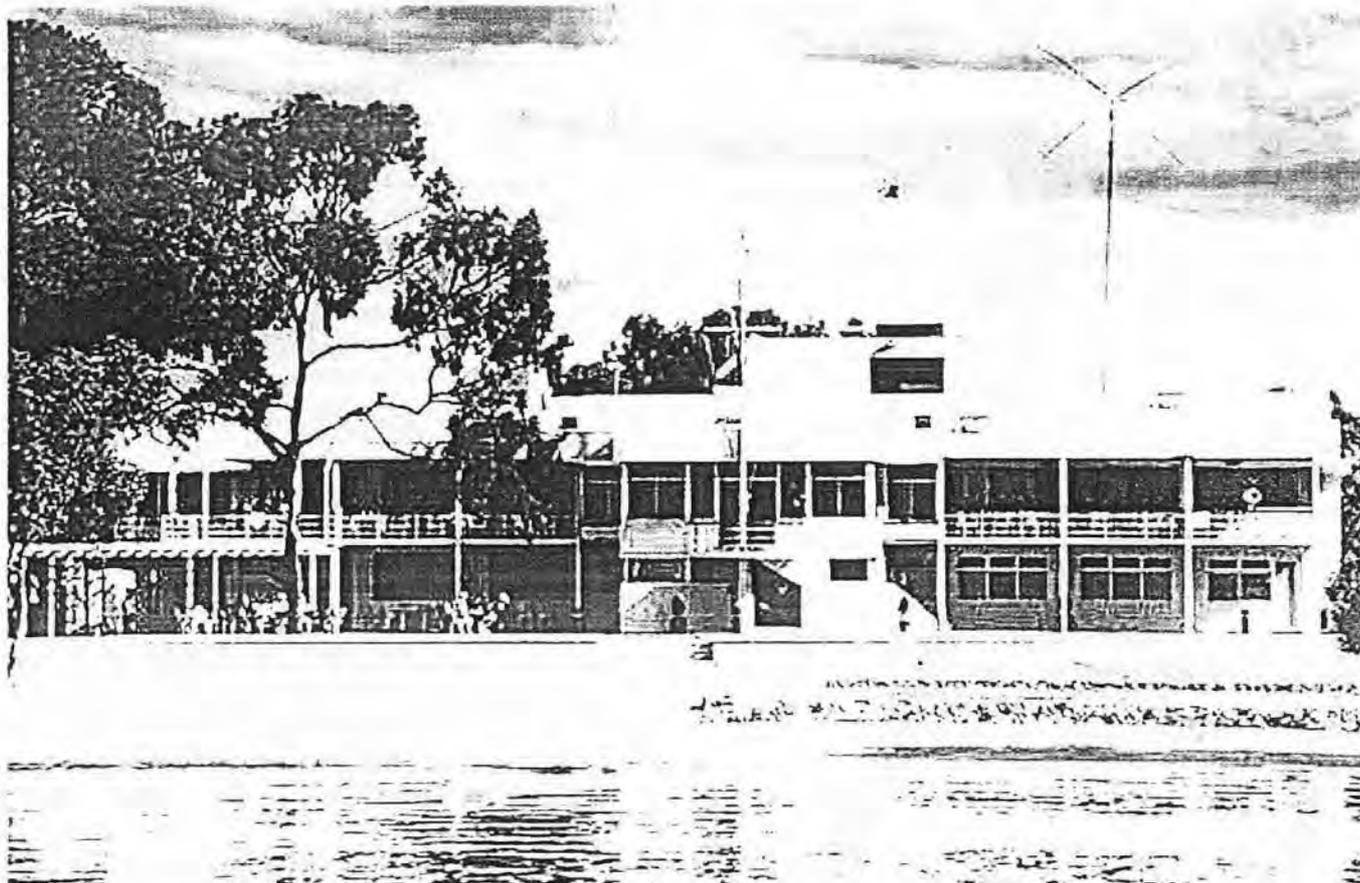
*Match racing in the 1999 Australia Cup  
Photograph by John Roberson*

Many winners of the Australia Cup have gone on to achieve international success, from the first win by John Bertrand to the more recent achievements by Kiwis Dean Barker and Gavin Brady, and hopeful Australian skipper (yet to win an Australia Cup) is young Jamie Spithill. He is to be the youngest skipper, at 19 years, in the history of the America's Cup for the 2000 event (sponsored by Syd Fischer).



## The Club

The Club has two Marinas. Located just 10 minutes from the Perth CBD the main Crawley clubhouse, overlooking the Swan River and the Perth city, offers Restaurant, Wardroom Bar, Cocktail Bar and Function Areas. The Crawley venue has undergone major refurbishment for the 1999-2000 season. The Challenger Harbour Fremantle venue is the Club's Offshore Racing base and also offers Bar and Function facilities. Both locations offer hardstanding, hoists and marina facilities. A mobile boat lifter, service and fuelling facilities operate at Crawley.



*Royal Perth Yacht Club – Crawley*

The Club races fleet and one design classes (ie Division 1-4, MB & SS 24, Thunderbirds, Etechells, Endeavour 24's, S80's, S97's, Farr 9.2's and a corporate fleet of Foundation 36's). The Dinghy Division competes regularly in Lasers, Mirrors, Optimists, 420's and Elliots. Training courses and individual coaching are available. The Club's Power Division offers time trials, fishing competitions and social cruising.

RPYC has the biggest Summer twilight fleet in Perth with over 70 boats regularly racing on Thursday nights, and offers an extensive annual function's calendar such as: Club Dine Ins, the Commodore's Summer Ball and the Concert on the Bay. The New Year 2000 Celebration is booked out already with over 2000 members and guests looking forward to an unforgettable evening. A sneak preview of the entertainment programme shows a great line up featuring Marcia Hines, and promises entertainment from 6 pm – 6 am!



The 1999-2000 season programme includes the Australia Cup, Australian Match Racing Championships, Australian Women's Match Racing Championship, Governor's Cup, Anzac Day Digger's Cup, Cape Naturaliste Race, Iberia Race and Gage Roads Race. The main 99/00 off-shore activity features RPYC as co-host of the WA "Regatta Week" - to be sailed from their Challenger Harbour facility.

Year round Midweek racing takes place on Wednesday afternoon, with Thursday night twilights, Saturday afternoon club racing and Sunday afternoon dinghy racing operating in the summer season. Enquiries welcome.

### In Summary

RPYC has sailed from strength to strength over the past 135 years. The Club is preparing itself

for the new millennium in a positive and tangible manner by implementing plans to develop our Clubhouse our 2 Marinas our grounds, facilities, our racing and our Club life.

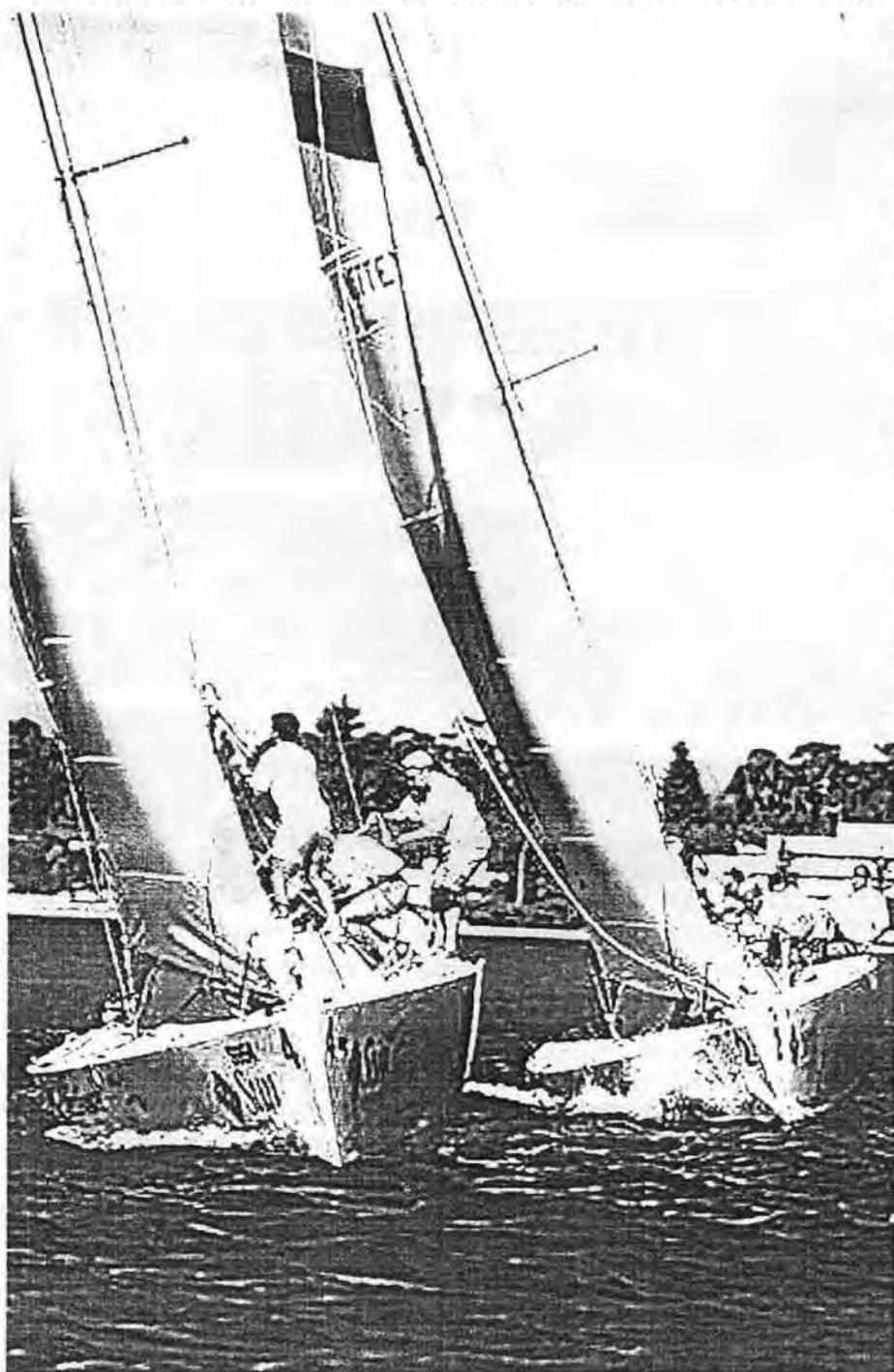
Much comment has been made over the years in relation to the future of yachting both as a leisure activity and a sport. RPYC's strategic direction lies in addressing current member issues, developing the family aspect of the membership to ensure the longevity of the club, its culture and the yachting lifestyle it represents.

New members are welcome.

### References

- Bob Fisher, Bob Ross: The America's Cup 1987 The Official Record, Aurum Press, 1987.  
Malcolm Uren: Sails on the Swan, 1966, West Australian Newspapers.

Australia Cup match racing  
Photo: J. Roberson





## WAS THE GREAT CARRACK OF RHODES AS GREAT AS SHE'S CRACKED UP TO BE?

### Rambo Dunnage

The Great Carrack of Rhodes, as described by Ian Brooks and mentioned in the Editorial of the *MHA Journal* 10 (2), was quite probably a vessel of considerable size, but I don't think we need take the claimed details of her size too seriously.

Brooks, as quoted, doesn't say what the source of his information is. He was obviously not the most earnest of scholars — anyone who thinks that a ship sailing in 1522 can be regarded as one of the “wonders of the *medieval world*” (italics added) hasn't got a basic grip on history.

Had any prodigiously huge ship existed at Rhodes *circa* 1522, we can be fairly confident that a good likeness would have been portrayed in one of the maps by the Turkish Admiral Piri Reis which are far-and-away the most beautiful and finely illustrated maps of the era.

The posited gargantuan status of the carrack apparently rests on four details. She is said to have had eight decks, a frigate on deck, an industrial bakery, and nonsensical protection against marine borers.

Even if we assume that the eight decks are not all complete decks from bow to stern as they would be in a “three-deck ship”, but some of them are aftercastle decks; eight is still too many to be realistic. What determines “realistic”? Some very large ships were built, both in the late middle ages, and particularly in the early 16th century, but, given the sail and spar plans used then (and the engineering of timber hulls) there are technical limits to size which were reached, but could not be exceeded. One of these limits is masting. If a vessel is to manoeuvre properly, the rig must be in proportion to the hull, and the height of lowermasts is limited by the size of available trees and also some more complex materials-technology problems. (This applies equally to the supposed huge ships of Chinese Admiral Cheng He.)

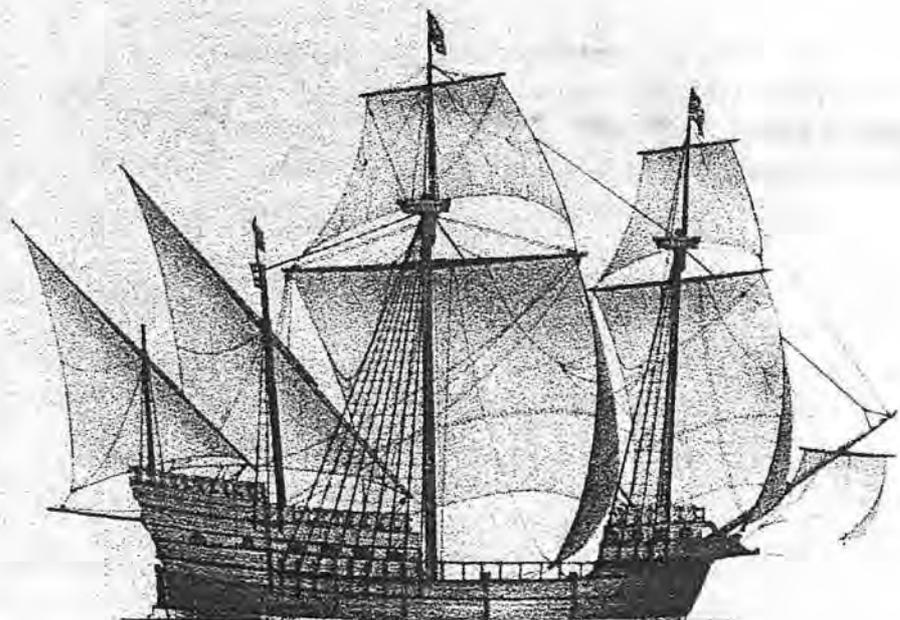
If we allow an orlop deck below the waterline (not common *circa* 1520) and three complete decks, then there should be another four tiers in the aftercastle (or perhaps the forecastle). They might just be fitted into a manageable design if there was very little height between decks (and there is evidence for as little as 1.2m between decks in the 16th century). But one would expect there to have been accommodation for important persons in the aftercastle (or forecastle) and it wouldn't do much

for the confidence and prestige of those Knights of Saint John to entertain in a great cabin with no more headroom than there is under your dining room table. So eight decks is either an exaggeration or the design was silly

Further evidence of size cited is that the Great Carrack carried a frigate on deck and towed another. What was a “frigate” in 1522? (Or what word used in the original document has been translated as frigate?) The name frigate, and its cognates, have probably carried as many meanings as pinnace, and its cognates, in the last four-hundred years. Cook's ENDEAVOUR carried a pinnace, yet ENDEAVOUR was smaller than some ships that were classed as pinnaces. Frigates (*frigata*, plural *frigates*) of the Mediterranean world were generally oar propelled vessels and were certainly nothing like the idea of the frigate formulated in the late 18th century.

A bakehouse producing 2,000 loaves a day? Well, perhaps it could. Again, one wonders about the original text — what word has been translated as loaf? My bet is that most days of the working week, the bakehouse produced a smaller number of loaves, but the loaves produced were larger. MARY ROSE had about 700 men on board when she sank. If they had each eaten a small loaf at each of three meals in a day, 2100 loaves would have been required, but if I'd been in charge of catering I'd have rationalised the bakery's production.

As for the sheathing with six layers of metal below the waterline — six layers of metal is an interesting example of hyperbole, but why would six layers be advantageous?





# WHICH WAS THE FIRST COASTAL STEAMER ON THE WEST AUSTRALIAN COAST ?

Following the proud tradition of previous editions we once again offer members of MHA food for thought and debate. Rod Dickson has written an article which should generate useful comment from readers.

There are two schools of thought on this issue. One favours the *XANTHO*, Charles Broadhurst's vessel, brought out from Scotland and later wrecked at Port Gregory. The other is *LES TROIS AMIS*.  
First the facts about the two vessels.

## *XANTHO*

*XANTHO* was built by Denny Shipbuilding Company during 1848 and was the eighth steamer built by the company. She was first constructed as a paddle steamer and was fitted with a steeple engine. The vessel was designed for sheltered water cruising and carried out this task quite successfully. Her principal dimensions were:-

Length between perpendiculars, 101.3 feet, (30.8 m).

Length overall, 121 feet, (36.8 m).

Breadth of beam, 17.6 feet, (5.3 m).

Depth of hold, 8.4 feet, (2.5 m).

In 1871, after a career in short sea and coastal voyaging the vessel was sold for scrapping, however the purchaser, Robert Stewart of Glasgow, decided to refit her for further service. To this end he lengthened her to 116.3 feet, (35.4 m) and took out the old engine. The engine room was relocated from midships to aft and a Penn engine of 30 H.P. installed. This brought about the change from paddle wheel propulsion to screw steamer.

It was also in this year that Charles Broadhurst traveled to Britain with the idea of introducing steam on the coast to further his pastoral and pearling interests. Without any apparent survey as to whether the vessel was suitable for the task he went ahead and purchased her. The *XANTHO* was to act as a mother ship to his pearling fleet and when not required for this role would be used as a cargo vessel plying the coast and the near east with spot cargoes.

*XANTHO* was also fitted with two masts and was schooner rigged, as was almost every vessel of her time. This arrangement meant that in the case of little or no wind the engines could be used and conversely in times of good winds the engines could be stopped and coal saved. Also it was a boon when entering and departing from difficult harbours, such as in the northwest where Broadhurst's interests lay.

Sailing from Glasgow the little vessel sailed past Gibraltar, through the Mediterranean, the recently opened Suez Canal and on to Singapore. Thence to Batavia and Surabaya. At the latter port he engaged 40 "Malay" divers and proceeded to Banningarra, his chief pearling base. Later Broadhurst took the *XANTHO* down the coast to Cossack and on to Champion Bay where he stayed for a few hours.

Arriving at Fremantle in May 1872, Broadhurst was praised for being an enterprising speculator. When the



vessel departed it was to go to Batavia, via Champion Bay and Cossack. She carried passengers, Aboriginal prisoners and cargo. After discharging the last of the cargo at Batavia she backloaded coal and cargo and sailed for Banningarra, Port Hedland and the Flying Foam Passage. The ship then left for Champion Bay. While there Broadhurst heard of a cargo of lead at Port Gregory that needed transhipping to Geraldton to be loaded on to a waiting sailing ship.

Back to Port Gregory and the 83 tons of lead were loaded into her hold from small boats. This cargo was then topped off with bales of wool and casks of whale oil.

*XANTHO* departed her anchorage at Port Gregory at 9.40 P.M. on the night of 16 November and headed into a southeasterly breeze. The vessel was down by the head and punching into a head sea. At midnight the vessel was found to be taking water at a rapid rate and she turned around to head back to port. Unfortunately she touched bottom when in the Hero Passage and sank. The crew all made it ashore in safety and later the cargo and most of the fittings were salvaged.

About 110 years later the Maritime Museum divers went up to Port Gregory and found the engine still in the remains of the hull. This was subsequently raised and taken to Fremantle for restoration and is in the process of being rebuilt for exhibition to the public.

My thanks to Mr. Mike McCarthy, Curator of Maritime Archaeology for the foregoing information.

### *LES TROIS AMIS.*

Official No. 40477. Built at Northfleet Dockyard, Kent, England; by Messrs Pitcher during 1854. Screw Steamship, 28.71 tons. Powered by one direct acting steam engine rated at 9 H.P. Tonnage allowance for engine room, 13.53 tons.

Dimensions :-

Length, 65.7 feet;

Breadth, 12.9 feet;

Depth of hold, 10.1 feet.

One deck, 2 masted schooner rigged, round stern, clench built, framework and plating of iron.

This small vessel sailed out of the river Thames bound for Australia on the 22 of August 1854, with Captain Annal in command and traveled via the Cape of Good Hope, where she would have called in for coal and supplies. The vessel had no passengers for the voyage but had a small quantity of cargo for Melbourne.

*LES TROIS AMIS* arrived at Melbourne, Victoria on the 6 December 1854 and shortly after began discharging her cargo of 8156 slates and four rolls of lead into small boats for landing at the township. With the gold boom, housing was going up everywhere and no doubt the slates and lead were well received.

The ship stayed at Hobson's Bay until her departure for Adelaide on the 14 February 1855 and she arrived there after a passage of 5 days on the 19th. There was a cargo waiting for her there and loading commenced shortly after her arrival.

After loading a cargo of bagged flour and collecting the Colonial mails the vessel departed from Adelaide on the 28 February 1855 bound for the Swan River. At 9 A.M. on the 15 March 1855 the Water Police noticed the steamer on the horizon and at noon they launched their whaleboat to inspect the vessel's papers. Superintendent George Clifton then conveyed the seven bags of mail ashore for onward delivery. Captain Annal was still in command when she arrived at Fremantle but was soon induced to return to Britain to investigate the purchase of another steamer for Western Australia.



The owner of LES TROIS AMIS, Mr. William Hinton Campbell, was induced by the Fremantle businessmen to bring the vessel over the bar and begin a regular ferry service between Perth and Fremantle. To which he agreed. To get the vessel over the bar the masts, spars and all ballast was removed to lighten the ship. The problem of her draft then manifested itself. She was too deep to get alongside the jetties and consequently in her first attempts to start this service, passengers had to be ferried in and out via a dinghy. The ferry service had it's ups and downs in the months of operation, but was generally well received by the traveling public.

On the 3 November 1855 the project came to a halt with the death of the owner, who accidentally fell overboard while securing his dinghy, in Perth Water. The body was discovered next morning. *LES TROIS AMIS* was laid up at anchor while letters went back and forth to England and his executors. It took until the 3 December 1856 to decide her fate and on this day Lionel Sampson auctioned the vessel complete. The purchaser was George Shenton, who intended running her on the river as before but in the near future intended taking the engines out and converting her into a coasting schooner. George Shenton, however sold the vessel to George Green in December 1856, who carried on the river trips until the end of May 1857 when he took her out of the river and resteped the masts and fitted the rigging. She was then put into the coasting trade, her preferred route being that of Fremantle to Champion Bay and return.

This trade route was carried out on a regular basis until the 10 November 1858 when the engines were finally removed and the vessel was rigged as a schooner. In the arrival and departure columns of the newspapers during this period the vessel is either described as the Steamer LES TROIS AMIS, or the S.S. Schooner LES TROIS AMIS. Whether she used her engines full time during these numerous voyages up and down the coast is of course unknown today, but on one memorable occasion during a gale when the vessel was off Dongara the only way the vessel was saved from destruction was for the crew to chop up some of the fittings and feed them to the boilers.

This, then is the brief background to the two vessels and I now leave it up to the readers to judge which was indeed our first coastal steamer.

