

MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

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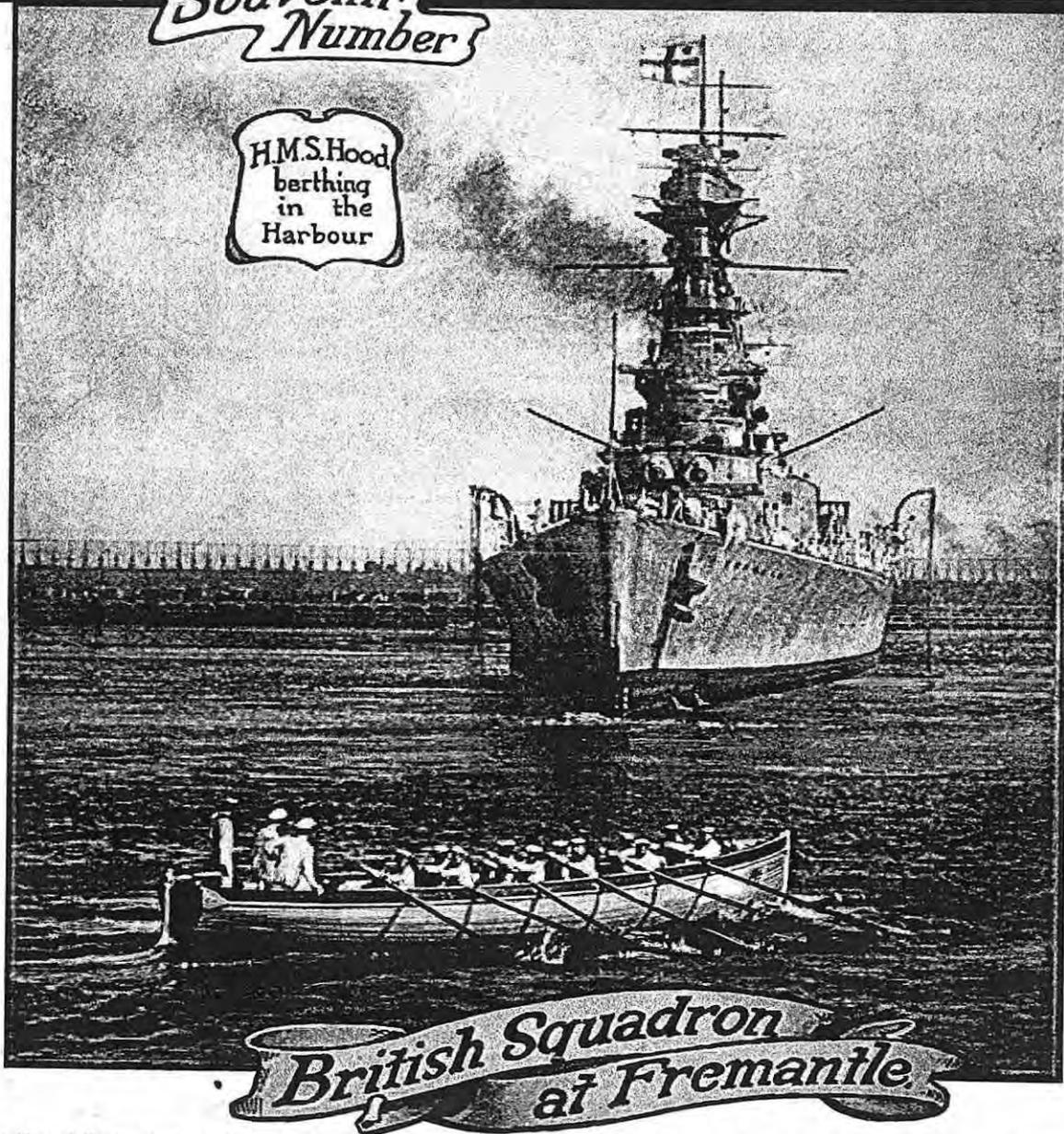
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*Souvenir
Number*

H.M.S. Hood
berthing
in the
Harbour



*British Squadron
at Fremantle*

The 32 foot Naval Cutter in her element—from the cover of the Western Mail, March 6, 1924: see articles page 5 and page 7



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

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

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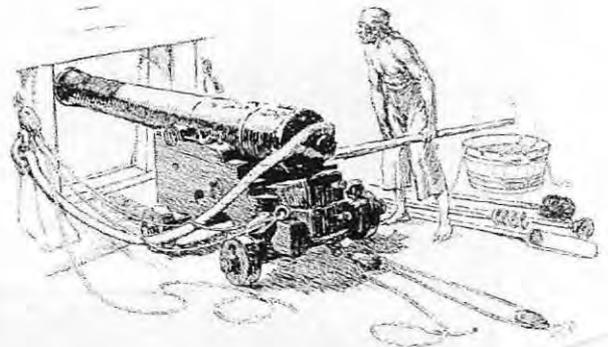
EDITORIAL

Readers will note a slight divergence from the usual lay-out of the journal—it has been decided that the Presidential Tidings will now be a once a year report on the Association's activities for the previous 12 months.

In part 2 of Mike's profile he makes mention of a yacht being built for Des Ashton. In an interesting coincidence Des Ashton happened to be my boss when I was working in New Guinea. The story when I arrived in 1961, ten years after he took delivery of the yacht, was that, after sailing to New Guinea, Des found out that he was going to be charged import duty on *Lahara*. When arguments failed to stop this imposition, it is alleged that he sailed down to Sydney, travelled to Canberra, berated the appropriate politicians at Parliament

House, had the import duty cancelled, and then sailed back to his job in New Guinea.

The Association welcomes back Nick Burningham from his overseas sojourn. We expect to be able to publish a number of articles by Nick over coming months.



Things They Would Rather Have Not Said

She is a most formidable vessel and could, I believe, by her superior armament, destroy all the broadside ships of the squadron in detail.

Admiral Symonds, 1871

She walks the water like a thing of life.

Captain Cowper Phipps Coles, 1871

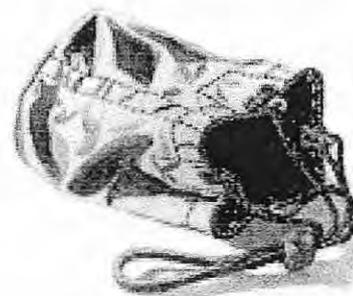
(Both men were referring to HMS *Captain*, the privately designed and built battleship which Coles had designed, and which had very suspect stability. It heeled over and sank in a gale only a couple of months later with the loss of 500 lives, including Cowper Coles)



The Ditty Bag

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

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



The survey brig *Lady Nelson* (60 tons, 4x 4pdr) was seized and destroyed by burning at Aluta Island, Timor, in February 1825. Built in 1799 the experimental vessel was fitted with three retractable centerboards and surveyed a great deal of the east and north coasts of Australia from 1800 until her loss.

Convicts who died aboard the hulks near London were taken ashore at the Arsenal wharf at Woolwich, and buried in unmarked graves on Plumstead Marshes. There is a red flowered nettle still known as "the convicts' flower" which grows in the area. As the nettle only grows on disturbed ground its presence indicates old convict graves, as there was no other reason to dig there. A number of skeletons have been exhumed, some still in chains.

The binnacle (the non-magnetic housing for the compass, its correctors and illumination) was originally called bittacle. It comes from the Italian *abitacola* meaning little house.

On 30 January 1774 James Cook sailing in HMS *Resolution* reached 71° 10' south and had to turn back because of impenetrable ice barring his way. Midshipman George Vancouver clambered to the end of the bowsprit and, waving his hat, shouted "Ne plus ultra!" ["None farther!"]. Vancouver became a famous explorer and for the rest of his life boasted that he had been nearer the South Pole than any other man.

Blather: Very wet mud, a feature of estuaries and rivers; of a dangerous nature such as that a weight will at once sink into it (from – *The Mariner's Handbook*, published by The Hydrographer of The Navy, 1973).

Some readers may have read of "quintals" when referring to the quantity of fish caught by fisherman from previous centuries (for instance in the

classic *Captains Courageous* by Rudyard Kipling). A quintal equals 100 pounds or 45.46 kg.

Admiral Sir Percy Scott (1853-1924) was a gunnery specialist in the Royal Navy. When still captain of the cruiser *Scylla* he startled the navy by scoring 80% hits with his ship's 4.7 inch guns when the fleet average was 30%. He repeated these results as captain of his next command, HMS *Terrible*

Frank Wilson was a pilot for the Thames River in London. He was one of the pilots who took colliers and the like up and down river under the many bridges. They were referred to as 'bridge pilots' or 'mud pilots', and it was their job to know the state of the tide to enable vessels to pass under the bridges without either hitting the bridge or going aground.

You had marks on the bridges, so you knew how much water you needed to get through the bridge. If the water was too high there was a danger of getting stuck, or taking the wheelhouse off; if the water was too low, there was a danger of running aground.

I remember an incident, I was coming down the river on a coaster called the Keystone. There had been heavy rain and the river had built up, so we couldn't get under Teddington Foot Bridge, so the skipper decided to go under the bridge anyway. In the wheelhouse, he could see over the top of the bridge. The skipper just went down and sawed the wheelhouse off.

Nog. A treenail driven through the heel of a shore (the shore being a timber supporting a vessel on the slips). The shore is then said to be noggged and the operation is called noggging.



SHIPS OF THE STATE SHIPPING SERVICE

The eighth in the series by Jeff Thompson, reprinted courtesy of Jeff and the Fremantle Branch, World ship Society.

No.8 *Kybra* Official Number 140159

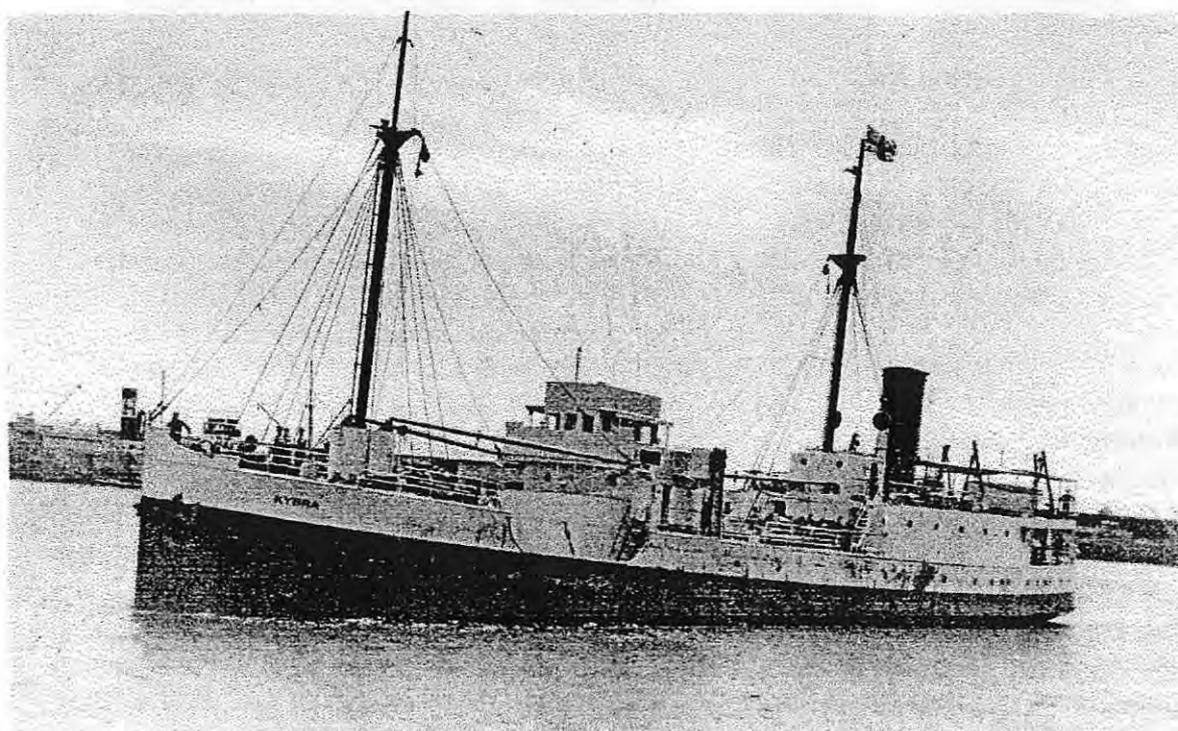
The *Kybra* was the second of two vessels constructed to the specific requirements of the State Shipping Service, built to replace the ageing *Eucly* on the south coast run. It was launched on 13 January 1926, by the Coaster Construction Company of Montrose, Scotland. Of 858 gross registered tons, 549 deadweight tons, 62.1 metres long, 9.4 metres breadth, and fitted with one 6 cylinder Sulzer diesel of 650bhp to give a speed of 11 knots. 32 passengers could be carried.

The *Kybra* left the builders yard for Fremantle via Suez Canal on 9 April 1926. In 1927 the *Kybra* commenced service along the south coast from Albany to Esperance. On 8 July 1940 the ship was requisitioned by the Royal Australian Navy to act as an anti submarine training ship. The south coast service was then abandoned when the *Kybra* was taken over by the Navy in 1940.

After conversion the *Kybra* was commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy on 30 September 1940 and based at Sydney, being paid off on 23 November 1945. On the 25 March 1946 the *Ky-*

bra was returned to the State Shipping Service with the passengers accommodation being upgraded by reducing passengers numbers to 10. In July 1948 the vessel went to the aid of the stricken Canadian registered *Papachrisides* Vasilos 500 miles off the West Australian coast from Carnarvon to tow her to Fremantle, arriving 8 August 1948.

Being some 30 years old and becoming too small for the North West service the *Kybra* was put up for sale and left Fremantle for Singapore on 28 February 1958, under tow of tug *T.P.124* after sale to Cia Naviera Lanena Ltd, Hong Kong, and renamed *Floreta*. In May of that year the ship was seized, by the Indonesian Navy as being in a restricted area. On the 8 December 1960 she was sold to P.T. Pelajaran Veteran of Surabaya and later laid up. In 1962 she was sold to P.T. Putra Samudra and renamed *Jaya Putra II* and after one voyage was laid up again, as being in poor condition. On 27 April 1968 the vessel was taken over by the Jakarta Harbour Master after being laid up in that harbour for 6 years. The ship was then towed to Kali Baru to be broken up.



Stateship's Kybra entering Fremantle 13 January 1947. By this time crew's accommodation had been moved aft and portholes in forecassle had been plated over.

Photo Jeff Thompson Collection

HMS Hood – a perfect example of the shipbuilder's art

by Ross Harry D Shardlow

On 27 February 1924, “the most beautiful capital ship ever built”, berthed at Victoria Quay. Given that her maximum draught was 31 foot 6 inches, and with the harbour dredged to just 30 feet, the Harbour Trust officers may have been a little apprehensive about fulfilling their boast that the Inner Harbour could accommodate “the very largest of ships with ease and safety.”

Laid down in 1916 at John Brown & Co's yard at Clydebank under the Emergency War Programme, and launched 22 August 1918, HMS Hood was not completed until 5 March 1920. She was commissioned in May 1920 as Flagship of the Battle Cruiser Squadron.

Hood's initial forays took her on flag flying visits to Scandinavia, Gibraltar, Spain, the West Indies and Brazil. From November 1923 to September 1924, the “Mighty” Hood, flagship of the Royal Navy's Special Service Squadron, made a 38,000 mile, round the world “Empire Cruise” of Imperial might, splendour, reassurance and good will. It was during this Cruise of the Dominions that the British Squadron, which included the battle cruiser *Repulse* and the light cruisers *Delhi*, *Dauntless*, *Danae*, *Dunedin* and *Dragon*, that HMS Hood called at Fremantle.

In 1925, Hood returned to the Home and Atlantic Fleets, undertook a general refit in 1929-30, joined the Mediterranean Fleet in 1936 after a quick run to the West Indies, before returning as flagship of the Home Fleet in 1939. With the outbreak of hostilities, HMS Hood was stationed at Scapa Flow to defend the North Sea and North Atlantic seaways.

BATTLE OF THE DENMARK STRAITS

On the evening of the 23 May 1941, the cruisers *Norfolk* and *Suffolk*, on patrol in the Denmark Straits between Greenland and Iceland, reported the German battleships *Bismark* (the most powerful warship afloat) and *Prinz Eugen*, were making their way into the North Atlantic west

of Iceland. HMS Hood, in company with the newly completed battle cruiser *Prince of Wales*, and support from six destroyers, set out in chase.

At dawn on the 24 May 1941 (Empire Day), HMS *Prince of Wales* sighted *Bismark* and *Prinz Eugen* seventeen miles ahead. Rapidly closing to a range of 25,000 yards, Hood and *Prince of Wales* opened fire; a few minutes later both enemy ships concentrated their return fire on Hood, one of *Prinz Eugen*'s shells plunging through Hood's lightly armoured boat deck, the resultant explosion causing an awful, uncontrollable, conflagration. Eight minutes into the engagement, a shell from *Bismark*'s fifth salvo penetrated Hood amidships, exploded in the secondary armament magazine, which then detonated the main magazine. The catastrophic eruption ripped the ship in two – when the smoke cleared three or four minutes later, the mighty Hood had gone. Only three of her complement of 1,418 men survived.

On 24 July 2001, David Mearns of Blue Water Recovery, using a Remotely Operated Vehicle and side scan sonar, located the wreckage of HMS Hood in waters three kilometres deep. Mearns's team took remarkable photographs of the wreckage scattered over the ocean floor, even a photo of the ship's bell, before placing a plaque of remembrance and tribute to those who died in the Royal Navy's greatest loss on a single ship in World War II. Nothing has been recovered from the wreck, and the site remains a secret.





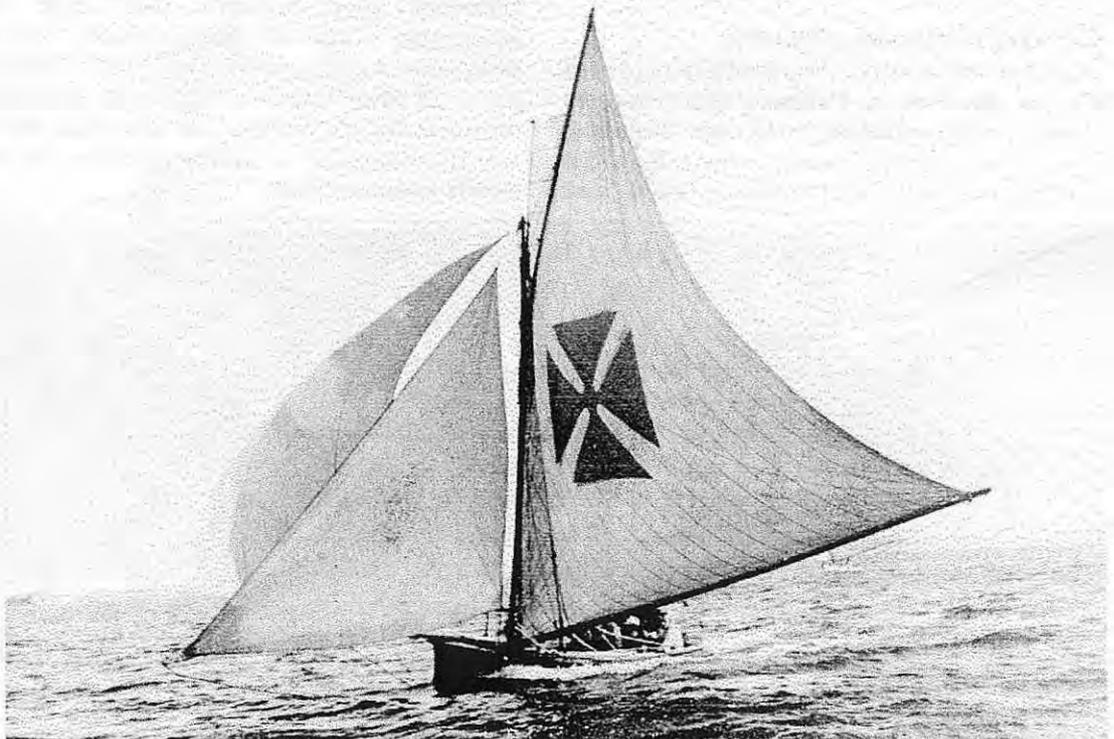
Early Swan River Yachts

Two more of the early yachts sailing on the Swan River around 1906.



Casilda

Elma





The Naval Cutter *ALBATROSS* – the last of her kind

by Ross Harry D. Shardlow

“Of course a ship is an artefact. She is in fact the quintessential artefact, the product of man’s handiwork, which has always called forth the best that was in him and in his culture.”

Walter Lord

“Put her underneath a barbecue,” was the uncharitable recommendation for *Albatross* when she was abandoned at Fremantle’s Swandock in 1998. The response in 2005 was much the same, “chuck a match in her, she’s too far gone.”

It seems a pity – she turns sixty this year.

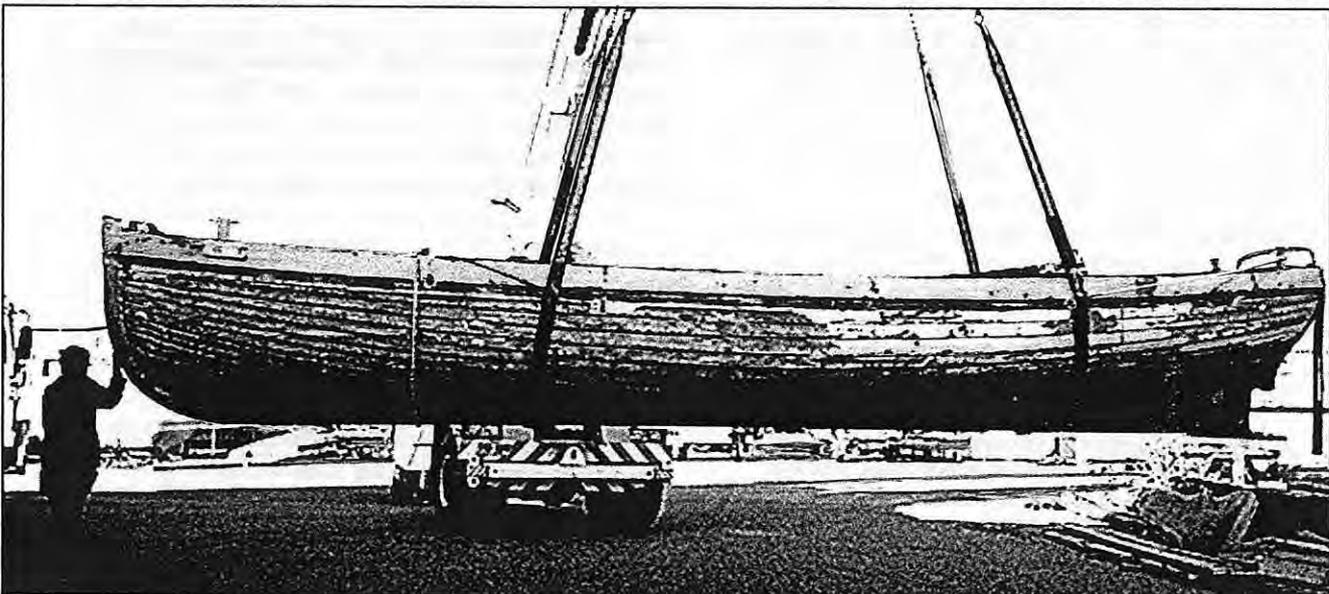
Albatross started her time as vessel number 272 at the Garden Island Dockyard, NSW, in 1946. That information is engraved on her stem. As she was built just after the cessation of hostilities, we do not (yet) know if she was assigned to a battleship, cruiser or aircraft carrier as were her wartime siblings. How, or precisely when, she came to Western Australia is still a mystery, but we do know she ended up at the Minesweeping Stores at Fremantle, near the old Traffic Bridge.

The World War II cutter has a heritage that goes back to at least 1712, that being the earliest recording of the word *cutter* to describe a clinker-built open pulling and sailing boat, assigned to men-of-war for the purpose of carrying stores, mails, provisions and personnel. She could also be employed on independent patrols and armed boarding parties – as was the case with HMAS *Sydney*; she was lowering her cutter to board the *Kormoran* when that tragic engagement took place off the Western Australian coast, 19 November 1941.

Cutters can be of varying length, sailed with one or two masts, rowed single or double banked – but always with the oars working through u-shaped apertures cut through the wash strake above the gunwales: these apertures are called *row-locks* (pronounced *rollick* or *rullock*). Scholars believe the word *cutter* has its origin with the distinctive row of these *cuts* along the washstrake – and has no association at all with the rig of the same name (see Vol.6 No.2).

Albatross is a 2.6-ton, 32-foot, clinker-built, 12-oared, double banked, pulling and sailing boat. She is a *pulling* boat, not a *rowing* boat. Rowing can be performed while sitting or standing, and as the Navy forbids oarsmen to stand while rowing, it follows there can only be *pulling* boats in the Navy. With a crew of twelve oarsmen, not counting the provision for an extra set of oars in the stern sheets, and under the command of a coxswain, who had his own dicky seat by the transom, the cutter could carry 29 men – on a calm day. There is a grapple-winch fitted beneath her aft thwart, a centre-case between her midship thwarts, and a mast thwart (with clamp) for sailing.

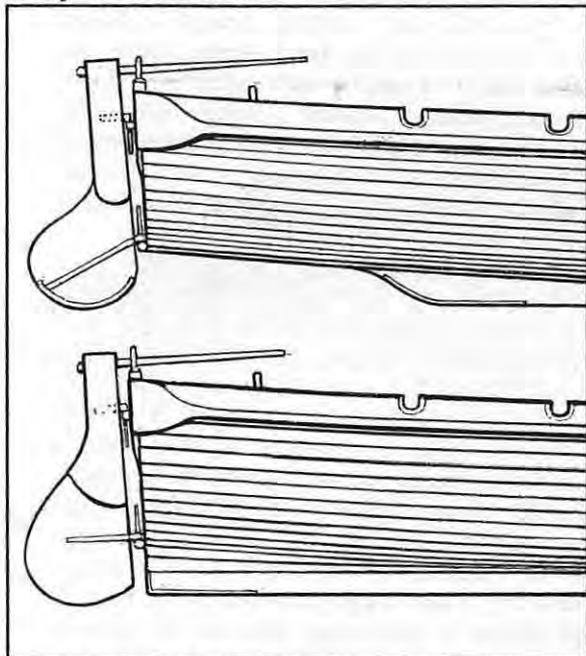
In 1957, skipper E. J. Brown purchased the vessel from the Royal Australian Navy for the 1st East Fremantle Sea Scout Troop. It was during her time as a training vessel that she acquired the name *Albatross*.



Albatross being lifted from her cradle at Wooden Boat Works, Slip Street, Fremantle.



She also acquired a foredeck, sampson-post, fairleads, navigation lights and tabernacle; received an afterdeck with mooring bollards; had a Ford motor installed with associated beds, floors and shaft log, and had an aperture cut out of her deadwood for a screw propeller. The keel is of interest: it appears to be original and made up from three scarfed sections running straight from stem to stern *without* the 6-foot cut-away keel and deadwood that naval cutters are purported to have adopted after the 1920s. On the other hand, the garboard strakes do *not* run down over the deadwood which is characteristic of the earlier straight keel model. Clearly some interesting research is required in this area.



After serving 40 years for youth training and development, the Sea Scouts conceded *Albatross* no longer met the requirements of a modern training vessel. Furthermore, her maintenance and repair costs were fast becoming insurmountable. Naval historian Geoff Vickridge, who joined the Sea Scouts in 1958, recalled, "the sea scouts were forced to make a hard decision; whether to break the vessel up or find an organisation which would prevent the vessel from being destroyed." This was the time when there was much talk of a slipways sausage-sizzle.

Recognizing *Albatross*'s historical significance, Geoff Vickridge, David Oliver and John Buckett, all associates of the Navy and/or Sea Scouts, rallied to have *Albatross* saved by alerting various authorities and interest groups. Vickridge's prospectus for a *Fremantle Maritime Precinct* (2005), reflects:

The Royal Australian Navy stepped in and offered the security of HMAS *Stirling* on Garden Island where at least it was guaranteed not to be broken up.

While the RAN very much wanted to restore *Albatross*, the limited funds available to the Navy for operational needs precluded it from allowing sufficient funds to be diverted to what was essentially, a museum project.

Albatross was transported by low-loader from Swadock slipways to HMAS *Stirling*, but with storage space taken over by the operations of the base, she was left out on the hard-standing where rain water and sunlight soon nurtured a vigorous culture of *Merilius lacrymans* – rot.

In 2004, the proprietor of Wooden Boat Works, Graham Lahiff, offered to accept *Albatross* as a restoration project within his boatbuilding curriculum. Again the Navy assisted and had *Albatross* transported to the Wooden Boat Works shed in Slip Street, Fremantle, virtually back from whence she had come in 1998. Anticipating a seaworthy restoration would consume some \$250 000, Mr Lahiff was in the process of seeking State and Federal funding when he was stricken by serious illness. Following his untimely death in May 2005, the interim managers of Wooden Boat Works had to rationalise the company's priorities, one of the outcomes being the immediate disposal of *Albatross* to free up valuable commercial work space. Again the call went out – find someone to take *Albatross* or she will be broken up.

As neither the Navy or the Maritime Museum were in a position to take her, the Maritime Heritage Association looked into the possibility of preventing her imminent destruction; after all, several members of the Association had already expressed an interest in her some years earlier. As reported in previous Journals (Vol.16, No.3 & No.4), ten members of the MHA, under the supervision of Ray Miller, gathered at Wooden Boat Works, 7 July 2005, to assess the vessel. Predictably, the findings concluded a seaworthy restoration was out of the question; even preserving the craft as a static monument appeared beyond the resources of the Association. While the Secretary was measuring up his own back yard, Mr Barry Hicks came forward with an offer to undertake her conservation and restoration, even find a site for her, provided ownership issues were resolved and agreed upon. Lieutenant Commander A. J. Young, Acting Commanding Officer of HMAS *Stirling*; Command Legal Officer Lieutenant Commander Simon Gourlay; and Wooden Boat Works Acting CEO Geoff Brown, worked together with remarkable alacrity to have *Albatross* bestowed to the MHA. Mr Hicks soon received the now memorable letter:

Dear Barry,
I have received a letter from Wooden Boat Works asking me to remove *Albatross* – what do I do now?

Regards – Ross

Less than a fortnight after the assessment, *Albatross* was wheeled out of Wooden Boat Works on a barry-trolley, loaded by crane onto Rowan Chick's low-loader, and transported to the Kenwick property of Andrew and Lena Hicks, where the conservation and restoration work was to take place. Whether Andrew and Lena were actually aware they were about to



Barry Hicks with his beloved Albert at the Kenwick Yard.

receive *Albatross* is not certain; notwithstanding, the Association is eternally grateful for their kind assistance. A hastily prepared conservation plan was drawn up while Barry prepared the site.

Since receiving *Albatross*, Barry Hicks has acted with attentive diligence, stabilising the timbers, removing non-original fixtures and fittings, and replacing the ones that should be there. Three missing thwarts and knees were manufactured to strengthen the hull before removing the foredeck. The engine-bed floors were left in place (now hidden by the bottom boards) to give further strengthening.

Unfortunately, *Albatross* showed no evidence of that distinctive feature of cutters, the cutout rowlock. The washstrake above the gunwales had been replaced some time back in her history with what looked like a doubling of mahogany-veneered plywood. During the assessment, Peter Worsley had the misfortune to let his screwdriver slip which exposed a small section of the washstrake. Peter imagined he could see a remnant of at least one rowlock sandwiched between the washstrake doubling. Imagine Barry's delight, therefore, when he carefully prised away the inner doubling to reveal *all* the rowlock assemblies in comparatively good order.

Stern benches, backboard, dickies, towing bollards, bottom boards – are all being replaced even if the materials and scantlings are not quite to original specifications. It is the intention to assemble the whole craft to at least have the appearance of a complete cutter before further intensive conservation and restoration work takes place. All replacement components have been screwed in place to allow easy removal when it comes time for more specific conservation work.

The centreboard winch, which was thought to be an irretrievable mass of corrosion, has been reinstalled in working order, as has the bilge-pump and grapnel-winch that has somehow survived the

ravages of time. A couple of unidentified planks in the bilge, thought to be stretchers, turned out to be sail battens. Despite the fact that the fuel tank will not be returned to the vessel, Barry restored it anyway: "Now *this* is filler cap - where are you going to find a filler cap like that these days?" Last inspection showed *Albatross* fully painted, inside and out, and about to have her mast stepped. "She'll look as smart as new paint for her 60th birthday," Barry reassures us, "but we're still looking for some de Horsey blocks."

We may celebrate *Albatross's* birthday with a barbecue this year – but *Albatross* most certainly will not be beneath it.

Our researchers are doing their best to keep ahead of Barry. During the course of his research, Geoff Vickridge discovered, "*Albatross* is the last of her kind – she is the only Australian built, 32-foot cutter, in existence."

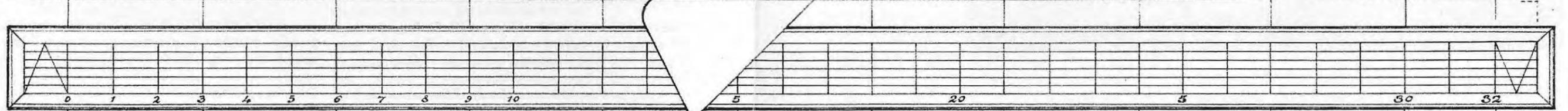
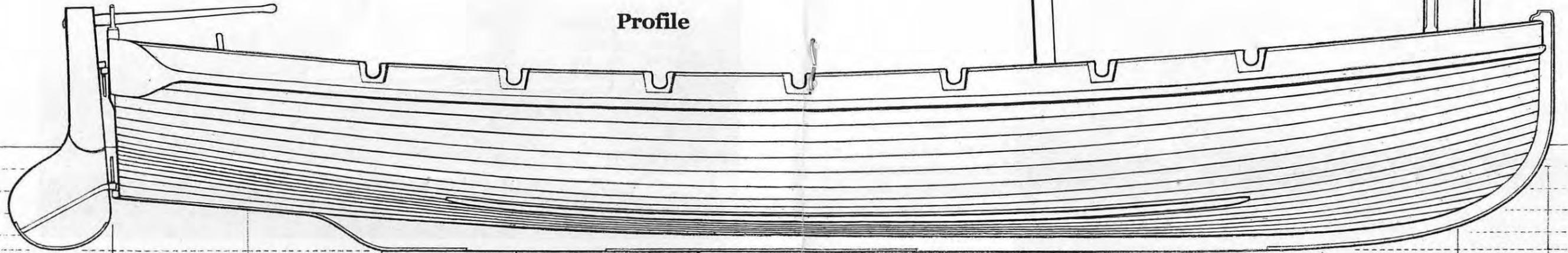
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Drawing of a 32 ft. Cutter

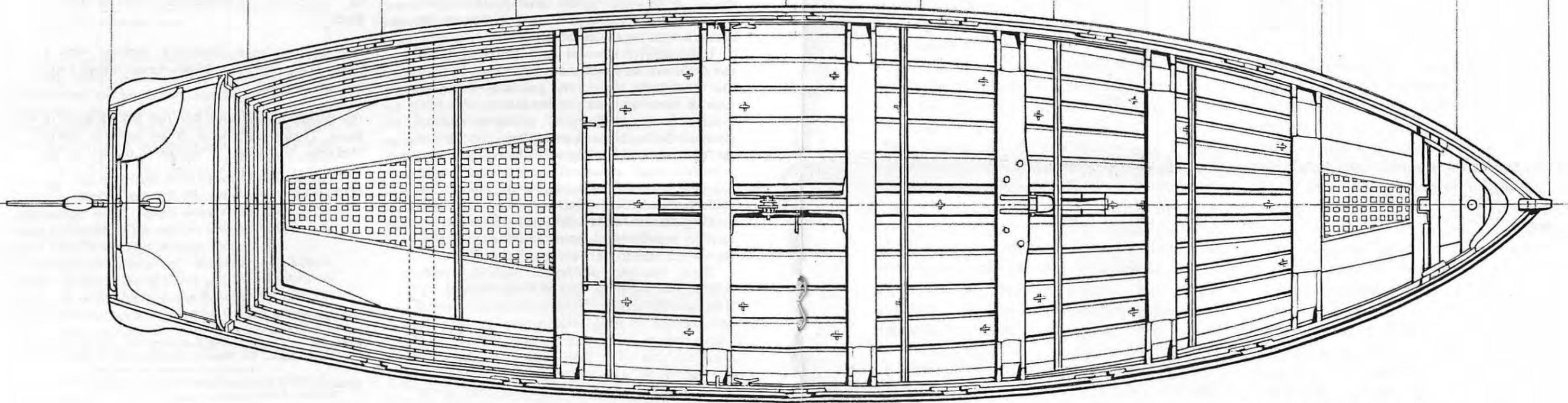
Rutherford

Profile

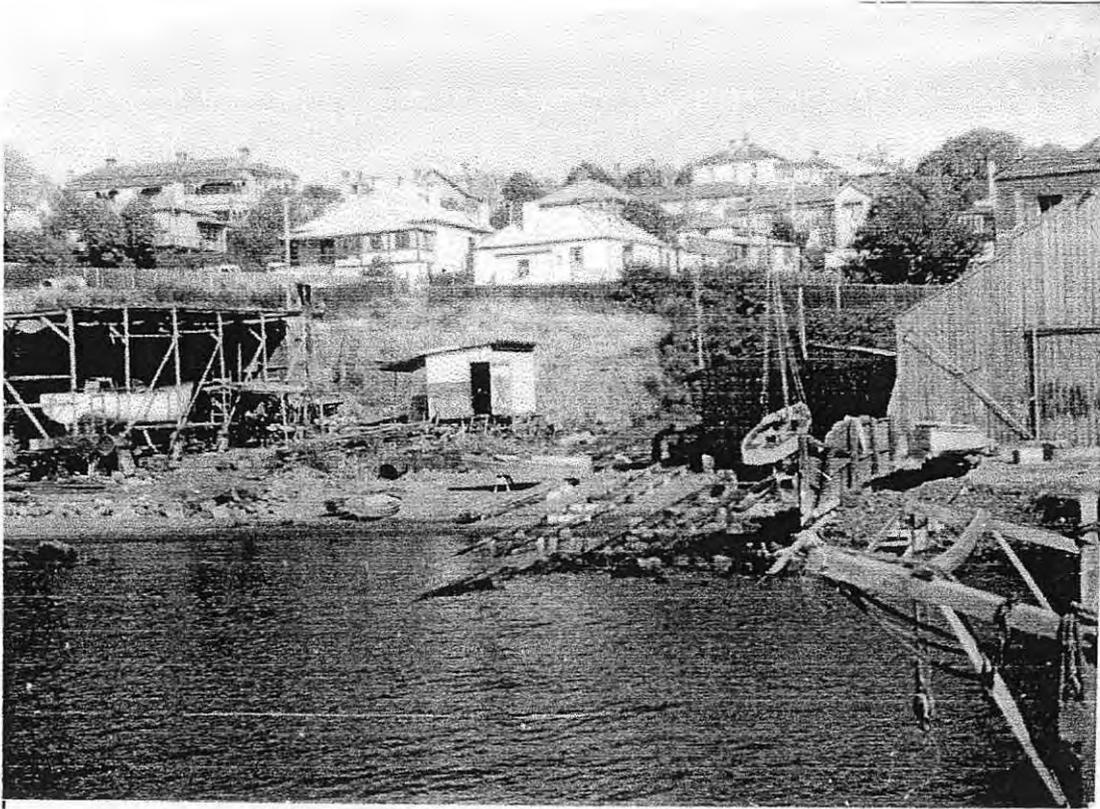


feet

Plan

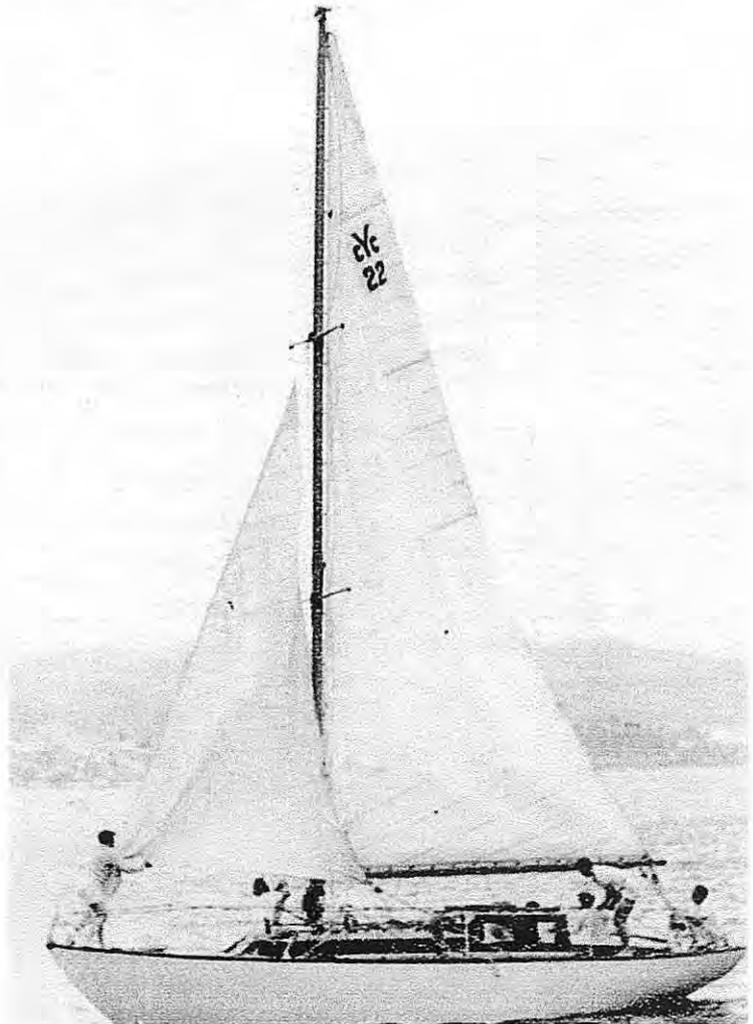


Length: 32 feet
Beam: 8 feet 6¹/₂ inches



Jock Muir's yard,
1951

*Lahara returning after her
first sail, 1951*





Further Maritime Moments From Mike

Part two of the member profile of Mike Igglesden.

He then 20 year old had just arrived from the UK after a lazy four-week voyage to Hobart.

Looking around for work I was offered a position, of a sort, at the airport, servicing after some training, light aircraft. I was also offered a job assembling Ferguson tractors. I eventually came to my senses and found my way down to Battery Point, just along from Salamanca Place, where incredibly skilled men spent their lives. The yards of Percy Cloverdale, Jock Muir, Max Crease, Purden and Featherstone were the Hobart boat builders of the era. They and their boat builder/shipwright employees led a life of little financial return, but most of them I believe enjoyed great work satisfaction. I was yet to realize they were a dying breed. In my wandering along the foreshore that day, negotiating a fascinating tangle of slipways, launching ramps, little wooden jetties, boats of varying sizes and condition, I also encountered the usual 'G'day' and comments associated with boat people the world over.

I was eventually pulled up short as my passage was confronted by a large motor yacht sitting on a cradle with her stern in the river and her bow inside a rough and ready shed. Beneath this boat, lying on the shingle and reaching up through the steel frame of the cradle, paintbrush in hand was the paint-bespattered form of a weary boat builder. "Looking for a job?" said this prostrate figure. "Yes" was my immediate answer in spite of knowing from experience (*Seafarer*) the work offered was not the most pleasant of jobs. In a couple of minutes I had discarded my reasonable 'job interview clothes' and donned his overalls. Shades of the Tom Sawyer situation? I discovered that I was working for Jock Muir, one of the best-known and respected boat builders of his time. I remained in Jock Muir's yard for some three years - the most enjoyable years of my working life.

After being general dogs-body for some months I was 'promoted' to handling tools every now and again. Making tea, sweeping up the workshop, holding a very heavy dolly above the head for hours on end, standing up to the waist in a very cool Derwent River levering errant boat cradles back onto their rails ("You're best at doing that,

Mike"), tailing out in the sawdust laden air in the 'breaking down' shed, supporting some heavy flitches were some of the jobs I was happy to relinquish, to an even more inexperienced addition to the work force. During the time I spent at Jock's there were 4 or 5 shipwrights employed building two beautiful boats, together with some major rebuilds and repairs.

Jock designed the 33-foot Bermudan sloop *Lahara* (which in Papuan means North-West Monsoon). She was built, both planking and timbers, of Huon Pine for a New Guinea patrol officer, Des Ashton. There are three types of Huon Pine, light, medium and a stronger variety containing more oil than the other two. The third type is ideal for steam bent timbers and will out last the other two. I traveled over to Strahan on the west coast one weekend where Jock selected the Huon and the Blue Gum required for the yard. The track, cut into the mountain, from Queenstown down to Strahan was one car wide, mostly unsealed, very windy, hairpin bends with a sheer drop of hundreds of feet one side and a sheer cliff towering above on the other. Even more memorable was the fight in the pub where we stayed the night!

After a sleepless night, we sallied forth with our array of pre-shaped plywood patterns. When laid over available logs they assisted in determining the suitability, or otherwise, for use in a current design, or a design he had in mind for the near future. Green Blue Gum was often used for backbones, smothered in grease until launching. Other timbers favoured by Jock were Celery Top Pine, Burma Teak and Beech for decking. Purchasing Burma Teak was something of a lottery as when broken down on the saw bench sometimes large hollow areas were revealed.

Van Diemen another of Jock Muir's designs was built at the same time as *Lahara* whilst I was there. She was built for Len Nettlefold (Nettlefold's screws). She was a lovely 50-foot double-ended ketch and was also Huon Pine on both planking and ribs.

My memory, never having been the best in the world, is somewhat lazy regarding details of a pro-



ject enacted in a very large shed almost full of Skoda motorcars. I say almost full because the remaining unused section was ultimately filled with a mast of some size. It was between 90 and 100 feet long and took about 2 months to build. Ray Kemp, later to become one of Tassy's leading boat builders (who built among other well known boats the *Lady Nelson*, Tasmania's sail training vessel) and I, were given the task of building said mast. The first week was spent assembling the timber for the construction of the bench and then erecting a series of supports, uprights and cross members at a good working height, approximately 10 feet apart, to take the weight and the length of the spar to be. Zero deviation for the full length of this building bench was permitted.

This is where the hazy bit comes in; I do remember 16 twenty-five or thirty foot lengths of beautiful Oregon pine arriving which we stacked alongside the completed bench, or it could be called a jig, I suppose. I do not remember the cross section sizes but they, of course, had to make up the box section of the mast. Scarfing (12 to 1 ratio) to make up the lengths required (3 scarfs to each length) was a traumatic experience. We were given a new fangled electric hand planer to use, the chain drive of which broke so often that it was cast aside (to put it politely), tempers mollified and the german jack, jack plane and tri-plane were brought into play. 'Beetle' glue, I've no idea of its formulation, was favoured for the job. One of its saving graces was the availability of hardeners, which could give long or short shuffling times. A very big plus on a large job where assembly may take hours, as was the case when the final glue-up time took place. But that was weeks away!

The mast design stipulated it to be hollow and tapered. Templates were made up and each of the four lengths of scarfed up Oregon scooped out to varying degrees, depending on their relative positions along the spar. Some parts adjacent to the spreaders, for example, were left relatively solid with just enough timber removed to permit the access of electric light cables. The hollowing of the tapered section demanded extra care, as the further up the mast we worked the less had to be removed. The next stage was to assemble in a dry run. Location dowels were placed every 10 feet or so, and the four lengths with the help of

six men was assembled. Prior to the glue-up, the sealing coats were applied, then a line was passed down the inside of the mast to act as a pull through. Dozens of cramps to straddle the mast were made from lengths of 24"x 2"x 2" timber off cuts, 3/8" holes bored in each end to take threaded bolts - my job. I threaded enough 3/8" mild steel rods to last a lifetime. After the big glue-up, came the traditional rounding up using a spar gauge - 8, 16 and 32 flats followed by smoothing plane, with abrasive cloth and papers to follow, and then 10 coats of copal varnish. I wonder how many years' worth of my wages that mast cost. I believe it was for Alan Payne's schooner *Mistral 2* which Muir's yard was refitting at the time. A new sprung teak deck was overlaid and bedded down on *Mistral's* structural deck. We all became covered in 'black s...t' every day!

You may have witnessed, at least on television, the stage show of 'sawing a woman in half'? That, of course, was an illusion. Perhaps you are less likely to have witnessed a non-illusionary event in the shape of sawing a boat in half - athwart ships, amid-ships. This procedure of lengthening a fishing boat by approximately 8 feet was made by installing a new backbone to bridge this gap, then re-planking. The owner of a small boat was thus enabled to have a 'wet well' and it was a more economic option than building a new larger boat. The discovery of scallop beds probably was the instigator of this, one of the more unusual demands on the boat builder's skills in the 1950s.

Ah! Those scallop pies! The same shop, opposite Constitution Dock, still sells them. Probably imported now?

[Editor's note:

Lahara's specifications were:

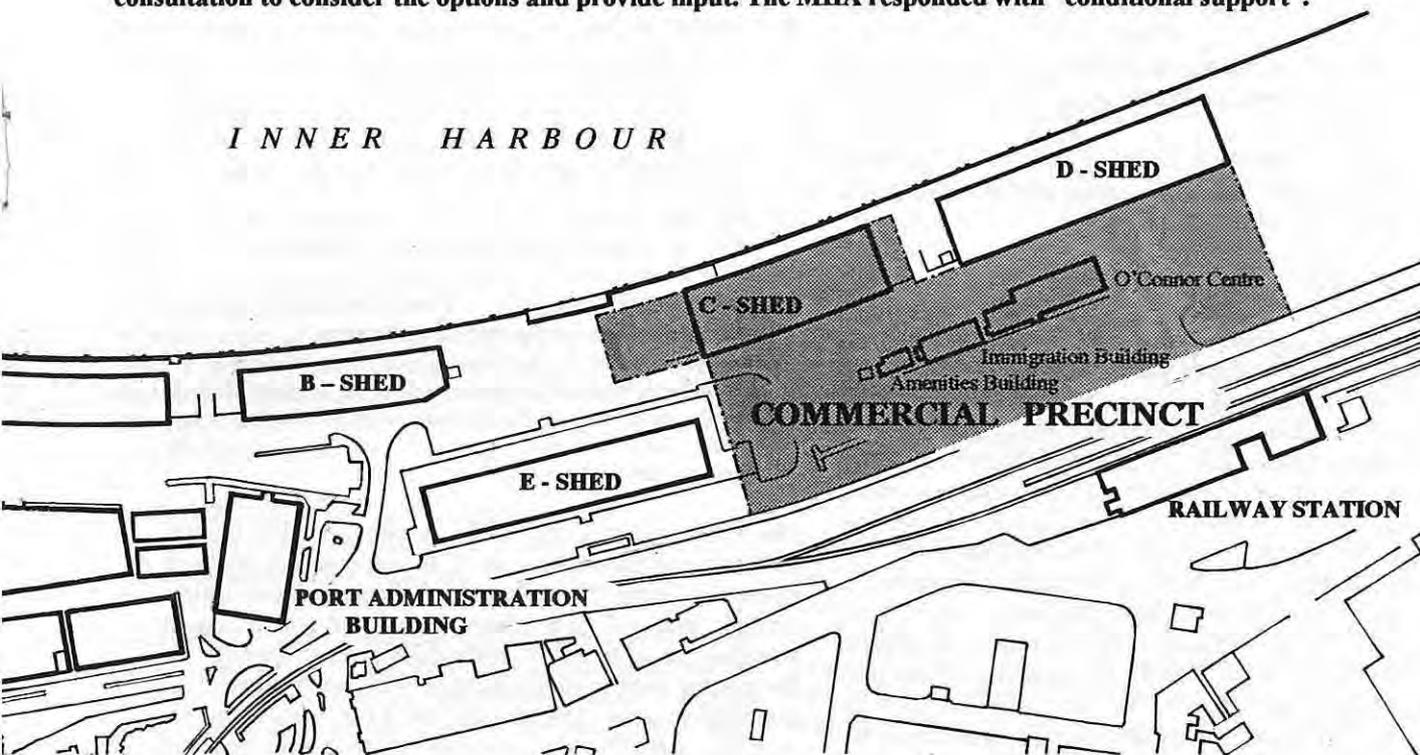
LOA	33 feet
LWL	25 feet
Beam	9 feet
Draught	5 feet 6 inch
Mast Height	42 feet
Sail area	450 square feet
Construction	Huon pine planking over blue gum frames. Queensland beech decking & teak coachhouse, with Oregon spars.

Lahara took part in the 1951 Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race, coming second on corrected time (elapsed time 4 days 7 hours 24 minutes 59 seconds; corrected time 2 days 20 hours 47 minutes 33 seconds).]



VICTORIA QUAY COMMERCIAL PRECINCT

Last April ING Real Estate released their plans to develop the Commercial Precinct on Victoria Quay. Stakeholder and Community forums were held followed by a twenty eight-day response time for community consultation to consider the options and provide input. The MHA responded with "conditional support".



The Commercial Precinct is one of a several Precincts laid down in the *Fremantle Waterfront Masterplan 2000*. The other precincts are for the Maritime Museum, the Slipways, the Ferry Terminal and Slip Street. The Masterplan includes several MHA initiatives that go back to 1988.

With some adjustment to the rail reserve and the realignment of Victoria Quay Road (now called Peter Hughes Drive), the Commercial Precinct occupies 2.9 hectares of land adjacent to the Railway Station. The Precinct also includes the cluster of buildings made up of the O'Connor Centre, the Immigration Building (the Old Police Station), toilet and Amenities Building and a sub-station. Closer to the waterfront, C-Shed is also included within the boundaries. Following a call for expressions of interest in October 2003, ING was announced as "preferred developer".

The developers propose to build a cluster of buildings designated VQ 1, 2, 3 and 4 that will provide 25,000m² of commercial office space, 12,000m² of retail space and 1,100 car bays. To accommodate this facility VQ 2 will be eight stories high, about the same as the Fremantle Ports Administration Building.

Included in the proposal ING will preserve and re-utilise the Immigration and Amenities Buildings and will restore C-Shed including an extension to the westward that will "interpretively recreate the bays that were demolished during the 1980s".

THE MHA RESPONSE

Given the twenty-eight day response time (which included the Easter break), and given the MHA was not allowed to pre-view the proposal before its release, and refused permission to be allowed an extension of time – the Association can be well pleased that it was able to make any response at all. It is little wonder the response was presented (by hand) eight minutes before the close of business on day twenty-eight.

HARBOUR HERITAGE

It is our fervent belief that an active working port *is* the real heritage of the harbour.

The MHA has an intimate appreciation of Victoria Quay's maritime heritage and we recognise the Harbour has a singular culture of its own. Following the guidelines of the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter (1999), the MHA has developed specific criteria and assessments of its own to determine the cultural significance of the waterfront. Since the Inner Harbour was officially opened 4 May 1897, it has undergone a continual process of change. The MHA's *Victoria Quay Assessment* states:

The buildings themselves are not particularly old and have been replaced, relocated, realigned, rebuilt and recycled since their inception – yet still retain their historic character, integrity and ambience.

These qualities have been maintained because the Harbour has its own way of doing things, a style that has become a culture. It is this culture we seek to protect.



We agree, therefore, that changes can be made, and should be made – provided the integrity and heritage of the place is recognised, understood and respected.

COMMERCIAL PRECINCT DEVELOPMENT

The Commercial Precinct can be divided up into three parts:

- The ING Commercial Building.
- The Immigration Buildings.
- C-Shed.

The Maritime Heritage Association’s response examines the “Maritime” and “Heritage” aspects of the proposal, and will focus on the oldest first.

C-SHED - 1903

We concur with ING’s proposal to stabilise, restore and re-utilise C-Shed. However, to “interpretively recreate the bays that were demolished during the 1980s” indicates a lack of understanding of Victoria Quay’s cultural heritage. C-Shed is the oldest Goods Shed on Victoria Quay, affords the highest assessment value, and deserves every consideration for its protection. The original structures date back to 1903. Responding to a need for change, the building was extended in 1912, widened in 1928 and shortened in 1985. This ongoing alteration epitomises the *living character* of Victoria Quay. All these changes have taken place in a characteristic style that retains the historic fabric of the building, retains the integrity of its own structure, and the integrity of the quayside. Not to recognise and respect this understanding countermands the basic Advocacy of the Burra Charter, that of a:

... cautious approach to change: do as much as necessary to care for the place and make it useable, but otherwise change it as little as possible so that its cultural significance is retained.”

C-Shed is not an archaeological artefact, it is still alive, its whole structure is part of the *working fabric of the wharf.*

There is no requirement to “interpretively recreate” the missing section of the building. Utilising compatible materials and skills, the missing section of C-Shed can simply be “reinstated” to the way it appeared before 1985. The Burra Charter refers to this as a “reconstruction”:

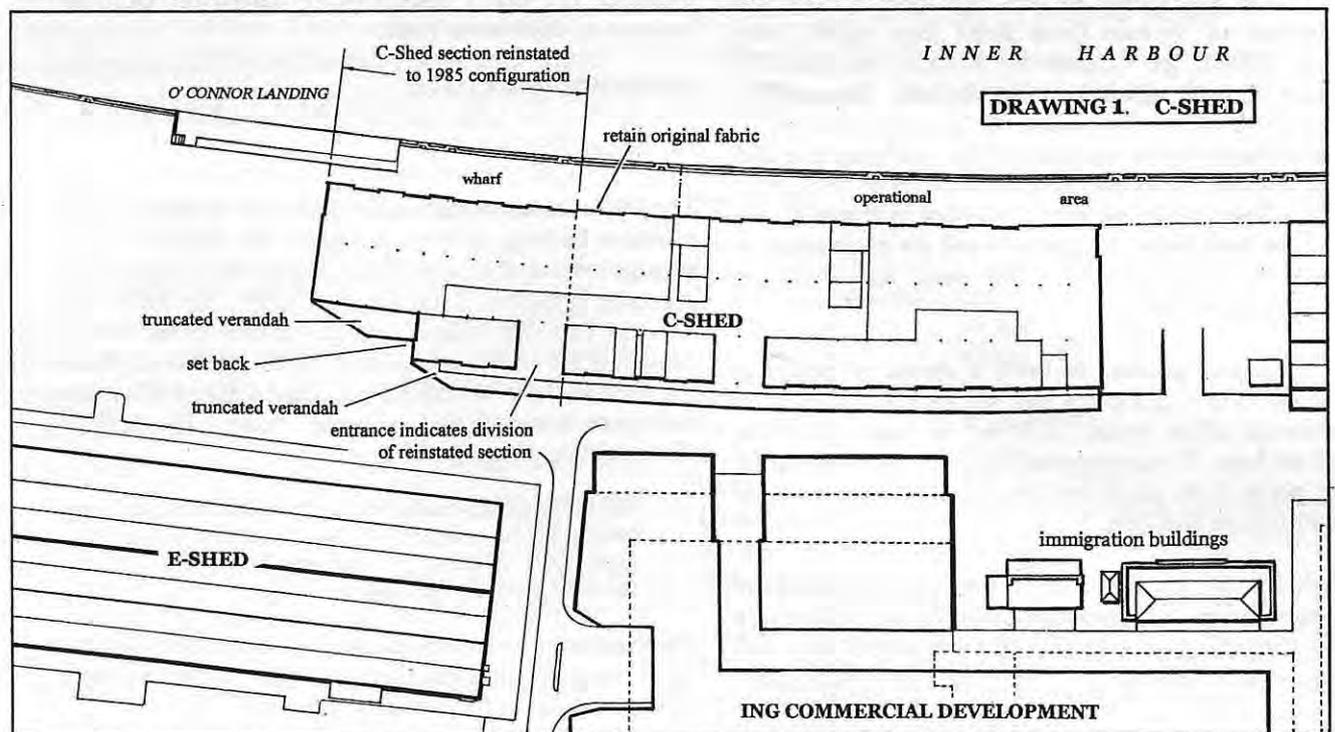
20.1 *Reconstruction* is appropriate only where a *place* is incomplete through damage or alteration, and only where there is sufficient evidence to reproduce an earlier state of the *fabric*. In rare cases, reconstruction may also be appropriate as part of a *use* or practice that retains the *cultural significance* of the place.

20.2 *Reconstruction* should be identifiable on close inspection or through additional *interpretation*.

The MHA does not abide by the Heritage Council of Western Australia’s interpretation that states:

New work is generally permissible if the original fabric is easily identifiable and complements the building’s original scale, form and massing. New work that mimics the original should be avoided.

The MHA wishes to see C-Shed reconstructed to its pre-1985 configuration (drawing 1). It is appropriate to do so under the Burra Charter as the building is “incomplete through damage” and “there is sufficient evidence to reproduce an earlier state of the fabric.” Furthermore, it is the missing section of the building that had the verandahs truncated to give clearance for the steam trains running onto the wharf – an important part of the “*cultural significance* of the place.” Any rail lines still extant on the wharf should also be retained for this purpose. ING’s proposal to extend C-Shed does not include the full length of the missing section, nor does it conform to the earlier structural configuration. The developers also intend to leave the waterfront wall open-sided. Though we prefer the retention of the “hit and miss”, door-wall-door, configuration, we would not object to the open-sided



arrangement described in their promotional literature – provided the open-sided section is restricted to the new section and does not extend into the fabric of the existing building. We trust the developers are mindful of the 40-knot sea breeze that frequents the site. The joining point between the old and new building (with its open-sides), could be readily interpreted. Similarly, placing a major entrance at the joining point on the other side of the building, could also make interpretation easy.

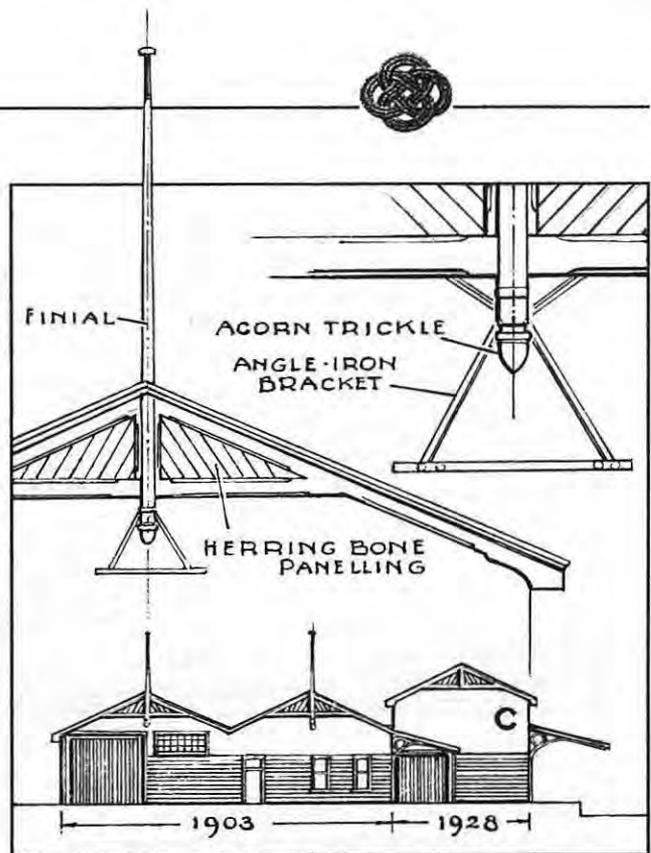
Photographic evidence shows that the original waterside sheds had decorative gable ends with tall finial flagpoles. Remnants of these structures are still to be found on other existing Goods Sheds. The taller shed, added in 1928, despite having decorative gables, appears not to have been fitted with a finial. The drop (or trickle) of the finial should be in the form of an acorn – according to the Lore of the Sea, “a motif of strength and well being”, without which the wharf will be compelled to misfortune and pestilence. For the good of the wharf, the MHA strongly recommends reinstalling the acorns.

THE IMMIGRATION BUILDINGS - 1906

We are in accord with ING’s proposal to preserve and re-utilise the Immigration Buildings.

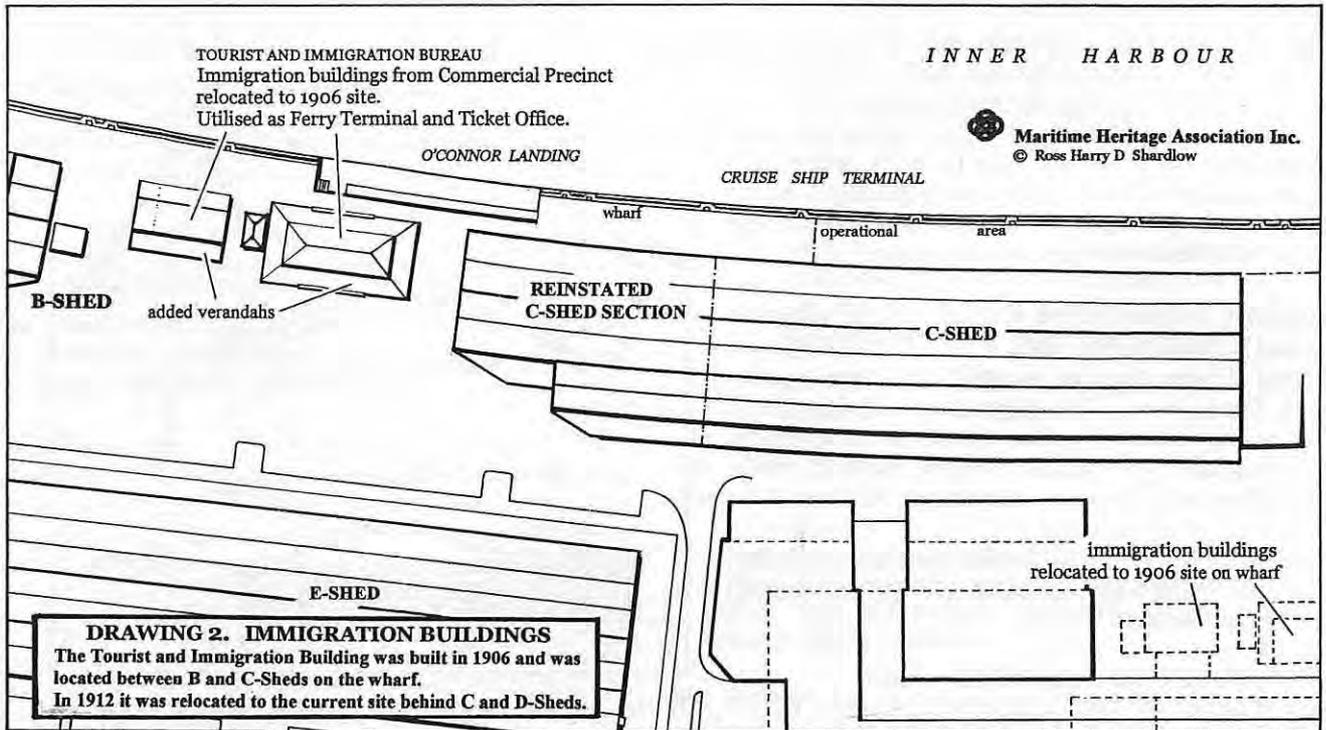
Although the 1942 brick and tile O’Connor Centre was constructed in conjunction with other wartime buildings on Victoria Quay, its isolation and unsympathetic character does not give it a high maritime heritage rating. Similarly, the sub-station next to the Amenities Rooms holds little appeal to our Association. Should plans to demolish the O’Connor Centre eventuate, we recommend salvaging the materials from it for the repair and maintenance of other heritage buildings on Victoria Quay.

The Immigration Building (later the Old Police Station), toilet, and Amenities Rooms have a highly significant rating and deserve every consideration for their protection. The “Government Immigration Office and Information



Bureau” (also called the “Tourist and Immigration Bureau”) was first constructed on the wharf between B and C-Shed in 1906. At one time, the Bureau was housed in C-Shed itself. In 1912 the building was relocated to its present site being somewhat remodelled in the process. The addition of brick colonnades and a tile roof disguise the timber-framed weatherboard building within. The Amenities Room, (also called the Waiting Room) was also transported from the wharf and appears to be a half-shed or harbour lean-to. It now has a brick facia to give a more prominent appearance to its otherwise skillion structure. The charming ladies’ water closet may also be from another site; there were many similar buildings used by tally-clerks and watchmen throughout the wharf area. ING have gone to commendable lengths to accommodate these buildings in their planning proposal (except for the annex to the Amenities Room which seems to have disappeared),





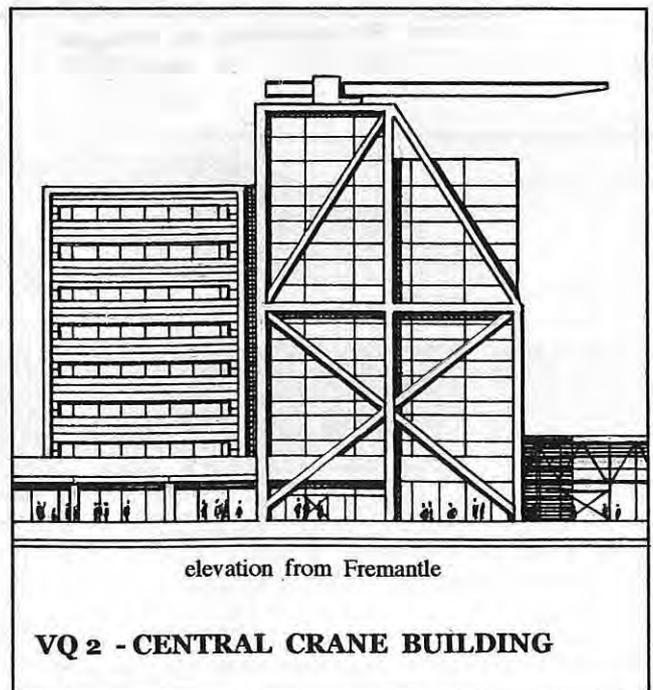
providing whatever setbacks and height buffers as is affordable. We cannot escape the obvious conclusion however, that the Immigration Buildings will be overwhelmed and trivialised; trapped in a cultural enclave, removed from meaning and purpose.

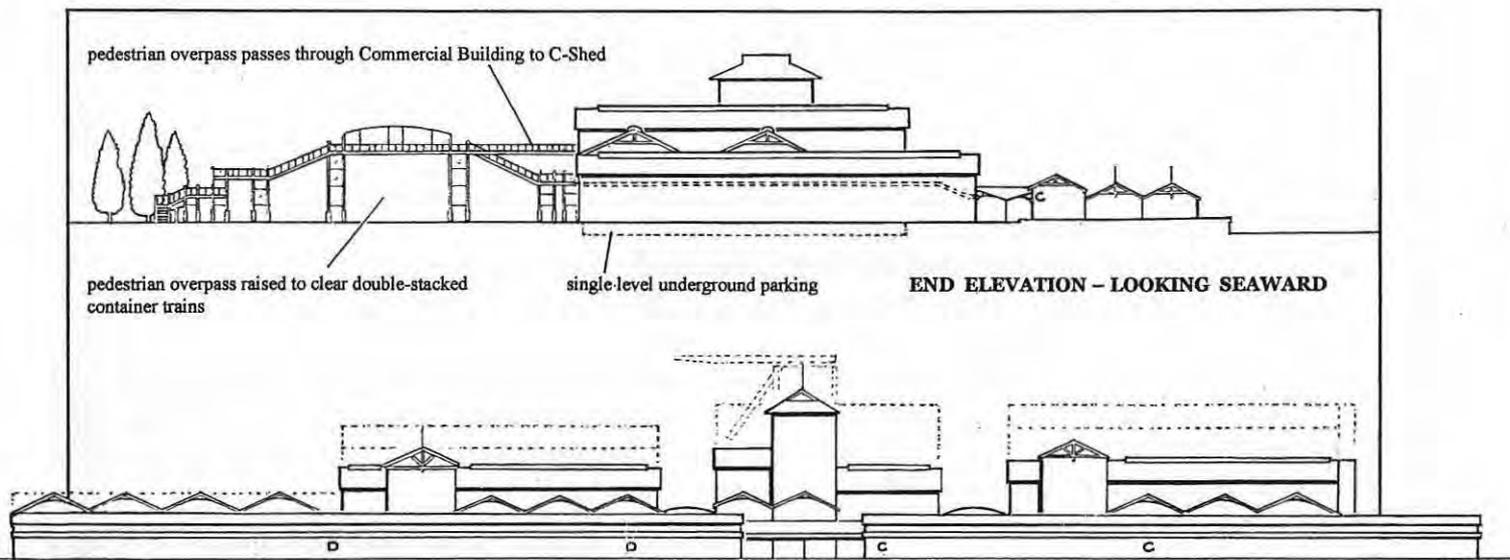
Despite the recognised value of leaving things where they are, the MHA believes that the Immigration Buildings will better suit their cultural significance if they were removed and returned to the original Immigration Building site between B and C-Sheds. There is no conflict with cultural integrity as the building is merely going back from whence it came; furthermore, the relocation of buildings is a real part of Victoria Quay's living heritage.

The MHA recommends that the three buildings (the Immigration Building, toilet and Amenities Room) be lifted in tact, and re-erected in their current configuration between B and C-Sheds (drawing 2). Photographic evidence shows the front of the Immigration Building aligned with the waterside sweep of B and C-Sheds. Only the timber-frame building need be shifted; the 1920s brick and tile additions will not be required except for interpretive display purposes. Where necessary, corrugated iron and weatherboards can replace the missing fabric. Extending the verandahs may complement the buildings and provide shelter, particularly on the reverse side of the buildings facing E-Shed. We suggest the buildings be utilised as the Ferry Operators' Ticket & Booking Office and Tourist Information Bureau. Being adjacent to the O'Connor Ferry Landing, the buildings will be eminently placed for the Ferry Service. More importantly, from the maritime heritage perspective, they will be returned to something resembling their original place and purpose. Their function could be further enhanced if Berth-C was utilised as a Cruise Ship Terminal. Relocating the Immigration Buildings may open up alternative planning options for ING's Commercial Development Proposal.

THE ING COMMERCIAL BUILDING

The MHA finds the footprint of the Commercial Building acceptable. We also hold with the waterfront-industrial architecture, and the set back from the heritage buildings. We expect, however, an overwhelming objection to the excessive height and sheer overbearing mass of the proposal. The MHA anticipates the height would need to come down by half. From the evidence in the proposal brochures, we feel that not all possibilities have been fully explored to reduce the overall height of the development without reducing the available office space. A greater use of underground parking (per Fremantle Port Admin. Building), relocation of the Immigration Buildings, and greater use of the roof lofts for office space, may bring the





SIDE ELEVATION ALONG VICTORIA QUAY FROM HARBOUR

DRAWING 3. PROPOSAL C – REDUCED HEIGHT

- Relocate Immigration Buildings to wharf between B-Shed and C-Shed.
- Single level underground parking.
- Extend buildings towards waterfront utilising existing harbour-side architectural elements.



Maritime Heritage Association Inc.
© Ross Harry D Shardlow

height down to a more acceptable level, one that has more proportional harmony with the existing waterfront (drawing 3). We would not like to see the footprint any closer to C and D-Sheds except, perhaps, at the very eastern end of D-Shed on the operational boundary. We realise access is required through this area, but joining the Commercial Building to D-Shed could give a sense of closure to this corner of the Precinct. The fabric of the Commercial Building is not readily identifiable in the promotional brochures. We are assuming it is of a "corrugated iron" nature with minimal slabs of glass or reflective surfaces. Weatherboard at eye-level appreciation would be welcome. The exoskeleton of the Crane Building is contrary to our views. We understand the metaphor being alluded to, but find it unnecessary, inappropriate and aesthetically dysfunctional. Victoria Quay does not have gantry cranes. And if the crane is somehow meant to disguise the height of the building, it simply does not work; it even exaggerates the height by drawing attention to it.

The pedestrian access to and from the railway station seems entirely inadequate and out of all proportion to the impressive scale of the project. Even minor developments still provide a pedestrian overpass where crossing a railway line is required. Given the intention of using trains 600 metres long, and double stacked with containers, we can only conclude that the lack of provision for a pedestrian overpass was an oversight. From the MHA perspective we would very much like to see the pedestrian overpass reinstated on the alignment of the original overpass. Having to clear the height of double stacked container trains we see as an advantage as it would allow the overpass to continue through the Commercial Building

as an arcade, providing interesting retail opportunities and excellent views along its path. We suggest running the overpass across to the corner of and into C-Shed giving direct access to the tavern, restaurant and food-hall.

Another subject only briefly mentioned here, is the need for a light rail or tramway service running from the Railway Station onto the wharf, from the end of D-Shed to the Maritime Museum, and from Slip Street to the South Mole. It could be an admirable service, and one that interpreted the extensive rail network once so prominent on the wharf. Provision for such a system may need to be considered in the ING Proposal.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

If the Commercial Precinct, with its proximity to the railway station, bus terminal and easy access parking, is as successful as its promoters say it will be, the Central Business Area of Fremantle is likely to be relocated to the waterfront - and that may have a catastrophic effect on the cultural heritage of Fremantle itself. Ironically, it seems that one Waterfront event may take away the sense of place and purpose that was created by another Waterfront event - the America's Cup Challenge.

Nevertheless, we trust the apparent problems can be resolved, and we hope the promoters will willingly embrace the cultural heritage of Victoria Quay in order to resolve them.

Ross Harry D. Shardlow





QUIZ

Answers to June 2006

1. Hawley Shoal is $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles west of Mt Haycock on Garden Island, Cockburn Sound. It is named after the vessel *Hawley* which struck there in 1883.
2. A rowlock is a U-shaped space cut in a boat's gunwale to take an oar. A crutch (often incorrectly called rowlock) is a metal jaw above a pin which fits into a socket in the gunwale. The jaws are sized to take the shaft of an oar.
3. The last vessel to carry convicts to Australia was the ship *Hougoumont* of 875 tons which, under the command of William Cozens, sailed from London on 12 October 1867. She arrived in Fremantle on 9 January 1868 with 279 of the 280 convicts embarked, one having died on the voyage. *Hougoumont* was built in 1852 at Moulmein in Burma.

Questions

1. What is a pledget?
2. Who was the captain of the *Zeewijk* when it was wrecked at the Abrolhos in 1727?
3. Who named Arthurs Head, and after whom was it named?

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