Bern Cuthbertson has donated the figurehead from whaling ship *Waterwitch* to the Maritime Museum.

The story of how the figurehead was saved from a firewood pile can be found in the President’s Message on page 3.
Maritime Museum of Tasmania
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About 700-1200 words, accompanied by
they may be short notes, or articles with text
interpretation of Tasmania’s maritime heritage.
Mission to promote research into and
and with themes reflecting the Museum’s
contributions may be historical or newsworthy
publication is at the discretion of the editor.

New Zealand schooner Huia

Maritime Times of Tasmania welcomes original articles for publication
Contribution must be historical or newsworthy
and with themes reflecting the Museum’s
mission to promote research into and
interpretation of Tasmania’s maritime heritage.
They may be short notes, or articles with text
about 700-1200 words, accompanied by
images if possible. Text may be edited and
publication is at the discretion of the editor.

Ideally contributions will be in a Word
document, with embedded images and/or
with separate 300dpi JPEG or TIFF files. We can
accept legible handwritten articles, with loose
photographs, which we will copy.
Images should have a caption, be credited to
the photographer or to the source, and have
written permission to publish.

Please submit contributions to The Editor
at the postal address above or email
admin@maritimetas.org.
Alternatively you can leave your contribution
at the front desk of the museum at the street
address above. Please remember to include
your contact details.

The Maritime Museum owes its existence to the generous spirit of
donors and benefactors – without their support there would be
very little to exhibit.

Recently, well known maritime character Bern Cuthbertson
appeared outside the Maritime Museum in a utility carrying a new
donation. When Museum volunteers went to help they uncovered
a ship’s figurehead. Bern recounted that, in the 1960s, he had seen
what appeared to be a wooden head sticking out of a large heap
of firewood in the backyard of a house in Pine Street, New Town.
On closer inspection he discovered a figurehead, so he knocked on
the door to ask if he could purchase it. A woman covered in flour
came to the door, angry that her scene making had been disturbed.
Bern’s offer to buy was met with an impatient reply: “Sell it to you!
Take the bloody thing away – I don’t want it.”

He salvaged the figurehead complete with .22 calibre bullet holes
and missing features. His research identified the artefact as the
figurehead from the Waterwitch, one of the very last of Alexander
McGregor’s Hobart Town whale ships and he set about restoring it.
The Waterwitch was launched in 1820 as HMS Falcon from the
newly established Royal Naval Dockyard at Pembroke in south-west
Wales. The 10-gun brig was commissioned for service on the west
coast of Africa in the suppression of the slave trade. Her subsequent
naval career is obscure, but on leaving the service she was renamed
Waterwitch. In 1842 the vessel was reported to be whaling out of
Sydney, and by 1860 Hobart had been made her home port.

Leslie Norman referred to the Waterwitch as: “the last bona fide
whaler to load up with the wild and woolly crews of the more
colourful days” (Norman L, Pioneer Shipping, J Walch & Sons, 1938).
After many profitable cruises she completed her final voyage for
Alex McGregor & Co in November 1895, bringing in 59 tons of oil
obtained in eight months. The McGregor colours came down and,
Alex McGregor & Co in November 1895, bringing in 59 tons of oil
obtained in eight months. The McGregor colours came down and,
with no interest from any purchaser, Waterwitch was laid up.
In April 1896 the barque was dismantled and used as a cargo
landing at the Domain shipyards. When Alexander McGregor died
in August that year his executors sold the remains of the now
sunken Waterwitch to Messrs F & T Bennett who broke her up. It
was an ignominious end to a former warship that had been worked
hard for more than 75 years.

Owing to the generous donation of the figurehead the Museum
has a striking reminder of Hobart’s whale ships. In addition, a model
of the Waterwitch is displayed in our gallery.

Waterwitch – O’May Collection, Maritime Museum of Tasmania
(Artist Unknown).

Waterwitch, one of the very last of Alexander
McGregor’s Hobart Town whale ships and he set about restoring it.

PM1011-Yellow-2013.10.27.indd 1
PM1011-Yellow-2013.10.27.indd 2
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2/28/13 12:49:10 PM

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From The Brig: Update on the Carnegie Gallery

The handover of the Carnegie Gallery to the Maritime Museum will be a process requiring both hard work and patience. Installation of equal access provision to the upper floors of the building needs the approval of Council planners and Heritage Tasmania and is a process that is likely to take some time. Council have offered to undertake the planning and design aspects of the project, for which MMT is very grateful as the technical knowledge and skills required would be difficult for the museum to source.

Until access provision is completed and a lease is in place the Carnegie Gallery space must remain closed to the public. However, Council are extremely supportive and positive for the museum’s future use of the space and we look forward to a continued and enhanced relationship with Council as the project progresses.

While we wait for the great leap forward, there are some small steps that can be taken. Street signage identifying the museum was always a difficult issue with multiple occupancy of the building. But now that the museum is sole tenant we have been able to go some way in addressing this issue and a new sign is now prominently displayed outside the Argyle Street entrance (see photo above). The museum continues to experience record levels of visitation and while there are many factors contributing to that success, improved visual recognition of the museum through better external signage must be one of them. We will continue to seek out other incremental improvements.

To the Editor,

May I add something to Jonathan Davis’ letter in the last issue? Though the troopship Ile de France (43,450/1927) called only briefly at Hobart, arriving and departing on 5th November 1942, she has a special place in the history of the port. Berthing at South Ocean Pier, she became the largest merchant vessel to come into the Hobart wharves to that date and Huddart Parker, the local agents, complimented the Harbour Master, Captain Watchorn, on his skill in bringing her alongside without tugs. Ile de France kept this record for 35 years, until Cunard’s Queen Elizabeth 2 (65,863/1969) arrived on 20th February 1978 (although Oriana, at 41,915 g.t., had come close in 1961-62).

Of course, the size of all these passenger liners pales by comparison with present-day giant cruise ships like Diamond Princess (115,875/2004), Celebrity Solstice (121,876/2008) and Voyager of the Seas (137,276/1999), but the older vessels were much easier on the eye!

Regards,
Rex Cox

Ile de France departs Ocean Pier November 1942.
Photo taken from The Glebe by Hal Wyatt

Photo taken from Mount Stuart by Rex Cox.

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Aaron Gray (Licensee)

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Retiring Volunteers

Two popular volunteers, Dan Sprod and Wally Mainsbridge, began their well-earned retirement from front-of-house duties in April. Both have supported the Maritime Museum for many years.

Dan Sprod arrived in Tasmania with his family in 1966 to take up the position of University of Tasmania Librarian. His early museum involvement began when he joined the people working towards the establishment of a Maritime Museum prior to its opening in Battery Point in 1974.

Dan was born and educated in Adelaide but his education was interrupted by war service when he enlisted in the RAN and served for 3½ years on the corvette HMAS Gemery. On graduating from Adelaide University in 1951, Dan moved to Canberra to work for the National Library of Australia. Then, in 1957, he moved to work in the Australian Consulate General’s Office in New York City saying of that period: “It was a fascinating time, professionally and for my family, and included part of Eisenhower’s regime and the Cold War and Sputnik controversy.”

In Hobart Dan established Blubber Head Press to publish works of Tasmanian and Australian historical interest and later, with his son Michael, he founded Astrolabe Antiquarian Booksellers. Dan is well known for his publications and in 1993 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to literature as an author, publisher and distributor of works on Tasmanian history. In 2004 he was acknowledged by the Federation of Australian Historical Societies and the Royal Society of Tasmania.

Dan has always supported the Museum including donating a model of the Lady Nelson built by his late brother John. In addition, his nautical exploits in Hobart include dinghy racing, first in the two person Enterprise and then, “because it made life easier without crew,” the single handed OK dinghy.

Dan Sprod and Wally Mainsbridge will be missed by everybody at the Maritime Museum and we all wish them well.

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A traditional old English corner pub, filled with history, tradition, and pride including photographs of every ‘Sydney to Hobart’ winner

Wally Mainsbridge, a born and bred Tasmanian, began as a volunteer in the Maritime Museum at Secheron House in the 1980s. He had retired from the ANZ Bank and was surprised to find himself once again under the strict management of Honorary Secretary Ken Hudspeth. Wally remembered that many years earlier Ken had been his teacher at Devonport High School where, as a reluctant pupil, he had been subjected to Ken’s naval-like discipline.

While a student, Wally’s interest in sailing and the Mersey Sea Scouts outweighed his interest in study so his father pulled him out of school when he was 15 and arranged for him to join the ES&A Bank in Devonport. Following the merger of the ES&A and ANZ banks Wally’s career continued with the ANZ Banking Group.

His postings took him all over Tasmania and he recalled, “I wasn’t married until I was 27 because I had never worked in one place long enough to keep the same girlfriend.” In those days, 27 was quite a late age to marry but he and his wife went on to raise their family before Wally retired in Hobart from his successful banking career.

His sailing began in a Lou Witt designed Mersey Class dinghy, the forerunner of the Tamar Class dinghy. Wally expressed concern that Lou Witt had not been acknowledged for his part in the design of the latter dinghy. Low Head Pilot Station attributes the design to Launceston draughtsman Graeme Titmus, nevertheless the following report from The Examiner dated 23 June 1950 leaves the question open:

The Tamar class dinghy was evolved towards the end of 1947. It is an improvement on the Mersey class dinghy, a plan of which was studied intensely by a special subcommittee of six appointed by the Tamar Yacht Club.

Wally sold the dinghy only to see it destroyed on rocks when the new owner went to sea from the Mersey in inappropriate weather conditions. Wally continued sailing firstly in a Sharpie and then in Derwent Class keelboats. He crewed for Jim Hickman aboard Bronzewing but admits he signed-off when he “was unable to speak the same language as his skipper.” It should be noted here that Wally is a charming well-spoken gentleman.
Clara
The History & Restoration of a Nineteenth Century Tasmanian Yacht
by Graeme Broxam

Being restored at Franklin's Wooden Boat Centre is what I believe is one of only five surviving purpose-built southern Tasmanian yachts from the nineteenth century. After at least 120 years as a harbour cruiser, racing yacht and, for nearly a century, an auxiliary motor launch, Clara is being returned to the configuration of the early 1900s.

Clara was probably the 24ft. boat, name not stated, built at the Domain Slip by Thomas Williams in 1882 as a harbour cruiser for William Davidson Peacock, jam factory proprietor and a pioneer of Tasmania's overseas fruit export industry. Clara was first mentioned by name when slipped at the Domain in January 1893. It is possible that Clara was in fact rebuilt from an earlier 24ft. vessel of the same name, built at Battery Point in 1881, that disappears from the record in the mid-1880s.

Clara next appears at the opening of the yachting season on 7 November 1896 owned by W. D. Peacock, after which she raced occasionally, but without much success, until 1902. She then raced successfully for a couple of seasons, including winning the handicap cruisers' races at the Hobart Regattas in 1903 and 1904.

Late in 1908 Peacock had Clara lengthened by four feet to 27ft.9in. waterline. She initially raced under her original sail plan, but this was considerably enlarged by 1911. Clara won a DSS “A Division” race on 24 February 1912, after which she became quite successful. On 16 November Clara beat a fleet including the noted Aotea without the benefit of her handicap, and again beat Aotea on handicap on 12 January 1913 to win the “Patron’s Cup.” At the end of November, Clara failed to show, in very bad weather, for a race that the Mercury’s reporter thought she would have had a reasonable chance of winning – provided that her crew were “good bailers,” given that she was semi-open.

It has been asserted that, on 2 December 1911, Clara carried Husky dogs from Nubeena Quarantine Station, Taroona to the Antarctic explorer Dr. Douglas Mawson’s ship Aurora immediately after she left Hobart on her expedition south. Photographs taken of this historic event show a vessel that is similar to, but NOT Clara.

In January 1915, it was announced that Clara would not compete at the forthcoming Hobart Regatta; this was probably when she was converted into a motor launch. Clara competed in a motor-boat race in 1916, and carried ex-servicemen to a picnic in 1917.

After W. D. Peacock died on 16 November 1921 Clara was advertised for sale, described as an auxiliary yacht with a 12 h.p. Eagle motor. In 1931 Clara was again advertised for sale, as a 30ft. Huon pine motor boat with a 5 h.p. Wolverine marine engine and Marconi sail. By the late 1930s the superstructure that Clara was to retain until 2012 was largely extant. Rumour has it that it was mostly made of offcuts from the Hobart tram works.

About 1948, Clara was acquired by J. D. “Dick” Lucas, formerly a shipwright with Charles Lucas of Battery Point. Clara’s Willys Overland engine was soon replaced by a new 24/32 h.p. BMC/ Morris Navigator. Following Lucas’ death, Clara passed to his son James (Jim) Lucas and wife Sheila. In 1975 Clara was reribbed from green blue gum, and the Lucas family used her until she was replaced by the larger Vera in 1979. Clara was sold to Douglas Hornsby, and was soon part of the Vintage Boat Club of Tasmania. About 1990 the first Morris Navigator engine was replaced by an identical unused unit still held by the Lucas family. Clara competed in many races for gaff-rigged vessels and in February 1994 won the gaff-rigged race at the Bellerive Regatta. Clara regularly attended Vintage Boat Club cruises to New Norfolk, one of which earned her owner the nickname “Captain Cannonball” after an overcharged miniature signal cannon took off and punched a hole in the side of a ferro-cement yacht. In 2002, Hornsby sold Clara to Michael Johnston, and I purchased Clara from him on 6 November 2011. Reconstruction commenced in June 2012.

I began this project believing that Clara, with perhaps 95% of her 1908 structure intact, could be the subject of a museum-standard restoration, preserving virtually all of this material. Unfortunately it was found that the decks were badly deteriorated, and leaks had caused rot in the upper planking. Although refastening done in the 1970s was still in excellent order, earlier fastenings had almost corroded away. Layers of concrete in the stern indicated there were intractable leaks there.

The project was then recast into recreating Clara as a practical representative of her type, retaining most of the 1908 planking, but replacing the decks and top clinker strake. The new deck is high-grade marine ply, cambered to prevent rot-inducing water laying on it. Additional celery top pine floors and stringers have been added, making Clara a much stronger boat. On removal of the false keel and keelson, the original centre-case slot was relocated, and a plywood centre-case and centre-board have been fitted.

The historical record would have us believe Clara was built of Huon pine. She was in fact built of 5/8 inch New Zealand Kauri pine, and the same material was used in her 1908 lengthening. Clara is “batten-seam” built, a technique combining the benefits of both carvel and clinker construction. The planking has been routed and splined to improve watertightness. The false keel being full of shipworm, it and the outer part of the main keel were removed, worm-holes in the latter filled with epoxy, and a new full-length blue gum false keel added. A new 20 h.p. Yanmar diesel engine has been fitted, capable of driving Clara at about 7.5 knots.

Clara is expected to be relaunched in September, after which she will be fitted with new laminated Oregon pine spars currently being manufactured, and hopefully will be in operation by Christmas.

Clara has had a very long and productive career. Never allowed to fall into complete dereliction, she has survived by being a cheap but reliable old boat, of a size and standard of construction that have allowed owners of modest means to keep her operational. Following her current reconstruction Clara is no longer a “cheap old boat” in any respect, and she should be good for another century.
Why did Australia come to have a ship named HMAS Wyatt Earp, commemorating a United States hero, famous mainly for the Gunfight at the O.K. Corral? His career, while interesting in its own right is irrelevant to Australia. So why?

The ship was built in Norway in 1919 as the Fanefjord for the herring fishery: 41.4 m long, 9 m beam, 5 m draft and 402 gross tonnage. US adventurer Lincoln Ellsworth purchased the ship in 1933 to act as his transport for six years of adventure exploration in the Antarctic regions, re-naming the vessel after his childhood hero. He was a firearms collector and was so inspired by Wyatt Earp that he purchased one of Earp’s handguns. As a strong US patriot, one of his driving ambitions was to claim territory for the US often by ignoring pre-existing claims and dropping US flags as a statement of claim.

Ellsworth is the name most associated with Wyatt Earp, but Australian Sir (George) Hubert Wilkins acted as captain and looked after the day-to-day management of the ship. During this time, Ellsworth conducted major aerial exploration of West Antarctica discovering and naming many features. He was a true pioneer of Antarctic aviation, as was Wilkins, in his own right. Ellsworth’s last voyage in Wyatt Earp was in 1938/39 in the Pryde Bay region of East Antarctica between where the Australian stations of Mawson and Davis are now. This was a frustrating venture for Ellsworth; the time and conditions for flying the ship’s ‘plane were extremely limited. The US did not recognise the Australian territorial claim and Ellsworth wished to claim as much as possible for the US. Advice he received from the US consulate in Cape Town about claims was ambiguous, but Ellsworth decided to go ahead anyway. He conducted only one major flight, due south from the ship, claimed territory, and saw and named the American Highlands. Following this disappointing venture, Ellsworth tired of the uncomfortable Wyatt Earp. He sailed into Hobart early in February 1939 and stayed at the Tasmanian Club. It is unclear if he sold the ship to the Australian Navy for £4400, or gave it to Wilkins who sold it, but a letter from the Prime Minister’s Department, addressed to Ellsworth at the Club, requested that the ship be delivered to Sydney.

After the outbreak of World War II later in 1939, the ship was re-named HMAS Wongala. At first it carried stores and ammunition from Sydney to Darwin, but from 1940 to 1944, it was based in South Australia as an Examination Vessel, and the Tasmanian connection

Model of Wyatt Earp held by Maritime Museum Tasmania. Note the seaplane on deck. Photo: MMF Collection.

Guard Ship and as Mother Ship for the Navy Auxiliary Patrol. From March 1945, the Boy Scouts Association used it for Sea Scout training, based at Port Adelaide.

In 1947, initiation of an Australian Government program, the Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions (ANARE), required appropriate shipping. Something seemed to fill the bill. It resumed its earlier name Wyatt Earp, but as HMAS Wyatt Earp, on 16 July 1947. It was modified extensively at Port Adelaide. Rotting hull timbers were replaced, accommodation expanded, space provided for a cosmic ray laboratory, a gyro-compass, small radar, and an echo sounder; and a new, higher bridge was built. At the launch on 17 November, it slid down the slipway and crossed the river to collide stern-first into a freighter on the other side; it was then deemed satisfactory for a voyage to the Antarctic. The main science on that voyage was to be in cosmic ray physics and meteorology data gathering. Phillip Law’s book describes that journey as a nightmare. The trip from Adelaide to Melbourne was a litany of failures, many more than would be seen as acceptable in a normal shakedown voyage. In Melbourne, a ‘plane was embarked; modifications were made to scientific gear and to the ship; it departed for Hobart, but in foul weather. The fast rolling began – up to 50° each side of vertical! Whatever could, broke free; seasickness and lack of facilities made conditions worse. Weaknesses in ship modifications in Adelaide meant that sea water came in through any vent, even at the highest levels, and cabins were awash. Eating, drinking, and cooking were extremely difficult.

The problems continued until the engines had to be stopped at lat. 51°54’S; long. 140°31’E, well northwest of Macquarie Island. The ship was ordered to return to Melbourne to correct significant problems. It was not until 7 February, quite late in the season, that its condition was thought suitable to resume the voyage. The rolling continued, water still came in the starboard side, and there were ongoing problems with equipment, but they made progress. Eventually the expedition reached the pack-ice and all enjoyed some peaceful Antarctic conditions. Unfortunately, the ‘plane’s engine could not be started because of the cold; there was no hope of getting to the coast so they turned northeast for the Balleny Islands. The Balleny Islands were virtually free of surrounding sea-ice and several days were spent there. There was a very brief landing on Bordaide Island, then a return to the vicinity of Commonwealth Bay (Mawson’s 1912-13 home for the Australasian Antarctic Expedition). A couple of short flights provided images of a cloud-covered continent, then the captain, because of the lateness of the season, decided to head north to Macquarie Island, where a new station was being built. They encountered atrocious conditions at sea. After HMAS Wyatt Earp returned to Melbourne, it never sailed under that name again, but resumed the name Wongala. It was sold to a commercial shipping firm, stripped of most of the Antarctic fittings, and operated until 1956 between Victoria and Tasmania. It was re-sold, renamed Notone and, after a short time working around Tasmania, was transferred to Queensland, where, on 23/24 January 1959, it ran aground on rocks and was wrecked.

Thus, sadly, ended the career of Fanefjord, Wyatt Earp, Wongala, H.M.A.S. Wyatt Earp, Wongala, and Notone. Its original ship’s bell is held at the headquarters of the Australian Antarctic Division in Kingston, and the Tasmanian Maritime Museum has a model.

Further reading:

by Patrick Quilty AM

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East Risdon is a quiet little place with few homes, by the river opposite the Zinc Works. Because the Zinc Works is so close, this place has never been developed. Things would have been different had the first European settlement continued, rather than been moved down the river to Sullivan’s Cove.

The area was the site of the river crossing in the earliest days of European settlement. Convicts from Port Arthur and Richmond were held overnight at the lock-up, to wait till the next day, to cross the river safely on the journey to Hobart Town. The lock up building was a convict-built stone building on the bank, overlooking the river. The Risdon Punt vehicular ferry service evolved from the colonial crossing and was mainly used by the eastern shore workers employed at the Zinc Works. East Risdon was a sleepy, quiet spot and the Risdon Punt was a relaxed arrangement. There was a timetable, but with morning tea and lunch breaks. The skipper would enjoy a chat as the punt slowly pulled itself across the river on a cable system. When lunchtime came, the punt would stop on one side or the other. Intending passengers just had to wait. Rarely did the punt carry a full load (about six cars, or two trucks). This Public Works Department service was obviously not running to make a profit.

Suddenly, in January 1975, things changed dramatically. Quiet, sleepy Risdon with the old Risdon Punt became the heavy river crossing point for passengers, cars, trucks and commercial vehicles. The Lake Illawarra had collided with the Tasman Bridge; a section had collapsed, the ship sank and the bridge was suddenly unpassable. Parking, and vehicles queuing waiting to cross on the punt, created chaos. The car parking area was too small. Room was required for the feeder buses to turn around after dropping waiting to cross on the punt, created chaos. The car parking area was too small. Room was required for the feeder buses to turn around after dropping people and cars came to park in the big car park.

That morning, local residents at Risdon noticed a large catamaran had run aground. Police were there and told us we were not allowed to go near it, in case there was a fire. We had walked along the track for years and had never expected to have it blocked by a large ship. The radio news soon broadcast this dramatic event, so people started coming to have a look. Soon there were cars and people everywhere. The car park was full again. Quiet Risdon wasn’t so quiet that day. Eventually the tug Storm Cove pulled the catamaran off the rocks so it could return to InCat to be checked over. Passengers were aboard, with their cars and caravans. Apparently they were off to Melbourne on a trial trip to see how the catamaran would perform.

The heavy traffic and the need for plenty of car parking continued for a year or so, until the opening of the temporary Baily Bridge. Then the new Bowen Bridge opened to replace the Baily Bridge and the Risdon Punt service came to an end – both punts were sold. The eastern side wharf was removed in 1982, after falling into disrepair. The Tasman Bridge was reopened nearly three years after being damaged. East Risdon returned to the quiet little place once again. The only reminder of the busy traffic era is the large sealed car park area. Locals enjoyed the quiet area, with one or two cars parked by the river now and then.

On Good Friday morning 1990, a dramatic event at East Risdon caused the car park to fill with cars and sightseers. Once again due to a large vessel going off course, lots of people and cars came to park in the big car park.

Tug racing

We don’t see many cars go past our homes at Risdon, but we do see lots of boats. Years ago, the River Steamers raced, and when this stopped most people thought the river racing between the workboats had finished. The tugs had moved their berths from the APPM wharf near the Botanical Gardens to the old Transport Commission wharf at Prince of Wales Bay. This meant that every time tugs were required to push and pull a ship at the Hobart Port or the Oil Wharf, the tugs had to travel all the way from Prince of Wales Bay and then come all the way back.

Most times the tugs would travel down the river at a “nice” speed. We could admire these handsome work vessels from our little boats as they glided past. The return trip was often a different matter. The tugs would race each other back up the river, leaving a wake for those in small boats to deal with!

Concern was raised by the rowing clubs, who pointed out that the racing tugs presented quite a dangerous situation to the rowers. The large waves created could swamp the rowing skiffs and break them. This concern was successful in actually slowing the tugs and bringing the river racing between the work boats of Hobart to an end.

Yobbos on the river

Risdon, the quiet little place, does not have noisy cars whizzing around like some places. Occasionally a carload of yobbos will spin around doing doughnuts all over the car park area, just to check if their driving skills have improved. Usually it seems their skills have not improved at all, so they speed away, perhaps feeling inadequate. Then we had yobbos whizzing around doing doughnuts in tugs – on the river!

The tug Cape Bruny was out, swirling around Risdon doing several doughnuts at speed before heading back to Prince of Wales Bay at full speed. She was possibly being tried out as part of sales negotiations, because she disappeared. Later she was seen tied up in the River Tamar, where she has slowly rusted away.

Another time the Anson was used to demonstrate how clever it is to do doughnuts. Normally, the Anson would slowly leave the Zinc Works with a load of jarosite, dump it at sea, then return to take another load. She was such a familiar sight, you didn’t notice her. To see the old Anson spinning around doing doughnuts was such an unfamiliar sight, you did notice her!

This is a fast and effective way of whipping a rope’s end. It is normally used as a temporary whipping, but if it is well applied, it could be long lasting.
BOOK REVIEWS

HISTORY OF THE IRON POT: DERWENT LIGHT
by Suzanne Smythe (2012)

It’s an iconic landmark, a point of reference for locals and a welcome sight for ocean sailors coming into Hobart. The Iron Pot Trophy is awarded to the handicap winner of the Sydney-Hobart yacht race, but there’s a fascinating history behind the light on the rock.

Initial lobbying for a strategically placed lighthouse in the River Derwent was ineffective, but after a shipwreck (Hope) and some groundings there, a light was established and first lit in 1832. This book describes the subsequent parade of characters that lived, loved (and fought) on the island. They maintained the light, recorded weather details, argued with authorities, kept livestock, grew vegetables, weathered storms and raised children there. Successive keepers’ opinions of the efficacy of a variety of oils used for the lamp are noted, and an outline of the conversion to electricity and solar panels is given. More details are added with historical anecdotes, e.g. the origin of the name, the interest shown after the rumoured discovery of gold, a pet monkey, and the problems children had rowing across the river to get to school and back.

Richly illustrated with maps, plans, documents, newspaper rowsing across the river to get to school and back. The Introduction gives the history of the evolution of picture postcards as a postal item, and the appeal they had for specialist collectors. Those illustrated here are of images captured by well-known Tasmanian maritime photographers, including Baily, Beattie, Propsting and Williamson. There are individual summaries of the yachts, giving details of registration, type, dimensions, builders, owners and notable events in the yacht’s history. Many of the yachts will be familiar names: Aotea, winner of the cruisers’ race at the Hobart Regatta 1908, 1909 and 1910, is still operational and graces the cover, and Clara, the subject of the article on page 18, is currently being restored. One-Design racing sloops, like Pandora and Canoe, also feature, with others which have survived more than 100 years, as testament to the quality of the boat-building. The names of many owners will also be familiar and the anecdotes of owners and races, of Derwent and Tamar rivers and Williamson.

Interesting background details in some postcards are noted. There are details of rigging and restorations, of conversions of boats that survived and boats that went aground or sank, anecdotes of owners and races, of Derwent and Tamar rivers and Williamson. There are individual summaries of the yachts, giving details of registration, type, dimensions, builders, owners and notable events in the yacht’s history. Many of the yachts will be familiar names: Aotea, winner of the cruisers’ race at the Hobart Regatta 1908, 1909 and 1910, is still operational and graces the cover, and Clara, the subject of the article on page 18, is currently being restored. One-Design racing sloops, like Pandora and Canoe, also feature, with others which have survived more than 100 years, as testament to the quality of the boat-building. The names of many owners will also be familiar and the anecdotes of owners and races, of Derwent and Tamar rivers and Williamson.

YACHTS ON THE DERWENT IN OLD PICTURE POSTCARDS
by Graeme Broom (2013)

This booklet, timed to coincide with the Tenth Australian Wooden Boat Festival held in Hobart in February 2013, contains a wealth of information about yachts seen on the Derwent in the first few years of the twentieth-century or earlier. The introduction gives the history of the evolution of picture postcards as a postal item, and the appeal they had for specialist collectors. Those illustrated here are of images captured by well-known Tasmanian maritime photographers, including Baily, Beattie, Propsting and Williamson. There are individual summaries of the yachts, giving details of registration, type, dimensions, builders, owners and notable events in the yacht’s history. Many of the yachts will be familiar names: Aotea, winner of the cruisers’ race at the Hobart Regatta 1908, 1909 and 1910, is still operational and graces the cover, and Clara, the subject of the article on page 18, is currently being restored. One-Design racing sloops, like Pandora and Canoe, also feature, with others which have survived more than 100 years, as testament to the quality of the boat-building. The names of many owners will also be familiar and the anecdotes of owners and races, of Derwent and Tamar rivers and Williamson.

THE PLAQUE BELOW THE PAINTING READS:
Nella Dan
Artist: Ib Odfeldt
Nella Dan was a steel motor ship built in Denmark in 1961. In December 1987 she was discharging fuel oil at the Australian Antarctic Division’s Macquarie Island Station when she dragged her anchors in strong winds and went ashore. Badly holed and considered beyond repair, she was refloated to remove all potentially polluting materials and scuttled about eight miles offshore.

MARITIME ART: NELLA DAN

Both books are available in Rolph’s Nautical Gift and Book shop at the Museum.

BY CLIO

Nella Dan

Built in 1961 at the Alborg Shipyard in Denmark for the Lauritzen Lines polar fleet, MV Nella Dan sailed to Antarctica for 26 years with ANARE (Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditions), calling at the stations in the Australian Antarctic Territory and supporting major Antarctic and Southern Ocean marine science programs. It had the capacity to carry 35 crew and 42 expeditioners. The Australian Antarctic Division had considerable input into the ship, which was named after Nell Law, an artist, wife of the Division’s Director, Phil Law, and the first Australian woman on the Antarctic continent.

Like the earlier Dan ships, Nella Dan’s hull was strengthened for navigation in ice, but had additional features, like an ascent to the crow’s nest inside the mast. With an overall length of 75.2 m and a breadth just over 14 m, the ship’s gross tonnage was 2,206. It was propelled by an 8-cylinder, two-stroke, direct reversible diesel engine. Auxiliary machinery included three diesel generators, a fresh-water evaporation plant, and refrigeration and air-conditioning plants. Other features were a helicopter deck, twin radar sets, echo sounders and both gyro and magnetic compasses. Broad horizontal fins at the stern helped keep the propeller clear of ice, and an ice knife protected the rudder when the ship went astern in the ice. Alterations and upgrades were implemented in future years, including the installation of a closed circuit television to allow both the instrument room and the bridge to view operations on the trawl deck.

The ship’s history was not without drama. In 1985, Nella Dan was trapped for 52 days in thick ice off the Enderby Coast in Antarctica, until released by the powerful Japanese icebreaker Shirase. Then in 1987, bad weather hit while Nella Dan was re-supplying the base at Macquarie Island, with disastrous results. The ship grounded after they had anchored as close as possible to the shore “to minimise the distance the LARCs had to travel when transferring cargo and to facilitate the handling of the fuel transfer pipeline” (ATSB Report, April 1988). All personnel survived, but the subsequent decision to scuttle the ship, on 24 December (see back cover), prompted an emotional global response.

In 2002, the Southern Ocean Maritime Art Prize was organised by the Maritime Museum of Tasmania, and the winning painting, Nella Dan, was acquired by the Museum. Artist Ib Odfeldt, now resident in Tasmania, but born near the site of the ship’s construction, first became interested in Nella Dan years ago, at the old Maritime Museum in Melbourne, where a large model, and memorabilia salvaged from the ship, were on display. For some years, it was a favourite subject for his art. He met people who travelled with the ship, and heard the “colourful” stories of their experiences.


Clio was one of the nine Muses in Greek mythology, the Muse of History, and is – appropriately for a reviewer – often depicted with scrolls or a pile of books.
FROM MELBOURNE TO STRAHAN for the Union Steam Ship Co.

by David James

In the winter of 1965, I was 4th Engineer of the MV Kumalla, a Union Steam Ship of Australia vessel on a regular run between Melbourne and Strahan, west coast Tasmania. The company went by the name USS Co. We would laugh at this abbreviated version of the company name, the joke being that what the initials really stood for was, U Shall Slave or U Shall Starve.

For all that, USS Co was a good company with a proud tradition forged over many years in Australian coastal shipping, principally on the interstate trade across Bass Strait. Although the fleet had once been much larger they still had about ten ships when I joined. The ships were notable for the dark green hull with a yellow driving band, and a white superstructure topped by an orange funnel with black rings and a black top. Another notable feature was the unusual top-up derricks (the mast-like cylindrical steel structures used to load and unload the cargo).

Bluff in the bow, with little streamlining, these freighters sat low in the water, fully loaded. They had a reputation as rather gutless in a blow, or in heavy seas, so confident was I that every other man on board had done, and would do, his allotted job just as reliably as I believed I was doing mine. Hatch covers needed to be securely tarped. The cleats must not fail in the water swirling on deck and over the covers. All engine room machinery and main engine/had to have been well maintained and operated without error.

Navigation in those challenging waters was so important and was done back then without the benefit of satellite and other modern aids. Kumalla did have radar at that time I was on her; however, it was located in an unusual place, atop the starboard mast instead of atop the monkey island. This was presumably to avoid clutter from the high top-up derricks that were employed by most Union Co. ships.

I cannot remember ever being affrighted in those stormy seas, so confident was I that every other man on board had done, and would do, his allotted job just as reliably and well as I believed I was doing mine.

There was one memorable night in Bass Strait. All day we had crested the very large waves. Regal wandering albatross wheeled close overhead. Tiny storm petrels (known to seafarers as Mother Carey’s Chickens), wings aflutter, feet paddling, fed on plankton borne in the spindrift on the cresting waves. Our ship had made very little forward way all through that long day under the howling onslaught, with the overspeed governor on the British Polar main engine often cutting in, slowing the engine just when we most needed the revolutions. As the bow fell into each trough the nearly exposed propeller raced, partly in air. Large waves struck the hull, causing timber panelling in alleyways and cabins to creak and groan in time, as the vibration from the shuddering bow coursed the ship’s length.

That night I got up to go to my engine room watch at midnight; something that I thought was a rat scurried past my feet at my cabin door. On closer inspection though, it proved to be a tiny storm petrel, attracted by the light perhaps and somehow blown inside the ship out of the howling winds. I left it sheltering in my cabin and made my way below to tend the noisily rattling engine just when we most needed the revolutions. As the bow fell into each trough the nearly exposed propeller raced, partly in air. Large waves struck the hull, causing timber panelling in alleyways and cabins to creak and groan in time, as the vibration from the shuddering bow coursed the ship’s length.
Notes from the Curator

by Rona Hollingsworth

If you’ve been upstairs at the Museum recently you will see that our ship models have disappeared from behind the blue curtains and many objects have gone from Store 4. They are now at our Cambridge warehouse. As well as allowing the objects to be more accessible and less cramped, the move creates a wonderful opportunity to check the models and assess them for their significance and condition. The space left vacant in the city will soon be filled with plans, photos, objects, books and work stations, with researchers, curator and librarian all vying for extra room! Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who have helped to set up shelving, move objects and assess the models.

Unfortunately I can’t list all of the interesting objects that have been donated to the Museum in the past few months but a few notable examples are the figurehead from the Waterwitch, a scrimshaw cane made of whalebone, the Rainbow class dinghy Rhythm, and an off-course alarm salvaged from the Lake Illawarra.

The alarm is very pertinent to the story of the Tasman Bridge disaster caused by the Lake Illawarra going off course and slamming into the bridge. It will soon be on view in our main gallery next to the Lake Illawarra / Tasman Bridge model which was kindly loaned by TMAG. A new panel about Macquarie Island shipwrecks can also be found in the revamped Shipwreck section.

We have also recently received a wonderful diary and photo album compiled by Jack Fox, a whaler on the Nielsen Alonso. This will be the subject of a future article in the Maritime Times but does remind me of three memorable lines I read recently about whaling in the southern ocean:

Below 40 degrees South Latitude there is no law
Below 50 degrees there is no hope
Below 60 degrees there is no god

Another document which has been lent for scanning is an 1850’s ledger from James Robertson’s chandlery business in Hobart. It includes lists of marline spikes, dead eyes, cutting in spades and hundreds of other items provided to well-known whaleships, ship builders and colonists.

Finaly I have to mention an intriguing Williamson panorama of Hobart which shows the DKL building under construction. By examining the vessels in port, volunteer Rex Cox, has managed to determine the exact day when the photograph was taken - April 13, 1911. Quite an achievement!

Thank you to Bern Cuthbertson, Rosemary Clayton, Andrew Edwards, Denis McQueen, Pat Fox, Dianne Robertson, Marcus Higgs and all of our other recent donors and lenders. It is very rewarding for Museum staff to receive such strong support from diverse members of the community – and it certainly keeps my job constantly interesting and stimulating.

Below 40 degrees South Latitude there is no law
Below 50 degrees there is no hope
Below 60 degrees there is no god

‘NO SHIP THERE I WAS’

being the continuing adventures of the maritime heritage coordinator Elizabeth Adkins, part the ninth.

In March we broke out the egg and bacon pies to celebrate the launch of Home-made: surfing in Tasmania’ in the Carnegie Gallery. Featuring short films like Simon Trewick’s ‘A Portrait of Surfing in Tasmania,’ ABC Open’s ‘This is Tasmania’s Biggest Wave’ and a rare film of early surfing at Clifton Beach from TAHO, photographic prints and memorabilia, as well as the boards on display at the Australian Wooden Boat Festival, the exhibition was on display for 2 months. I’d like to thank Larissa Deck, Bryan Wilson, Rona Hollingsworth, Mark Hosking and the Library crew for their help in installing the show, and Rex Cox for photographing it. It gave us a good example of what the Maritime Museum of Tasmania could do with temporary exhibitions in that space in the future, attracting a goodly number of local visitors especially on the weekends.

The exhibition was designed to be portable, and now the exhibition banners, films and photographic prints are packed and ready to tour. Five coastal museums around Tasmania have expressed interest in hosting the exhibition. It includes lists of marline spikes, dead eyes, cutting in spades and hundreds of other items provided to well-known whaleships, ship builders and colonists.

Planning on a theme of Tasmanian lighthouses – perfect for stormy weather. We are investigating ways to ‘build’ model lighthouses, that kids can make and take home, which reflect Tasmanian lighthouses and stories. It’s lovely to be able to share our museum with Hobart families like this.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Bob Andreaathar, Tina Dambitits and Rona Hollingsworth for their achievement in putting the entire object collection into the eAlive catalogue. Bob and Rona’s meticulous work in documenting the objects and Aina’s dedication in entering the data into the eAlive database means that we all have more access to our collection for research and fun than ever before. Our eHive address is http://eHive.com/account/3906. Jump in! The Magazine needs more sponsors. Can you help?

If so email the Maritime Museum:
oﬃce@maritimeas.org

Thanks to our current sponsors for helping to keep us afloat

Until next time, wishing you fair winds and following seas....
Early History of Surfing at Carlton Beach – Tasmania

My first experience of surfing in Tasmania occurred when a few rugby friends of my father, formed the Hobart-Carlton Surf Lifesaving Club.

The Club was formed on 24 October 1957, and its first bronze squad qualified for duty in January 1958 in time to compete in its first surf carnival at Low Head on Australia Day 1958.

One of the squad’s instructors, Bob Newbiggin had moved to Tasmania from Sydney where he had a distinguished record in NSW surf carnivals, having won the senior surf race championship for five successive years. Bob won the open belt race at the Low Head carnival and in so doing brought surfing and surf lifesaving in southern Tasmania to the public’s attention.

At that time J F (Bill) Young (a member of the first bronze squad) and his family owned a shack, named ‘Straffon’, at Carlton Beach. Bill had a number of surfboards stored carrying his wife or his children on his back.

The above picture was featured in The Mercury Newspaper to celebrate the 25 year anniversary of the founding of the Hobart Carlton Surf Lifesaving Club. It shows the type of hollow timber racing boards and surf ski used by members of the Club in the late fifties. The double ski held by George Debnam was originally owned by Phil Coles, who later became a member of the Australian Olympic Committee.

Interest in surfing in the area grew quickly after the creation of the club, along with better beach access and the later formation of the Park Beach Surf Lifesaving Club in February 1960 at the other end of the beach.

Following on from the Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956, and the demonstration of surfboard riding in Sydney by the American lifeguard team using solid balsa surfboards, Bill Young acquired a copy of one (referred to at the time as a ‘pig’ board) from a Sydney manufacturer and began using it at Carlton. Soon after, when surfboard manufacturers started experimenting with foam covered in fiberglass, a foam board was purchased by Noel Owen. These new balsa and foam surfboards were in stark contrast to the racing boards used by Club members in carnivals and enabled the riders to cut across a wave at greater speed. This really started the popularity of surfing at Carlton Beach.

The squad’s instructors, Bob Newbiggin and E C (Ted) Davies had moved to Tasmania from Sydney and Southport, Queensland respectively. Both were competent body surfers who passed on their skills to the new members of the club and their families. Bob, being such a strong swimmer, was often seen body surfing carrying his wife or his children on his back.

The photo was taken at Sandy Bay Beach where the bronze squad trained.

The award goes to Jack Van Ryn. Jack joined the museum as a volunteer in February 2012 and since then has become involved in many museum activities. As well as serving on the front desk Jack contributed hugely to installing and de-installing the Surfing display at this year’s Wooden Boat Festival and gave much needed assistance with the removal of artefacts to the new storage facility at Cambridge.

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Wives of Club members and their children were also catered for by the construction of timber ‘belly boards’ by my father, Keith McLaughlin. These were made by gluing two layers of marine plywood in a press and bending the nose upward. These were shaped, varnished and provided with handles, with some carrying the Hobart Carlton Surf Lifesaving Club logo.

As my parents were unable to acquire the new and ‘expensive’ balsa and foam boards, my father went about the design and building of hollow timber boards similar in shape to the new balsa pig boards at the time.

Those original hollow surfboards built by Keith McLaughlin had the following specifications:

- Huon pine frame, king bally (rounded) rails. The timber rails were bent around the frame, but not steamed.
- Huon pine baffles, nose and tail block
- Marine ply sheath
- Bung to release any water seepage
- Marine ply fin (the only straight lines on the board)
- Boat nails and waterproof glue

The boards featured a good rocker to avoid ‘nose diving’. In 1963 I sold the hollow timber board and graduated to a Gordon Woods ‘Island’ board.

Then in 1966 I upgraded to a Gordon Woods stringless pintail board referred to generally as the Nat Young model (refer p75 of book titled ‘Nat’s Nat and That’s That’).

Although I’d had a number of boards and a wave ski in the meantime, I still own this board and last used it at Snapper Rocks in 2011.

I married Patricia Rice in 1969, and like me she was a keen surfer. We had two children, Helen and Kim, both of whom learned to ride waves at the beach. My family and I have been regular visitors to our beloved Carlton beach ever since.

Mr Davies and Mr McLoughlin riding belly boards at Carlton Beach 1958

Surfboards and skis 1957 style at Carlton Beach. From left: Noel Owen, Bill Young, Robert Smith, George Debnam, Doug Smith and Bob Newbiggin.

Photo courtesy of ‘The Mercury’ 16 October 1982

by Hayden McLoughlin

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Maritime Times of Tasmania | Winter 2013

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Autumn and early winter were seasons I particularly enjoyed on the canal. As long as you dressed against the cold and damp the changing colours of the countryside could be viewed at close quarters from the tiller, or, if not so well dressed, through the window of our cozy snug stove-warmed cabin. At this time of year we would eat a lot of one-pot stews and casseroles that would last a couple of days. Local vegetables were in plentiful supply from boxes at the end of farm driveways (sometimes we’d find a box of vegetables with a jar for the money unattended at a lock) and weekend ‘Farmer’s Markets’ were starting to spring up in many Midlands towns. Aboard the boat we really felt we were part of the countryside, not merely passing through, and we often remarked that while our home might be small our garden was huge!

And then I discovered that it had, once upon a time, been almost literally true for the people eking out a living on England’s inland waterways. The mid-nineteenth century boom in railway construction took away much of the canals’ business. As use of the canal system declined those who worked them saw their incomes fall sharply as companies reduced charges to attract business. What had been secure, relatively well paid employment became insecure, often seasonal and increasingly poorly paid. It was at this time that many boat workers left their canal side cottages, or more likely had them taken away, and moved with their families and possessions onto their boats. One result of this was the loss of their gardens, depriving their families and possessions onto their boats. One result of this was the loss of their gardens, depriving

So wrote a visitor from Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory of their visit to the Maritime Museum. I haven’t yet been to the Top End, so I can’t judge how high their bar is set, but our Territorian visitor’s sentiment is far from unusual.

Our visitor’s book records comments from around the world and a diversity of superlatives are used. A visitor from Winnipeg felt we could add no more, writing that the museum was ‘perfect’, while a younger visitor from Switzerland found us ‘sweet’. Written by someone from a land renowned for its chocolate suggests we should take that as a high compliment. A visitor from Port Macquarie described the museum as ‘Epic’, while a visitor from New Norfolk defined their experience through a drawing of five love hearts. Some possibly younger visitors competed with one another in the weird stakes, with a Mr Passport, apparently from Cake Island, describing us as ‘Cheesey’ (I like to think they meant a fine, aged Stilton, crafted with skill to be rich, fulsome and mature and challenging to the senses, yet ultimately satisfying) while ‘Boris from Russia’ just wrote ‘Bugle’.

The importance of our volunteers to the visitor’s positive experience was emphasised by a visitor from Melbourne who wrote that they ‘wanted to buy a hat but didn’t fit me,’ while ‘Chris from New Zealand’ wrote that it was ‘our first visit to Tassie. Well done! We can’t be certain if they were congratulating themselves for making the trip, or us for making it worthwhile. Meanwhile, a visitor from Brisbane ‘liked looking for the rats’. Maybe it reminded them of home in some way.

The expectations of visitors are sometimes thwarted, with a visitor from NSW writing that it would be ‘great to see a section on Antarctic Exploration’. Regrettably, TMAG’s excellent ‘Islands to Ice’ exhibition that covers just that topic was closed during TMAG’s redevelopment. Another visitor, this time from Canberra, simply wrote ‘Sydney Hobart Race?’ We have Westward, so as long as no one gives the museum a Super Maxi then that is an exhibition that we may be able to manage in the future.

In the midst of the plaudits, though, it seems generally harder to please visitors from Sydney. One commented that they ‘wanted to buy a hat but didn’t fit me’, while another grudgingly allowed that they found the museum ‘sufficient’. I felt the same way about their bridge.

From the Galley

**SAUSAGE & APPLE CASSEROLE**

What could possibly be the connection between a misty canal in England and the oldest sailing charter vessel in survey in Australia? The answer? Vegetables.

Democratise your dining experience and enjoy this recipe using local produce from the Huon.

**Ingredients**

- 450g pork sausages (or sausages of your choice)
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 2 medium onions (peeled and chopped)
- 2 apples (sliced and cored, but not peeled)
- 2 small parsnips (peeled and sliced)
- Diced swede or turnip to taste
- 1 heaped teaspoon plain flour
- 275ml dry cider
- 2 tablespoons tomato puree
- 2 cloves garlic (crushed)
- 12 leaves sage (fresh, finely chopped)
- Salt and pepper (to taste)

**Method**

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C / 350°F / Gas Mark 4.

Take a large oven-proof casserole, heat the oil in it and add the sausages all round.

Then, using a slotted spoon, remove them to a plate while you brown the onions lightly.

When they are done, sprinkle in the flour to soak up the juices, then gradually stir in the cider, before adding the tomato puree.

Put the sausages back in, plus the apples, parsnips, garlic, chopped sage leaves and a little seasoning; put a lid on when it all comes to simmering point and then transfer to the oven for 30 minutes.

After 30 minutes, remove the lid and cook for a further 20-30 minutes.

Serve immediately with mashed potatoes and a glass of cider.

Recipe courtesy [www.getmecooking.com](http://www.getmecooking.com)
NELLA DAN’S LAST MOMENTS

A collection of images of the scuttling of Nella Dan was recently made available to the Museum for copying.

*Nella Dan* features in the *Maritime Art* column on page 15.

Photographer unknown.

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