

Maritime Times

Tasmania

AUTUMN 2024 ISSUE NO. 86

\$4.50

NEW: TREPHINES,
TOURNIQUETS
& TENACULUMS

MUSEUM YACHT
WESTWARD LOSES
EXCLUSIVITY

Tassie icon: Cock of the Derwent

Maritime Museum Tasmania

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Maritime Times Tasmania is the quarterly magazine produced by Maritime Museum Tasmania
ISSN 2652-1393 print
ISSN 2652-1342 digital

Acknowledgements

Maritime Museum Tasmania gratefully acknowledges the support of the City of Hobart, Murdoch Clarke, TasPorts, Arts Tasmania, and Nanni Diesel Australia.

Maritime Museum Tasmania is pleased to acknowledge the support of its Patron, The Governor of Tasmania, Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC.

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Cover
The photo on our cover is MTT's newest acquisition, the Cock of the Derwent.
Image: Emily Quintin

Maritime Times Tasmania



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Maritime Times Tasmania welcomes original historical or newsworthy articles for publication that reflect the Museum's mission to promote research into, and the interpretation of, Tasmania's maritime heritage. Contact admin@maritimetas.org for further details on contribution requirements, guidelines and editorial standards.

from the president's log

This year the Maritime Museum celebrates the 50th anniversary of its establishment by members of The Shiplovers' Society of Tasmania and supporters with an interest in the preservation and promotion of Tasmania's rich maritime heritage. Amongst Tasmania's earliest community-based museums its continuing success has been the result of the sustained support of generations of volunteer supporters.

Our 50th anniversary celebrations began with Rex Cox's exhibition, *Life of a Port*. Rex is not only an internationally-published photographer but has been involved with the Maritime Museum—often holding senior office bearer positions—almost since the beginning of the Museum. The exhibition was followed in February with a formal reception at Government House to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Museum. Hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Barbara Baker AC, Governor of Tasmania, the reception took on much greater meaning for us as Her Excellency is also our Patron.

Regular readers of the Maritime Times will have noted that this issue has changed in appearance. This is the result of the editing of the journal now being carried out in-house following the retirement of Anna Lucas, our long-serving editor. It is no exaggeration to say that Anna transformed the journal during her tenure as editor. It is now one of just two heritage journals regularly published in Tasmania and plays a key role promoting Tasmania's maritime heritage, its conservation and protection.

While the journal's appearance may have changed, the tradition of rich and varied content continues. In this edition we have reports on how Tasmanians fared in the recent Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, the unfortunate tale of the cargo vessel *Tasmania*, and an account of our weekend sailing of *Westward* at the Kettering Wooden Boat Rally. The sustained hard work over the past few years by volunteers John Wedd and Peter Wright has allowed the *Westward* to again become an active part of life on the river in Hobart.

The diversity of the recent acquisitions to the Museum reflects the sustained influence the sea has had and continues to have on Tasmanians. Of particular note amongst the recent donations is the first digital artwork to enter our collection, *Horizon* by Christl Berg. This piece formed part of the recent exhibition 'Reimagining the Ocean', and was donated by the artist.

Another article explores the significant collection of nineteenth century surgical instruments donated to the Museum by the Collection of Medical Artefacts. The donated collection includes examples of instruments used in many of the procedures on board British naval, merchant and whaling ships from the late eighteenth to the end of the nineteenth centuries.

The beginning of our anniversary year has also seen one of our recent donations—the c1835 sculpture thought to be of Lieutenant Governor George Arthur by the convict Daniel Herbert—placed on display. The earliest known free-standing full length sculpture created in Australia, it is also a remarkable political statement and one that has attracted international media attention.

The Maritime Museum's 50th anniversary activities and successes have been profoundly tempered by the passing at the beginning of the year of our long-serving Honorary Secretary, Beth Dayton. For over a decade Beth played a central role in the successful day-to-day operation of the Museum. It has been said that Beth was the force that held the Museum together. The significance of her contribution was recognised in this year's Australia Day Honours List with the award of Medal of the Order of Australia. Sadly, Beth did not live to see the official announcement but was aware that it was going to be awarded.

The 50th anniversary of Maritime Museum Tasmania offers us the opportunity to build upon the contribution of Beth and the many other past members of the Museum and ensure that the vision of the Museum's founders fifty years ago to promote and protect Tasmania's maritime heritage continues to be realized.

**CHRIS TASSELL,
MMT PRESIDENT**

Museum news

BY MARK HOSKING



Above: Rex Cox at the opening of 'Life of a Port', December 16, 2023. Photo: Emily Quintin

Below: Volunteers and staff preparing to take Westward out for the Kettering Wooden Boat Rally, February 10 2024. Photo: Sally Dexter



The Maritime Museum has enjoyed a bumper season over summer - with the increase in cruise ships visiting Hobart there's more tourists in the city looking to learn more about our history. Thanks to our hard-working volunteers for greeting each new guest with a smile.

Rex Cox's exhibition, 'Life of a Port', opened to great fanfare on December 16 2023 with a large crowd enjoying the preview of the show and the refreshments on offer. If you have never attended a museum opening, they are relaxed, generally informal events, and a good chance to explore the whole museum without the usual crowds and also to meet and chat to volunteers and staff.

The installation of our enigmatic colonial statue has generated considerable interest (see page 6 for details), and we've enjoyed the media attention over the last few weeks.

We're always on the lookout for new volunteers, but specifically we need to fill three vital roles: Secretary, Membership Officer, and Social Events Coordinator. If you, or someone you know, is interested in learning more about these volunteer positions, please contact us for more information.

Our Museum vessel, *Westward*, took part in the Kettering Wooden Boat Rally in February, and a great time was had by all. Read Ross James' full report on pages 22-24.

Lastly, it is with great sadness that we must report the recent passing of John Wedd, Museum secretary from 2003 to 2012 and much-loved member of our community. John was an intensely practical man and, as well as his secretarial duties, he was happy to undertake all manner of tasks around the museum. Part of John's morning routine was to check the mooring lines of *Westward*, as well as *May Queen* of which he was also a key supporter of, and he organised slipping and maintenance for many years. The Museum extends its condolences to John's wife, Erika, and their family.



Right: John Wedd, with *Westward's* newly-equipped engine, installed with the support of the ANMM and Nanni Diesel Australia. Photo: MMT

Beth Dayton OAM

BY MARK HOSKING

Beth Dayton passed away on January 2 after a long, bravely fought but ultimately one-sided battle with cancer. At the time of her death Beth was Secretary of the Museum, a role she had held since 2012.

Beth grew up on the Glebe and lived in or near Hobart her entire life. She was intensely proud of her home town and her deep and personal knowledge of the city was often useful when trying to place or date photographs in our collection.

She started her working life at the Postmaster General's Department as a clerk in the Finance and Accounting Branch, an early job compiling and calculating individual residential phone bills from the paper records kept by the switchboard operator. She rose through the administrative ranks and by the time she left the department she was Head Female Clerk, the most senior female employee in the state.

It was at the PMG that Beth met her husband, Dick. They lived in a bush setting off Summerleas Road near Kingston, where Beth enjoyed encouraging the bush life, feeding 'her' possums and other wildlife. They had a motor boat, spending time fishing in the channel and up the east coast, favourite spots being off Dennes Point, near where Dick's parents lived on Bruny, or Maria Island, anchoring overnight in Chinamans Bay. One of the photographs that Beth gave the museum was a snap she took from their boat of the raising of *Ena* (now at the ANMM in Sydney) after it had sunk in the Channel.



Together Beth and Dick established a cleaning business and later took on a postal delivery round. Beth would tell us horrifying stories of some of her cleaning jobs, clearly not afraid to get stuck in herself to get the job done. On the postal round that became Beth's responsibility as Dick became increasingly unwell she would, when she had time, stop to talk to customers. When she didn't have time, she would try and sneak in deliveries without drawing attention to her presence for fear of being held up by a chat! Dick and Beth were very sociable, a characteristic that had encouraged Beth to volunteer at the museum when her husband became less mobile.

It was this combination of administrative skill, practical ability, empathy and sociability that made Beth such an effective museum secretary. She ran the committee, not with a rod of iron, but more like a sheepdog, running to and fro, nipping at heels but ultimately getting everything into the pen on time. At any museum event Beth would make sure refreshments were arranged, preparing platters herself, table cloths ironed and the dish washer loaded correctly. Guests—whether volunteers, members or strangers—would be greeted with a big warm smile and made to feel welcome with a glass appearing magically in their hand.

Beth treated 'her' volunteers like family. She was, clearly, a benign matriarch, the wrath of whom we all feared, but whose approval we all deeply craved!

I worked with Beth since she became Museum Secretary, shortly after her beloved husband, Dick, had died. I'm not sure if she was my right hand, or me hers. We could bicker, but Beth was usually right. We never had a conversation about a Hobart pub (there is an inherent connection between maritime history and pubs!) without Beth starting with, 'when we used to drink there...'. Beth saw great changes at the Museum as Secretary; a massive increase in visitor numbers, COVID shutdown, the ongoing redevelopment. She threw herself passionately into everything, learning new skills and helping out wherever needed.

Beth left us at an exciting time in the museum's story. She was buying a new hat for the Government House 50th Anniversary. And would probably have insisted on a different one for the award ceremony of her OAM. Beth, herself, is now very much a part of the story of our museum's success.

'George' is unveiled!

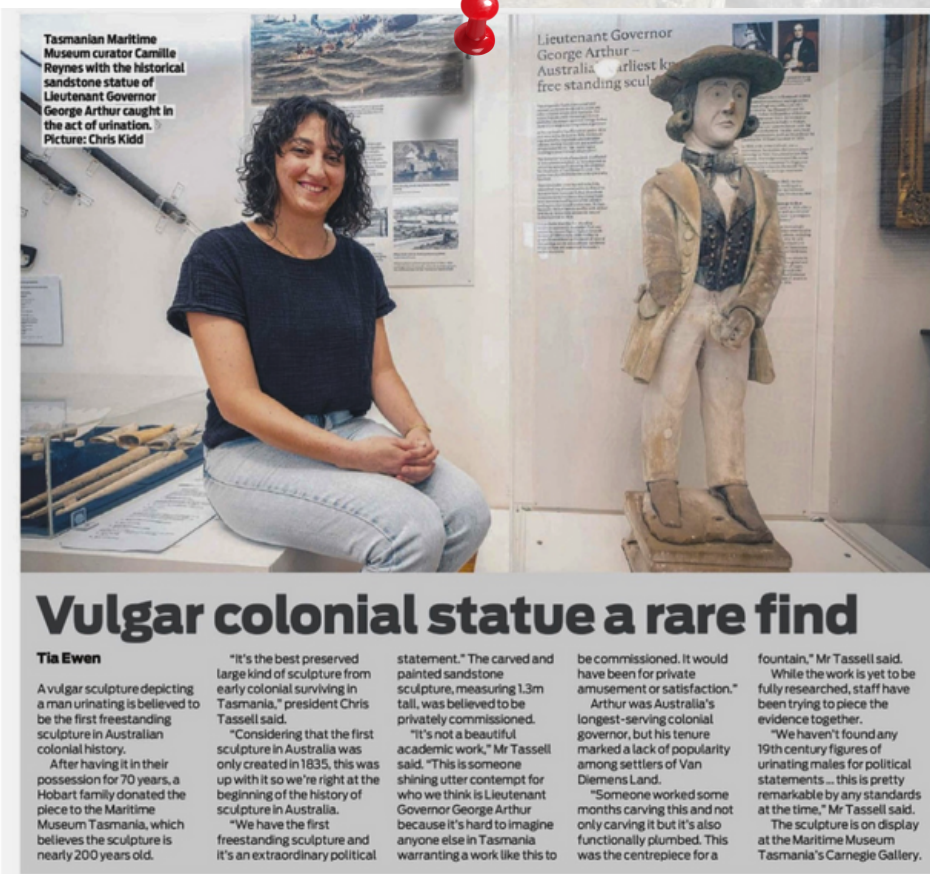
New acquisition labelled a 'piss-take'

Maritime Museum Tasmania recently unveiled their newest (and possibly most controversial) acquisition to the public.

You might have read about 'George' in the last issue of Maritime Times ('Colonial Enigma' by Chris Tassell pg 12 & 13, MTT No. 85). We believe this detailed depiction of Lieutenant Governor George Arthur to be Australia's earliest known free-standing, full-length statue. The statue's installation in the upstairs Carnegie Gallery generated a lot of interest from local and national media, as well as attracting plenty of curious visitors to the Museum.

Media coverage was extensive, and included local newspaper The Mercury, radio and online stories on ABC Hobart, and social media on Pulse News; with a national newspaper feature in The Guardian and an interview with museum president Chris Tassell on ABC Radio National.

The story ranked as the fourth most-viewed article in The Guardian, and was also the top story in the Culture section on Friday February 2.



Most viewed

Across The Guardian In Culture

- 1 ● **Live**
Australia news live: Albanese brushes off fresh calls to freeze taxes on alcohol
- 2 ■ **New boss Luke McIlveen's reverence for Ray Hadley unnerves SMH and Age staff**
- 3 **'Dark money': \$57m of donations to major Australian parties in 2022-23 of unknown origin**
- 4 **Tasmania hails Australia's first colonial statue as a piss-take - and an 'extraordinary political statement'**
- 5 **NSW police say analysis shows pro-Palestine chant in viral Sydney Opera House video was 'where's the Jews?'**
- 6 **Two killed by freight train in Sydney as attempted track rescue ends in tragedy**
- 7 **Brad Pitt set to star in Quentin Tarantino's final movie - report**
- 8 **'Quite a surprise': king penguin swims thousands of kilometres to find itself on South Australian beach**
- 9 **Ex-Liberal staffer Frank Zumbo found guilty of indecently assaulting four women**
- 10 **YouTuber Friendlyjordies takes down video after alleged death threats**



WELCOME

to the Museum's newest members...

- RADM Steve Gilmore AM CSC
- Derek Inglis
- Robert Brocksopp
- Colin Allen
- Peter Craig
- Peter Hunt
- Colin Ransley

Become a member and experience all the Maritime Museum has to offer.

As a member, your support will enable us to focus on our mission of preserving Tasmania's maritime heritage.

- Free admission for the year,
- Invitations to member-only events,
- Access to the museum's library and photographic collection,
- Subscription to our member's magazine, the Maritime Times,
- Subscription to member's email newsletter,
- 10% discount at the Museum Shop and even greater savings during special sales.

[Download an application form online at maritimetas.org/support/membership](http://maritimetas.org/support/membership)

Tasmanian Maritime Heritage Network news

Maritime Museum Tasmania coordinates the Maritime Heritage Organisation of Tasmania (MHOoT), a network of Tasmanian organisations involved in maritime heritage. Thanks to the support of Arts Tasmania and Tasports we're actively involved in outreach efforts to document, promote, and advocate for Tasmania's maritime heritage.

Our first lunchtime talk of the year was a hit, with a remarkable turnout. Ted Richey captivated the audience with tales of his family's ties to the iconic ketch *Lenna*, which they used for years in pursuit of their livelihood through fishing. As a poignant conclusion to Ted's talk, he generously offered the Cock of the Derwent to the Maritime Museum. It was a very emotional moment, and we are so honoured to be able to include such a significant object in our collection.



Above: Ted Richey handing over the Cock of the Derwent to curator Camille Reynes after his lunchtime talk, February 6 2024. Photo credit: Ted Richey

In January, we visited the Spring Bay Maritime & Discovery Centre in Triabunna, where we were impressed by the dynamic team's annual art exhibition showcasing local talents. The Maritime Museum's side is equally interesting, especially with the recent acquisition of two fantastic model ships: the *Alma Doepel* and the *Birngana*.

Below: model of the Alma Doepel at Spring Bay Maritime & Discovery Centre, Triabunna. Photo credit: Camille Reynes



Sometimes, we encounter objects, documents, or photographs that, while valuable, don't quite align with our collection's focus or could find a more suitable home elsewhere in Tasmania. Recently, for instance, a carronade, reputedly from the wreck of the *George III* was brought to our attention and will soon be donated to the Dover Museum. This transfer will enrich the museum's narrative surrounding the ill-fated ship's history.

Additionally, we're aiding in the dispersal of the Coma (Collection of Medical Artefacts) Museum collection following its regrettable closure last year. A collection of medical bottles has been meticulously documented and will be on loan to the Bruny Island Quarantine Station, where it will play a vital role in telling compelling stories.

Exhibition news

BY CAMILLE REYNES

Since its successful launch in December, our more recent temporary exhibition, *Life of a Port*, has been extremely popular. The response from visitors has been positive, and for those of you who haven't seen it yet, you are in luck, as we have decided to extend it until the end of June.

We have received interesting feedback from some of our observant patrons. It has been noted for example that the exhibition did not include photographs of ferries—a valid observation indeed! With hundreds of captivating images by Rex Cox at our disposal, making selections was quite a challenge.

However, fear not, ferry enthusiasts! Our upcoming exhibition promises to delight. We are thrilled to showcase the remarkable work of artist Louis Rodway, whose focus on ferries is sure to captivate and inspire.

Over in the Carnegie Gallery, our intriguing statue has been installed and is drawing considerable attention from visitors, museum professionals and media. This enthusiasm is fantastic, and we are hoping that "George" being in the spotlight might also help raise awareness about the importance of preserving Tasmania's sandstone sculptures and buildings. The Ross Bridge and its carvings, for instance, are still deteriorating and deserve to be better preserved.

New acquisition: Cock of the Derwent

The Maritime Museum is thrilled to announce the generous donation by Ted Richey of the *Cock of the Derwent*, or the 'Golden Cock' - a lustrous copper perpetual trophy shaped like a rooster, that once adorned the masthead of the annual winner of the *Cock of the Derwent* race that trading vessels took part in as part of the Royal Hobart Regatta. The trophy was manufactured in the 1920s after the original was lost overboard.

We also visited the Dover Museum and Art Gallery, where we met active members Marianne Austen, Caroline Homer and Beth Gregory. It was wonderful being able to exchange ideas and chat about future collaborations. It is worth a visit if you find yourself down this way, with modern interpretation and a great variety of works by local artists.

At both institutions, our curator Camille initiated the Shipwreck Material Survey Project, which was made possible thanks to funding from the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service. This project aims to catalogue all artefacts found or recovered from Tasmanian shipwrecks, in public and private collections. A comprehensive inventory will be an invaluable resource for scientific research and educational endeavours. Read more about the Shipwreck Material Survey Project on page 10.



The first *Cock of the Derwent* race ran in 1842. *May Queen* won in 1868, and also competed in the last race in 1954 against *Lenna*, who emerged victorious. This particular race—the very last *Cock of the Derwent*—was arranged to coincide with the visit of Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh during their visit to Hobart on their Australian tour. We're so proud to be able to preserve this remarkable piece of Tasmanian history for the future.

Tasmanian Shipwreck Material Survey Project

BY CAMILLE REYNES

At the end of last year, and thanks to funding from the Parks and Wildlife Service, the Maritime Museum Tasmania initiated a new project, aiming at cataloguing as much as possible of the shipwreck material retrieved over the years in Tasmania.

Tasmania's coastal waters have witnessed a significant amount of shipping activity, which unfortunately led to numerous shipwrecks over time. These wrecks, besides igniting the imagination, are time capsules and serve as invaluable repositories of historical knowledge. They shed light on past technologies, trade routes, and on what was transported on these vessels.

However, extracting information from shipwrecks poses challenges. The remnants of wrecked ships are often hard to access, become scattered and may undergo alterations due to environmental factors or human intervention. Moreover, the artefacts retrieved from these wrecks are dispersed among various museums and private collections.

A comprehensive inventory of this material is essential, not only for record-keeping but also to research and preserve our maritime heritage.

Identifying and documenting shipwreck materials will enable collaboration between heritage organisations, research institutions and local communities to safeguard these resources effectively.

Creating an inventory of shipwreck materials will also help with their preservation and conservation. By documenting the objects and their condition, we can develop strategies for proper storage, restoration, and protection. Shipwrecks are subject to deterioration due to environmental factors, such as saltwater corrosion or natural disasters, making it crucial to prioritise their preservation for future generations.

The study of shipwreck materials involves multidisciplinary research, including archaeology, maritime history, conservation, and more. Analysing these materials can provide valuable scientific data. This information aids in expanding our knowledge of the maritime history of Tasmania and in preserving and honouring stories and experiences associated with these vessels.



Above: Anchovy paste jar, recovered from the wreck of the *Katherine Sharer*. Photo credit: MMT collection A_1984-021

The artefacts recovered from shipwrecks provide a tangible connection to the past and contribute to the community's collective identity.

In the past having objects from a wreck was kept secret, for fear of getting in trouble. However, most objects have been retrieved before the legislation on underwater heritage, and there is an amnesty in place anyway. We also have no intention of taking it away from you! We only think that put all together, these objects would give us a more complete vision of our wonderful maritime heritage. A photo and some measurements are all we require for our inventory.

Whether you are an institution or a local resident and have Tasmanian shipwreck material, we would love to hear from you! Please contact us directly at camille@maritimetas.org.

Ship spotter

A look at *Ponrabbel II*

BY REX COX

Another historic vessel sank at its moorings near King's Wharf in Launceston on September 10 2023.

The bucket dredge *Ponrabbel II* (457/1916) had ceased service with the Port of Launceston Authority in 1977 and was long ago stripped of its superstructure and dredging gear. Its two compound steam engines were handed over to the Australian Maritime College and Low Head Maritime Museum (which also has a fine model of the vessel).

Ponrabbel is a Tasmanian Aboriginal name for 'the place where three rivers come together', and the suffix is a reminder that this was a replacement for an earlier dredger, sunk during its delivery voyage from Glasgow by the German cruiser *SMS Emden* in the Indian Ocean on 14 October 1914.

The Marine Board of Launceston promptly ordered *Ponrabbel II* from the same Glasgow builders. However, it didn't reach its home port until 7 April 1921, due to wartime priorities in the shipyards and running aground on the Portuguese coast, with extensive repairs necessary.

Apart from a brief time in Brisbane during World War II *Ponrabbel II* spent over 50 years working on the Tamar.



PONRABBEL II at Town Pier, Launceston September 1963
(photo: John Greenhill)

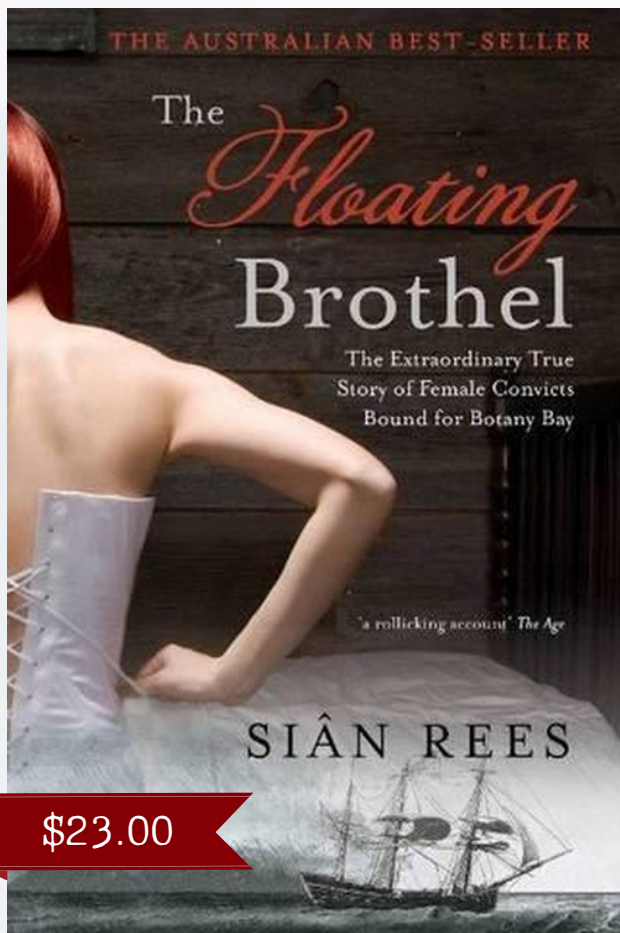


PONRABBEL II (sunk in right foreground), *RISDON COVE & CAPE GRANT* beyond, Launceston, October 2023 (photo: Rex Cox)

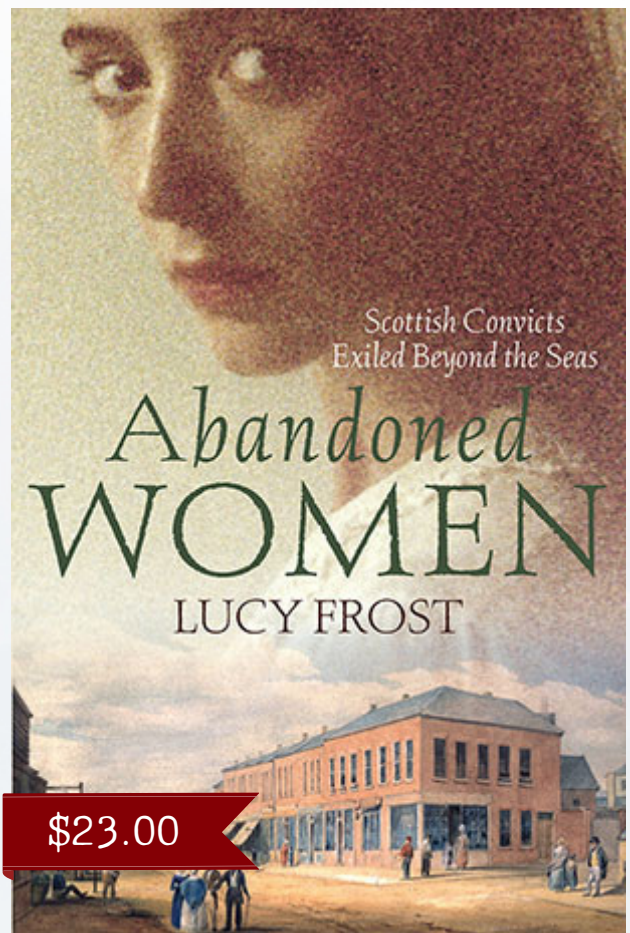


PONRABBEL II laying near King's Wharf, Launceston, 2014
(photo: Rex Cox)

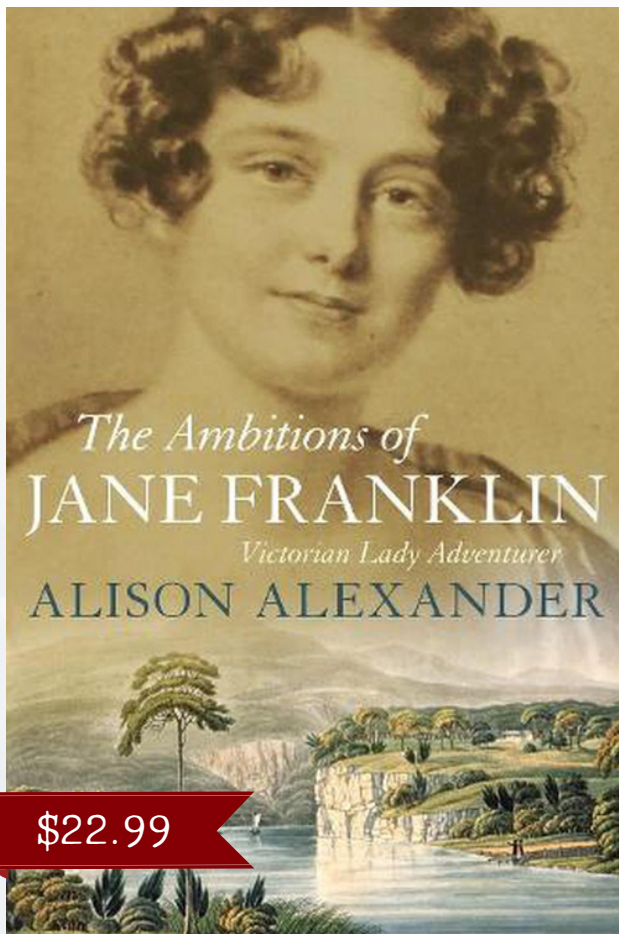
IN THE BOOKSHOP: WOMEN & THE SEA



In 1789, 237 women convicts left England for Botany Bay in Australia on board *The Lady Julian*, destined to provide sexual services and a breeding bank for the men already there. Based on painstaking research into contemporary sources such as letters, trial records and the first-hand account of the voyage written by the ship's steward, John Nicol, this is a riveting work of recovered history. *The Floating Brothel* brilliantly conjures up the sights, sounds and particularly the smells of life on board ship at the time and is populated by a cast of larger-than-life characters you will never forget.

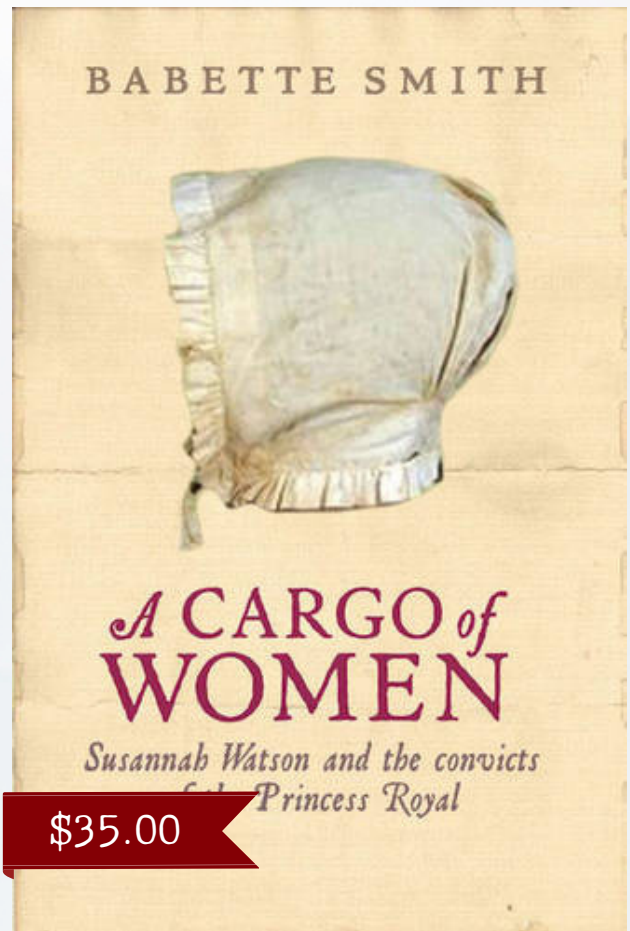


From the crowded tenements of Edinburgh to the Female Factory nestling in the shadow of Mt Wellington, dozens of Scottish women convicts were exiled to Van Diemen's Land with their young children. This is a rich and evocative account of the lives of women at the bottom of society two hundred years ago. Many women survived the convict system and shaped their own lives once they were free. Others, though, continued to be plagued by errors and disasters until death.



\$22.99

Arriving in Tasmania in 1837 when Sir John became governor, she swept like a whirlwind through the colony: attempting to rid the island of snakes, establishing a scientific society, adopting an Aboriginal girl, and sending a kangaroo to Queen Victoria. When her husband disappeared in the Arctic on an expedition to discover the Northwest Passage, she single-handedly turned him from a failure into one of England's noblest heroes. She continued travelling well into her 70s and died at age 84, refusing to take her medicine to the last.



\$35.00

In *A Cargo of Women*, Babette Smith reconstructs the lives of the women from the *Princess Royal* from fragments of information in shipping lists, official records, newspapers and court transcripts. Her research overturns stereotypes of women convicts as drunken whores and criminals. Caught in an England convulsed by change, they become the unwitting and unwilling pioneers of a new land. Many proved to be resourceful and resilient, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by a new society.

Nineteenth-century maritime surgical instruments

BY CHRIS TASSELL

The Maritime Museum has recently been donated a comprehensive collection of surgical instruments typical of those used by surgeons on British naval, merchant and whaling vessels throughout the nineteenth century.

Peter Weir's classic 2003 film 'Master and the Commander: the Far Side of The World' in which the leading characters are the naval officer Jack Aubrey and the physician Dr Stephen Maturin was based on the novels of Patrick O'Brian which were largely set during the Napoleonic wars.

The film features a number of surgical procedures perhaps most dramatically the trephining or removal of a circular section of the skull from a sailor suffering from a depressed cranial fracture.

In the film the sailor recovered with the hole being covered by a flattened silver coin. In reality although trephining was a surgical procedure with a long history dating back to at least the late Paleolithic, it had a survival rate of less than 10% during Napoleonic times. For this reason, along with the surgical amputation of limbs it was referred to as "capital" surgery.



Above: petit screw tourniquet made by Evans (London), c1840. (image: Maritime Museum Tasmania)

Below: lower molar tooth forceps made by Maw & Son, (London), 1860 – 1870 (image: Maritime Museum Tasmania)



Pair of T handle trephines, one with ebony handle, unknown English maker, 1820 - 1880 (image: Maritime Museum Tasmania)



The collection donated by COMA (Collection of Medical Artefacts) will allow the Museum to tell stories about an often overlooked aspect of life at sea during the age of sail. It is planned that a small selection of instruments from the recent donation will feature in a small temporary exhibition in the near future.



Above: Hey's cranial saw made by Evans (London), c1840 (image: Maritime Museum Tasmania)

As well as trephines and cranial saws the collection contains a number of the instruments used for the most common of the shipboard capital operations, the amputation of limbs. The dangerous working conditions on ships meant that limb injuries were a frequent occurrence, only made worse in sea battles. Despite this, amputation remained a last resort not the least because of the high probability of infection. The collection includes amputation knives, saws, tourniquets and tenaculums (small hook like instruments for manipulating blood vessel). These instruments like most surgical instruments changed very little from the beginning of the eighteenth century until the late nineteenth century.

Less dramatic but far more common issues onboard a ship that demanded the attention of the surgeon were those associated with oral health which were often exacerbated by scurvy. Although the procedures employed were largely limited to the removal of teeth using either a tooth key or tooth forceps. Although the procedure was straightforward the risk of sepsis was high if fragments of the tooth root were left in the jaw, a common occurrence.

Sailors have been notorious for contracting urogenital infections, most commonly from venereal diseases, and the nineteenth century was no exception to this. Such infections often resulted in urethral constrictions and difficulty in passing urine. If the condition did not respond to warm baths and poultices then catheters were used. The collection includes a range of catheters both straight and curved made from either silver or gum elastic used to try and unblock the urethra. More dramatically trocars were used to introduce catheters into body cavities including the bladder to drain fluids.

During the nineteenth century bleeding and cupping were commonly used to treat a wide variety of conditions notably inflammatory conditions. Bleeding often involved draining a significant quantity of blood (600 – 900ml) and was done using sharp bladed lancets. While cupping could be either wet or dry the former involved bleeding first using the quite elaborate scarifier that are such a feature of cupping sets. Cupping sets were also produced for home use and often came in fine wood or leather covered cases lined in material such as velvet. The collection includes a number of these sets all of which were used in Tasmania and some sold by Hobart pharmacists.

For the many minor surgical procedures surgeons undertook their instrument chest also included a variety of probes, scissors and scalpels. Many of these instruments were also to be found in the set of pocket surgical instruments that Royal Navy surgeons were required to carry whether they were on duty or not. This requirement implemented in 1799 remained in the Royal Navy regulations until the First World War.

Surgeons whether on naval, merchant and whaling ships were required to provide their own surgical instruments and supplies despite the position not being paid particularly well. As a consequence, surgical chests ranged from beautifully cased sets made by leading surgical instrument makers to much more random assortments of instruments from a variety of instrument makers. The Museum collection includes instruments made by many of the leading surgical instrument makers in London, Edinburgh and the midlands of England.

Below: blunt-ended straight amputation knife made by Weisz (London), c1840 (image: Maritime Museum Tasmania)



Museum yacht *Westward* loses exclusivity

Westward dethroned as the
only Tasmanian winner
of two Sydney Hobarts

BY COLIN DENNY



December 2023 marks the end of *Westward's* reign as the only Tasmanian-owned yacht to have won two Sydney Hobart Yacht Races. Philip Turner's Tasmanian-owned *Alive* won its second Sydney Hobart outright in 2023 having previously won in 2018.

Now, 75 years after *Westward's* second win, a comparison of the yachts reveals the big changes in ocean yacht racing.

Westward

Launched in September 1947, the 12.8m wooden cutter *Westward* started life as a new build for a Sydney owner that fell through before local businessman George Gibson purchased the yacht. *Westward* was designed and constructed by Jock Muir in a backyard near Queen's Street, Sandy Bay. The yacht is carvel planked in celery top pine on laminated blue gum frames with a wooden mast.

Soon after launching in late 1947, *Westward* won line honours in the inaugural Maria Island Race, the first race in which it had participated despite originally having been designed and built as a fast sailing fishing cruiser. The yacht was built with a wet fish well that was stopped up while racing.

The yacht's success in the 1947 and 1948 Sydney Hobart races and Muir's role as its sailing master were to launch his career as a yacht designer, builder and blue water yacht racer. Muir was later to be recognised as one of Australia's leading mid-twentieth century yacht designers.

The Sydney Hobart Yacht Race is Australia's most important offshore yacht race and amongst the leading blue water yacht races in the world. More generally, *Westward* is regarded as one of the five most important yachts associated with this race.

Westward was donated to the Maritime Museum of Tasmania in 2010 by owner the late Stan Field under the Commonwealth Government's Cultural Gifts Program, and is the largest object in the Maritime Museum's collection. It is the only Sydney Hobart race winner in a public collection.

In December 2023, *Westward* lost its title as the only Tasmanian-owned yacht to have won the Sydney Hobart race twice, but remains the only Tasmanian-designed and built yacht to have done so one or more times.

Alive

The 22 metre racing yacht was commissioned by Jim Madden from New York, USA in 2005. In common with Madden's previous yachts, it was named *Stark Raving Mad*. The yacht was designed by Reichel-Pugh (San Diego, California) and is constructed of carbon fibre with a canting-keel.

The yacht was launched and fitted out in January 2006 in San Diego and spent much of 2006 racing on the US East Coast. The yacht then went to the west coast and competed in several races, winning many, and was awarded Newport Harbor Yacht Club's 'Boat of the Year' for 2006. *Stark Raving Mad* was purchased by Australian Peter Harburg in May 2008, shipped to Australia and raced under the name *Black Jack*.

Harburg sold the yacht to Tasmanian businessman Philip Turner in 2014, who renamed it *Alive*. Despite now being nearly 18 years old, the yacht has been kept up to date and well sailed under control of Tasmanian skipper Duncan Hine during Turner's ownership. The yacht's Californian designers, Reichel-Pugh, are well known in Australia for designing many successful yachts including the three overall place getters in the 2023 Sydney Hobart Race, also *Wild Oats X* and *Wild Oats XI*.

Following an overall win in the 2018 Sydney Hobart Race, *Alive* achieved a second overall win this summer. Their success followed winning the 2023 Hamilton Island Race Week, the Brisbane to Hamilton Island Race and the 2023 Bruny Island Race. *Alive* currently holds the race record for the TasPorts Launceston to Hobart Yacht Race after it had rushed south from the cancelled 2020 Sydney Hobart Race in time for the start at Beauty Point.

A large carbon fibre bowsprit from *Alive* is in the Maritime Museum Tasmania collection. The sprit was handed over by skipper Duncan Hine following its replacement during maintenance and upgrades of the yacht in the past.



Westward (image: Maritime Museum Tasmania)

Westward

Designer	Jock Muir (Tasmania)
Builder	Jock Muir (Tasmania)
Launched	September 1947
Length	12.8m
Beam	3.7m
Draft	1.4m (full length keel)
Displacement	14 tonnes
Hull	Celery top pine, blue gum
Mast and boom	Wooden (spruce)
Standing rigging	Galvanised wire
Running rigging	Rope and wire
Navigation	Sextant and dead reckoning
Crew	9
Sails	Canvas
Sydney Hobart elapsed time	5 days 13hrs 18mins (1947) 4 days 14hrs 18mins (1948)

Alive

Reichel-Pugh (California)
Westerly Marine (California)
January 2006
22m
4.3m
4.6m (canting keel)
10 tonnes
Carbon fibre composite
Carbon fibre composite
Exotic animal fibre
Mixture, exotic fibre, etc
GPS and other electronic aids
13
Carbon fibre
2 days 1hr 41mins (2018)
2 days 2hrs 19mins (2023)

The accident-prone *Tasmania*

BY REX COX

A surprising number of ships have carried the name of our island state (the Miramar website lists 17, including a RN/RAN destroyer, plus many others with 'Tasmania' as part of their name). Perhaps the best known here is *The Iron Tasmania* (425/1853), first ship owned by the Tasmanian Steam Navigation Company for trading from Hobart to Melbourne and Sydney and referred to as such to distinguish its iron construction from an existing wooden built vessel of the same name. The subject of this article will, I suspect, be much less familiar to readers as it only visited the State twice, in March 1934 and April 1935, but is nonetheless interesting due to a chequered and somewhat unfortunate history.

The cargo vessel *Tasmania* (7514/1913) was built by Flensburger Schiffsbau-Gesellschaft, Flensburg, for Deutsch-Australische Dampfschiff Gesellschaft (D.A.D.G. or German-Australian Line), Hamburg. This company had commenced a cargo service from Europe to Australia in 1889 and began calls at Tasmanian ports, principally Burnie and Hobart, in the years immediately prior to the First World War. The trade prospered, which no doubt influenced the naming of one of four new vessels that joined the D.A.D.G. fleet in 1912-13.

Tasmania made its first voyage to Australia from Hamburg and Antwerp via Durban, arriving at Melbourne with general cargo on 17 November 1913. The outbreak of war led to it being seized at Antwerp by the Belgian Government on 5 August 1914, only to be returned to D.A.D.G. on 9 October following Germany's conquest of Belgium. It appears to have remained in Antwerp for the duration and was again surrendered there in 1918, this time going to The Shipping Controller, London with F. & W. Ritson as managers. New Zealand Shipping Company Ltd. took over management in 1920 and purchased *Tasmania* the following year, retaining the name and London as port of registry and possibly increasing the amount of insulated space in the holds for perishable cargoes.

Their new acquisition proved to be somewhat accident prone. At least eight incidents were recorded over the next 15 years, beginning with a grounding at Wellington on 3 May 1922 and including two collisions in the Manchester Ship Canal- with *Pacific Shipper* (6304/1924) on 16 December 1928 and *Florentino* (1822/1921) on 15 January 1932. In fact, 1932 was a particularly bad year for *Tasmania*, as it struck a wreck on 6 March, resulting in tail shaft and bottom damage, while the steering gear failed in the Yarra River on 26 April and there was a bunker fire in Sydney on 16 May. In between times the bow was damaged by striking a dry dock at Falmouth on 12 September 1930 and the rudder also damaged when passing over the anchor chains of the American cargo vessel *Collingsworth* (5101/1920) on 10 April 1931.

image: *Tasmania* in the London Docks (photographer unknown)



image: *Tasmania* in New Zealand Shipping Co. colours - the short well forward of the bridge was a common feature of German-Australian Line vessels. (Photographer unknown)



Another incident which came to light through the pages of *The Log*, quarterly journal of the Nautical Association of Australia, related to the 1934 voyage during which *Tasmania* first visited Hobart. The article by C. E. Jones was based on the book *Dear Descendants* by John Watkins, who signed on at Cardiff as an assistant engineer with the intention of visiting friends and family in Australia. The ship departed Cardiff on 1 February in ballast, but ran into trouble in the Bay of Biscay when "...in the midst of wild weather ...(it) ... shuddered with a violent explosion from the engine room, the single screw stopped, and we wallowed out of control, with seas breaking green over the skylights, and steam hissing and billowing up the companionways. It turned out that the Fourth Engineer...had mistakenly closed the outlet valve from the feed-ram pump driven directly off the crosshead of the quadruple expansion engine. The resulting burst had destroyed some fancy pipework. It was literally a case of all hands to the pump, and some weary seasick hours later we had lashed up an emergency bypass that allowed the engine to be run at about half speed. We could at last get steerage way, to bring our bows round into the gale. Meanwhile a radio message had been sent to the owners requesting permission to return to Cardiff for repairs...". Such permission was not forthcoming so *Tasmania* proceeded slowly on the voyage to Australia. Engineers eventually managed to increase speed to about two-thirds, but the voyage out took 47 days and the ship arrived in Sydney on 19 March with coal supplies running very low.

Tasmania arrived at Hobart from Sydney on 23 March 1934 to load 102,788 cases of apples for London, Liverpool and Bremen. Returning the following year, it berthed at Port Huon on 14 April 1935 and came up to Hobart a couple of days later to complete a quota of 48,636 cases of apples and 2,471 cases of pears for London, Liverpool and Hull. This was almost the end of a troubled career as *Tasmania* was sold to Metal Industries Ltd. in January 1936 and broken up at Rosyth.

References:

- C. E. Jones, *The Voyage of an Aeronautical Engineer, The Log*, Vol.30 No.1 February 1997, Nautical Association of Australia, Melbourne.
J. Watkins, *Dear Descendants*, self-published, South Melbourne, 1982.

Walter Reeks

BOOK REVIEW BY COLIN DENNY

In their book *Walter Reeks: Naval Architect Yachtsman and Entrepreneur* Nicole Mays and David Payne have produced a superb account of the remarkable life, work and designs of Walter Reeks.

Reeks was probably the first internationally-qualified naval architect to practice this profession in Sydney. The story begins with his interesting background in England prior to arriving in Australia.

Reeks was born in Christchurch, Hampshire in 1861 and first worked for an architect and building surveyor in nearby Bournemouth. In about 1880 his interest in yachting and yacht design prompted him to apply to be articled to George Inman & Son, Shipbuilders, of Lymington. Whilst working for Inman in this busy area opposite the Isle of Wight he boarded at 12 Thomas Street, Lymington, a location well known to this reviewer who stayed in nearby Pennington Lane on annual visits to England. The waterside shipbuilding site is now occupied by the Berthon Boat Company.

When George Inman died in 1883, Reeks moved to Liverpool to work for the great yacht designer and naval architect, Alex Richardson. Then, in March 1885, he embarked from Liverpool on the *SS Lancaster Castle* for Melbourne. On arrival he stayed for a few weeks before boarding the Australian Steam Navigation Company's *SS Cahors* for Sydney. Reeks' lifelong association with Australia had just begun.

In Sydney, Reeks acted as a yacht broker but his naval architecture soon took precedence. He designed a broad range of vessels from commercial craft to recreational yachts. At the same time, he was a dedicated yachtsman and volunteer, a member of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron for over 40 years, a life member and former vice-commander.

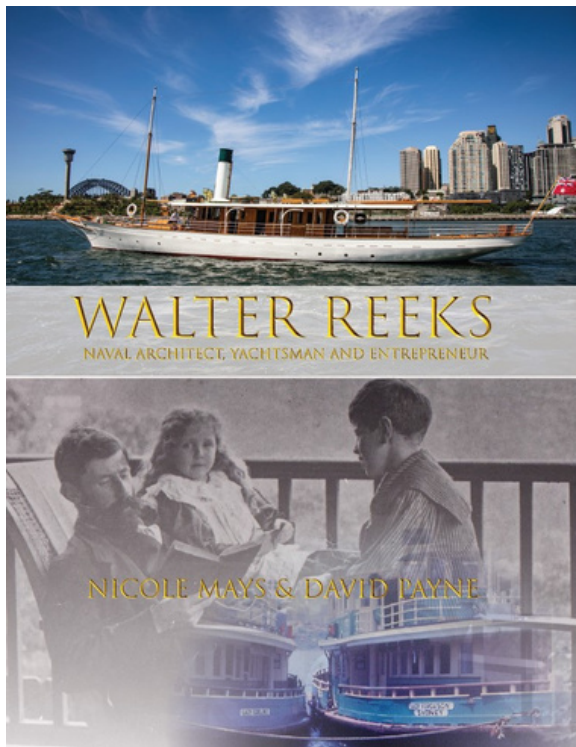


Above: Walter Reeks.
Image credit: ANMM collection, ANMS0529

Despite being best known for the design of Sydney's fleet of ferries, craft were built throughout Australia and New Zealand. In Tasmania, Reeks is well known as designer of the river ferries *Derwent*, *Togo*, *Excella*, and *Rosny*. *Togo*, built in 1905 by Frederick Moore of Launceston, set the standard for craft to come. It had a neat cruiser stern and was built without the normal heavy frames. Instead, the ferry was built with planks fastened with batten seams like some pleasure boats. *Togo* proved to be the fastest ferry in Tasmania.

In Hobart, the yawl *Gypsy* survives as a fine example of Reeks' work. The design first appeared in *Rudder* magazine in 1911. Alfred Blore scaled it down for William Ball and Wyn Tatnall who built *Gypsy* of Huon pine planking on a combination of Huon pine ribs and grown hardwood frames. Launched in 1914 in Norfolk Bay, the yacht was sold to Jack and Sydney Knight in 1918 and today is still owned by the Knight family.

Many of Reeks' plans have been lost over time but it was David Payne's passion to save as much of the remaining records as possible. David first worked in his uncle Alan Payne's highly regarded naval architecture studio and later spent sixteen years as Curator of Historic Vessels at the Australian National Maritime Museum.

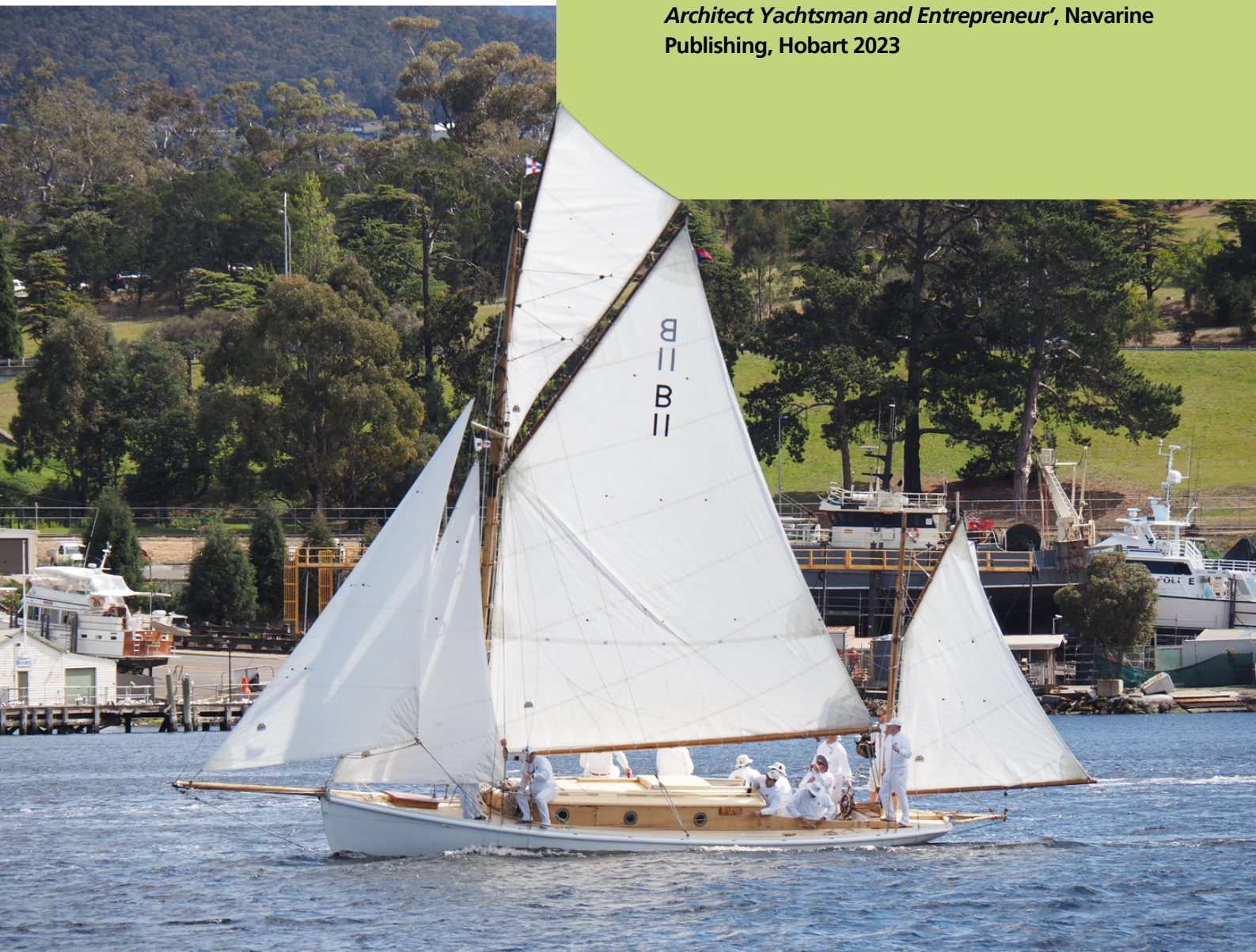


He had sketched and recorded Reeks designs and wanted to publish his work. David approached Nicole Mays to join him in the project after working with her on the history of Australia's 21 foot restricted class.

The collaboration between David with his technical knowledge and Nicole with her research and writing skills has resulted in the publication of the masterful *Walter Reeks: Naval Architect Yachtsman and Entrepreneur*. The life, accomplishments and disappointments of Reeks have been recorded in detail with comprehensive references to sources. Nicole's experience shines through. She has been involved in writing eight Australian maritime history books and has published many articles. Her interest in family history was established in her teens knowing that her great-great-great grandfather was Jacob Bayly Chandler, a boat builder of Battery Point between 1847 and 1901.

The richly illustrated book is essential reading for those interested not only in our maritime history but also the complex life of the skilled immigrant naval architect, Walter Reeks (1861 – 1925).

Nicole Mays & David Payne, *'Walter Reeks: Naval Architect Yachtsman and Entrepreneur'*, Navarine Publishing, Hobart 2023



Westward worships at the Wooden Boat Rally

BY ROSS JAMES
PHOTOS BY SALLY DEXTER

The Biennial Australian Wooden Boat Festival needs no introduction. An internationally-revered gathering of those hardy souls who worship at the altar of the traditional shipwright. What is less well-known is that in the intervening years some of those same disciples make pilgrimage to Kettering for the Wooden Boat Rally.

The calling was clear. *Westward* must attend. Three-quarters of a century have passed under her keel, but the urge to commune with her kin was irresistible.

At mid-morning Friday, facing a brisk south-westerly wind and a slate grey sky, *Westward* was looking forward to the excuse to scan her wardrobe for her best suit. Slipping under the tilting bridge at eleven, she eagerly anticipated a glimpse down river to Derwent light, then Dennes Point as her initial guides, before a final turn into the Channel as the precursor to run down to Kettering.

Peter, Stefan, Bernard and the two Ross's were kept busy tending her demands but the weather gods on this day were set on ensuring no easy passage, making for a tedious passage down the river and into the Channel. *Westward* finally picked up her allotted berth in Little Oyster Cove close to 3pm.

The temple on the hill beckoned and thirsts were quenched at the Oyster Cove Inn prior to the welcoming BBQ hosted by the Kettering Yacht Club. Stefan generously agreed to act as the overnight watch-keeper, keeping *Westward* company overnight, and on Saturday morning reported that both had a good night's rest with absolutely no evidence of supernatural company.

(cont. page 24)





Amongst the numerous activities planned for the Rally was the relaunch of the fully-restored Derwent Class Yacht *Undine*. Her glossy bright blue hull and glassy varnish coach-house was flawless and truly a credit to Cody Horgan and the workers at the Wooden Boat Centre who brought her back from the brink. Needless to say, great care was taken with the traditional champagne bottle.

The usual suspects were joined on *Westward* by Sally, Margaret, Camille and her mother. Once sandwiches and coats were stowed, we reversed out into the fairway in perfect weather. With the principal Committee boat *Goondaloo* incapacitated and unable to attend the Rally, *Westward* was asked to step in as the rounding mark for the Rally's sail past to kick off the start of festivities. Well aware of the important role we were charged with, as soon as all available flags were raised to 'dress ship', a sober discussion was held by all on how to solemnly acknowledge each vessel as they passed abeam *Westward*. A number of good suggestions were made, but Stefan donned a Greek fisherman's hat and signalled each vessel by blasting a plastic trumpet in mostly B flat anyway.

The variety of vessels that crossed our bows was inspiring. Carefully-created canoes, delicate dinghies, compact cruisers, racing sloops and major motor launches. Each clearly the apple of the owner's eye, and flying flags that expressed the boat or the owner's individual spirit or origin.

Our duty done, we left the younger ones to their racing program and *Westward* aimed eastward for a very pleasant cruise to explore Barnes Bay. Returning to Kettering, we dodged around the bespinnakered plastic competitors of the Round Bruny race on their way down the Channel. Sunburnt, but otherwise in good spirit, the crew agreed on a departure time for the 'morrow, leaving Stefan to participate in the boisterous evening entertainment as *Westward's* sole representative.

Sunday morning, worship continues. Overnight in her berth, *Westward* had been joined by her younger Muir sister, *Trevassa*. Truly a piece of timber art.

John joined Stefan and the Ross's for the return motor up river to Hobart, blessed with gentle breeze and blue sky, sliding under the tilting bridge at 2pm. Tying up and tidying up complete. Her pilgrimage was over.



Australian Wooden Boat Festival relaunches iconic wooden boat after major restoration

On Saturday 10 February, 2024 the Australian Wooden Boat Festival (AWBF) relaunched an iconic Derwent Class yacht, meticulously restored by the staff and students at the Wooden Boat Centre in Franklin, Tasmania.

The significant restoration project has taken hundreds of hours by lead Shipwright Cody Horgan, with students and volunteers from the Wooden Boat Centre, after commencing in June 2023.

The Derwent Class vessel was donated to the Australian Wooden Boat Festival in poor condition, by the Oyster Cove Marina in 2020. The AWBF then gained philanthropic funding to support the restoration project.

The Derwent Class yachts date back to the 1920's, as they were a style of yacht that could be built by amateur builders and inexperienced yachties as an entry level vessel. Undine was originally built in a suburban backyard, in Pirie Street, New Town in 1948.

It is hoped Undine will join the fleet of several Derwent Class yachts sailing out of Kettering, with young custodians at the helm. Undine is available for purchase for \$20,000 ONO, with the condition she stays in Tasmanian waters. All funds from the sale will be injected back into producing the Australian Wooden Boat Festival 2025.

AWBF Board, staff and dignitaries, including Dean Young MP were in attendance, accompanied by Wooden Boat Centre staff, students and volunteers and over 100 other wooden boat enthusiasts.

Lead Shipwright at the Wooden Boat Centre of Tasmania, Cody Horgan, said "the project came with immense pride and joy, and shows the artistry of restoration, as well as providing a great model for future projects at the WBC".

AWBF General Manager, Paul Stephanus, said "this momentous occasion celebrates maritime heritage, and what can be achieved through collaboration with other like-minded wooden boat folk. We hope to see *Undine* on the water racing against her rivals once again".

For more information please visit the AWBF website – awbf.org.au

FOR SALE

"UNDINE"

24ft fully restored Derwent Class yacht, built in 1948 in Hobart. No expense spared.

Proceeds of sale go direct to the Australian Wooden Boat Festival.

\$20,000 ONO

Contact

office@awbf.org.au or call
(03) 6223 3375

AUSTRALIAN WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL



TasPorts' funding supports local yacht clubs



TasPorts is a strong supporter of local sailing – and yachting clubs – in Tasmania. Through its Community Grant Program, it has provided funding to three local yacht clubs to help upgrade safety equipment and improve facilities.

Sandy Bay Sailing Club used its grant to purchase ten new VHF radios and to provide VHF marine radio training for coaches and volunteers.

"The budget is fairly constrained at the sailing club, so corporate sponsorship is an important source of income, particularly for project work such as the VHF initiative," Sandy Bay Sailing Club committee member Andrew Black said.

"When the weather turns, which happens regularly on the Derwent, the VHF marine radios are critical for keeping everyone safe. As a sailing club for young people, safety is of paramount importance."

Prior to receiving the TasPorts grant, the club was desperately seeking funds to replace a limited number of radios with basic models.

"We feel so grateful to TasPorts that we can now offer our members top-of-the-range equipment and the necessary training to use them," Mr Black said.

Mersey Yacht Club in the state's northwest purchased a navigation tablet and personal AIS-enabled man overboard devices that can be used by members when out on the water.



Image credit: TasPorts



Image credit: TasPorts

“Keeping up with new technology is difficult, so to be able to introduce members of the club to the new AIS technology is really exciting,” Mersey Yacht Club committee member Samantha McGrath said.

“We are grateful to TasPorts for supporting local water users. Without this funding purchasing the new AIS equipment would not have been possible.”

The Midway Point Yacht Club received grant funding to upgrade the club’s jetty, which is used by members and the general public.

“After having to remove the original jetty about 10-years-ago, the club began work on the new one, but due to limited funds, the jetty was built to a functional state but not fully completed,” Midway Point Yacht Club vice-commodore Michael Verrier said.

“Membership fees only cover the necessities, meaning the project kept being delayed, so when we received the news about the TasPorts’ funding, we were ecstatic. “The jetty is a really important community asset, and to be able to complete it to a fully safe and accessible state is a great outcome to be celebrated.”

TasPorts Community Grant Program launched in early 2022, and so far, we have awarded \$250,000 in funding to over 40 organisations for a wide range of projects and events across Tasmania.

For more information on TasPorts' Community Grant Program, including dates and eligibility, head to our website <https://tasports.com.au/grant-program> or contact TasPorts Community Engagement and Partnerships Officer on 1300 366 742.

Gifts for mini mariners!



MARITIME
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