

Maritime Times

Tasmania

WINTER 2024 ISSUE NO. 87
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**SEMAPHORE COTTAGE'S
NEW LEASE ON LIFE**

**70 YEARS ON:
HOBART'S ROYAL
VISIT REMEMBERED**



**New home for
Lake Illawarra
anchor**

Maritime Museum Tasmania

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Cover

The photo on our
cover is Lake
Illawarra's anchor at
the Motor Yacht
Club of Tasmania
in Lindisfarne.

Image: Emily Quintin



City of HOBART



TasPorts



Events
Tasmania



MURDOCH CLARKE
LAWYERS

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

Protecting, conserving and promoting Tasmania's rich maritime heritage is a continuing challenge for the Maritime Museum, its members, volunteer and staff. This issue of the *Maritime Times* provides some insight into the many and widely varied activities the Museum is involved with and the generous support the Museum receives from the community in doing this. Underpinning all of this activity is the commitment of the Museum's volunteers and small but very dedicated staff.

TasPorts has been a valued partner of the Museum for many years, so it is particularly pleasing in our 50th anniversary year that TasPorts have confirmed the continuation of their support until 2027. Recent initiatives of this partnership include the filmed interview with photographer Rex Cox presented as part of the current exhibition 'Life of a Port', as well as continuing support for production of the *Maritime Times*. Importantly, TasPorts support also enables *Westward* to be berthed in Constitution Dock where it can be seen by visitors to Hobart.

The decision by the Museum to acquire *Westwood*—and then maintain it as a living vessel when there are many easier options—is a measure of the Museum's commitment to Tasmania's maritime heritage. The work involved in the recent annual slipping of *Westward* was physically demanding of Museum volunteers and contractors alike but ensures that *Westward* remains in excellent condition for another year. In this issue some idea of the extent of this recent work on *Westward* is highlighted.

In April the Hobart City Council finalised the lease to the Maritime Museum of Semaphore Cottage in Princes Park. Built about 1818, it is the oldest surviving building in Battery Point, and was once the centre of the largest semaphore telegraph system in Australia. Saved from demolition by the Shiplovers' Society of Tasmania in the late 1930's, the cottage's subsequent restoration was based on an early model of the cottage in the Museum's collection. The cottage model will form part of the new interpretation of the cottage, semaphore system and associated gun batteries the Museum is preparing as part of its planned use of the cottage.

The research for the Semaphore Cottage project is being undertaken by Museum volunteers and is just one of the many Museum's activities made possible because of this support. This issue of the *Maritime Times* includes reports on recent acquisitions and book reviews of some recent publications stocked in the Museum's shop. Volunteers play a key role in the Museum's collection management program including researching potential acquisitions, cataloguing acquisitions and making this information available on the Museum's website. Similarly, the Museum's shop operation is dependent upon our volunteers, whether at the point of sale or undertaking the myriad of activities necessary to ensure the shop meets the needs of our visitors.

As you might imagine, the demands of the Museum's many programs are many, and often the Museum is limited in being able to develop new opportunities by the availability of volunteers. There are always opportunities for volunteering in a meaningful and satisfying way at the Museum. If you think that you may be able to support the Museum as a volunteer don't hesitate to contact us.

As a community-based museum, the success of the Maritime Museum is based on the support of our members, volunteers and community partners. To enable the Museum to continue to meet the challenges of protecting, conserving and promoting Tasmania's maritime heritage, I would encourage you to maintain your membership of the Museum for the forthcoming year. A membership renewal form is included with this issue of the *Maritime Times*. Also included is information on the Museum's annual appeal which this year is focused on the commissioning of a model of the *Aurora Australis*; for many years the flagship of Australia's Antarctic programs. Built in Australia, the research and resupply vessel was a feature of Hobart's port life for more thirty years and held a special place in the hearts of the Hobart community.

On behalf of the Maritime Museum I would like to thank you for your past support and look forward to your continuing support in the future.

**CHRIS TASSELL,
MMT PRESIDENT**

Museum news

WESTWARD IN DRY DOCK

BY ROSS JAMES
PHOTOS: SALLY DEXTER

Westward has had her annual slipping brought forward a few months to attend to a persistent leak. Not enough to worry the pump, but it needed attention. Whenever the anti-fouling needs work, it is a catalyst for all the other accumulated jobs to get some much-needed attention too.

Making it high on this year's list; correcting the waterline. Under her previous custodians *Westward* had had large fuel and water tanks installed in her aft sections. This coupled with a very heavy old diesel engine that had been recently replaced by a new Nanni of around half the weight, there was around 200 millimetres too much antifoul exposed at the bow and 350 millimetres at her transom. Before hull paint can replace antifoul the old antifoul needs to be removed to bare wood. *Westward* now floats much closer to Jock Muir's original line which can still be seen etched on her bare planks.

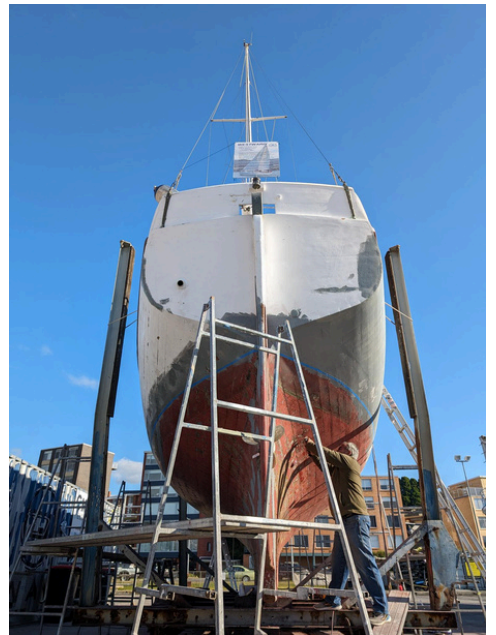
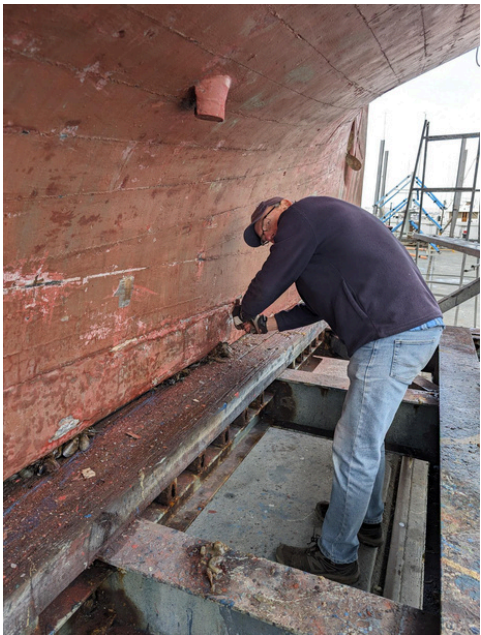
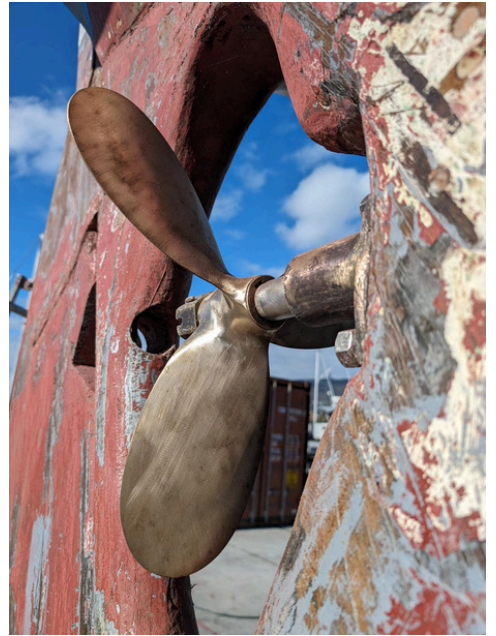
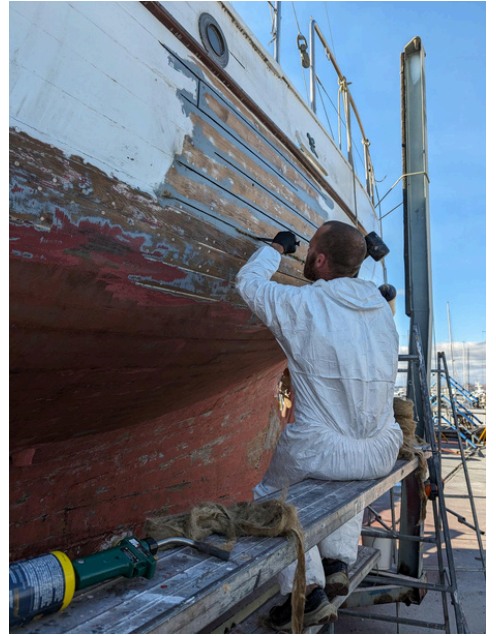
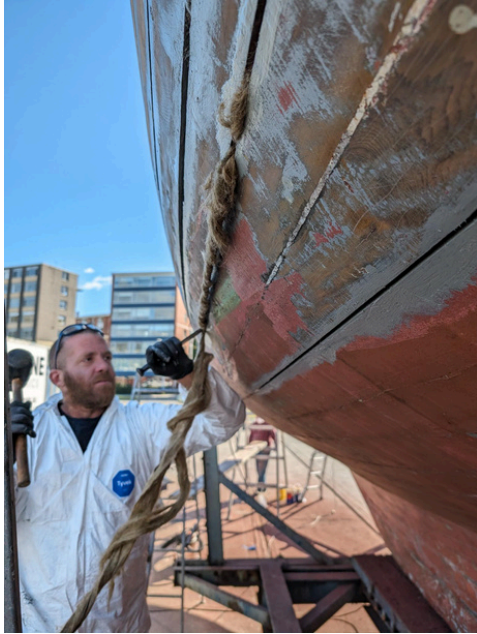
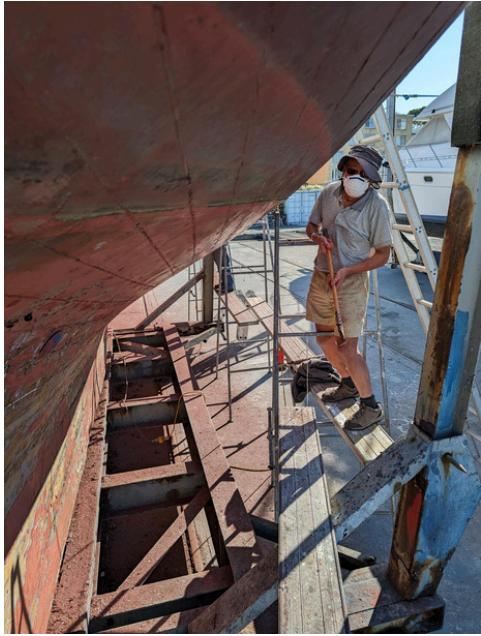
It's only a thirty minute voyage from her berth in Constitution Dock to the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania slipway where we are made welcome once again. Having a full-length keel to sit on, there was minimal fuss lining up on the cradle, a quick check that we were centred and vertical, and there she was with all her secrets revealed. The wash down revealed no surprises in the exposed Celery-top planking, all in excellent condition. Numerous seams both above and below the waterline were attacked by shipwright Duncan Mennitz, raking out the brittle old putty or mastic from between the planks, then setting new oakum (hemp fibres with pine tar) with his caulking irons before finishing off with new linseed oil putty. All mimicking the original techniques Jock would have employed one kilometre away in Battery Point 77 years ago.

As with all boats, galvanic action and corrosion is a constant and *Westward* is no exception. After consulting Chris Davies, it was decided to exchange the zinc anode for a mild steel one, and then after applying the new coatings above and below, we are heading back to Constitution Dock.

Our grateful thanks go to the following people and organisations...

Museum volunteers: Peter Wright, Ross Gates, Sally Dexter, Bernard Callington, Allan Lee; The Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania; Hempel Paints; RM Marine; Doug Watson; Chris Davies; Duncan Mennitz.





Tasmanian Maritime Heritage Network news

BY CAMILLE REYNES

Maritime Museum Tasmania coordinates the Maritime Heritage Organisations of Tasmania (MaHOoT), 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.

Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, MaHOoT organised face-to-face networking events across the state, often coinciding with the **Australian Wooden Boat Festival** in Hobart.

These seminars weren't just opportunities for networking; they served as forums for problem-solving, idea-sharing, and collaboration. Out of these discussions sprang initiatives like pull-up banner exhibitions, curated by the Maritime Museum of Tasmania, which now grace venues statewide, enriching communities with Tasmania's maritime legacy.

We're thrilled to announce the revival of our annual MaHOoT conference. As we gather once more, we look forward to reflecting on our collective journey, addressing common challenges, and charting a course forward in our shared mission to preserve and celebrate Tasmania's maritime heritage.

JOIN US AT THIS YEAR'S

Maritime & Heritage Organisation of Tasmania

MAHOOT Network Conference 2024

HOSTED BY MARITIME MUSEUM TASMANIA

Friday June 14 2024, 11:00am – 3:30pm
Peppers Silo Hotel, Launceston
12–14 St John St, Launceston TAS
Cost per delegate: \$30.00

Lunch and refreshments provided throughout the day.
A limited number of bursaries are available to assist
with travel costs, contact us for details.

Please RSVP to office@maritimetas.org by May 10 2024
and advise any specific dietary requirements.



In the last issue of *Maritime Times*, we talked about a carronade reputedly from *George III* that had found its way into our possession. With our own Museum collection already boasting two cannons, we made the decision to pass it on to the **Dover Museum and Gallery**, situated in close proximity to the *George III* wreck.

In late April we were able to deliver it to the Dover Museum team who were nothing short of enthusiastic. The curators will now work on a new interpretative panel that will enrich their already interesting display.

A new home for *Lake Illawarra's* historic anchor

BY CAMILLE REYNES

Another of our notable recent endeavours involves the *Lake Illawarra* anchor, a monumental artefact bearing witness to the Tasman Bridge Disaster of January 1975 in which 12 people tragically lost their lives. The anchor was retrieved from the Derwent River as part of the restoration and repair of the bridge's span.

Loaned from the Maritime Museum Tasmania collection to the Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania in Lindisfarne, *Lake Illawarra's* anchor now stands as a poignant memorial, juxtaposed against the backdrop of the Tasman Bridge.

We worked closely with the Motor Yacht Club and are now satisfied that the installation pays homage to the disaster's victims, ensuring their memory endures.

Right: News coverage of the anchor's new home at the Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania, *The Mercury*, 12 March 2024

Below: *Lake Illawarra's* anchor at rest in Lindisfarne with the Tasman Bridge in the background. Photo: Emily Quintin



New Acquisitions

BY COLIN DENNY

Donation offers continue to arrive and many objects have been accepted. If artefacts do not meet our collection criteria they are often taken and passed on to more suitable institutions. This is important so that our Museum meets the objective of promoting an understanding of the maritime heritage of Tasmania.

Recent acquisitions have included family collections of maritime memorabilia, books, photographs, and documents. The HMAS *Derwent* collection was enhanced when a former crew member donated his uniform worn when lowering the flag to decommission the ship. It will supplement the HMAS *Derwent* cabin display.

A Moth scow-type dinghy was among the other donations and is currently in storage elsewhere while we upgrade our Cambridge warehouse racking for our dinghy collection.



‘SS Ionic’ by Henry Warn Wilson (watercolour painting)

The watercolour of the *SS Ionic* is significant not only for the subject but also because the artist, Henry W Wilson, founded the Shiplover’s Society of Tasmania a precursor of the Maritime Museum.

Wilson’s painting depicts *Ionic* anchored in the Derwent unloading onto lighters when here in 1888. Research by Jonathan Davis notes that the lighter alongside is the ex-barque *Phoenix* built in 1867 and the O’May steamer *Success* is there to tow lighters. The White Star flag can be seen at the *Ionic*’s masthead.

Henry W Wilson gained the idea of forming the Shiplovers’ Society after reading about the Shiplovers’ League in London. Later he decided to form a Tasmanian Shiplovers’ Society and called for help from Harry O’May, well-known ferryman and maritime historian. In 1931 the Society was formed.

The prominent Hobart businessman worked as an insurance executive for more than 50 years. His obituary in September 1940 noted, ‘watercolour painting was Mr Wilson’s chief recreation, and he was a councillor of the Arts Society of Tasmania’.

Bert Parkinson's caulking tools

An extensive caulking tool collection has been donated by a Legana man together with caulking cotton and a wooden storage box. The tools had been owned by Bert Parkinson, who started his own boatbuilding business in the 1940s, after time as foreman shipwright with Holymans. A few years later Bert lost his right hand when using a circular saw at home and the accident forced the business to close. Nevertheless, Bert continued working after the accident.

Caulking irons are chisel-like tools with flared blades that had edges that were sharp, blunt or made with grooves known as 'creases'. There are several shapes and styles of caulking iron – one for opening a seam, one for sinking the oakum deep into the seam which had creases to harden the oakum down, one with a bend to help reach into areas where a normal iron cannot, and a sharp iron to trim and strip away unwanted threads of oakum before the pitch was added on top.

A caulking mallet is used to strike the caulking iron during the process of caulking. The mallet had a head made from either lignum vitae, beech or oak, all very hard woods. The ends of the head are bound with tapering iron rings which could be moved back as the mallet face wore down. The head of the hammer has slits through the top with circular holes, these slots were the cause of the musical note when the hammer strikes the iron, the note being tuned by the length of the slots and number and size of the round holes.

A shipwright told this writer that the hardwood selected for the head is important. It determines the sound made when striking the iron. The distinctive note tells an experienced caulker whether sufficient material is tightly packed in the seam.

(Reference: WoodenBoat magazine, Issue No. 290).



Maritime Museum Tasmania accepts gifts of objects, documents and artefacts relating to Tasmanian maritime history and that meet the Museum's Acquisition and Collection Policy. These donations are tax deductible under the provisions of the Income Tax Assessment Act, subject to certain conditions. The Museum is happy to explain the procedures and benefits of donating to the collection to potential donors, simply [contact us](#) for more information.

Semaphore Cottage's new lease on life

BY CHRIS TASSELL

In 1936 one of Hobart's first heritage conservation campaigns was waged to save the Semaphore Cottage in Princes Park, Battery Point from demolition. Although by then derelict the brick cottage was recognised "as being the last survivor of the chain of (semaphore) stations in the south of the island" [1].

Led by the Shiplovers' Society of Tasmania, supporters of the cottage's preservation convinced the building's owners, the Hobart City Council, to not only save the building but restore it as part of the development of Princes Park. In January 1940 the Lord Mayor, John Soundy, formally declared the restored cottage and reconstructed semaphore signal mast to be a memorial to "the part played by the semaphore and signallers in the early history of Tasmania" [2].

Recognised as the oldest surviving building in Battery Point, the cottage was built in 1818 as the guardhouse for the Mulgrave Battery—Hobart's first defensive fortification. Named after the Earl of Mulgrave, the battery had extensive

earthen ramparts and was armed with six naval cannons on wooden carriages. On the hill behind the battery a signal staff was erected to communicate with the recently-established lookout on Mount Nelson.

Within a few years a second staff to support a semaphore, or optical telegraph, had also been built near the guardhouse. Both the flag and semaphore staffs are clearly visible in Joseph Lycett's "View from the Top of Mount Nelson with Hobart Town in the distance, VDL" published in 1824. The semaphore intended to signal the impending arrival of shipping to the port and used moveable arms rather than shutters following the recent practice adopted by the British Admiralty in 1817. The Mulgrave Battery signal station became the first in a chain of stations that extended to Mt Nelson, then to Mt Louis, Tinderbox and finally Mt Royal near Gordon, a distance of 54 kilometres.

The appointment of Captain Charles O'Hara Booth as commandant of the Port Arthur convict settlement in 1833 was to result in a dramatic expansion of the telegraph system and its use. By 1836 the system had been extended to Port Arthur and was in operation. To accommodate the much greater variety of communications the operation of the penal stations required the three-armed semaphore system, capable of transmitting 666 signal numbers was replaced with a six-armed system capable of 999999 signal numbers in 1838.

The semaphore telegraph system was capable of transmitting a message from Hobart to Port Arthur in 15 minutes. The southern Tasmanian semaphore system was the largest semaphore system in Australia, using what was then the most state-of-the-art long distance communication technology in the world.



Image: 'Panorama of Hobart', 1828 by August Earle. This watercolour of the Mulgrave Battery shows the Battery's 32-pound guns installed in 1824, guardhouse and three-armed semaphore mast, as well as a small brick building thought to be the first magazine and a wooden sentry box. (Collection - Dixon Galleries, State Library of New South Wales)



Image: Maritime Museum curator Camille Reynes with volunteer Anne Ashford at Semaphore Cottage, Battery Point, March 2024. Photo: Emily Quintin

By the mid 1830's the function of the Mulgrave Battery guardhouse had changed profoundly to being "the Central Headquarters of the Semaphore Telegraphic System in the South of the Island, through which passed all signals from, and to, the capital of the Colony" [3]. In contrast the condition of the Battery and its guns was attracting much adverse comment and as a result, construction started on a new battery behind and above the Mulgrave Battery in 1840.

Completed in 1842 the new battery, named the Prince of Wales Battery, was equipped with the six 32 pound muzzle loading guns from the Mulgrave Battery and 4 newer muzzle loading 8-inch shell guns. These were installed behind extensive new earthworks. Soon after, in 1845, a new masonry magazine was constructed to store the battery's munitions. Originally built above the ground the magazine was gradually covered over so that by the end of the century all sight of it had been lost. During the redevelopment of Princes Park as an employment creation project in the 1930's it was "rediscovered". A new entrance to the magazine was constructed from closer to Castray Esplanade and this still exists today.

In the 1850's the Prince of Wales Battery was in turn replaced by the Prince Albert Battery higher on the hill, but within thirty years the changing naval armament technology had made the Battery Point battery redundant. In 1881 the batteries were dismantled and the site passed to the Hobart City Council. The semaphore telegraph system was to suffer a similar fate following the development of the electric telegraph by Samuel Morse. In 1880 the Mt Nelson signal station was connected by electric telegraph to Hobart and soon after the semaphore telegraph system was to send its last message, the numeral 343, code for the word "Forgotten" (3).

This year Maritime Museum Tasmania, which developed from the Ship Lovers' Society of Tasmania, celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. It is highly appropriate that in our anniversary year the Museum has commenced a new project to interpret and make the Semaphore Cottage more accessible to the community again. The Museum greatly appreciates the support of the Hobart City Council in this new initiative which also honours the foresight of the Ship Lovers' Society.

[1] *Examiner* 12 October, 1937.

[2] *Mercury* 10 January, 1940.

[3] Masters, W.E., 1973. *The Semaphore Telegraph System of Van Diemen's Land*.

Welcome

to the Museum's newest members...

- Jenna Smith
- Asif Iqbal
- Derek Jones
- Michael Laing
- Tim Warren
- Ken Stronach

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

- 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.

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

Remembering David Keyes

David Keyes, Life Member and past Vice President, has passed away at the age of 97.

David had an extensive maritime career, starting on the 15th of January 1943, when he was indentured as an Apprentice with the Australasian United Steam Navigation Company.



After coming ashore in the early 1950s David worked for the Stevedoring Industry Authority and then the Transport Commission. David was Master of Sydney ferry, Lady Wakehurst, brought to Hobart to join the fleet of ferries on which cross-river travellers relied after the Tasman Bridge tragedy.

David joined the museum in the early 1980s, and the Committee in the 1990s. He was a key part of the team that planned and executed the museum's move from Secheron House to the Carnegie Building and served as Vice President of the museum under President Dr Joe Cannon in 2002/03. He remained a front-desk volunteer, welcoming visitors to the museum, until 2005.

David donated a number of items to the museum, including the Indenture Certificate mentioned above, and a fine model of a Chinese Junk, that he had purchased in Shanghai in 1948.



Ship spotter

A look at *Tasmanian-built ferries*

BY REX COX

**Hobart shipbuilder
Richardson Devine has a
contract with the NSW
Government for seven ferries
to operate the Parramatta
River service in Sydney**

The first, named *Frances Bodkin* after a prominent botanist, educator and D'harawal Elder, ran initial trials on the Derwent on 27 February and I was fortunate to be on the spot with camera when it entered the Cove briefly that day to pick up personnel.

Walter Pless obtained more photos before *Frances Bodkin* left Hobart on 21 March for Sydney, via Flinders Island and Eden.

These ferries have a passenger capacity of 200. They will consume 40% less fuel than older vessels and are designed for possible future conversion to electric propulsion.

John Nutt, the second in the series, came out of the shed at the end of April.



Passing the cruise ship *Grand Princess*, 14 March 2024
(photo: Walter Pless)

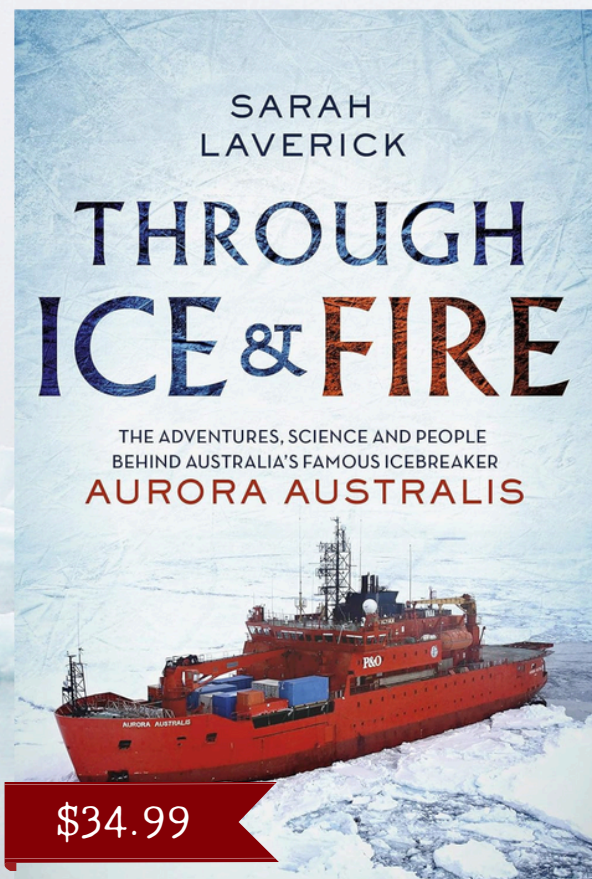


A brief stop in the Cove during trials, 27 February 2024
(photo: Rex Cox)



Leaving the Cove for further trials, 27 February 2024
(photo: Rex Cox)

In the bookshop: Antarctica



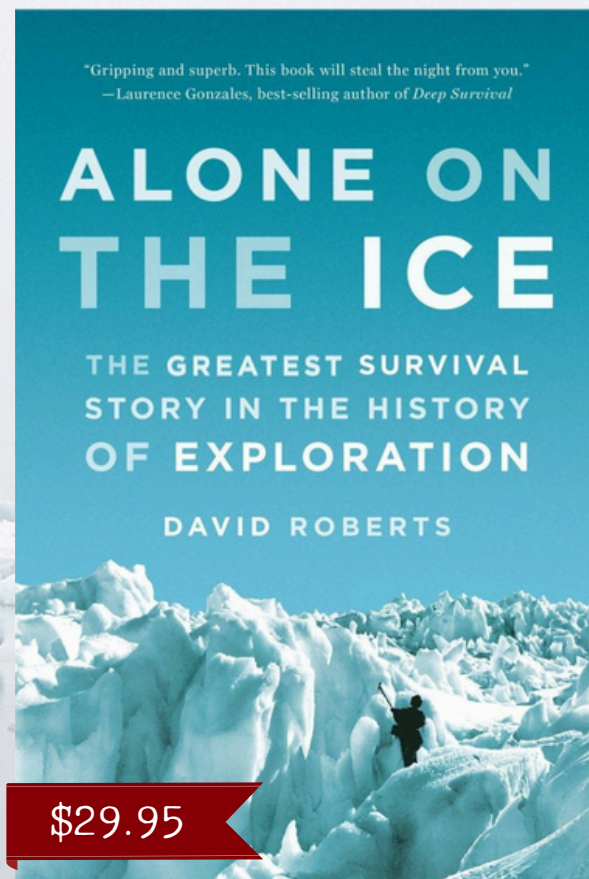
Through Ice & Fire, Sarah Laverick

The wild and desolate expanses of Antarctica have been the setting for many famous exploits and misadventures: a place where every decision has life-or-death consequences.

This is the 30-year story of *Aurora Australis* and of her diverse charges - crew, technicians, scientists, explorers, writers and artists.

It's the tale of a problem-plagued construction, two devastating fires, a crippling besetment in ice and a blizzard-induced grounding in Antarctica. It tells of brave rescue missions of other ships and their grateful crews, and of the heroic administering of medical help while battling life-threatening temperatures and hurricane-force winds.

This is a tale of engineering brilliance, team tenacity and human resilience. It transforms the *Aurora Australis* into a compelling character in Australia's chapter of Antarctic history and makes heroes of the men and women who have guided her through the most inhospitable seascapes on earth.

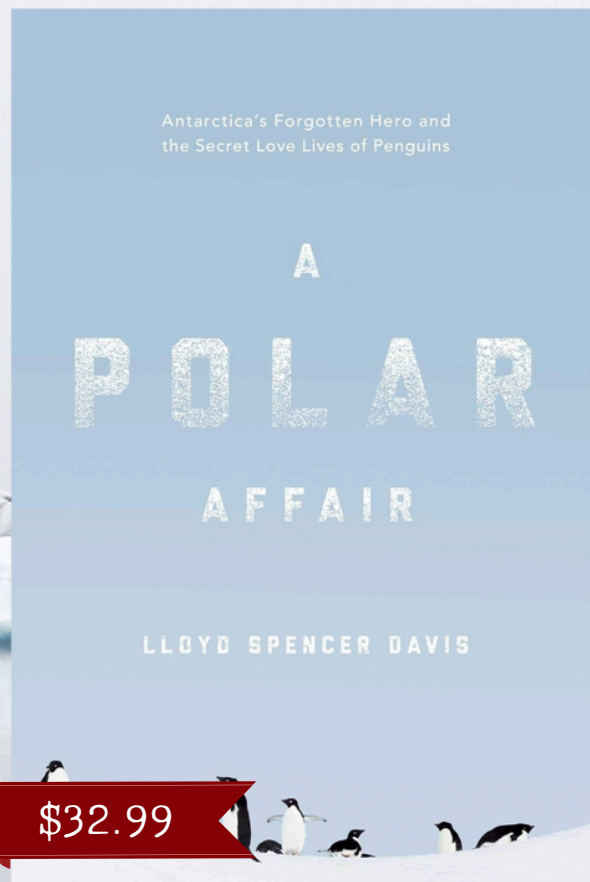


Alone on the Ice, David Roberts

On January 17, 1913, alone and near starvation, Douglas Mawson, leader of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition, was hauling a sledge to get back to base camp. The dogs were gone. Now Mawson himself plunged through a snow bridge, dangling over an abyss by the sledge harness. A line of poetry gave him the will to haul himself back to the surface.

Mawson was sometimes reduced to crawling, and one night he discovered that the soles of his feet had completely detached from the flesh beneath. On February 8, when he staggered back to base, his features unrecognizably skeletal, the first teammate to reach him blurted out, "Which one are you?"

This thrilling and almost unbelievable account establishes Mawson in his rightful place as one of the greatest polar explorers and expedition leaders.



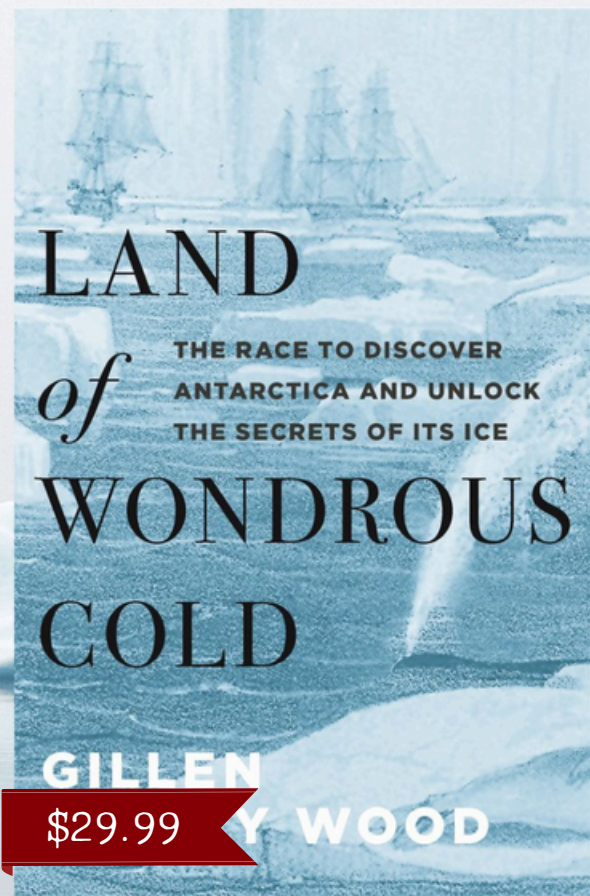
A Polar Affair, Lloyd Spencer Davis

A captivating blend of true adventure and natural history by one of today's leading penguin experts and Antarctic explorers.

George Murray Levick was the physician on Robert Falcon Scott's tragic Antarctic expedition of 1910. Marooned for an Antarctic winter, Levick passed the time by becoming the first man to study penguins up close. His findings were so shocking to Victorian morals that they were quickly suppressed and seemingly lost to history.

A century later, Lloyd Spencer Davis rediscovers Levick and his findings during the course of his own scientific adventures in Antarctica. Levick's long-suppressed manuscript reveals not only an incredible survival story, but one that will change our understanding of an entire species.

A Polar Affair reveals the last untold tale from the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration.



Land of Wondrous Cold, Gillen D'Arcy Wood

A gripping history of the polar continent, from the great discoveries of the nineteenth century to modern scientific breakthroughs.

Antarctica, the ice kingdom hosting the South Pole, looms large in the human imagination. The secrets of this vast frozen desert have long tempted explorers, but its brutal climate and glacial shores notoriously resist human intrusion. Land of Wondrous Cold tells a gripping story of the pioneering nineteenth-century voyages, when British, French, and American commanders raced to penetrate Antarctica's glacial rim for unknown lands beyond. These intrepid Victorian explorers laid the foundation for our current understanding of Terra Australis Incognita.

A deep-time history of monumental scale, Land of Wondrous Cold brings the remotest of worlds within close reach — an Antarctica vital to both planetary history and human fortunes.

A very *Royal* visit... seventy years on

BY REX COX

I was barely seven years old at the time of the 1954 Royal Visit to Hobart, but can still remember the excitement and sense of anticipation that accompanied it. The port was particularly busy, with an impressive array of warships beginning to gather from 11 February onwards. The frigates HMASs *Quadrant*, *Condamine* and *Shoalhaven* attended the Royal Hobart Regatta on 13th and 16th February, *Quadrant* being Regatta flagship. Three cruisers - HMS *Ceylon*, HMNZS *Black Prince* and HMCS *Ontario* - were also in port over this period, lending an international flavour to the proceedings. While the frigates departed prior to the royal visit, the aircraft carrier HMAS *Vengeance* arrived on 19th February. HMS *Ceylon* later provided part of the Royal Yacht's naval escort from Fremantle to the Cocos Islands, while HMNZS *Black Prince* had performed a similar role in New Zealand waters.

A number of merchant ships were also at the wharves. *Defoe* was loading wool and general cargo on a Blue Star Line charter while Indo-China S.N. Co's new *Eastern Star* was here to load scrap for Japan. Union Company's *Karoon* and war reparations vessel *Kamo* and the Tasmanian Government vessel *John Franklin* were also alongside. A shortage of berthing space saw several more ships anchor in the river during this period - New Zealand Shipping Company's *Kaikoura*, Sydney-Hobart trader *Karuah* and American freighter *Pioneer Gem*.

Gothic, with Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh on board, arrived from Sydney on Saturday 20th February. Escorted by the cruiser HMAS *Australia* and the destroyer HMAS *Anzac*, the Royal Yacht passed the Iron Pot lighthouse at 0830 and was met by a flotilla of small craft, including river steamers *Cartela* and *Marana*.





Further up the river a large fleet of yachts and power boats provided a guard-of-honour as *Gothic* and escorts headed for their berths. It was a beautiful morning and the spectacle provided plenty of good copy for the press. "The Mercury" waxed lyrical in a special evening edition: "Tasmania's seafaring traditionsgained added distinction from the very nature of the welcome. Flanked by yachts, the *Gothic* steamed towards her berth under historic Battery Pt., birthplace and home of the State's seafaring skills and experience. As the famed white vessel nosed towards the wharf thousands of naval personnel in visiting ships of war stood to attention on their quarterdecks. Merchant vessels, with their crews at vantage points in their rigging, hailed the approaching liner and her Royal passengers with siren blasts."

Captain David Aitchison, master of *Gothic* during the tour, wrote a book some years later titled "*Royal Standard: Red Ensign*", in which he recalled that tugs were not used on this occasion despite there being a strong tide running and that "...the *Gothic* reacted to it most perversely with all the wayward stubbornness of a refractory mule. The pilot fought her magnificently, we berthed right on time, to his great credit, and I expect that few realised how difficult the task had been." (The pilot was Captain Geoffrey Foster, a long-time employee of the Marine Board of Hobart).

I was with my parents just outside the city centre waiting for the Royal progress, so did not see any of this waterfront activity, but I remember looking down Elizabeth Street to the river and seeing *Gothic* framed between city buildings as it approached Princes Wharf. While not large by today's standards, it seemed huge that day with white hull and superstructure glistening in the sunlight.

The Queen was to remain in Tasmania for several days before flying to Melbourne, where she would pick up the Royal Yacht again. The latter remained in Hobart till the morning of 23rd February and Captain Aitchison was able to record a couple of amusing incidents. The Marine Board had commissioned a new and rather magnificent gangway for the Queen's disembarkation but it was later pulled clear of the ship's side so that *Gothic* could be moved a little further along the wharf, allowing HMAS *Anzac* to berth astern.

Other gangways were provided but for some reason the naval guard remained with this one, even though it was now some three metres away from the ship. Several members of the royal entourage discovered this to their embarrassment (and the crew's amusement) when they returned to the ship, headed straight for the sentries (who duly presented arms) and climbed the steps only to realise their mistake and beat a hasty retreat.

With so many warships in port, *Gothic's* departure time was put back a few minutes to allow for a ceremonial hoisting of colours. When the pilot boarded he advised that linesmen had been diverted to handle an incoming cargo ship (*Kaikoura* and *Karuah* both moved from the anchorage that morning, while *Kamo* also shifted berths). Captain Aitchison sent some of the crew ashore to take in the ropes, leaving two at each end. Colonel Charteris and Commander Richard Colville, members of the Queen's Household, happened to be leaving the ship at the last moment, and were pressed into service to let the remaining lines go, which they did in great style. As *Gothic* backed away from the wharf they raised their bowler hats in salute - having made up one of the more unusual lines parties that the port of Hobart has witnessed!

Footnote:

Gothic was originally fitted out for a 1952 Commonwealth Tour by King George VI and Queen Elizabeth which did not occur due to the King's death in early February. The Royal Yacht livery created much interest when *Gothic* arrived at Risdon to load zinc on Sunday 11th January 1953, also becoming the largest vessel to that time to pass through the lift span of Hobart's floating bridge.

References:

Sir David Aitchison K.C.V.O., *Royal Standard: Red Ensign*. With the Queen in the *Gothic*, London 1958.
The Mercury, various dates.

LAUNCESTON'S 'ROTTEN ROW'

WORDS AND PHOTOS
BY BRENDON BOWES

Brendon Bowes took a nostalgic trip along the Tamar River to visit derelict Kings Wharf and its vintage vessels

Derided as eyesores by civic leaders, unkempt and decaying, the derelict vessels moored along Launceston's Kings Wharf have long been a part of the city's scenery, which some citizens would happily banish to the scrapyard.

Reports in October 2022 of an oil spill on the Tamar roused more calls for the river to be "cleaned up", and the hulks removed for good. Yet Kings Wharf, now a forgotten and rotting shadow of its former importance, was once the beating heart of commerce and passenger services for northern Tasmania.

The old ships that still call it home also provide a fascinating link to decades of maritime trade in all parts of the state.

In Spring 2021, I enjoyed a Tamar River cruise departing Home Point. After sampling the delights of the Cataract Gorge, few passengers took any notice of the industrial activity around the Syncrolift ship repair facilities on the east bank.

But I was fascinated by the row of old ships lining the river, some very familiar, all survivors from another age.

First to appear was the hulk of the bucket dredge *Ponrabbel II* (457 grt/1919) now a centenarian, built to replace its namesake sunk in the Indian Ocean by the German cruiser *Emden* in 1914.

Once the pride of the Marine Board of Launceston, *Ponrabbel* had an essential role in dredging Home Reach and other parts of the circuitous Tamar, the longest navigable river in Australia for ocean going ships. Sharp rocks, gooey mud and recalcitrant shoals were no match for its long line of rotating buckets that ate into any obstacle to shipping.

On retirement in the 1970s it was one of the last commercial steam ships in Tasmania and one of its steam engines is displayed at the Low Head Maritime Museum. Stripped of upperworks, the rusty hulk is an anachronism moored to the rotting piles of Kings Wharf. In late 2023 the old dredge sank with only part of the upperworks then visible.

Next along the river was the Sydney built tug *Cape Bruny* (ex Wonga 242 grt/1949) that performed sterling service on the Derwent from 1972. Converted to diesel and renamed *Cape Bruny* in 1975, the old tug was purchased by the Australian Maritime College as a training aid at Beauty Point until sold to LD shipping in 1997.

The old Hobart Tug and Lighterage Company livery, of red funnel and yellow superstructure, was still visible but terribly bleached by the sun when I saw *Cape Bruny* in 2021. By October 2022, the vintage tug had sunk with main deck awash.

Moored inboard of the old tug, loomed the boxy bulk of the former Bruny Island ferry *Harry O'May* (338 grt/1952) named in honour of Tasmania's best loved maritime historian. *Harry* had come all the way from Hong Kong in 1975 to help with commuter woes on the Derwent following the Tasman Bridge disaster. Capable of lifting 900 passengers at a time, the double-decked ferry was appreciated by long-suffering Eastern Shore residents.

image: *Cape Bruny* alongside *Harry O'May*





image: Lady Jillian, streaked with rust



image: Lady Jillian, shrouded in brambles



image: Abandoned film star Windward Spirit

Constructed as the *Man On* for Victoria Harbour service, the purchase of a vehicular ferry by the Tasmanian Government may seem odd, but this was an astute acquisition. When passenger services ceased in 1977, *Harry* was reconverted to carry vehicles for the Bruny Island run, remaining until 1995 when no longer needed as a back-up for *Mirambeena*. Fitted with elaborate folding ramps, *Harry* started a new vehicular service across the Tamar from Beauty Point to George Town, but this proved unsuccessful. The ferry has remained idle at Kings Wharf ever since, now a rusty haven for seagulls. Both *Harry O'May* and *Cape Bruny* had been owned by LD Shipping proprietor Les Dick, who died in 2021.

Berthed behind *Harry* was the hulk of another classic Sydney steam tug, *Cape Forestier* (ex *Warang*, 230 grt/ 1936) of similar design to *Cape Forestier*. Brought to Hobart in 1969 and converted to diesel, it was towed to Launceston in 1991 for the Australian Maritime College. Stripped of all upper works, by October 2022 the old tug had gone to the bottom with only the bow protruding.

Moored bow-in to the mudbanks was an elegant survivor of the "mosquito fleet" of auxiliary sail trading vessels that served the Bass Strait islands until the 1990s. The *Lady Jillian* (226 grt/1948) was built in Adelaide as the three masted auxiliary schooner *Jillian Crouch* for Spencer Gulf trading. Renamed by new owners the Flinders Strait Shipping Company, *Lady Jillian* served the Furneaux Islands for 27 years until 1995 when a State Government's subsidy for Flinders Island trade was switched to a rival company. Mostly laid up at Kings Wharf since then, grand plans were announced for the 38m *Lady Jillian* to be converted into a four-star tourist ship. However, the superstructure is now streaked with rust and the hull enveloped in a sea of blackberries.

An enigma is the one-masted auxiliary "steamer" *Windward Spirit*, sitting high and dry at the end of Kings Wharf. This vessel was depicted as a lighthouse tender in the 2016 feature film, "The Light Between Oceans", shot in New Zealand and at Stanley, Tasmania. Lack of local history suggests the *Spirit* was imported to Tasmania as a film prop. Her future is unknown.

Ships of this forgotten flotilla have come and gone over the years. On my visit, the 53m landing barge *Statesman* (876 grt/1999) was moored nearby, laid up between Bass Strait trading.

In 2006, four owners of 11 ships moored in the area are believed to have been served notices by Marine and Safety Tasmania to get vessels seaworthy or risk having them seized and sold. LD Shipping owned eight, claiming all were seaworthy and securely moored. One each was owned by Mr. Peter Smith, Mr. Brett Devine, and Mr. John Clinton.

After being laid up in Launceston, some were sold, like cargo vessel *Percy Jean* (ex *Cowrie*, 535 grt/1956) owned by Devine shipping in 2007 and transferred to Vanuatu registry.

Others have gone to be scrapped, like offshore support vessel *Oceaneer* (ex *San Pedro Sound*, 326 grt 1969) broken up at Bridport in 2019 after years of idleness on the Tamar.

The scrapper's torch will probably be the fate for most of the remaining veterans of Rotten Row.

The British Special Service Squadron in Hobart, One Hundred Years Ago

BY COLIN DENNY

Early on Thursday morning, 27 March 1924, under leaden skies and in drizzling rain thousands of people lined the Hobart waterfront and vantage points around the city anticipating the arrival of Britain's Special Service Squadron. The seven ships of the Squadron were on a world cruise showcasing British naval power, and the 55,000 inhabitants of Hobart were about to be overwhelmed by 4,500 Royal Navy personnel.

The Mercury newspaper reported that, 'Mists obscured the vision and it was not until the units of the Squadron were close to the city that their outlines could be discerned'. The pride of the Royal Navy, the battle cruiser *HMS Hood*, appeared first followed by five light cruisers: *HMSs Delhi, Dragon, Dauntless, Danae*, and *Dunedin*. The battle cruiser *HMS Repulse* brought up the rear.

HMS Delhi berthed at Princes Wharf. However, as the *Hood* drew into Ocean Pier, 'The sweep of the tide and wind resulted in a delay of an hour in bringing the flagship alongside, but with the assistance of land lines she was berthed'. *HMS Repulse* and four of the light cruisers anchored out in the stream.

At the time the Port of Hobart had no tugs so it was often difficult to bring large vessels alongside. Prior to the introduction of the first tugs in the 1940s, the port relied on the remarkable skill of their pilots to berth ships.

The round of special activities organised for the Squadron began with a reception at the City Hall to welcome the Squadron Commander, Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick L Field KCB CMG; the Light Cruiser Division Commander, The Hon, Sir Hubert C Brand KCMG KCVO CB; together with the Commanders of the seven warships and their principal officers.

That night a dinner was held at Government House. Generous Hobart citizens welcomed parties of sailors into their homes. In addition, sailors were entertained by numerous events including a dance at the Sandy Bay Bowling Club. Men in uniform could travel free-of-charge on the trams, and a special excursion was arranged aboard *SS Togo*. Others went by train to Launceston for a soccer match which the Navy won. A naval sports day was organised, and a special race meeting held at Elwick.

On 31 March Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick Field was 'at home' aboard *HMS Hood* and personally met his 1,500 invited guests as they stepped on deck from the gangway. The guests were served refreshments by the officers and marines and, 'Many took the opportunity of dancing on the finely prepared boat deck, where music was provided by the ship's orchestra.' *Hood's* stringed orchestra previously gave a performance at the City Hall and the ship's band played at the Beaumaris Zoo on the Domain.



Main image: *HMS Hood* (unknown date)
Inset image: *HMS Hood* boat badge

Every day spectators crowded the waterfront, with many arriving from distant parts of Tasmania by special train services arranged for the duration of the Squadron's visit. The Minister for Education, the Hon. A G Ogilvie, noted the importance of the visit, announcing that 2 April was to be a holiday for all Hobart schools. That day an estimated 3,500 children were welcomed aboard the *Hood*. They clambered all over the ship and were kept entertained with a roundabout on deck and two chutes to slide from one deck to another.

The Mercury correspondent showed interest in the extra people travelling with the Squadron reporting the presence of, 'officers from the Rolls Royce and Thornycroft Companies to look after the Admiral's car and the CMB...a coastal motor boat that can do 35 knots and is the pride of all the officers of the *Hood*. The Admiral has a barge, but he has shown a preference lately for the motor boat. The motor boat also attracted the attention of the Sultan of Zanzibar, and he and other native potentates spent many hours of delight speeding across the waters of their respective domains. In addition to the Admiral's Rolls Royce there are many other motor cars on board the *Hood*'.

The officers of the Royal Navy benefitted more than their sailors from the special activities organised for the Squadron. A letter to *The Mercury* from Mr E J Mitchell of Bellevue Parade headed, 'Hospitality to Jack Tars', acknowledged the work done by the citizens' committees of Hobart but added, 'might I suggest that more be done, particularly in the matter of giving hospitality to the sailors.' However, the superior opportunities given to officers compared to their men was, of course, a manifestation of the prevailing British social order.

The visit of the British Special Service Squadron to Hobart was memorable for all Tasmanians. *HMS Hood* had berthed alongside at Ocean Pier and *HMS Delhi* at Prince's Wharf giving thousands of people the opportunity to go aboard active warships. When the Squadron sailed on Thursday 3 April the waterfront vantage points were again packed. *Hood* backed into the stream to lead the fleet from the Derwent amid resounding cheers and stretching streamers in an enthusiastic public send-off.

EPILOGUE:

On 24 May 1941 early in the Battle of the Denmark Strait the 41,200 ton battle cruiser *HMS Hood* was struck by shells from the German battleship *Bismark*. Tragically, *Hood* exploded and sank within minutes and only three of the complement of 1,418 survived. Due to *Hood*'s publicly perceived invincibility, the loss affected British morale and may have signalled the end of the battle cruiser as a credible fighting machine.



Image: HMS Hood, with SS Rosny in the foreground, 3 April 1924



Image: HMS Hood at Ocean Pier, 3 April 1924



Image: HMS Hood at Ocean Pier, 3 April 1924

From Ireland to Hobart Town: Daniel Callaghan, Battery Point's First Commercial Boat Builder

BY NICOLE MAYS



Image: Vue de la rade de Hobart-town (Ile Van-Dieman) [The harbour, Hobart Town (Van Diemen's Land)] by Louis De Sainson 1833 (P_1991-481)

In 2014 I published a book titled *Spirited, Skilled and Determined: the Boat and Ship Builders of Battery Point (1835 - 1935)* that is now out of print. In the ten years since its publication, many additional records and sources of information have become available detailing the construction of numerous vessels at Battery Point inadvertently omitted from this book, as well as the existence of Battery Point's first commercial boat builder, Daniel Callaghan. While Callaghan only operated a boat yard at Battery Point between 1830 and 1833, his story is quite interesting and one worth telling.

Daniel Callaghan, sometimes rendered as O'Callaghan or Callahan, and his wife Mary left Cork, Ireland, in July 1829, arriving in Hobart Town on board the ship *Medway* on 16 February of the following year.^[1]

Obviously keen to establish his business, three days later Callaghan published an advertisement in the *Colonial Times* stating that he intended to 'commence ship and whale boat building in all its branches'.^[2] Curiously, he provided his place of contact as the Derwent Distillery.

This business, located on Hobart Town's rivulet off Macquarie Street, likely near the bottom of current-day Gore Street, had been taken over by James Hackett, Callaghan's cousin on his maternal side, in early 1829.^[3]

Callaghan and his cousin Hackett both hailed from Passage West, Ireland, a port town located on the west bank of Cork Harbour some 10 kilometres south-east of Cork's city centre. It was predominantly a working-class area, populated by small tenant farmers and those associated with maritime trades.

Callaghan was the oldest of at least three children, all boys, born to Michael and Catharine Callaghan (nee Hackett) and was baptised on 31 July 1797.^[4] While his father remained a tenant farmer of Carrigaline West, Callaghan spent his late teens and early 20s learning the craft of shipbuilding, likely with the support and encouragement of his maternal Hackett relations.^[5]

[1] *Colonial Times*, 19 February 1830.

[2] *Colonial Times*, 19 February 1830.

[3] *Colonial Times*, 9 January 1829.

[4] Ireland Roman Catholic Parish Baptisms, Passage West Parish (1797, 1799); *Evening News*, 2 September 1882.

[5] Ireland, Valuation Office Books, 1831-1856 (Cork, Carrigaline West).

Though improvements in vessel design and construction, and steam propulsion, as well as the implementation of new tools and technologies, such as patent slips, were beginning to filter through the shipbuilding industry in Cork, the local economy was in a general state of decline leading into the late 1820s.[6] Belfast was also quickly overtaking Cork as the centre for Irish shipbuilding.

Though no marriage certificate has yet been located, Callaghan married Mary Ryan in Cork in the months leading up to their departure. As free immigrants the couple set sail for Australia in mid-1829, brimming with a sense of optimism and the hope of new opportunities. It was to be an interesting decision the pair made to start a new life in Australia. History reveals that Callaghan's trajectory may have been set on a completely different course had he stayed in Ireland.

Besides being involved in tanning and distilling industries, the Hackett family on his maternal side soon became involved in local politics, helped in part by their expanding resources and business connections. Callaghan's younger brother Eugene also went on to become an extremely successful and wealthy businessman in the nearby county of Limerick, operating a tannery and shoe-making business that was still in existence well into the twentieth century. In 1864 Eugene was elected Mayor of Limerick.[7] The well-respected family, now referred to as O'Callaghan, would play an important role in Limerick's development and politics for generations to come.

Daniel Callaghan was also a cousin of Sir William Bartholomew Hackett (1800 - 1872), a merchant of Cork who became the largest manufacturer of leather in Ireland.[8] He also served as the Mayor of Cork and was knighted in 1852. Another relation was Sir William Hackett (1824 - 1877), barrister-at-law who died at Colombo of cholera while serving as the Chief Justice of Ceylon. He had been knighted in 1866 and had previously held the position of Chief Justice of Fiji.

Whether for personal, work, health, financial reasons, or a combination of all four, it is not known why James Hackett and Daniel Callaghan and their wives opted to migrate from Ireland to Van Diemen's Land. However, like their family members, they were both educated and shared an entrepreneurial spirit. Given that James Hackett was the first to arrive in Hobart Town, Callaghan was obviously helped by his cousin's resources and connections, and he quickly established a boat building business at Battery Point. The yard was located on the edge of the River Derwent, between the Mulgrave Battery (now Princes Park) and the Secheron estate, and in close proximity to the developing 'New Wharf' area. It was situated on property then owned by Thomas Smith that now serves as A. J. White Park at the bottom of Finlay Street.

It was a pivotal time for boat and ship construction in Van Diemen's Land. The early 1830s saw Hobart Town fast becoming a supply hub for whaling vessels en route to the southern seas. Several of the town's more prominent merchants had also joined the industry, commissioning or purchasing ships, barques, brigs and other large vessels to enter the fleet. All required a complement of whaleboats, usually between four and six craft per vessel. All of these craft additionally required fitting out and repair. Thus, in the yard's infancy, the construction and repair of whaleboats and other smaller vessels would have occupied the bulk of Callaghan's time at his Battery Point site.

Another outlet for Callaghan's expertise was local sailing races, a newly-established recreational activity for Hobart Town's more well-resourced residents.

For example, the 1831 Hobart Town Regatta, held in February of that year and one of the first organised regattas to take place on the River Derwent, saw two sailing boats built by Callaghan compete amongst a fleet of eleven. Capitalising on this success, Callaghan was then tasked by the organiser of a follow up regatta, Lieutenant Hill of the Royal Navy, to build a sailing boat to be awarded to a race winner.[9] Dubbed *The Prize*, the resulting vessel measured 24ft overall with a beam of 7ft 4in, and was valued at just under £100.[10]

Continuing to build his business, on 5 January 1832 a large boat was launched from Callaghan's Battery Point yard.[11] Stated to be '*one of the finest modelled craft that ever was built in Van Diemen's Land*', the 28-ton schooner *Charlotte* was constructed to the order of Samuel Henry Thomas specifically to trade between Oyster Bay, Maria Island and Spring Bay on Van Diemen's Land's east coast.[12] More vessels soon followed, including two boats built by Callaghan to compete at the 1832 Hobart Town Regatta.[13]

In April 1832 Callaghan was noted as building a four-oared gig for the purpose of competing in a pulling match against the celebrated boat *Auriga*. The race was to be worth fifty sovereigns.[14] Callaghan himself could have benefitted from the race winnings, however, as he was likely suffering financial duress owing to lack of payment from Samuel Henry Thomas associated with the new schooner *Charlotte*. The vessel was first advertised for sale by auction in late April 1832.[15]

The *Charlotte* failed to sell and Callaghan remained unpaid. More than a year then passed with the vessel laid up. Still failing to make payment, in August 1833 Samuel Henry Thomas was sued by his creditors with Callaghan listed as one of seven men owed substantial amounts of money.[16] The *Charlotte* was advertised for sale by the Sheriff's Office a few weeks later. [17] Some agreement for its purchase appears to have then been made as the craft was noted to be loading for Swanport in late September under the command of Captain Henry Matthison.[18] The vessel would remain on this route for several years, also making at least three trips to New Zealand in 1834, a trade partnership then in its infancy.[19]

Despite the uncertainty of payment for the *Charlotte*, Callaghan continued to eke out a living at his Battery Point boat building yard. During this period James Callaghan, likely a cousin who had recently immigrated from Ireland, also joined the enterprise.[20] Of note, in May 1832 Messrs Callaghan were noted as constructing a steam boat of 65ft to the order of Dr Alexander Thompson, a Scottish medical practitioner who had only recently arrived in Hobart Town after making several trips on board convict transports to the colony in the 1820s.[21] The vessel's machinery was imported from England and once complete, it was the intention of Dr Thompson to employ the vessel between Kangaroo Point and the New Wharf.[22]

[6] Cork Constitution, 2 December 1828.

[7] Limerick Reporter, 1 December 1863.

[8] F. Boase (2018). Modern English Biography (volume 1 of 4), A - H.

[9] The Tasmanian, 4 March 1831.

[10] The Tasmanian, 11 March, 11 June 1831; Colonial Times, 22 June, 17 August 1831.

[11] Colonial Times, 4 January 1832.

[12] Colonial Times, 4 January 1832; The Hobart Town Courier, 28 January 1832.

[13] The Tasmanian, 25 February 1832.

[14] Colonial Times, 11 April 1832.

[15] The Hobart Town Courier, 28 April 1832.

[16] The Hobart Town Courier, 9 August, 6 September 1833.

[17] The Hobart Town Courier, 6 September 1833.

[18] The Tasmania, 27 September 1833; Colonial Times, 1 October 1833.

[19] Colonial Times, 25 March 1834.

[20] Colonial Times, 9 May 1832.

[21] Colonial Times, 9 May 1832; <https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/thomson-alexander-2731>.

[22] Colonial Times, 9 May 1832.

Named *Governor Arthur*, the craft was launched on 12 June 1832 to the enthusiasm of a large concourse of spectators.[23] Though the technology used to propel the Governor Arthur was akin to a rudimentary paddle steamer and still in its infancy, impressively the vessel's maiden voyage, which took place on the 10 September 1832, saw the craft travel the 3-mile distance across the Derwent from Hobart Town to Kangaroo Point in a matter of 12 minutes.[24]

Following completion of the Governor Arthur, nearly six months passed before another vessel built by Messrs Callaghan was launched. This was the 35ft cutter *Emerald*. Built on speculation, the craft was advertised for sale between May and October 1833.[25] A sailing boat was next launched and first noted on the River Derwent in August of that year.

Regrettably, this time period coincided with Callaghan's lawsuit against Samuel Henry Thomas. He was very likely strapped for cash such that by August 1833 Messrs Callaghan's assets were advertised for sale by auction. These included a four-oared boat built of English oak, a galley boat, and a nearly-new pleasure barge.[26] Separately advertised for sale was a 12-ton sloop, the *Perseverance*, which Messrs Callaghan had built to order, along with a new dinghy.[27]

On 16 October 1833 the creditors of Daniel Callaghan were requested to meet at Mr. Hesse's office in Argyle Street with a statement of their claims.[28] Callaghan was also subject to legal action from his business partner and relative James Callaghan.[29] Less than two weeks later he left Hobart Town on board the barque *Ann* for Sydney.[30] Callaghan's wife Mary likely followed several months later.

After arriving in New South Wales, Callaghan established a shipbuilding enterprise on the Macleay River, located on the mid-north coast. Now known as Kempsey, the region was even more remote than Hobart Town. Nonetheless, it was the forests of cedar that drew the shipbuilders. Here, in partnership with John Barclay, a master shipwright formerly of Canada, Callaghan, now often referring to himself as O'Callaghan, launched at least three vessels. [31] These were the 58ft schooner *Eliza*, built to the order of Francis Girard who owned a wharf and steam-powered flour mill at Darling Harbour in Sydney, the cutter *Rob Roy*, built to the order of T. H. James and launched on 27 January 1837, and the schooner *Francis*, built to the order of Francis Girard and completed in July of that year.[32]

The cedars, however, were soon exhausted and by the early 1840s the resource nearly depleted. Callaghan moved to Sydney where he found work at Sydney's patent slip. Laid down at the bottom of Sussex Street, Darling Harbour, it was notably the first device of its type to be installed in Australia.[33]

Appearing to be somewhat of a nomad, by the mid-1840s Callaghan was residing at Twofold Bay on the New South Wales far south coast where shore-based bay whaling had commenced over a decade prior. It was likely that this industry and its demand for shipwrights drew Callaghan to the region.

Though it is not known when Callaghan returned to Sydney, it is probable that he was the 'Callaghan' that won a sailing race at a Pyrmont regatta held in May 1848. The boat in question, *Sprig of Shillelah*, was a skiff 17ft on the keel with the prize being six guineas.[34] Later that year, a list of unclaimed letters published in the New South Wales Government Gazette notes that one addressed to 'Callaghan, Mr. D., shipwright, Port Macquarie' was waiting to be claimed, perhaps indicating that he was at the time, or had recently been, working in this area.[35]

In December 1849 Callaghan testified in Sydney as part of a case heard in the Supreme Court involving the underwriters of the barque *Isabella Anna* and its owner.[36] While his involvement in the court case was minimal, Callaghan's presence as a witness indicates that he had once more found work at the Darling Harbour Patent Slip.[37]

Showing more entrepreneurial spirit than perhaps he had in the past decades and indicating that he had some capital to fund a new build, in late 1854 Callaghan advertised a clipper-built schooner for sale that he had recently constructed on the banks of the Georges River just outside of Sydney.[38] The vessel measured over 55ft overall with a beam of 15ft and a depth of 6ft. Originally named *Emma*, though likely changed, Mort & Co. sold the craft on 13 December to a Mr Corcoran for £700.[39] This appears to have been the last large vessel built by Callaghan. He likely returned to shipwright work, based locally in and around Sydney, for the remainder of his career.

Callaghan's wife Mary died on 9 October 1857, aged 49, at the family's home, 62 Cumberland Street, Sydney.[40] Callaghan died at his residence, 66 Cumberland Street, Sydney, on 2 September 1872.[41] He was survived by at least two of their five children.

While recognised as Battery Point's first commercial boat builder, Daniel Callaghan only spent a few years working from this location before relocating to New South Wales. Still, it was from an allotment on the edge of the River Derwent in the vicinity of the current-day Finlay Street, that this Irish-born entrepreneur built at least 15 vessels, ranging from smaller sailing boats to larger cutters and sloops, as well as the colony's first steam boat, the *Governor Arthur*.

A new edition of *Spirited, Skilled and Determined: the Nineteenth Century Boat and Ship Builders of Battery Point* will be out later this year. The book profiles Callaghan in more detail, and his cohort, as well as hundreds and hundreds of vessels built at this location during the nineteenth century.

[23] Hobart Town Courier, 15 June 1832.

[24] The Hobart Town Courier, 14 September 1832.

[25] Colonial Times, 21 May, 18 June 1833.

[26] Colonial Times, 10 September 1833.

[27] Colonial Times, 10 September 1833.

[28] Colonial Times, 15 October 1833.

[29] The Hobart Town Courier, 8 November 1833.

[30] The Hobart Town Courier, 1 November 1833.

[31] The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 6 May 1837; Dungog Chronicle: Durham and Gloucester Advertiser, 5 August 1927.

[32] The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 12 January, 18 April 1837, 9 January 1838; The Sydney Gazette, 11 February 1837; The Australian, 16 June 1837.

[33] The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 18 September 1832; The Currency Lad, 27 April 1833; The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser, 23 May 1833.

[34] The Australian, 26 May 1848.

[35] New South Wales Government Gazette, 6 October 1848.

[36] The Sydney Morning Herald, 13 December 1849; The Shipping Gazette and Sydney General Trade List, 15 December 1849.

[37] The Sydney Morning Herald, 14 December 1849; The Shipping Gazette and Sydney General Trade List, 14 April 1849.

[38] Empire, 9 December 1854.

[39] The Sydney Morning Herald, 15 July 1854; The Maitland and Hunter River General Advertiser, 16 December 1854.

[40] The Sydney Morning Herald, 13 October 1857.

[41] Evening News, 3 September 1872; The Sydney Morning Herald, 4, 6 September 1872.



Incat Tasmania: Charting a Sustainable Course



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Incat's commitment to innovation and sustainability is evident in our latest endeavor - the construction of Incat Hull 096, the world's largest battery electric ferry.

At 130 metres long with a capacity to carry 2,100 passengers and 226 vehicles, this groundbreaking project highlights our dedication to pushing the boundaries and our commitment to a sustainable future.

One of the key features of Hull 096 is its energy storage system, which will be the largest on any vessel in the world. Operating between Buenos Aires and Uruguay, the vessel will be charged by two fully automated charging towers at each end, requiring only 90 minutes of charging time. Hull 096 will be capable of operating at a top speed of 25 knots, with a range of 30 nautical miles.

Building on the momentum of Hull 096, Incat is committed to constructing a future fleet of electric ships which will set new standards in vessel performance, passenger comfort, and environmental stewardship. We plan to make zero emission vessels more readily available to the world by producing multiple electric ships every year.

To meet emission reduction targets across the world, hundreds if not thousands of electric ships will need to be produced, and we are expanding our production facilities and growing our workforce to meet the market demand. We are proud to be the only shipyard in Australia capable of producing zero emission ships in a State that has already achieved net-zero emissions.

Incat's journey from its early days to its current position as a leader in sustainable shipbuilding is a testament to our dedication to innovation and excellence. Incat isn't just building ships, we are shaping the future of decarbonisation in shipping.

TasPorts' partnership with Maritime Museum Tasmania



TasPorts has been a proud partner of Maritime Museum Tasmania for many years, and we are pleased to announce a renewed partnership with the Museum for an additional three-year arrangement up to 2027.

Maritime Museum Tasmania is one of Australia's longest-established community-based volunteer organisations. It promotes, cares for, and advocates for our maritime heritage and operates the largest specialist maritime history library and archive in Tasmania. This resource underpins the Museum's long-standing reference and inquiry service, providing information on a pro-bono basis to anyone seeking information about Tasmania's maritime heritage.

TasPorts' renewed partnership with the MMT will continue to see TasPorts supporting, promoting, and conserving Tasmania's maritime heritage through financial support for its quarterly magazine *The Maritime Times*, providing berthing facilities for the heritage vessel, *Westward*, at Constitution Dock, and providing varied support to a range of activities and initiatives that align with our community focus areas. Over recent years, we have been proud to have supported the activities below and are excited to see what will come in the future!

Westward: a brief history

Initially intended as a recreational fishing yacht, *Westward* was converted into a racing yacht after the initial sale contract fell through, and George Gibson became its new owner.

Gibson entered *Westward* in the inaugural Maria Island race in 1947, then in the 1947 and 1948 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Races – and won all three. Until 2023, *Westward* was the only Tasmanian-built vessel to win the Sydney to Hobart twice and the only yacht with a fishing well to win the race! In 2023, *Alive* became the second Tasmanian yacht to win dual Tattersalls Cups. *Alive* crossed the finish line in 2023 with a time of 2 days, 2 hours, 19 minutes and 4 seconds.

Following its racing career, *Westward* was used as a cruising vessel in the Pacific until returning to Tasmanian waters as a donation to the Museum in 2010.

Now, *Westward* can be viewed in Constitution Dock, where it has been restored and maintained by Museum volunteers as a floating exhibit and a key part of Tasmania's sailing history.

The presentation of *Westward* in Constitution Dock is generously supported by **Nanni Diesel Australia** and **TasPorts**.



Life of a Port: Rex Cox Maritime Photographer

Rex Cox has been capturing maritime life around the Port of Hobart and the River Derwent since his father handed him a camera in the 1950s.

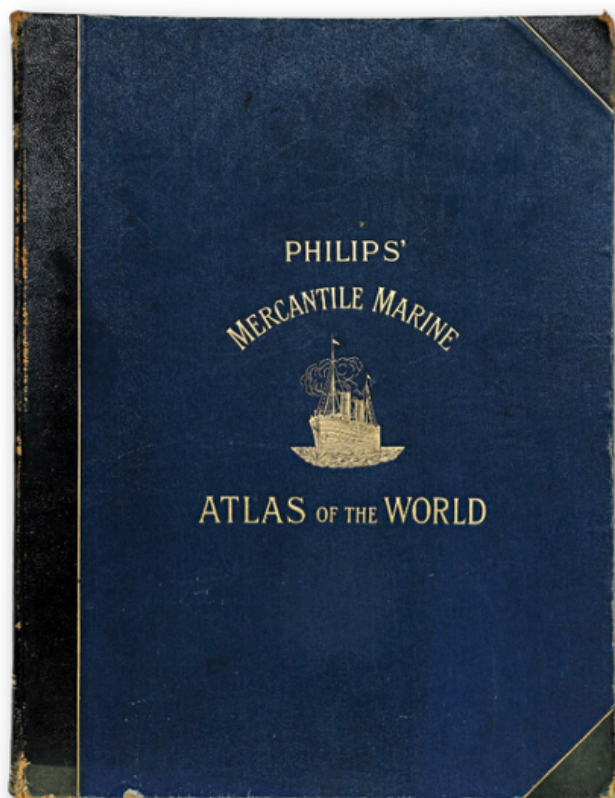
Maritime Museum Tasmania's current exhibition, 'Life of a Port: Rex Cox Maritime Photographer', showcases Rex's extensive catalogue, which not only records the changing nature of port traffic and activity on the wharves but also features many of TasPorts' vessels, property, and port areas.

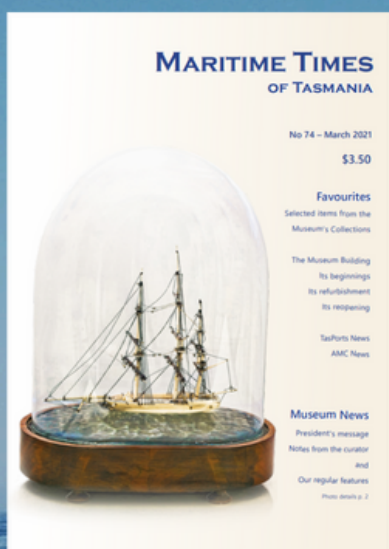
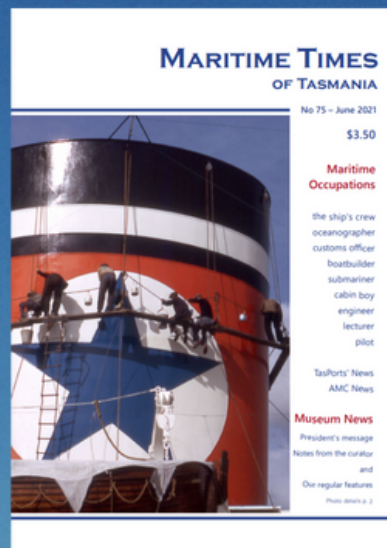
As part of this retrospective exhibition, MMT produced a short documentary on Rex, funded through the TasPorts Community Grant Program.



Atlas Donation

One of the many fascinating items within the library's collection is a Philip's Mercantile Marine Atlas of the World, which TasPorts owned for many years. In 2023, we were proud to have the opportunity to officially donate this book to the Museum for safekeeping so it can be adequately cared for and shared with others.





Download previous issues of the
Maritime Times on our website:
maritimetas.org/heritage/maritime-times



**MARITIME
 MUSEUM
 Tasmania**