

Maritime Times

Tasmania

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Prevailing Gales: convict stories & samurai histories

PHOTOGRAPHY: HOBARTS DOCKS DURING WWII

EGERIA'S VOLUNTEER-LED RETURN TO GLORY

Maritime Museum Tasmania

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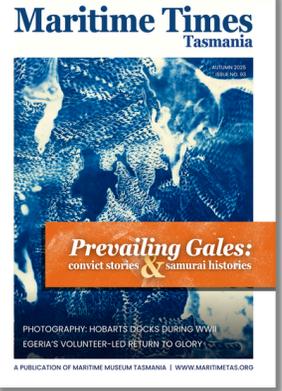


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cover image:
Sue Pedley's
Prevailing Gales
cyanotype
56x76cm



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MURDOCH CLARKE
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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 editor@maritimetas.org for further details on contribution requirements, guidelines and editorial standards.

Maritime Museum Tasmania acknowledges and respects the palawa/pakana peoples as the traditional and ongoing owners and custodians of the skies, lands, and waters of Lutruwita. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

from the president's log

The year has certainly started at a great pace for the Museum, with our lecture program, special events, *Westward* cruises and regular openings of the Semaphore Cottage. All this has taken place while our reception volunteers at the Museum's front desk welcomed a seasonal high number of visitors.

The beginning of the year also saw our new exhibition, Sue Pedley's *Prevailing Gales*, installed and opened in the presence of Mr Tokuro Furuya, Japanese Consul-General. The exhibition has developed from, and responds to, the extraordinary story of the brig *Cyprus*, seized by convicts at Recherche Bay in 1830 and then sailed via New Zealand, the Chatham Islands, Tahiti and Tonga to Japan. This voyage represents the first recorded cross-cultural connection between Tasmania and Japan.

At the same time, work has continued on the new exhibition *Port City*, telling the story of the Port of Hobart. Supported by TasPorts, this major exhibition explores how the port has shaped both Hobart and many of those living in the city. The exhibition will include many new objects, including material from the lifting bridge at Bridgewater and examples of the innovative technologies used by our maritime industries today. It will also feature many favourite objects that visitors return to see. While installation of the new exhibition will cause some disruption at times, we are working to keep the gallery open for visitors as much as possible.

All this activity is simply not possible without the support of our volunteers. While we have continued to attract new volunteers, there remains an ongoing need for more if we are to sustain a program of this scale. I encourage you to think about those you know who might enjoy becoming involved as a volunteer with the Museum.

This edition of *Maritime Times* outlines some of the Museum's many recent activities. It also provides further insight into the Field family's association with *Westward* and explores aspects of the history of the Port of Hobart, a story so rich and diverse that no single exhibition could hope to present it comprehensively.

The story of *Egeria* highlights not only the vessel itself, but also how this significant part of our state's maritime heritage has been saved for the benefit of the community and kept actively alive through the efforts of a dedicated group of volunteers.

Similar examples of Tasmania's maritime heritage being preserved and managed by volunteers for the wider community can be found across the state. For example, the volunteer members of the Dover History Group have developed a new exhibition on the tragic wreck of the *George III*, which opened late last year at the Dover Museum and Gallery.

The Maritime Museum was also pleased to support the Group's exhibition by donating a carronade recovered from the *George III* wreck. This formed part of the Museum's long running program supporting community based museums with an interest in Tasmania's maritime heritage.

This support extends beyond the rehoming of heritage material and includes facilitating donations of display and functional furniture, making specialist equipment available such as environmental data recording devices, and providing technical advice.

The Museum also continues to actively promote awareness of Tasmania's maritime heritage. One recent initiative has been the addition to the Museum's website of a new section dedicated to the Tasmanian Yachting Hall of Fame, established in 2010. The Hall of Fame recognises and honours those who have contributed to Tasmania's rich yachting history.

The Maritime Museum's program for the year ahead is shaping up to be both exciting and varied. If you enjoy our program of events and know others who might as well, please encourage them to become members of the Museum.

**CHRIS TASSELL,
MMT PRESIDENT**

Prevailing Gales opens to a full house

Prevailing Gales opened on Friday February 20 to a full house of invited guests at the Maritime Museum with around 100 people gathering to mark the launch of Sue Pedley's ambitious new exhibition exploring the 1830 encounter between the brig *Cyprus* and samurai from Japan's Awa Domain.

We were honoured to welcome Mr Tokuro Furuya, the Melbourne-based Consul-General of Japan, whose presence underscored the enduring connection between Tasmania and Japan that sits at the heart of this project. Steven Phipps, President of the Australia–Japan Society of Tasmania, formally opened the exhibition, reflecting on the historical and cultural significance of this little known maritime episode and the value of continuing dialogue between our two communities.

Sue then spoke about her research in Tokushima and the Edo period manuscripts that record the arrival of the *Cyprus*. She described working directly with the materials and techniques connected to those documents, and how wind, water and distance became conceptual anchors for the exhibition. Her remarks grounded the work in both scholarship and lived experience.

What visitors experienced on opening night was the result of an intense and focused installation week. The gallery was transformed in just over a week. With the Museum team's practical expertise the physical build moved quickly. Large works were installed, delicate paper pieces carefully mounted, sound elements tested and retested. Lighting was adjusted repeatedly to achieve the right balance between atmosphere and clarity.

Museum curator Camille Reynes worked with Sue closely throughout the week, shaping the flow of the space and building a cohesive visual language. Colour, texture and sound were used deliberately to shift the mood of the gallery. By the final day, the room felt markedly different from the empty white box we began with. It carried depth and a sense of movement that echoed the exhibition's themes.

By 6:30pm on opening night, the gallery was full. The audience included long-time museum supporters, members of the Japanese community, artists, historians and volunteers. Many guests stayed well beyond the formal proceedings, spending time with individual works and speaking directly with Sue.

A crew of Museum volunteers hosted the event with professionalism and warmth, ensuring guests were welcomed and the evening ran smoothly. Their contribution was central to the success of the night.

Exhibitions of this scale do not come together without collaboration. From research and curatorial development to installation, logistics and event coordination, *Prevailing Gales* represents a significant collective effort.

The result is an exhibition that sits comfortably within a maritime museum while expanding what that space can hold. Contemporary art, archival research and international history meet here in a way that feels accessible.

Prevailing Gales is now open to the public. Visitors are encouraged to spend time in the space and allow the layers of material, sound and story to unfold gradually.



Sarah's sea shanties strike a chord at the Museum

On an evening in mid-January, the Maritime Museum hosted a sold-out night of sea shanties led by Canadian folk singer Sarah Segal-Lazar.

Sarah spent January in Tasmania as part of her Australian tour and came directly from an appearance at the Cygnet Folk Festival to perform among the model boats in the gallery to a crowd of maritime enthusiasts.

Over the course of more than an hour, she moved through a repertoire of maritime songs and shanties that had the audience clapping and stomping in time. At one point, the crowd participation became enthusiastic enough to knock the oars out of a model boat's rowlocks, an outcome that caused Sarah considerable delight mid-shanty.

With 70 people packed into the space, and a generous donation of sparkling wine from local winery Frogmore Creek, the atmosphere was lively. Events like this one allow the Museum to explore new ways of using the galleries as shared social spaces, bringing people together through music and storytelling connected to maritime culture.

We are grateful to everyone who came along to support the evening, and we hope it is the first of many live music events at the Maritime Museum!



photos by Tom Dawkins, tomdawkinsphotography.com



Welcome

to the Museum's newest members...

Robert Foale
Malcolm Asche
Ross Kile

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 & photo collection,
- Subscription to member's email newsletter,
- 10% discount at the Museum Shop.

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

A great day to be on the water!

Our trusty crew of Museum volunteers took *Westward* out on the Derwent for a Valentine's Day sail on Saturday February 14, and the conditions could not have been better! Calm water, clear sunshine, and plenty of hands on deck. Thanks to everyone who came along and made the day so special.



CELEBRATING TASMANIA'S YACHTING LEGACY

Tasmania has a long and accomplished history in yachting. From Olympians and world champions to Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race winners, as well as respected boat designers and builders, Tasmanians have shaped the sport nationally and internationally. The state has also produced administrators and race officials who have served at the highest levels, a contribution recognised by World Sailing, the sport's peak international body.

In 2010, the then Yachting Tasmania Board established the Tasmanian Yachting Hall of Fame to formally recognise this record of achievement. Since then, annual inductions have honoured both historic figures and contemporary contributors, ensuring excellence on and off the water is acknowledged.

The Maritime Museum Tasmania is proud to host the full Tasmanian Yachting Hall of Fame list on its website in collaboration with the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania. By bringing the Hall of Fame into the Museum's digital collection, these stories sit within the broader context of Tasmania's maritime heritage and remain accessible to sailors, researchers and the wider community.

The complete list of inductees can be viewed here: maritimetas.org/heritage/tasmanian-yachting-hall-fame



image: Matt Bugg, 2017 Tasmanian Yachting Hall of Fame inductee. photo via Australian Paralympic Committee/Creative Commons

SEMAPHORE SCORE AT THE STATE LIBRARY



image: Semaphore Score at Allport Library and Museum photo via State Library and Archives of Tasmania

Recently, Margaret Woodward's exhibition *Semaphore Score* opened at the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts. Margaret, the first Creative Fellow at the State Library and Archives, centred her research and exhibition on the *1868 Tasman Peninsula Semaphore Code Dictionary* held in the state collection. The dictionary lists more than 3,000 words and phrases used to communicate between Hobart and Port Arthur using a system of eight signal stations across the Tasman Peninsula and beyond.

Semaphore Score presents not only the original semaphore artefacts but also a contemporary reimagining of the code, with a revised vocabulary and naturally dyed semaphore flags created by Margaret during her fellowship.

Central to Hobart's semaphore system was the Semaphore Signal Station cottage in Princes Park, now managed by the Maritime Museum. As part of her research, Margaret visited the Maritime Museum to view material associated with the semaphore system, including Private Murphy's chart of signals used in Hobart during the 1840s and 1850s.

Semaphore Score continues until the end of May.

Swallow: Reimagining the Cyprus

A conversation with Ally Burnham

The seizure of the brig *Cyprus* at Recherche Bay in 1829 remains one of Tasmania's most compelling maritime stories. In *Swallow*, novelist Ally Burnham enters that history through the voice of William Swallow, blending documented fact with imaginative reconstruction.

Working closely with archival sources and maritime specialists, Burnham explores not only what happened, but how we know it happened. In this conversation with Maritime Museum Tasmania's Emily Quintin, she reflects on ships, navigation, Sarah Island and the enduring pull of Tasmania's convict records.

Many maritime books treat the ship as a setting. Your published language suggests a more intimate relationship with the vessel. What does "the ship as character" allow you to do thematically?

It's been a lot of fun to build upon the personification we already bestow on ships. Throughout the novel, it's a quirk of William that he reads a personality into every ship he sails. This was useful for me, because there are a lot of ships in this story, and a reader needs to be able to distinguish them apart. If I were to just use visual language, eventually all these ships would bleed together and start to sound the same. So it was a creative tool to treat them like characters: they have different features, different moods, different attitudes towards William, just as he has differing opinions of them.

He can respect the great three-masters that transported him, but not in the same way he is indebted to the brigs and schooners that get him to safety. He will personify the creaking of the *Cyprus'* lines, of the rustle of canvas, and project moods onto it, guessing what the vessel is "feeling". It's a flavourful choice, but it's one that readers have enjoyed, and I've enjoyed writing it.

Each section of the book — there are eight in *Swallow* — is named after a different ship William has sailed, and that section reflects the influence that ship has had upon his life. Echoes of his time sailing that vessel go on to inform the choices he makes at that moment in the story. I've played with this technique when I haven't had access to the easy writer's alternative — whenever pacing slows, a writer can shuffle characters off to a different location. I can't do that in a story primarily told on a ship.

Instead, I play with the weather. A sailor's relationship with the weather is profound. When your life, well-being and livelihood depend on it, you develop almost a sixth sense. The weather becomes an interiority tool — and in my case, so do the ships — to highlight to the reader what William is thinking or feeling. If he is in a certain mindset, he will project it onto the vessel. The *Cyprus* is constantly in conversation with his moods, either in harmony or in dissonance.

But I also lean on this for comedy. William is a lifelong sailor, so he sees the world differently. Ships represent his autonomy over where he goes in a society constantly trying to trap him. Naturally, he has an emotional attachment to them that others don't understand.

The *Cyprus* incident has multiple narrative centres: the mutineers, the marooned party, the colonial administration and later the London courtroom. How did you decide which to prioritise?

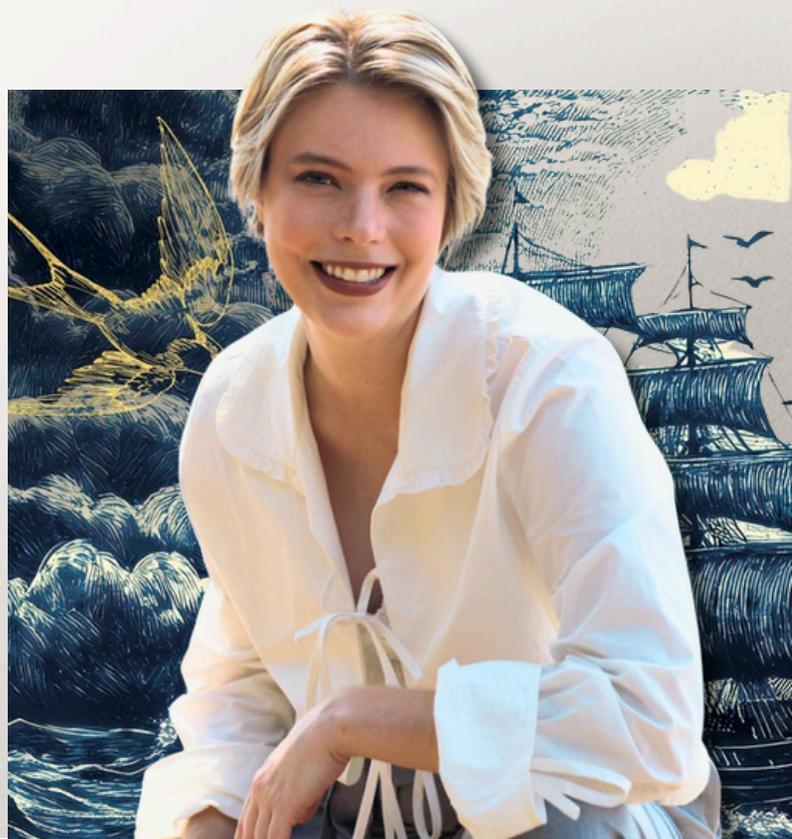
An early version of *Swallow* was written in third person, which gave me the freedom to move between perspectives. I had drafted chapters from other viewpoints, exploring how different characters experienced the mutiny and its aftermath. But it felt too surface-level for what needed to be a deeply character-driven story.

Ultimately, I returned to first person and committed fully to William's point of view. Everything had to funnel through his emotional experience. Even the mutiny itself, which begins while he is below deck, is reconstructed through what he hears, imagines and later recounts. His imagination fills in the gaps, but those imagined details align closely with the trial testimonies.

There are other versions of this story that could be told — perhaps alternating between William and Pobjoy, or even incorporating the Japanese perspective later in the voyage. But for this trilogy, William's emotional journey is the through-line. His interpretation shapes the reader's understanding of events.

You have described working with difficult handwriting and comparing testimony across researchers. What did you learn from the texture of archival documents?

I am currently writing the sequel to *Swallow*, which follows William's journey to Japan. Sue Pedley's exhibition currently at Maritime Museum Tasmania, *Prevailing Gales*, is inspired by the reports and watercolours of the Japanese samurai Hamaguchi. Seeing those same manuscripts in person at the Tokushima Prefectural Archive changed something for me.



Even though the images are available in high resolution online, the physical presence of the documents was unexpectedly moving. I began thinking about the kind of person who drew them. Hamaguchi's creativity flourished within the confines of his profession. He becomes a fascinating contrast to William — an escape artist resisting the binds of his society. Without the texture of those preserved watercolours, I would not have grasped the shape of the sequel so clearly.

The court transcripts are equally revealing. They give us William's first-person voice. He is detail-oriented, with a heavy focus on navigation and wind direction. Readers have commented on the precision of the novel, and I point straight back to the transcripts. That's how he spoke. These details mattered to him.

But they also reveal performance. He signs his testimony with an 'X', even though we know he was literate. He speaks at length about his wife and daughter but does not mention his son. Those omissions are telling. Is it strategy? Is it emotional distance? These small details open space for character interpretation.

Most of all, the physical documents underscore how fallible record-keeping could be. Spelling was phonetic. Transcribers misheard names. Digital copies give an impression of certainty, but the originals show human error. If a human wrote it, we must question it. Those moments of humanity — mistakes, biases, gaps — are narrative footholds.

You worked with a maritime specialist to check terminology and detail. If you could give museum visitors a single myth-busting fact about sailing a brig, what would it be?

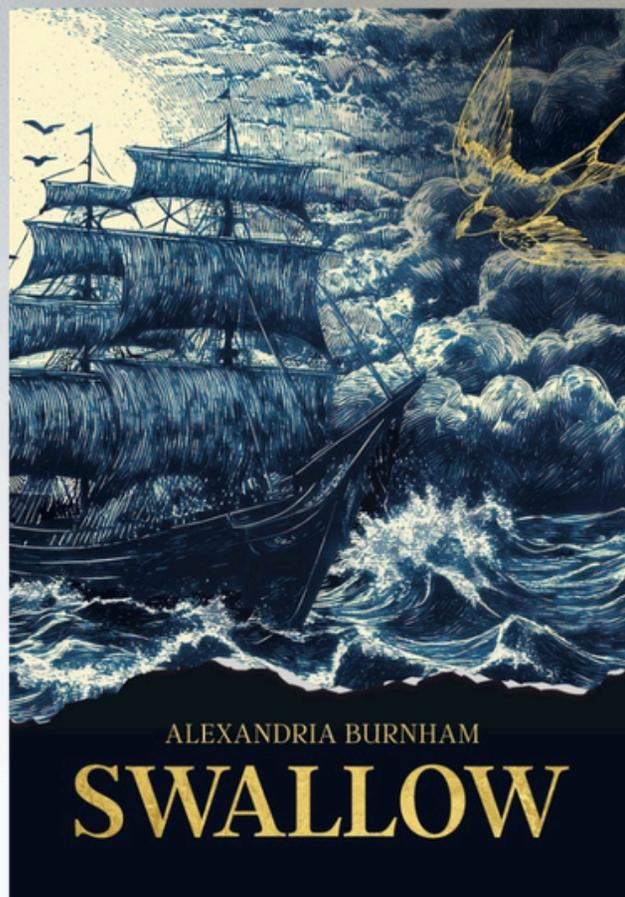
The big one is not calling ropes "ropes", but "lines". Another surprise: dinner was not the main meal of the day on a ship — lunch was. Food was prepared in the morning so that both watches could eat together at midday. I had to go back and correct early scenes that placed gatherings around dinner when they would have happened at lunch.

I'm endlessly fascinated by dead reckoning. The artistry of it, the mathematics involved, and the astronomical knowledge required to navigate under stressful conditions. There was no GPS. A compass alone is not enough. Survival depended on skill and calculation. Writing about a time when navigation itself was high stakes adds tension to every voyage.

Macquarie Harbour and Sarah Island sit behind the whole story as a threat. How did you represent that penal landscape without letting it overwhelm the maritime plot?

Sarah Island is a looming shadow. *Swallow* is, in many ways, a book about not going there. None of the novel takes place at Macquarie Harbour, but its presence shapes every decision.

William knows Sarah Island only by reputation. He has heard the stories. It is framed as a final destination, equated with death. At its time, it was one of the most remote settlements in the world. That isolation makes it terrifying.



When the choice becomes mutiny or Sarah Island, it feels like no choice at all. The seizure of the *Cyprus* becomes an act of survival. Sarah Island exists in the story as an existential threat — a place from which one does not return.

Tasmania holds extraordinary convict archives and family historians are part of *Swallow's* modern audience. How do you hope readers, especially descendants and researchers, will use this novel?

William Swallow is one of Australia's most fascinating historical figures. My hope is that *Swallow* creates an experiential understanding of his life and acts as a jumping-off point for further research.

He has three transportation records. He is buried at the Isle of the Dead at Port Arthur. The Hobart Penitentiary was being built while he was a convict in Hobart. These sites and records remain accessible.

If the novel captures the imagination, generates interest, and draws people toward the archival material and historic sites, that can only support the work already being done by historians and heritage organisations.

Swallow is now available to purchase from Maritime Museum's bookshop for \$34.99

To read the extended version of this interview [click here](#) or scan the QR code:



New acquisitions

BY COLIN DENNY

When viewing our extensive collection of objects, you may wonder where they come from. Occasionally artefacts are purchased but more often they are from generous donors with an interest in preserving the stories of Tasmania's maritime heritage. In the last quarter the Museum acquisitions include a variety of interesting objects. Here's three of them...

The Incat Plate

In 1996 the replica brig *Lady Nelson* was sailing in mainland waters and in grave financial difficulty. The not-for-profit company that owned the brig tried to sell the vessel to clear debts but were thwarted by the Friends of the *Lady Nelson* Group who then began fundraising.

The Friends' fundraising efforts included a proposal to auction plates decorated by prominent Tasmanians. One plate went to the chairman of Incat, Bob Clifford, but he passed it on to his son Craig to decorate. In 1996 Craig was appointed a director of Incat and he illustrated the plate with a stylised Incat image.

The fundraising auction never eventuated and after many years the white porcelain Incat plate with gold trim has been donated to the Museum. It represents a small addition to the Incat objects that include the recently installed large "Aluminium Cross Section of a Hull – The Art of Lightweight Innovation" constructed in Gallery One.



The "Irish Compass" Flag

The Museum collection includes a wide range of signal flags, house flags, and ensigns. Recently National Archives donated an unusual house flag once used by the Department of Transport from December 1972 until May 1982.

The department arose from the amalgamation of three organisations to deal with transport on land, sea and air. At the time it was Whitlam Government policy to modernise and streamline the public service into super departments.

The Department of Transport house flag incorporated a logo of three crossed arrows representing the three functions. Mariners of that era remember it painted on the funnels of the lighthouse supply vessels *MV Cape Don*, *MV Cape Pillar*, and *MV Cape Moreton*.

The amalgamation was unpopular with some existing employees who irreverently referred to the new logo as the "Irish Compass".



Uncle Rex Greeno

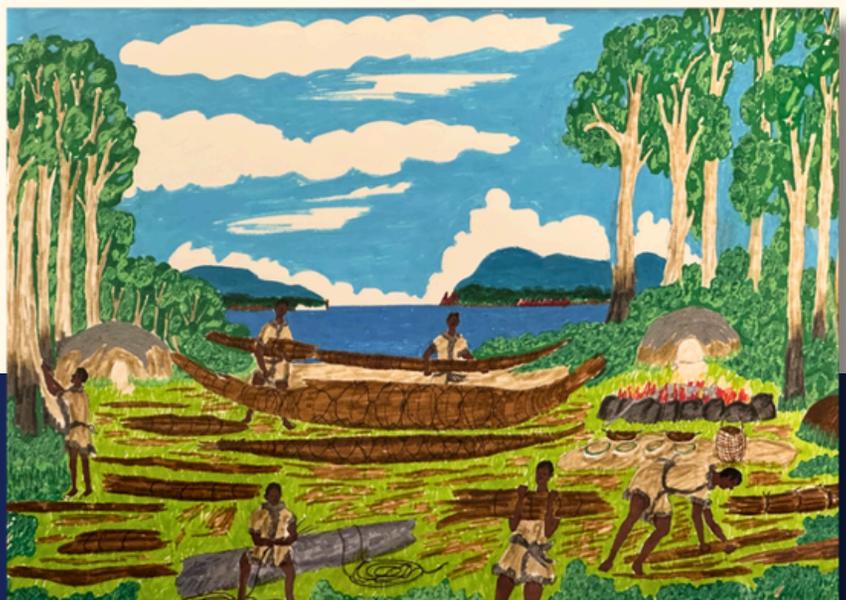
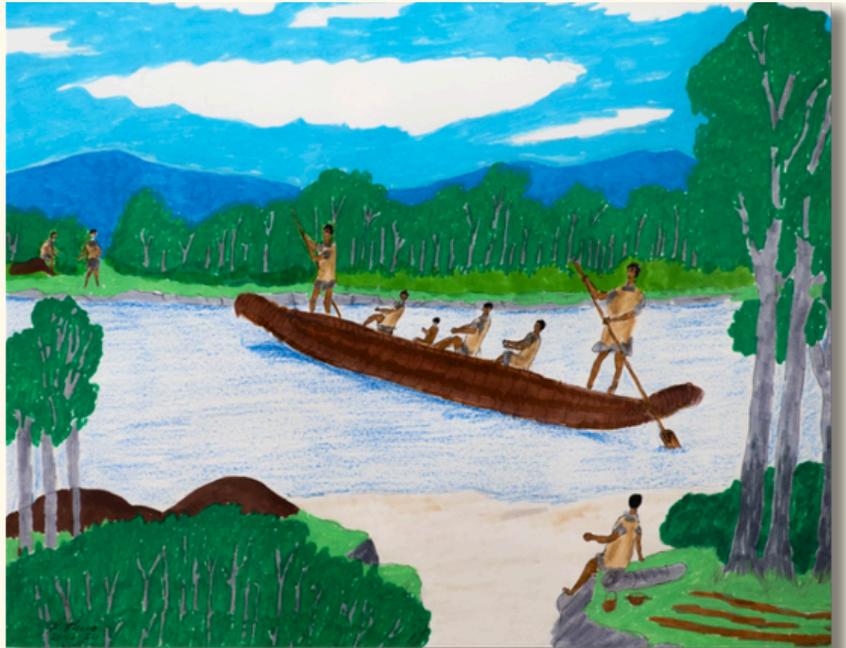
The Maritime Museum recently purchased three drawings by Palawa Elder, Uncle Rex Greeno (1942–2025). His mixed media cultural works depict the daily lives of his forefathers, with particular attention to their relationship with the sea. The acquisition strengthens the Museum's interpretation of early Indigenous maritime activity on Lutruwita and provides an important counterpoint to displays depicting later European arrivals.

Born on Flinders Island, Uncle Rex drew deeply on his own upbringing in an island family. Living by the sea and training with his father as a professional fisherman shaped both his artistic practice and his understanding of maritime life. He often acknowledged the influence of his grandfather Silas, who taught him the cultural practices of the mutton bird season, including snaring kangaroos and fishing from a small wooden boat while travelling between the islands where the birds nested.

Speaking before his final exhibition at the Bett Gallery in 2025, Uncle Rex reflected on the cultural foundations of his work: "Our people have been here for 50,000 years. They had a family life, they lived in communes, they worked together, they met together, they hunted together, and that's how I depicted my drawings."

Uncle Rex's work is represented in major public collections including the Muséum d'histoire naturelle du Havre in France, the National Gallery of Australia, the National Museum of Australia, Museums Victoria, the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, MONA, the Queensland Art Gallery of Modern Art, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery.

He was also widely respected for his research into the construction of traditional Tasmanian Aboriginal bark and reed canoes. A small model canoe he constructed is held in the Maritime Museum Tasmania collection (A_2020-01), reflecting his commitment to reviving and sharing cultural knowledge connected to Tasmania's maritime past.



images (top to bottom):
Ferrying mob across river, 2025
Bark canoe builders, 2025
Seafood gathering, 2025

Westward's story spans three generations

BY EMILY QUINTIN

While cruising the South Pacific aboard the yacht *Westward*, Stan, Bilkis and Juliana Field welcomed a son and baby brother, Herbert, born in 1976 in Papeete, Tahiti. It was an arrival that neatly summed up the family's way of life at the time, shaped by long horizons and an attachment to a vessel that would remain central to their story for decades.

In January this year, Herb Field took the opportunity to reacquaint himself and his own family, Vanessa, Alex and Lachie, with the old family yacht during a holiday visit to Hobart. Moored in Constitution Dock, *Westward* is now approaching its eightieth anniversary, having been launched in 1947. Herb was quick to note another shared milestone: next year, his mother will celebrate the same birthday as the yacht that carried so much of the family's life.

For Stan Field, cruising was not a phase but a calling.

His love of exploration took him and *Westward* across an extraordinary sweep of waters, from the Arabian Sea and the Straits of Malacca to the Gulf of Thailand and Southeast Asia, through the Pacific Islands on multiple occasions, across to New Zealand, Costa Rica and through the Panama Canal to the Caribbean and Bermuda. It was a life lived at sea, long before global cruising routes became well worn.

An engineer by nature, Stan adapted *Westward* to suit the demands of extended cruising, often single-handed. At a time when onboard refrigeration was far from standard, he assembled his own freezer using second-hand components. He adapted a starter motor from a Rolls Royce Merlin engine to raise the anchor, and repurposed a truck starter motor to drive a mainsail winch in the cockpit. These solutions were typical of Stan's approach: imaginative, but also grounded in an understanding of both machinery and seamanship.





Eventually, Stan and his family settled ashore in Maryborough in south-east Queensland, finding a mooring for *Westward* nearby on the Mary River. While Stan's voyages spanned oceans, Herb's fondest memories are of sailing closer to home. His adolescence was shaped by holidays aboard *Westward* in the Sandy Strait, inside Fraser Island, trips to Lady Musgrave Island, and one memorable passage sailing back from school in Rockhampton, down the coast to Maryborough.

Those years were not only about travel, but about living life aboard a working yacht. Herb recalls being sent aloft to preserve the rigging with lanolin, assisting with routine engine room maintenance, and taking part in the annual slipping of the vessel. It was an upbringing that combined freedom with responsibility.

In 2010, *Westward* entered a new chapter when it was gifted to the Maritime Museum. A crew from Hobart was dispatched to sail *Westward* south, returning the yacht home.

Over the past fifteen years, *Westward* has undergone a series of careful changes aimed at preserving the original fabric of the vessel while keeping it operational.

The work reflects a philosophy of conservation that recognises a working life as part of a vessel's heritage, rather than something separate from it.

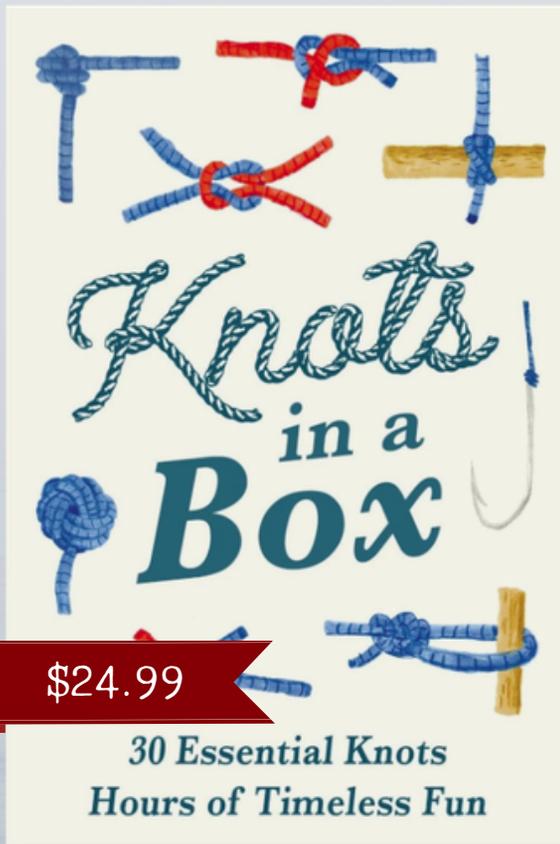
While much of *Westward's* public story rightly centres on its Hobart construction, and celebrated Sydney–Hobart victories, there is another history of almost equal significance: *Westward's* fifty-plus years as a cruising yacht speaks to the endurance and adaptability of the vessel.

Standing beside *Westward* in Constitution Dock, with three generations of the Field family present, it is easy to see that this is not simply a story about a yacht - it's a story about continuity and a life lived in close relationship with the sea.

Watch Herb Field tell his story on YouTube, [click here](#) or scan the QR code:



In the Museum bookshop: new arrivals



Knots in a Box, Chris Duriez

Master the art of 30 essential knots!

This entertaining, easy-to-follow, and eminently practical set of 30 cards will equip readers with knotting skills to last a lifetime.

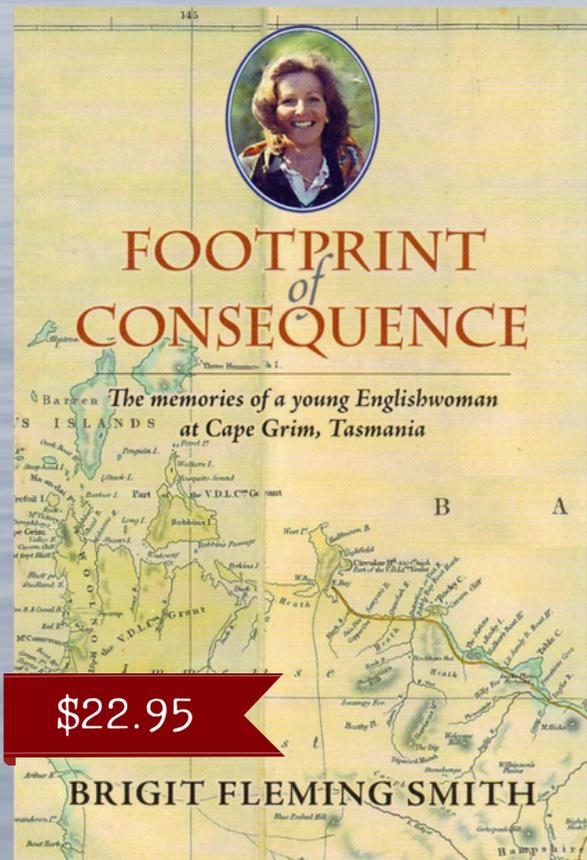
Each card features step-by-step in instructions for knot tying and mastering.

From the clove hitch to the Albright knot, readers will learn an array of loops, hitches and binding knots as well as variations of the most famous examples.

Footprint of Consequence, Brigit Fleming Smith

In 1966 Brigit Fleming Smith, a young Englishwoman, married an Australian from Victoria who had recently bought enough shares in the old Chartered Land Company of VDL to give him overall control in farming Woolnorth at Cape Grim in Tasmania's north-west.

Her memoir, tells of how this vast tract of land in the teeth of the Roaring Forties, barely changed since the first pioneers battled with the country of North West Tasmania in the 1840s, was to become home.



\$22.95

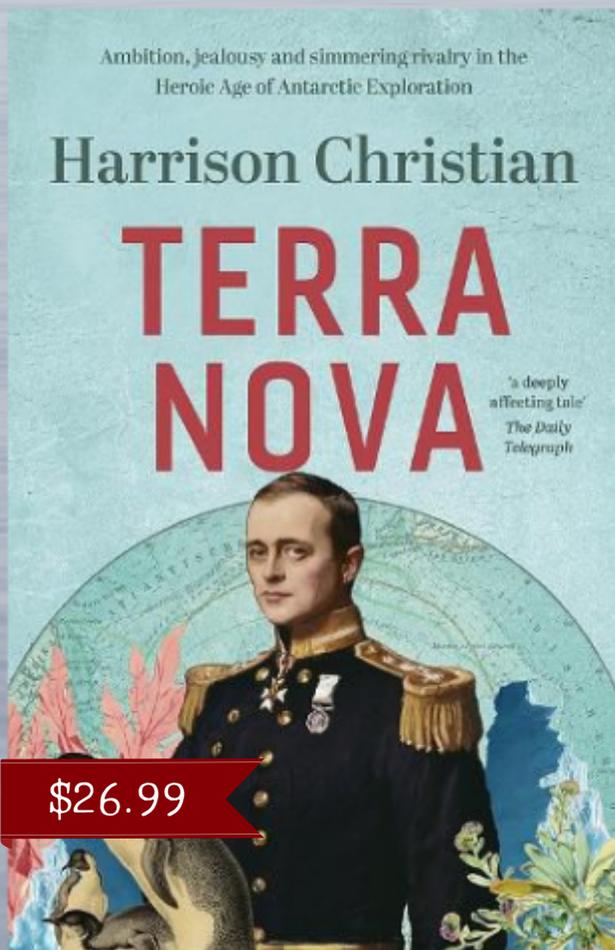
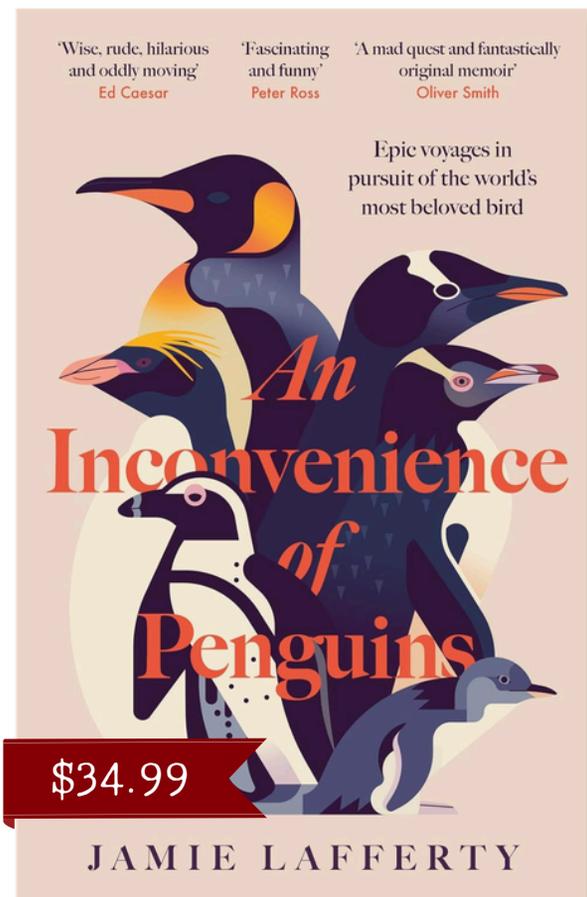
BRIGIT FLEMING SMITH

***An Inconvenience of Penguins,*
Jamie Lafferty**

The problem started, as problems often do, with a penguin. From Kings and Emperors to Macaronis and Rockhoppers, penguins are one of the most immediately recognisable animals on Earth. Yet for all that familiarity, what do we really know about them?

An Inconvenience of Penguins follows award-winning travel writer Jamie Lafferty as he visits all eighteen species in a bid to understand the birds and their extraordinarily varied habitats a little better.

From getting stranded in the Galapagos and marching through African guano fields to leading photography groups in the Antarctic and taking psychedelics on the Falklands, this is a birding quest like no other.



Terra Nova, Harrison Christian

Robert Falcon Scott's 1910 attempt to reach the South Pole is placed in jeopardy when Edward Evans joins as his second-in-command. A clash of personalities between the two men almost prevents *Terra Nova* from sailing, but they forge ahead, conscious of competing expeditions racing to the pole.

On the treacherous journey across the Antarctic ice, the differences between the scientific-minded Scott and the ambitious Evans become insurmountable. Scott sends Evans back early, making the final push without him, only to find they have been beaten by the Norwegians.

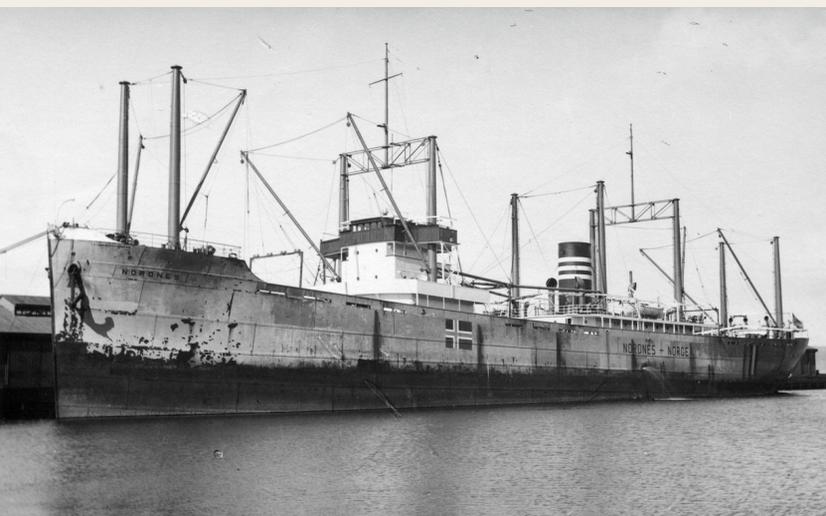
When Scott and his remaining men make their desperate return to base, they're met with an inexplicable shortage of supplies, leading to the tragic deaths of the entire party.

PHOTOGRAPHING SHIPS IN WARTIME HOBART

BY REX COX



above: *Crista* being painted wartime grey, 2 September 1939 (John Craike)
below: *Nordnes* with neutrality markings, 2 March 1940 (Noel Brown)



Access to port areas has become more restricted in recent times, with photographers harking back to those halcyon days when they could wander at will around the wharves and be close to the ships.

However, any inconvenience pales by comparison with the situation during World War 2. *The Mercury* ceased reporting of shipping movements on the day war was declared, barriers were erected on the wharves, and photography prohibited. That didn't deter the enthusiasts, who somehow worked their way around these issues (and perhaps the typical Australian attitude to authority also had something to do with it).

John Craike and his friend Noel Brown were both keen ship photographers in the late 1930s, and on the eve of hostilities John recorded the Shell case oil carrier *Crista* (2,590/1938), being repainted grey as it lay alongside Ocean Pier. The boys on their bikes were watching history in the making!

John and Noel obtained permits which enabled them to continue their craft around the Hobart waterfront (though the strategic Risdon works were off limits), and they captured invaluable images of ships that, in some cases, were subsequently lost to enemy action. One of the most poignant perhaps was the new refrigerated cargo liner *Wellington Star* (12,382/1939), which loaded fruit in Hobart for Britain on 5–8 May 1940 and was sunk by a German U-boat on 16 June while homeward bound. Then there were vessels like the Norwegian *Nordnes* (4,037/1932), carrying neutrality markings only a few weeks before its homeland was invaded by German forces in April 1940. John was also able to take close-up photos of the armament mounted on ships' sterns without being mistaken for an enemy agent, though in the case of *Orestes* (7,882/1926) he appears to have been hiding around the corner of the shed.

During January 1940, the intrepid pair ventured out in Noel's dinghy to photograph a vessel loading zinc at Risdon. They got away with it on that occasion, but security must have been beefed up later, as another attempt saw them being detained, cameras seized, and permits withdrawn. Deprived of their favourite pastime, both decided to join up!

Meanwhile, Hal Wyatt and Melville Muir were taking advantage of their jobs at the Hobart Telephone Exchange (now the Mantra One Hotel), on the corner of Davey Street and Sandy Bay Road, overlooking St David's Park. From the upper floors they could discreetly record the historic visits of troopships like the North Atlantic passenger liners *Ile de France* (43,548/1927) and *Nieuw Amsterdam* (36,287/1938), and, of course, the Cunard Queens.

It seems that, despite the prohibitions, just about everybody in Hobart photographed *Queen Mary* (81,235/1936) and *Queen Elizabeth* (83,673/1940) during their various calls in 1941. There are a surprising number of images around, ranging from "official" *Mercury* photos (which weren't published until 1945) to others "snapped" surreptitiously. The two big liners were anchored relatively close to the city, and I have been told that a porthole in the gents' toilet on the Bellerive ferry was a popular vantage point for those with cameras.

A number of American troopships called here, and Melville Muir captured *Brazil* (20,773/1928) alongside Ocean Pier in August 1943. There is an interesting postscript to this visit. One of the soldiers aboard was Thomas Roberts, who always remembered Hobart with great affection. His son and daughter-in-law came here in April 2001 to fulfil a promise of scattering his ashes on the Derwent, and were assisted by Maritime Museum manager Jeff Gordon, who took them out in his yacht to perform the simple ceremony.

Warships were rare visitors during these years, but a notable arrival was the big aircraft carrier USS *Saratoga* (33,000/1927), with three destroyer escorts, in March 1944. We can again thank Melville for taking an unofficial photo from his workplace, though *The Mercury* also recorded the occasion for posterity. Many years later the newspaper published a story about an enterprising boy who rigged up a camera in his school bag, with a peephole for the lens, enabling him to obtain a rather fuzzy photo of another warship, the New Zealand cruiser HMNZS *Achilles* (7,030/1933), at Queen's Pier in early 1945.

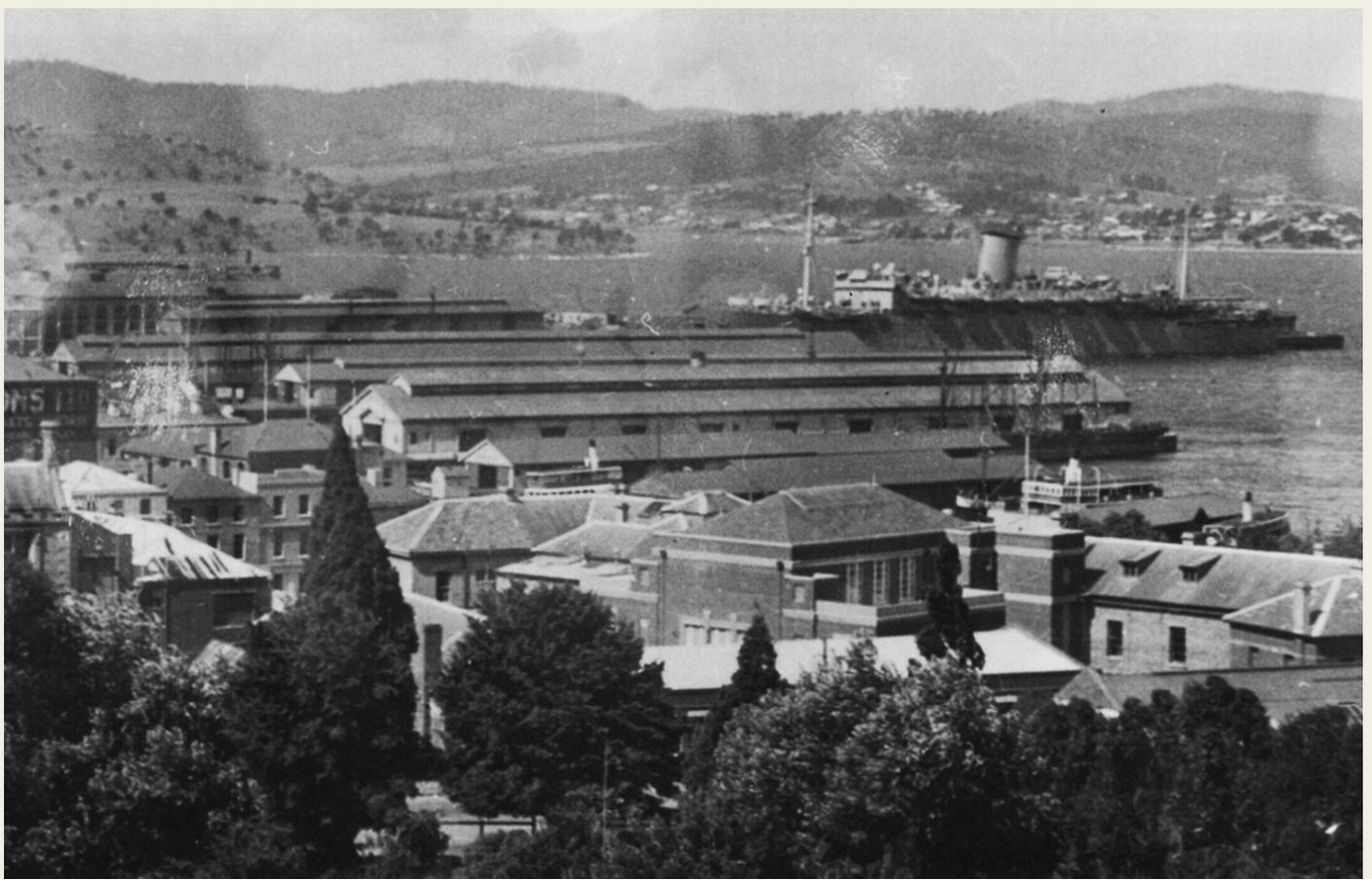
Sadly, I didn't keep the clipping and now have only a vague recollection of the details.



above: *Queen Elizabeth*, Hobart 2-3 April 1941 (Noel Brown photo)

below: Stern gun on *Orestes*, 22 May 1940 (John Craike photo)

bottom: *Brazil* at Hobart, August 1943 (Melville Muir photo)



The volunteer-led revival of ML *Egeria*

BY COLIN DENNY

The remarkable story of a group of resolute volunteers from the Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania, who faced the challenges of preserving a historic wooden vessel, can be a lesson to boat owners in a similar predicament. The former Marine Board of Hobart VIP motor launch *Egeria* now has a new life at the MYCT that respects its provenance.

Tasmania's ports amalgamated in 2006, establishing one entity, TasPorts, a state-owned company administering all ten ports. The Hobart-based ML *Egeria* was no longer a core asset and would not be kept by TasPorts.

ML *Egeria* was commissioned in the late 1930s as a Vice Regal launch for the Marine Board of Hobart. Designed by John Thornycroft in England and built at Battery Point by Purdon & Featherstone, the 18.9-metre-long vessel is carvel planked in Huon pine. *Egeria* was launched on 30 October 1941.

When, in 2006, TasPorts resolved to divest itself of *Egeria*, it hoped the vessel would remain in Hobart and continue to offer VIP services. The major yacht clubs on the River Derwent were approached and offered the opportunity to take over the operation of *Egeria*, which remained in commercial survey. However, the three major yachting clubs declined.

The Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania, based in Lindisfarne, discussed *Egeria* with TasPorts in 2007. In October that year, the Club agreed to buy the vessel for the token sum of \$1, subject to *Egeria* being available for five years for VIP roles, including water transport for the State Governor, flagship duties for the AWBF, and various charity cruises.

The Club assembled a group of skilled volunteers to manage, maintain, and operate the vessel. Former tug master Bernie Smith and Police Marine Division retiree Graeme Jones were qualified to be skippers, and the late John Lucas acted as marine surveyor. John had served his apprenticeship as a shipwright at Purdon & Featherstone, builders of *Egeria*, and later managed the company.





Graeme Foale became Vessel Supervisor and Manager, coordinating activities with the Club, maritime authorities, Government House, and the wider community. From its small beginnings, the volunteer force has grown to more than thirty active members. Graeme plans induction and training to ensure compliance with AMSA and other requirements.

The summer season of 2011–12 was a turning point for *Egeria*, with forty-five volunteer-crewed charters. Crew positions are easily filled and consist of a qualified skipper and three hands, one of whom is a bosun. Businesses became aware of the effort involved and offered commercial support in the form of fuel, marine paint, uniforms, and equipment.

As expected with a wooden vessel of this age, maintaining *Egeria* has not been without setbacks. When TasPorts handed *Egeria* over, their survey reported that all was sound.

However, a detailed inspection in 2012 found rot in bulkheads and the deck. TasPorts agreed to help make good the damage and funded a shipwright to carry out the work. Costs were minimised with the assistance of skilled Club volunteers.

In 2015, the chromed fittings were removed during the winter recess and around one hundred pieces were shipped to Melbourne for re-chroming. A private donor, a generous Club member, met half the cost.

Photo: Australian Wooden Boat Festival 2025, Admirals Sail On the Water (Alex Nicholson)



During the following winter recess, the decision was taken to spline the hull above the waterline and strip and paint the entire hull. Seventeen volunteers spent 3,000 hours over six weeks stripping years of paint. The hull was found to be sound, and a Tasmanian Community Fund grant paid for a shipwright and painter to complete the work.

The safety of *Egeria* is a primary concern, so in 2019 it was decided to replace the old electrical wiring and rewire the entire vessel. More than 75 kilos of wiring was removed by volunteers and sold to a scrap merchant for over \$700. The Community Fund once again provided a grant to employ an electrician to undertake the rewiring, assisted by members.

Grants have funded major maintenance projects. Day-to-day operational costs are covered by modest charter charges, with about 20% contributed by sponsors. Despite initial skepticism from a few Club members, *Egeria* has covered its costs every year since 2013.

The 2024–25 season was the busiest ever, with 108 charters undertaken, again all crewed by volunteers. On-water crew hours totalled approximately 1,600.

Each Tuesday morning, around 80% of volunteers attend their meeting, where plans are discussed and jobs allocated. Coffee is served, and the gathering is a social activity for many retirees who are proud to be part of a group preserving *Egeria*.

The Motor Yacht Club of Tasmania, owners and custodians of this magnificent vessel, can be proud of their members' work. The MYCT has benefited financially from nearly 7,000 patrons who have taken a harbour cruise and then returned to the Club for dinner.

Additional information:

[Australian Register of Historic Vessels](#)
ML *Egeria*, vessel number HV000377

The author acknowledges the assistance of Graeme Foale when researching this article.

Photo: Australian Wooden Boat Festival 2025,
Admirals Sail On the Water via Alex Nicholson



Lizard Island:

a turning point on the Endeavour voyage

BY PETER WRIGHT

Set on the outer edge of the Great Barrier Reef, Lizard Island lies about 240km north of Cairns and 27km off the Queensland coast. Known as Jiigurru to the Traditional Owners, the island holds significant cultural sites. It was named by Lieutenant James Cook in 1770 after the yellow-spotted monitor lizards found there.

In August 1770, Cook and his crew were travelling north after repairing HMB *Endeavor* near present day Cooktown. The reef system ahead was dangerous and poorly understood by Europeans, and Cook needed a vantage point to assess a safe route.

Cook climbed the island's highest peak twice, hoping to gain a clear view of the reefs and locate a passage through them. The summit is now known as Cook's Look, a reminder of the calculations that took place there as the crew searched for an exit through the maze of coral shoals.

Cook's journal entry for 12 August 1770 records both determination and frustration. Visibility was poor, and despite spending the night on the island and returning to the hill at sunrise, the haze prevented a full survey of the surrounding waters. Even so, the sight of breaks in the reef gave him hope that a navigable channel existed. It was a turning point in the voyage, illustrating how close *Endeavour* remained to serious danger.

"I immediately went upon the highest hill on the Island... I discovered a reef of rocks... this however gave me great hopes... I stay'd upon this hill until near sunset... the weather continued so hazy... I came down much disappointed... In hopes the morning might prove clearer... I went again upon the hill... but found it much hazier than in the evening."

The full transcript of Cook's journal can be found via Trove through the [National Library of Australia](#), with additional context on Cook and Banks' journals available through the [Douglas Shire Historical Society](#).



above: Watsons Bay, Lizard Island. photo via Peter Wright



above: *Varanus panoptes* at Lizard Island Research Station photo via Chris Bell, Australian Museum Lizard Island Research Station



above: Lizard Island Airstrip with Lizard Island Resort and Lizard Island Research Station on the right, photo via Peter Wright

Access to the island has changed dramatically since Cook's day. Visitors now arrive via small aircraft on a scenic one-hour flight from Cairns, with expansive views across the reef system. Private vessels can also visit, although anchoring is restricted to protect fragile coral environments.

The island sits within Lizard Island National Park and is home to the [Lizard Island Research Station](#), operated by the Australian Museum. The station supports scientists studying reef ecology and conservation, continuing a long tradition of observation and exploration in these waters.

At the north-western end of the airstrip lies the Lizard Island Resort, offering high-end accommodation across private villas and suites. Guests arrive for reef experiences, walking tracks and water-based activities that make the most of the island's natural setting.

Beyond the resort, five simple camping sites sit at the north-east end of Watson's Bay. Managed by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, these low-cost sites require visitors to bring all supplies. Facilities are basic, and there are no shops on the island, which preserves a sense of remoteness that contrasts sharply with the luxury resort nearby.

The walking track to Cook's Look begins near the camping area. From the summit, visitors can still appreciate the challenge Cook faced as he searched for a path through the reefs. Watson's Bay itself is named after the Watson family and carries a difficult chapter of frontier history involving conflict with the Dingaal people. Today it also serves as an anchorage for visiting yachts, with informal evening gatherings on the beach a long-standing tradition among sailors.

For those seeking something more adventurous, an unmarked walk begins at the south-eastern end of the airstrip and leads to Coconut Bay. The final descent requires a rope down a steep rock face and is best suited to confident walkers.

Lizard Island remains a meeting point between past and present. For Cook, it offered a critical lookout during one of the most hazardous stages of the *Endeavour* voyage. For modern visitors and researchers, it continues to provide perspective, whether scientific, historical or simply personal.

Standing at Cook's Look today, it is easy to imagine the uncertainty of 1770, when safe passage through the reef was far from assured.



above: aerial map of Lizard Island via Australian Museum Lizard Island Research Station.

below: Cook's Look, photo via Peter Wright.



New from author Nicole Mays

Mariners, Marriages and Mansions: The Bayley Family of Hobart

Over a 10-year period three siblings arrived in Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania) from England: Charles, Bayley and Harriet Bull. Camouflaging their humble roots they adopted the surname of Bayley, their mother's maiden name and one associated with several prominent shipbuilders from coastal Suffolk and Essex where they had been born and raised.

The first to arrive was Charles Bayley (1813-1875) who began work as a mariner in his teens. In 1839, at the age of 26, he was appointed captain of the whaling barque *Wallaby*. Charles spent the next 23 years involved in this industry, in the process becoming one of Hobart Town's wealthy whalers and shipowners.

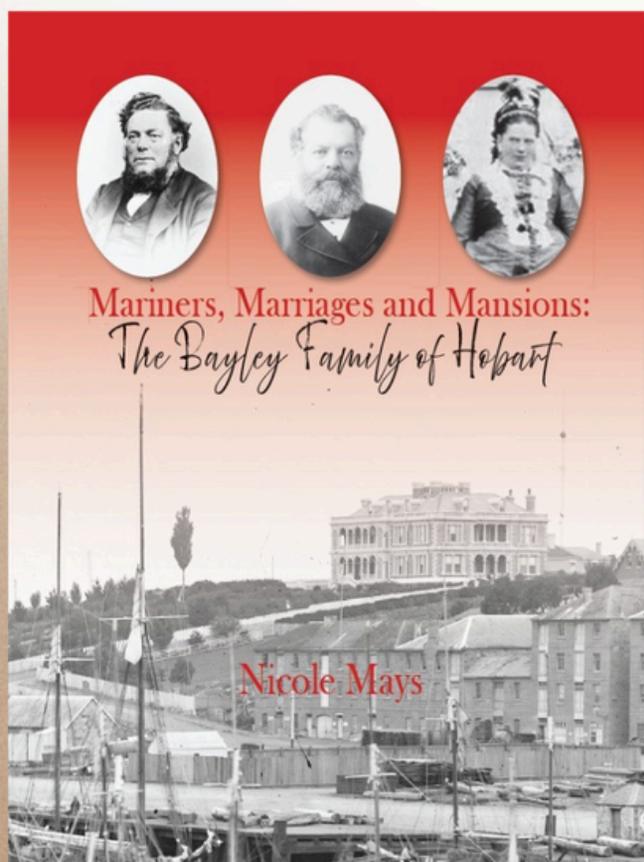
This prosperity transferred to his brother Bayley Bull (1823-1894) who arrived in Hobart Town from London in 1843. Capitalising on his older brother's resources and reputation, and assuming the name of James Bayley, he also became involved in the whaling industry and maritime trade, countering their inherent risks to further the family's success.

In 1846 James Bayley returned to London and with his youngest sister Harriet Bull (1828-1878) arrived back in Hobart Town in January 1847. While James resumed his role in the whaling industry, Harriet quickly married Scottish-born shipwright Alexander McGregor who went on to become one of Van Diemen's Lands' industrious shipbuilders, within a few decades also becoming the largest and wealthiest shipowner in the colony.

Combined, Charles, James and Harriet Bayley (and her husband Alexander McGregor) were tenacious, persevering and calculated risk-takers, building business empires they would never have dreamed possible had they stayed in England.

Despite this affluence they remained unassuming, sagacious and charitable; enduring the loss of spouses, children and each other; taking on various causes and volunteer opportunities; and helping advance their communities. Their only extravagance appears to have been their penchant to travel back to England, and their homes: 'Lenna' at Battery Point and 'Runnymede' at New Town, both stately mansions still in existence.

This book profiles the lives of Charles, James and Harriet Bayley: their upbringing, their careers, their spouses and families, their personal losses and grievances, their homes, their good deeds, and their scandals. It is also the story of their legacies and the patrimony that allowed their widows, children and grandchildren to lead privileged yet benevolent lives, championing political, military, social, health and recreational causes and events throughout the greater Hobart area and well beyond.



*Mariners, Marriages and
Mansions* is now available to
purchase from the Maritime
Museum's bookshop for \$45.00

Ship spotter

BY REX COX

A friend recently discovered some photos on the AOT website that were taken from Bellerive and show a large grey painted ship at Ocean Pier (left). This has been identified as P&O/Federal Line's *Essex* (11,063/1936) and the date as April 1945 – so yet another example of “illegal” photography during WW2! The date was confirmed once we spotted the two squat motorship funnels of Royal Mail Lines' *Highland Princess* (14,128/1930), visible just beyond the bow of *Essex*, and on the far side of the pier. Port records indicate that this troop transport was in Hobart at the same time as the Federal cargo liner.

Essex had previously loaded fruit at Hobart in May 1939. It suffered considerable damage as part of a Malta convoy in early 1941, not returning to service till November 1944, and was scrapped as *Norfolk* in 1962.

During peacetime *Highland Princess* operated in the South American trade, carrying passengers and refrigerated cargo between London and the River Plate. It had a long postwar career, being broken up in China as *Guang Hua* in 1992.

The former river steamer *Togo* (153/1906) can just be seen at the extreme right of the photo, alongside one of the Regatta jetties. Laid up in the 1930s, it was requisitioned for war service c.1943 and some modifications carried out at Battery Point. These were not completed, probably due to the rapidly changing war situation, and *Togo* was later towed to the Ship's Graveyard.



image (above): The full view from Bellerive, April 1945 - *Essex* at far left and *Togo* far right (AOT)

image (right): Enlarged view *Essex* & *Highland Princess* at Ocean Pier, April 1945 (AOT)



ICE BREAKERS

50 years of women in Antarctica

The 'Antarctic ice ceiling' was smashed in 1976 when three women ventured to the southernmost continent as part of Australia's Antarctic Program (formerly 'Australian National Antarctic Research Expeditioners – ANARE), for the first time.

The scene had been set the year before – the International Women's Year – with a growing expectation that women should be treated equally. At the Australian Antarctic Division, the definition of equal included access to Antarctica.

Up until then women were denied participation in ANARE. The official line was that there were no facilities for women: no separate toilets or sleeping quarters, poor fitting clothing and a climate too hostile for women.

Some of these inconveniences were true. But they were used to legitimise the denial of women's access to the inherently masculine Antarctic that had been described as the last bastion of men's independence and no place for women.

Only one woman had travelled to Antarctica as part of Australia's expeditions. She was Nell Law, the wife of the Director of the Australian Antarctic Division, Dr Phillip Law, who stowed away on *Maggie Dan* to Mawson station in 1961.

She was discovered on board just hours before the ship was due to set sail, but was permitted to remain on board with her husband.

Some 14 years later the International Women's Year aimed to end discrimination against women and allow them to participate fully in social, political and economic life. With women still excluded from Antarctica, the focus on women's equality was felt at the Australian Antarctic Division.

In January 1976, after a concerted effort by Australian Antarctic Division photographer Jutta Hosel, Jutta was invited along with two colleagues, family liaison officer Shelagh Robinson, and administrator Elizabeth Chipman, to travel on *Thala Dan* to Casey station.



image: Heard Island Expeditioners in 2025, photo by Simon Payne





image: Women on *Investigator*, photo by So Kawaguchi

Many women had already worked on Macquarie Island, following in the footsteps of scientists Susan Ingham, Isobel Bennet, Mary Gillham and Hope Macpherson who travelled in the summer of 1959–60.

But it was in the Antarctic season of 1975–76 that the first three women travelled to Antarctica as contributing participants of what has now become the Australian Antarctic Program.

It has not been a smooth road for the inclusion of women in the Australian Antarctic Program. In 2023, following concerns over the treatment of women, the Australian Antarctic Division commissioned a comprehensive independent review into its workplace culture.

The review found significant bullying, sexual harassment and exclusion of women had occurred over many years. The Division accepted all the review's recommendations and continues to focus on building positive workplace culture where all people feel safe and included.

The cultural change focus continues and an independent review of the Antarctic Division's progress towards positive cultural change is due to be published in 2026.

Despite the challenges and obstacles to participation, women's contributions have become integral to every aspect of the Australian Antarctic Program's science and operations.

Today, they are at the forefront of globally important climate science, and are critical to successful shipping, aviation and logistics, as well as to expeditioner wellbeing, climate policy and international relations.

A series of firsts...

After the pioneering, albeit short visits, by women to the Antarctic continent and sub-Antarctic, there were many new firsts to fall

1976 – Medical Officer Dr Zoë Garder winters on Macquarie Island

1981 – Medical Officer Dr Louise Holliday winters in Antarctica, at Davis

1983 – Peta Kelsey is first female scientist to winter at Macquarie Island

1985 – Peta Kelsey and Gina Price are first female scientists to winter in Antarctica, at Mawson

1988 – First female tradie in Antarctica, painter Kay Grist, at Casey

1989 – Dr Lyn Williams and Denise Allen become first women to win the Antarctic Medal

1989 – First female Station Leader, Alison Clifton, on Macquarie Island

1989 – First female Antarctic Station Leader, Diana Patterson, at Mawson

1991 – Annie Wessing, first female Field Training Officer in Antarctica

1992 – Denise Allen is the first woman to winter at all three Antarctic stations and Macquarie Island

2009 – First female Australian Antarctic Division Director, Lyn Maddock

2015 – First female Australian Antarctic Division Chief Scientist, Dr Gwen Fenton

See the full feature, and videos of women talking about their experience in the Australian Antarctic Program at antarctica.gov.au/news/explore-antarctica/ice-breakers-50-years-of-women-in-antarctica





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