

MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

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*The composite clipper ship City of Adelaide as she now lies in Irvine, Scotland.
On the brink of being broken up, the ship is now to go to South Australia.*

See story page 18.

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

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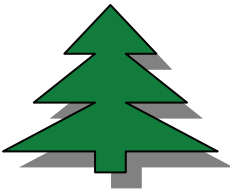
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**A Merry Christmas
&**



A Safe and Happy New Year to All

Things They Would Rather Have Not Said

“This is the run-up to the big match which, in my view, should be a walk-over.”

Rear Admiral Sandy Woodward, April 1982

“I never believed it would be a walk-over.”

Rear Admiral Sandy Woodward, July 1982

Rear Admiral Woodward was the British Task Force Commander South Atlantic at the beginning of the Falklands War. To further confuse the issue, in May 1982 a Ministry of Defence spokesman stated “We are not in a war situation.”

Submersible Smugglers

Leigh Smith supplied this interesting article on modern day smuggling. Not quite the same as the fast cutters of the 18th and 19th centuries!

In July this year the US Drug Enforcement Administration with the assistance of the Ecuadorian military discovered a clandestine submarine base in the Ecuadorian jungle. The interception successes of the US Coast Guard and the DEA has in recent times led drug smugglers from Columbia and Ecuador to construct and use semi-submersible vessels in order to evade detection. However, they appear to have moved up to genuine submarines to conduct their runs to Mexico and the USA. The captured submarine is no toy and must have cost in excess of one million dollars (Probably small change to

Columbian drug barons). It has been variously reported as 25, 27 and 30 metres in length and capable of carrying 12 tonnes of cocaine (which would easily pay for it in one trip!). The submarine is air-conditioned, has a 3 metre periscope, sophisticated navigation equipment and can carry a crew of five or six. A spokesperson for the DEA is reported as saying that it probably was not the first built and used, only the first they had discovered. Previous interceptions and captures of drug-runners' "submarines" have been semi-submersibles. This is a fully submersible and therefore a genuine submarine.

Photograph: AP Reuters



Australian Invention Tried at Portsmouth Highly Successful

London, Friday

A trial was made today at Portsmouth of the invention of a Melbourne man for cleaning the bottom of ships without having to raise them out of the water. The device is in the form of a submarine torpedo-fashioned cleaner, and was tried upon the battleship *Bulwark* in the presence of Admiralty officials. The experiment proved successful, and there is every possibility of the invention being purchased by the Government.

Bunbury Herald, 10 May 1913: 1c

The Ditty Bag

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

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



The following appeared in the *Daily News* of 14 November 1882, 3d:

On Monday 13 November 1882 the Fremantle Harbour master and his crew were ordered to go out with their boat. The crew mustered at the boat-house and one of the crew was directed to get in so that when the boat was launched he could scull it back to land. The boat was duly launched down the slip, but it seems the crewman on board could neither row nor scull, or even pole back to land. He sat there helpless until the boat drifted to shore some time later.

The newspaper item went on to query how a complete landlubber got the job when many men with experience were looking for work.

After Dennis Connor in *Stars and Stripes* won back the America's Cup at Fremantle there was an ecstatic tickertape welcome in New York. In the parade, naturally, was a 12-metre yacht. However, the yacht was not the winning yacht, still a long way away in Fremantle. The powers that be had approached Peter de Savary for permission to use the British yacht, *Victory II*, the only 12-metre anywhere near New York. It was hastily transported 400 miles from Newport, Rhode Island (where it had been since its unsuccessful challenge in 1982), for the festivities.

"It's the closest *Victory II* ever came to winning the America's Cup," said de Savary sadly.

I wonder if any of the tens of thousands of cheering Yanks knew?

Pipe, Butt, Tun, Anker, Hogshead, etc. are merely the names of Casks, and do not contain any fixed number of gallons, they are gauged and charged according to the number of gallons they contain.

A Pipe of Port contains	115 gallons
A Pipe of Madeira	92 gallons
A Pipe of Lisbon, Bucellas & Calcavellos	117 gallons

A Pipe of Teneriffe	100 gallons
A Pipe of Marsala	93 gallons
A Pipe of Cape	92 gallons
A Butt of Sherry or Tent	108 gallons
A Hogshead of French Wines	46 gallons
An Aum of Hock	30 gallons
A Firkin of Beer	9 gallons
A Kilderkin of Beer	18 gallons
A Barrel of Beer	36 gallons
A Hogshead of Beer	54 gallons
A Puncheon of Beer	72 gallons

Reference: *The Comprehensive Table Book*, 1864.

Although England has many headlands there is on the whole of the English coastline only one cape — Cape Cornwall, near Land's End. Scotland also has only the one cape — Cape Wrath, on the north-west tip of the country.

"The coastline off the Northumberland and Durham coalfield has advanced four hundred feet in the last century due to sewage and coal-dust dumping" (Purves, L., 1990, *One Summer's Grace: A Family Voyage Round Britain*. Fontana Paperbacks, London).

In December 1919 a steamer passing Breaksea Island out of Albany asked for news about Captain Ross Smith, who was then on an aerial flight from England to Australia. The answer was sent back "Don't know him. Captain Miller harbour master here".

Nestor was one of the Greek heroes, so he should have known Venus when he saw her. However HMAS *Nestor* opened fire on the goddess while escorting a convoy in the North Atlantic. *Nestor* reported:

At 16.30 an object was sighted in the sky right ahead, and presuming it to be an aircraft Nestor opened fire. After a few rounds had been fired, it was found to be the planet Venus.

Fortunately, no hits were scored!

Ships Of The State Shipping Service

By Jeff Thompson

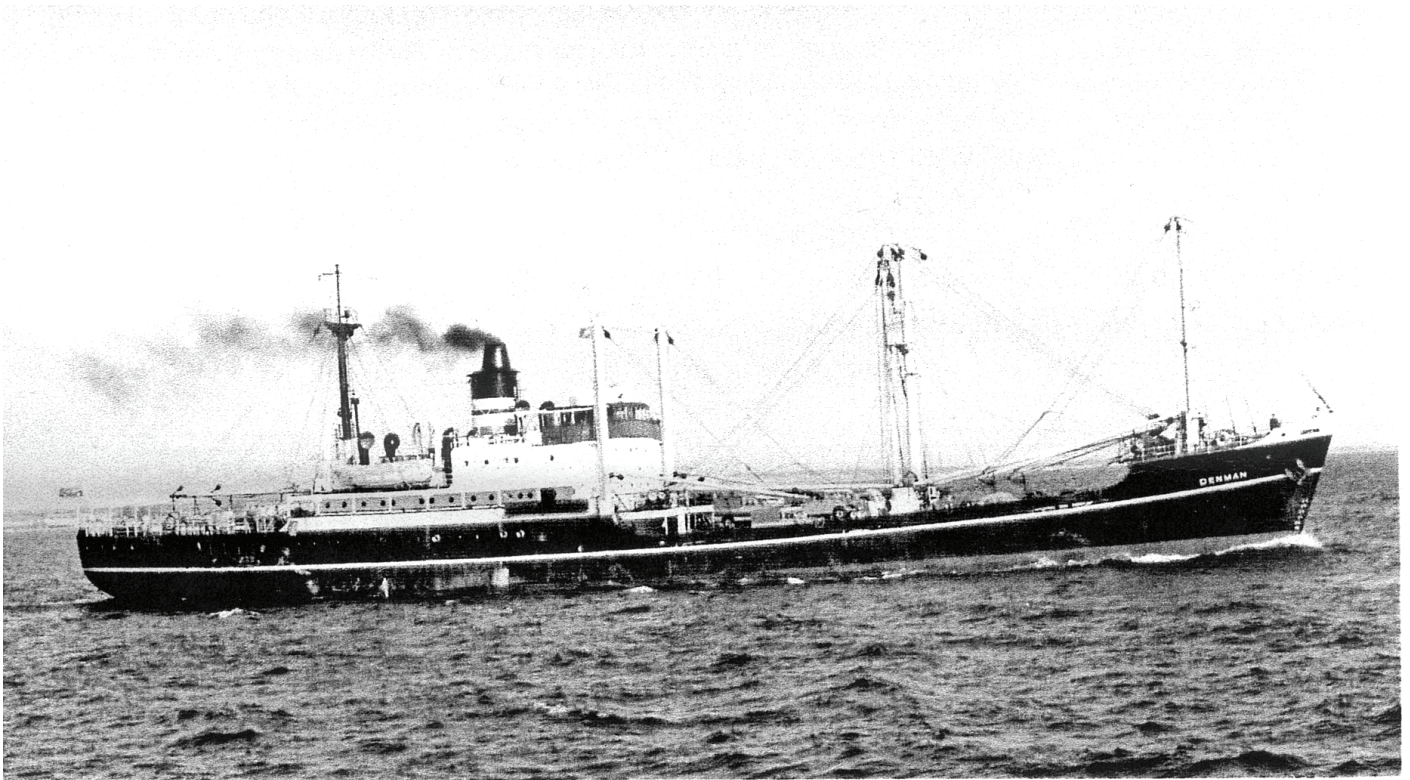
No. 22 *Denman* Official Number: 156163

The *Denman* was delivered in July 1949 by the State Dockyards, Newcastle N.S.W. (Yard no 27) to the Australian Shipping Board, having been launched on 25th September 1948. Being the ninth 'D' class coastal freighter constructed of ten originally proposed. As built the vessel was 2,265 Gross registered tons, 2,962 deadweight tons, 88.8 metres overall, 13.6 metres breadth, 5.6 metres draught. She had a triple expansion engine fitted for burning oil fuel and having a single screw.

In December 1960 the *Denman* was bareboat char-

tered to the State Shipping Service until November 1961 when it was returned to her owners (now The Australian National Line). Again in August 1964 the ship was rechartered on a bareboat basis until November 1964, then being returned to her owners. Each charter to lift a back log of cargo for the North West.

During January 1967 *Denman* was sold to Eddie Steamships (Philippines) Inc (Litonjua Shipping Co Inc, managers), Philippines and renamed Aurelio KL. In early 1970 the vessel was sold to Ming Hing for demolition at Hong Kong, which began in May of that year.



Submarine Overland!

The miniature Japanese submarine sunk in Sydney Harbour on 31 May 1942, and now on display at the War Memorial in Canberra, took a very circuitous route to reach this destination. It was fitted with wheels and towed by the Army from Sydney on a morale building tour.

It went first to Newcastle and back, then down the Hume Highway to Goulburn. On to Canberra, Wagga, Albury, Wangaratta, Benalla and down to

Melbourne. From there it was towed to Geelong, Warrnambool, Portland, Hamilton, Mt Gambier, Millicent, Kingston and across the Murray River at Murray Bridge. This part of its jaunt terminated at Adelaide. From here it back-tracked to Murray Bridge, then on to Keith, Bordertown, Horsham, Stawell, Ararat, Ballarat, Bendigo and Shepparton before rejoining the Hume Highway at Benalla. On through Albury, Holbrook, Gundagai, Yass and then to its final destination in Canberra.

The S.S. *Hyndford* and Captain Comrie

A Man and His Ship

This is the first part of the latest story from the pen (computer?) of Rod Dickson. A great yarn! The second part will appear in the March 2011 journal.

In September 1905 a happy throng of workers and the families gathered at the shipyard of William Hamilton & Co. Ltd to witness the launch of their latest vessel, the S.S. *Hyndford*, built for the prominent Scottish Shipowners Company Limited of Port Glasgow.

Mrs Robertson, wife of the ships manager, Mr James Robertson, performed the launching ceremony by breaking the traditional bottle of champagne across the ships bows and reciting the age old prayer, blessing the ship and all who would sail in her.

Down on the ways the shipwrights knocked away the chocks and the vessel slid stern first down the greased ways into the waters of the River Clyde, where waiting tugboats took control and eased the ship alongside the fitting out berth. Over the ensuing months the painters and ship fitters completed their tasks and the vessel and her machinery were pronounced ready for sea.

With a scratch crew, the shipyard and machinery representatives on board to witness the trials, the boilers were fired up. Once up to working pressure and the surveyors happy, Captain Comrie gave the signal to the wharf rats to let go the lines. As the seamen slacked away the wharfies lifted the eyes of the mooring ropes off the bits and dropped them into the murky rubbish littered waters. With a tug standing by ahead, in case of any problems, the ship made her way down to the Tail of the Bank and the mouth of the Clyde. The pilot ordered full away and the engines built up to full power. She steamed at full speed down the measured mile with the pilot timing her speed. Having done the first run the ship turned around and did the measured mile again. Having satisfactorily passed these tests all that remained now was the emergency full astern test.

This was to test the ships engines in an absolute emergency, such as losing steerage in a crowded anchorage or suddenly coming across another ship in a fog. The vessel had to come to a com-

plete stop in the shortest possible time and as the ship steamed back towards the Clyde, suddenly the pilot ordered "Emergency Full Astern." The third mate, operating the telegraphs immediately swung the handle over to the position marked and then did the same again. Down below in the engine room the engineers, waiting for this moment, but never sure when the moment would come, swung into action. The main steam inlet valve was closed and the reversing lever swung across and then the steam valve opened again. The engines were now going in reverse, but the ship was still going ahead. White foaming water boiled beneath her counter as the propeller bit and slowly the ship came to a halt. All of these movements were being carefully timed and measured and would be entered into the ship's official documentation.

The Lloyd's surveyors had done their work and the ship now received her certification. She was allotted the Registration Number, 121259 and the signal letters EDLT.

The *Hyndford*, 4,286 gross tons, was a typical tramp steamer of her time, registered at Glasgow and flying the British flag. She was of the three island type, raised forecastle, midships house and poop deck.

Her dimensions were, length, 376 feet, breadth 49.2 feet and moulded depth 30.3 feet. When loaded she drew 24 feet, giving a freeboard of 6 feet.

For propulsion the *Hyndford* was fitted with a 3-cylinder steam engine having a notional 418 HP and 2 boilers operating at 180 lbs. She was fitted with electric light.

The forecastle contained the seamen's accommodation, double bunks, mess table and stowage under. Also the anchor windlass, paint locker and bosuns store, while below their bunks were the anchor chain lockers.

In the midship house lived the ship's officers and engineers on the upper levels, while below there was the galley, mess room and officer's smoke room on the port side, while to starboard lived the cook, caterers and stewards

In the poop housing lived the engineroom hands, the stokers and greasers, along with their mess table. At meal times one of the crew would be detailed off to collect the day's offerings. He would present himself to the cook who would ladle out the meal in a large kid which would then be quickly carried back to the waiting men and dished up in equal portions.

The *Hyndford*, under the command of Captain Comrie sailed from Glasgow to Bombay in early 1906 and from Bombay travelled around the coast to Calcutta where she discharged general cargo into the lighters alongside. The owners obtained a charter for the ship and in May 1906 the crew and shore workers began backloading her cargo.

For this voyage the ship was bound for the West Coast of South America via South Africa. Her cargo consisted mostly of jute sacks in bales, a quantity of spices, bales of colourful cloth and sawn timber in bundles, mainly teak.

The vessel was moored fore and aft to large buoys in the River Hooghley, a navigable branch of the mighty River Ganges, and when the Pilot boarded from his launch on the morning of the 6th of June 1906, Captain Comrie ordered the Mates to single up fore and aft. The Chief Officer was at his station on the forecabin and the 2nd Mate was in charge of the poop. As each rope was taken off the bitts the end splashed into the river and was hauled back on board through the buoy ring. When both forward and aft had only one line left on the buoy the Captain informed the Pilot.

"Singled up fore and aft, Pilot."

"Thank you Captain, let go fore and aft."

"All gone forward." "All gone aft."

"Dead slow ahead please Captain, and twenty degrees to port on the helm."

With the small river tug pushing the stern the

ship slowly turned and when the bows were pointing downriver the tug stopped pushing and the helm was brought back to midships. Traveling back down the Hooghley River from Calcutta, the ship passed through Garden Reach to the outer industrial area of Budge-Budge and then passed through the rice fields and coconut plantations of the Ganges Delta, all the time altering course, this way and that. The *Hyndford* had to negotiate the twists and turns of the river but even more hazardous were the hundreds of other vessels also using the river. From small sailing barges tacking back and forth, to large ocean going ships trying to stay in the marked channel, everyone had to be observant and avoid the others. The river journey was filled with perils at every bend and the Captain was a nervous man until in the far distance the smoke from the funnel of the Sandheads Pilot Vessel was observed.

As the ship came to dead slow ahead, the small pilot cutter came alongside and the Pilot, after saying his goodbyes and wishing the Captain a pleasant voyage clambered down the rope ladder and boarded the cutter to wait for the next inbound vessel.

With the open seas of the Bay of Bengal under the keel Captain Comrie ordered Full Away on the telegraph. As the bells rang on the bridge, down in the engineroom the sweating stokers and engineers brought the engine up to full speed and the *Hyndford's* propeller began to shove her 4,200 tons faster through the water until she reached her top speed of 10 knots. Shaping a course of SSW and ensuring that all was clear ahead and the officer of the watch understood his orders, Captain Comrie went below to his cabin for a well earned rest.

Day after day, night after night the officers and crew went about their duties, navigating, keeping lookouts, cleaning and painting, stoking the boilers, greasing and oiling, cooking and cleaning. The first land seen on this leg of the voyage was the southern coast of Ceylon, (now Sri Lanka) and after taking final bearings from the light house on Dondra Head the ship altered course slightly more to the west. Two weeks after departing Calcutta the *Hyndford* sailed along the palm fringed beaches of the southern coast of Madagascar. As they slowly steamed past the crew eyed the land and imagined being ashore on

another tropical paradise. Losing the land again the 2nd mate, who was in charge of the navigation, checked his charts and laid off a course for Durban, South Africa.

Arriving off the port on the 30th of June the ship was brought to anchor as she had to wait her turn for a berth at the coaling wharf. After their normal ships duties the crew washed down the vessel from fore to aft and then those that could broke out the fishing lines to try and supplement their rations with freshly caught fish. On the 1st of July the signal was made from ashore that the pilot would board the vessel at 0700 to take her in to the harbour. Captain Comrie left orders in the night book for all hands to be called at 0530 and steam to be available in the engine room and on the windlass for 0600. On time the stokers had steam up and on the fo'c'sle the mate and the carpenter with three seamen waited for orders. It was a cold blustery morning in mid winter as the orders were given to begin hauling in the anchor. Link by link the chain came inboard and was stowed below until the anchor was just holding the vessel in position. As the pilot cutter approached the ships side the 2nd mate was waiting with two seamen to help him on the ladder and to escort him to the bridge.

At slow ahead the *Hyndford* manoeuvred between the two breakwaters at the entrance to Durban's Harbour, turned hard around and berthed at the coaling berths on Berea Point. The navvies were ready and waiting and as soon as the gangway was on board they streamed up and gathered at the bunker hatches. As the crane swung the baskets of coal onto the deck the navvies took a handle each and carried it across to the hatch where it was tipped and emptied. 320 tons of coal was loaded into the bunkers and the fore end of number three hatch to last the ship for the next stage of her journey. South America.

When the bunker coal was loaded the lines were let go and the harbour tug swung the ship's stern around so that the bows were facing the sea, the engine was put ahead and the *Hyndford* made her way back out into the Indian Ocean through the breakwaters. As the pilot was dropped off into his cutter the bows began to lift to the swells rolling up from the south. Being mid winter the weather was cold, with constant strong winds

blowing from south and southwest. Between the squalls the 2nd mate took his final bearing from the Durban lighthouse and settled the ship on her course along the South African coast.

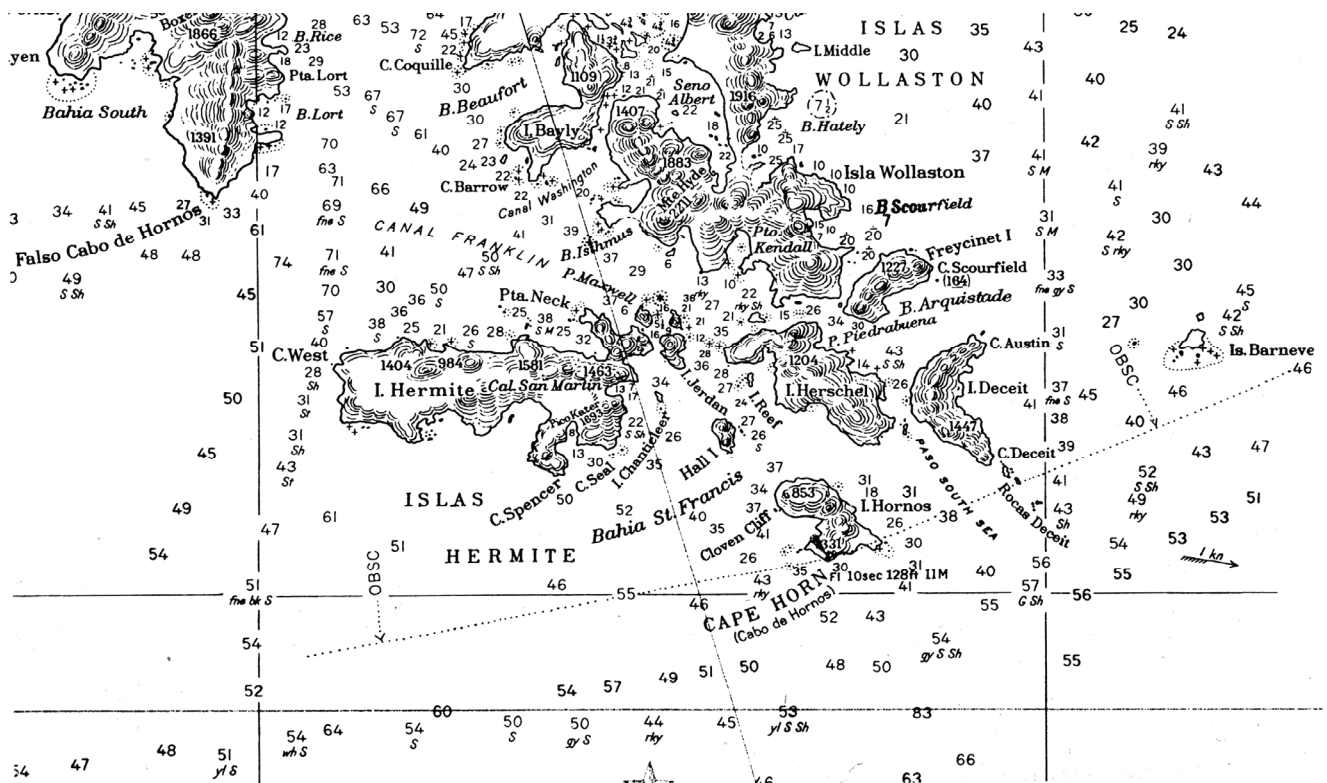
Passing Capetown, at the foot of Table Mountain the ship made for the Atlantic Ocean and gradually began to make northing into warmer weather as she headed for her next destination, Buenos Aires, Argentina, where they discharged part of the cargo. The ship then sailed from there to another Argentine port named Bahia Blanca approximately 350 miles to the southwest where they discharged some more of the cargo and then backloaded gunny sacks and timber for her next ports, Coronel and Talcahuano, Chile. These two ports were famous for the hundreds of thousands of tons of guano shipped to Europe in the old sailing ships.

On the 3rd of September 1906 Captain Comrie and his crew departed Bahia Blanca bound south for the eastern entrance to the Straits of Magellan which they intended to traverse to pass from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. They made the Cape of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, the guardian headland on the north side of the Strait on the 8th of September and turned west into Philip Bay. Passing the Inner Narrows they passed Elizabeth Island and shaped a southerly course to pass Punta Arenas on the north bank of the Broad Reach. At the southern end of the Reach the ship passed through Famine Reach to turn westward into Froward Reach. From now on the officers were on their toes as the navigation of this very narrow waterway is rather difficult as it is filled with small islands, rocks and shoals. On the 9th of September the *Hyndford* passed the small town of Dungeness, on the north shore of the Brunswick Peninsula, where her signal flags were hoisted to let the shore station people know her position. Once a week the signal station operators sent the weekly summary of passing vessels to Lloyds of London where they would be posted and the owners would then have an idea of where their ships were.

The spectacular scenery of the passage was not lost on the crew of the *Hyndford*, the tundra plains and snow covered mountains they passed were imprinted on their minds and as they sailed along the coastline of Desolation Island indented with glacier made fjords and bays. The final

landfall on the western end of Magellan Straits is Cape Pillar and this was finally reached in the early hours of the 11th of September 1906, then the ship and her crew headed out into the Pacific to be met by a heavy head sea to which she dipped her bows in greeting. The wind was strong out of the northwest and as the vessel moved further out into the deep ocean the swells rolled towards her like huge steep mountain ridges and she fell into the pattern of lifting and falling called pitching. This movement of the ship was not just uncomfortable for the crew but it was a bad time for the engineroom staff as when the bows went down the stern came up and often enough the propeller came right out of the water and began to race. The engineers had to be on their mettle to control the racing shaft.

had just settled down and was about to drop into a deep sleep when his instinct took over. There was something unnatural about the ship noises he was hearing. It seemed as though there was a strange vibration coming from the after end of the ship. Subconsciously, every professional seaman hears his ship working, every creak and groan, shake and rattle is registered as just being there in the background, but, as soon as something is out of the ordinary the subconscious becomes conscious. Captain Comrie lay in his bunk for a couple of minutes but knowing deep inside there was a major problem he began to get up. As he swung his legs over the roll boards, fitted to the side of his bunk, the bridge voicepipe whistle blew. The 3rd mate informed the captain that the engineers had pulled the telegraph back



Captain Comrie had been on his feet for just on 48 continuous hours during the transit of Magellan Straits and now that the *Hyndford* was out in deep water and on her northerly course for the next port he issued his orders to the 3rd mate whose watch was the eight to twelve.

"Keep a good lookout and call me immediately if anything comes up."

With that the captain went below for a quick breakfast, wash and then his thoughts turned to his bunk and getting some well earned sleep. He

to Stop Engines and requested the captain's presence on the bridge.

Quickly dressing he left his cabin, pulling on his heavy bridge coat to ward off the winter chill. Climbing the ladder to the bridge the wind was bitterly cold and the low flying clouds sent down heavy rain to spatter against the bridge windows like soft bullets. In the shelter of the wheelhouse he met the Chief Engineer who informed him that the propeller had been sheared of all its blades. As there was no indication that the ship had hit any floating debris it could only be assumed that there had been a fault in the propeller casting and

that it had taken this opportunity to disintegrate. The steamer was already losing way through the water and her head was paying off to starboard. The giant foam flecked ridges of ocean that only minutes before she had been riding over were now approaching her port beam and causing the vessel to roll from side to side violently. Gradually the bows paid off even more until she eventually laid with the wind and sea on her port quarter.

Being dead in the water Captain Comrie ordered the quartermaster to hoist the daytime signal for a vessel not under command, two black balls in a vertical line, to warn any other vessel in the area that she was unable to manoeuvre. Riding as she was with the seas on her port quarter, she fell into the rhythm of a long pitching and rolling movement as she drifted towards the southeast pushed along by the wind and current.

Captain Comrie was feeling apprehensive as he didn't think the ship had made more than thirty miles of offing from Cape Pillar and the drift was taking the ship further to the south of the Cape. In fact the ship was being set towards the inhospitable coast of Desolation Island and his only hope was to see another steamer making for or leaving Magellan Strait.

The captain called all the officers and the bosun to the bridge for a conference and he informed them of his fears of the way the vessel was drifting. He didn't expect the ship to be close to land before the next morning and so he ordered the lifeboats swung out and provided with extra provisions, water, rum and tobacco. The 2nd mate made all the charts of the area up into two packets, one for each boat and then got a supply of rockets ready for signalling if necessary. The chief officer took the carpenter forward to the fo'c'sle and they prepared the anchors for dropping. As darkness came on, earlier than usual because of the dark gloomy weather, the daytime signals were lowered and the two vertical red lights were hoisted in their place. All was now in readiness for the morrow and the watches remained doubled up for the night, all hands being especially vigilant.

As dawn broke Captain Comrie now knew with certainty that his hopes of drifting into Magellan Straits were dashed as from the bearings taken by the mates the ship was well south of Cape Pillar.

The iron bound coast of Desolation Island, battered by hundreds of years of howling westerly gales and mountainous seas offered no safe refuge for a ship as there were no beaches or bays that were unprotected from the fierce weather.

To the crew the situation now seemed absolutely hopeless. To the north of Cape Pillar there had been a chance of meeting another vessel but to the south and along the barren shores of Tierra del Fuego, the chances were almost nil unless they reached the latitude of Cape Horn, almost 400 miles to the south, but, the odds of being driven ashore were so much the greater. Compass bearings were taken and the charts studied in detail to try and find some shoal water where the ship could hopefully anchor in safety. There was no problem in plotting the ship's position but study as they might no safe bottom presented itself. Many blank spaces showed on the charts which indicated the original surveyors had trouble finding bottom at all.

On the 14th September 1906 the situation was grim. It was then that the Chief Officer volunteered to take one of the lifeboats and make back for Cape Pillar and the Straits and if no ship was met with carry on sailing to Punta Arenas to alert the officials of the plight of the *Hyndford*. Accordingly, the lifeboat was prepared for her sailing mission and the Chief Officer hand picked four of the able seamen to accompany him. The starboard boat was chosen and lowered to the rail. The five men got in and the crew on board prepared to lower away. Another seaman poured some oil from a five gallon can onto the sea to calm the waves.

As the boat was lowered to the water a sea rose to meet her, the lines were cast off and the boat was afloat. The lower blocks were unhooked and the boat was free. The crew fended off from the ship's side as they slowly drifted astern. When the lifeboat cleared the stern of the *Hyndford* she met the full brunt of the wind and the crew set the reefed lugsail. As the sail bellied to the wind the boat gathered way and the mate, at the tiller, shaped a course to the north eastward on a port tack. With such a heavy sea running even a specially designed ship's lifeboat was having trouble riding the seas. From the ship, the watching men only saw the boat when she lifted on the crests of the waves, the lugsail straining. As she made

ground towards the Magellan Straits a heavier than before squall came roaring across the surface of the sea. The sleet laden wind soon blotted out all sight of the tiny boat and her crew and drove the men on the ship to shelter. The storm lasted over an hour and when the men came out on deck again she was white with hailstones and the icy residues of the gale.

No human eyes ever looked upon the lifeboat or its occupants again and it was assumed that she was overwhelmed by a heavy sea. Five good men lost forever in their selfless quest to get help for their comrades.

capped in places with thick, matted forest or bare rock. From the marine charts the captain learnt that within yards of the cliffs the ocean depths were a minimum of 500 fathoms, so there was absolutely no possibility of anchoring. From their bearings it was obvious that the currents were setting the ship directly towards the dreaded cliffs.

Captain Comrie ordered the ship's chronometers unscrewed and they, along with the ship's papers and the officer's sextants were placed in the port lifeboat, the only boat left that could save their lives. Although it would be doubtful if it could be safely launched at all given the state of the

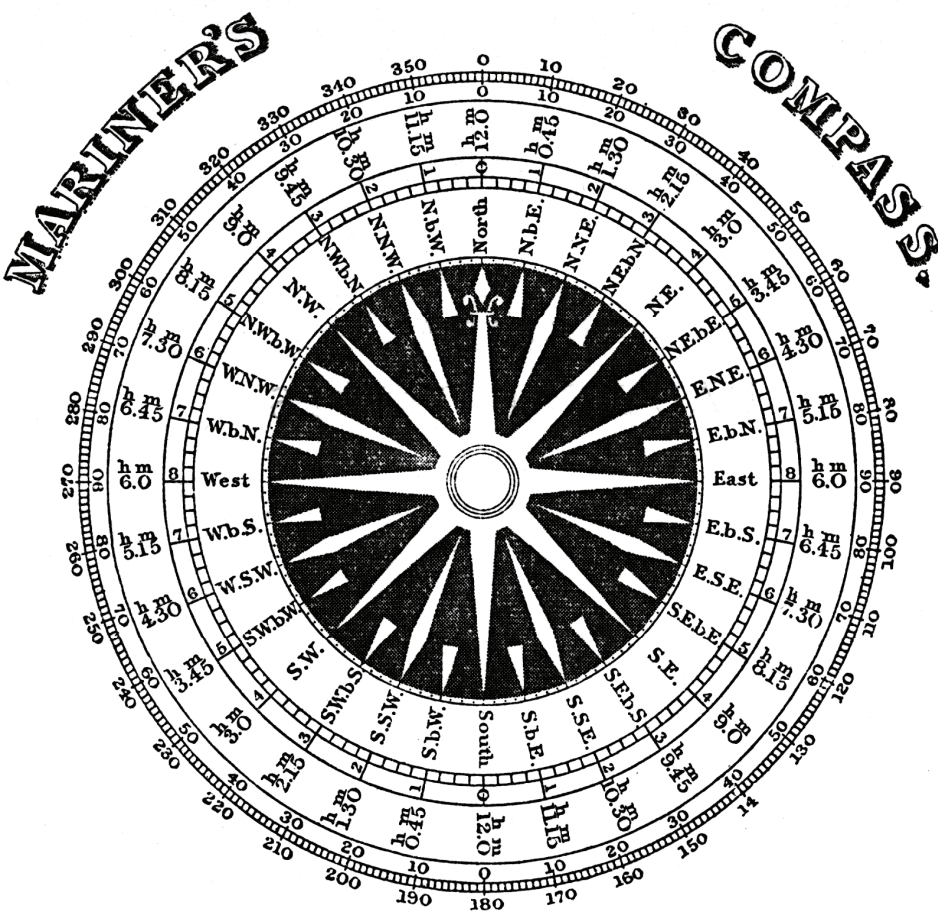
seas rolling up on the port quarter. Those seas appeared from the deck of the ship to be about 30 feet from trough to crest, however, when they punched the sides of the cliffs the same seas rose up to a height of 100 feet. No boat or human could ever live in the maelstrom foaming madly at the base of those cliffs.

Captain Comrie watched the cliffs approaching closer and closer, his mind rebelling at the thought of abandoning his ship, but, at the same time, aware that a decision would have to be made soon, even if it was apparent that the boats would probably be smashed to pieces in the thundering surf. As the ship drifted south nearly parallel to the cliffs all

SAILING SOUTH.

The *Hyndford* and her crew continued drifting to the south and eastward, always in sight of land and on the third day of drifting they were nearly lost on the inhospitable shores of Santa Ines Island. The ship was approaching the northwest end of the island and as daylight grew the island showed up clearly and the men were appalled at what appeared before them. Barren and wild cliffs rose sheer out of the sea for about 500 feet,

hands were on deck awaiting the final order to abandon ship. The engineers and stokers had left the boilers and auxiliaries to look after themselves and had lined up on the lower bridge deck along with the ship's officers while the seamen gathered on the foredeck. They all gazed in awe at the perils they faced and inwardly prayed for deliverance. The captain, standing on the wing of the bridge, watched the rollers as they rose and fell and he slowly became aware that there was



an undertow or backwash of some violence emanating from the cliffs. As he watched the waves he became more and more certain in his mind that he should hang on to the boats and wait.

The ship was almost on the cliffs and a swell rose under her and rolled her almost on her beam ends. The men grabbed rails and anything else they could to save themselves and to a man they cursed Captain Comrie for not having given the order to abandon. Spray was flying all over the ship in a huge misty curtain and seabirds swooped and screeched about the mast heads. Men were weeping in terror and others praying to their loved ones as the vessel rolled violently one way and then the other. And then they all noticed that the *Hyndford* was being pushed away from the cliffs. The immense undertow had the ship in its grip and had no intention of letting go.

In the ensuing hour the cliffs tried twice more to catch their prey and twice more the ship eluded them by the violence of the backwash forcing her away. Then the final cliff was passed and the land began to tend towards the east. With the drift pattern still forcing the ship south there was now nothing in the way until she reached the ice of the Antarctic Peninsula.

With the ship drifting south and now away from the land and its dangers the Captain called a meeting of all hands. Gathering about the forehold he held a general discussion in which he explained the problems the ship faced and asked for suggestions on how to resolve these same problems.

The *Hyndford* was lucky in that it was the transition period between sail and steam and stowed in the locker in the fo'c'sle were a couple of fore and aft jib-headed sails, one was a small staysail and the other a small trysail. By themselves only really useful as steadying sails and of little use for sailing any distance. However they were set on the aft side of the fore mast and main mast.

Captain Comrie was fortunate in that himself, the 3rd Mate, the Bosun and a number of the A.B's had experience of square rigged sailing ships and the meeting determined to sail the ship to safety. No.1. hatch was partially opened and bales of Jute sacks were brought up on deck. The bales were split and the crew sat around armed with

needles and twine sewing the sacks together. In the afternoon the first of the makeshift sails was completed in shape and then 1½ inch rope was sewn around the edges for strength. The sail was triangular in shape and at the peak a wire runner was attached. The runner passed through a block at the mast table and led down to the winch. Taking up the slack the sail was hoisted aloft.

The bottom, or foot, of the sail was laced along the derrick which was then swung outboard using the guy winches. The wind filled the gunnysack sail which bellied out and the watching men cheered as they felt the ship move to the power of the wind. Heartened, they settled down on deck again, took up their needles and started on the next sail.

The bosun, an ex Thames bargeman had the idea of making a sort of spritsail similar to those he had made and sailed since he was a boy. The derrick on the fore mast was topped up to an angle of 45 degrees and the staysail laced from the mast head to the derrick head. The crew then set about sewing a loose footed foresail laced to the underside of the derrick. Using the guy winches the derricks were swung out until the sails were filled with wind and the ship began to move. Eventually sails were set on both masts and the ship was found to be making four knots through the water. The big worry was the leeway, the ironbound coast of South America was still too close for comfort and Captain Comrie set a course of as close to south-west as he could manage. As long as the wind stayed fair and didn't blow a real gale they were confident they could make and round Cape Horn.

Day after day, watch after watch, the *Hyndford* sailed south closer and closer to the icy wastes. Once the ship reached a latitude of 55 degrees south the Captain altered course to south-east and by the evening of the 22nd of September the ship was thirty miles due south of Cape Horn. Eleven days had now passed since the loss of the propeller and it was seven days since the ship began her new career as a sailing ship. In that seven days the *Hyndford* has sailed 450 miles under a jury rig.

Part 2 in the next journal—don't miss it!

HMS *Investigator* Found

But not the one your thinking of!

In July of this year archaeologists from Parks Canada made a discovery of world-wide importance – the discovery of HMS *Investigator*. This is not Matthew Flinder's *Investigator* in which he surveyed so much of Australia, but a later vessel. The discovery was made in Canada's North West Territories.

The 122-ton *Investigator*, under the command of Captain Robert John Le Mesurier McClure, had been sent from Britain in January 1850 to search for Sir John Franklin's expedition which had disappeared a few years earlier. Reaching Mercy Bay on the north coast of Banks Island the ship was beset by ice for 19 months, it was then abandoned by the crew in 1853. The 69-man crew walked across what is now called McClure Strait to Melville Island where they were rescued. However, what makes this ship so important is that, according to various news sources reporting the finding of the wreck, the *Investigator* was the

first vessel to sail the North West Passage, having done so before arriving back at Mercy Bay. This would pre-date Roald Amundsen's previously accepted first passage in the *Gjøa* (1903-06) by about 50 years.

The wreck is 120 feet overall, and stands upright in 36 feet of water, with the mast and rigging having fallen. It is in remarkably good condition, due to the almost freezing temperature of the sea. In fact it was only a lucky movement of ice in the bay that enabled the team to find the *Investigator*. Next year the team hope to send robot cameras in to explore the crews' quarters in the wreck. The wreck of the *Investigator* belongs to Britain, but the Canadians will be carrying out the archaeological work.

After that their next goal is to find Franklin's two ships – *Erebus* and *Terror*.





Messing up in Hati Mulia

Part 17 of Nick Burningham's recollection of when he was young and interesting

We spent five days in Kupang anchored in the Bay of Namu Sain, then we moved round to the port of Tenau where the Harbour Master's office is located. Tenau used to be the place where the sailing *perahu* anchored on the edge of the reef to load and unload, and to some extent it still was in 1990, but the old anchorage was obstructed by an entirely useless seawall. Tenau is open to the northwest, whence an afternoon sea breeze blows so it's not a great place for a small vessel to go alongside.

We were at Tenau for the Immigration and port formalities in order to clear for Australia. By early afternoon on 10th September we were cleared, so we cast off and set sail. Mid-September can be a difficult time to sail from Kupang to Darwin. Any earlier in the season one would definitely go north about Timor rather than beat five hundred miles against wind and current on the open Timor Sea. A little later in the year the prospect of a mix of mild southeasterlies and some southwesterlies makes the direct passage quite a reasonable prospect. I decided to try the direct passage. I needed to get back to work before my leave finished. So, we tacked down Semau Strait heading for Roti Strait and thence out to the open sea. By mid-afternoon a very strong wind was howling up the strait so we anchored in the lee of a headland. When the wind went light we set out again but by the time the night had come down it was blowing fierce again and we were making little ground to windward under jib and mizzen. However, we got out of Semau Strait and into Roti Strait which is open to the east and has a bad reputation. There were big seas running and the wind was gusty. We tacked back and forth between Roti and Timor making almost no ground against wind and current.

Not long after midnight we decided that conditions were not right for attempting the direct passage, that we would go north about Timor. However, I knew that we couldn't simply follow the coast of Timor. The current setting southwest from Ombai Strait makes that all but impossible unless you are very lucky with the winds. A *perahu* bound east around the coast of Timor must first

head back up towards the chain of islands east of Flores in order to approach Omabai Strait from the northern side of that chain.

We started well. We went tearing past Tenau a couple of hours after we'd put the helm up and sailed north at a good speed until dawn when we were becalmed. Then a sea breeze set in and we were able to continue up the coast to the headland of Batok. But in the night we were again becalmed and went backwards with the current. During the next morning we sometimes made progress and sometimes drifted back. I confided to the log that I was heartily sick of it. The sea breeze, when it arrived was not as strong as the previous day's but it did allow us to sail on a course of 30° heading for Pantar Strait except fifteen minutes spent sailing in the wrong direction to get out of the way of an LNG tanker that seemed intent on running us down.

During the night we got into the approaches to Pantar (or Kalabahi) Strait. All the straits between the Lesser Sunda islands (the chain of islands from Bali eastwards) have current setting to the south most of the time during the dry season or east monsoon. Only for an hour or three around high tide is there a favourable current for a *perahu* heading north through the straits. We slowly stemmed the south flowing current through the second half of the night but at dawn the wind seemed to be fading so we anchored close under a village on the Pantar shore.

The strait is almost blocked by a towering volcanic cone called Pura. Either side of Pura are narrow passages too deep for anchoring.

The village where we anchored was very simple all thatch and stone. Just above it, on the mountainside a high stone wall ran parallel to the coast and the older village was behind it. Indeed much of Pantar is thus walled against slave raiders and head hunters.

At 1000 the southerly breeze was blowing nicely so we decided to up anchor and try to get through the narrows against the ebb. We made it through with a fine force 6 breeze pushing us, but it was a fraught experience with the current pouring south at a good five knots and we nearly got caught in a



The Pantar shore. Part of the wall can be seen on the left

whirlpool that would have swept us onto a rock. We anchored again north of the narrows when the wind faded. By early afternoon the flood tide should have been in our favour, or at least thwarting the south-going current, so we rowed out of the little bay where we'd anchored into the last of the southerly. The wind soon went northerly, but we were able to tack into it with no sign of an adverse current until about 1500. We tried to tack up under a small island to anchor, but by 1600 we were clearly getting nowhere and were likely to get sucked back down the narrows. We stood across to the eastern (Alor) shore with the wind backing round to northwest. But even with the sheets eased, sailing parallel to the shore, we were going backwards with the current. The only strategy left to us was to try to get into Kalabahi Bay and thus avoid being washed all the way back to the Sabu Sea. We did it by passing inside the rocks that lie a couple of hundred metres off the point. Inside the fjord-like bay we anchored for the night in the first cove.

There was no point in trying to sail again until the top of the flood gave a little favourable current in the afternoon. We went ashore to wash in fresh water and buy toothpaste which we'd forgotten to buy in Kupang. I asked if there was a motorised *perahu* heading north and able to give us a tow out of the strait. I was prepared to pay. There wasn't. Someone suggested sailing close under the south coast of Alor. If the current got you when you

sailed out from the eastern end of the island you'd probably still be able to fetch the Timor coast east of Tanjung Paramballa and sail east through Wetar Strait.

We sailed out of the bay and initially managed to make a little ground to the north on a light breeze, but then a pulse of current dragged us back to the south and left us with no option other than trying the south coast of Alor.

By nightfall we were out of the strait and few miles along the rugged Alor coast.

We made poor progress in the night, often becalmed. The next day we tacked against light and moderate easterlies admiring the precipitous landscape to the north. You could see little villages high in the mountains, surrounded by jungle and probably scarcely aware of the 20th century.

The next night was largely calm and the stretch of coast we admired the next day as we tacked slowly east was more or less the same as yesterday's. The next night was even worse with a steep headsea making progress impossible even when there was some breeze. But during the day the easterly came up fresh and we made progress by short tacks along a towering, wild shore. By nightfall the eastern end of the coast was in sight and by midnight we were almost there. Then, after midnight it fell flat calm again and we were caught by the current. By dawn we were halfway down to the Timor coast on the wrong side of Tanjung Paramballa, a fitful northerly no help in going anywhere useful. "We are f.....ed." I recorded in the log.

Indeed it was true. By midday we'd drifted south till Tanjung Paramballa was lying due east of us. The correct strategy was to use whatever breeze eventually reached us to sail up to a more tractable strait west of Pantar Strait. Lamakera Strait was the one most used by *perahu*. But we would have to work east along the north of the islands, across Ombai Strait and on along Timor's north coast before setting out across the Timor Sea in the



doldrums month of October. We could easily be another three weeks doing that, by which time I might be without a job.

I decided to go back to Kupang and make arrangements to lay up HATI MULIA until a more propitious time. Once again we reversed our course. Though the wind was light, sailing with the current we were back to Batok by midnight. "The distance we had covered in eight days we undo in 24 hours" I lamented in the log. It took another 36 hours to reach Kupang.

I left HATI MULIA at the village of Sulamu on the northern side of Kupang Bay, in the hands of A....., a Cornish shipwright who was working for an aid agency building a pair of fishing boats.

I sent funds from Darwin for A..... to install a small long-shaft diesel so that we could make a passage back to Darwin in a reasonably quick time. But when I eventually got back to Kupang with Dan Dwyer and another friend in April the following year HATI MULIA was in poor condition, the engine installation was not finished, and A..... was clearly deep in the grip of the local palm-wine and arak.

We were trying to figure out what to do when HATI MULIA dragged anchor in Namo Sain bay and bounced on the bottom starting a bad leak. We immediately sailed round to Tenau and beached to the south of the port. I tried to fix the leak but it was soon obvious that HATI MULIA had been damaged and temporarily patched at Sulamu. I had to get back to work. In the end I sold HATI MULIA to a local for about the value of the new motor. Some years later she was said to be working in the shark fin fishery southeast of Ashmore reef.

Since then I've reverted to sailing off shore in other people's boats and on the Swan River in a much smaller boat.

Engineless *perahu lambo* are pretty much a thing of the past. Indonesian vessels which fish in the Memorandum of Understanding 100Km "box" in the Australian Exclusive Economic Zone and those that make voyages to collect trochus and trepang on the reefs in the box must be engineless to comply with the MOU. There is a fleet of *perahu lambo* based at Papela on the island of Rote. There is also a small fleet of *perahu lete lete* that voyage from their home island of Raas, off the northeastern end of Java, to Kupang or Rote using sail and an auxiliary engine which is removed for

the fishing and collecting voyages. Some of them are still very attractive and traditional craft.

Some big *perahu lambo* from Jinato and other islands still carry timber, but they have fairly powerful auxiliary engines, cut-down rigs, and often a tall and untidy wheelhouse aft that spoil their looks. The majority of the large *perahu* that still carry some sort of rig rarely set any sail. The rigs are carried so that they can register as *Perahu Layar Motor* (auxiliary *perahu*) and thus get relatively cheap registration with less restriction on where they may trade -- fully motorised shipping is usually registered for specific routes whereas auxiliaries operate as tramps.



A small perahu lete lete anchored at the island of Rote, ready for a long collecting voyage to the reefs of Australia's Northwest Shelf in 2008. She is probably from Raas or neighbouring Satonda, but her styling is innovative and borrows from the style of the Sapeken islands that lie north of Bali. Although conditions on the Timor Sea are often windy in the dry season, and this vessel uses an auxiliary motor when voyaging in Indonesia, the rig is impressively tall. The boom of the mainsail is the same length as the tall spar. With the sail furled, the boom is lying against the spar.

Photo: Dan Dwyer.

HMS *Penguin*

In the June 2009 edition of this journal I told the story of the coincidence of Lieutenant Brewis having surveyed the waters off Cape Leeuwin, and of the subsequent sinking of the *Pericles* with his wife and children on board in the same area. Lieutenant Brewis was serving aboard HMS *Penguin* at the time of his survey, and the history of this vessel is worth noting.

HMS *Penguin* was rigged as an auxiliary barque of 1,130 tons, and launched on the Clyde in August 1877. With a length of 170 feet and a beam of 36 feet she had a total sail area of 14,850 square feet. The three masts had solid timber lower masts, one of the last Royal Navy ships so fitted. These came from fir trees planted some centuries earlier in the New Forest. Her engine was a 700 IHP steam engine, with a single propeller which was capable of being raised when not in use. The unreliability of the engine made this a fairly common practice. The barque was originally equipped with a 7-inch rifled muzzle loading gun and four 64 pounder rifled muzzle loaders.

Penguin served for four years in the Pacific before returning to Plymouth, where she was paid off for the next five years. Recommissioned in

1886 she served on slavery patrol with the East African Squadron for two years, including taking part in the blockade and bombardment of Zanzibar. On her return to England she was converted for survey work, losing her 7-inch gun and gaining nine sea boats, two of them steam cutters. Thus equipped she joined the Australian Station in 1890.

HMS *Penguin* carried out surveys in many of the waters surrounding Australia during the next seventeen years. Besides the area off Cape Leeuwin mentioned above, she sounded two of the great depths of the world's oceans – 4,900 fathoms in the Tongan Trench and 5,155 fathoms in the Kermadec Trench. She also completed the survey for the Trans-Pacific Cable.

HMS *Penguin* was finally paid off in 1907 and converted to a depot ship at Garden Island in Sydney. Six years later she was sold to the Royal Australian Navy for £2,000. She remained with the RAN for ten years, until sold out of service in 1923. Converted to a crane lighter, *Penguin* lasted another forty seven years until 1970 when, after 93 years of service, she was towed out and scuttled in the Ships' Graveyard off the NSW coast.

Thus is our history lost.



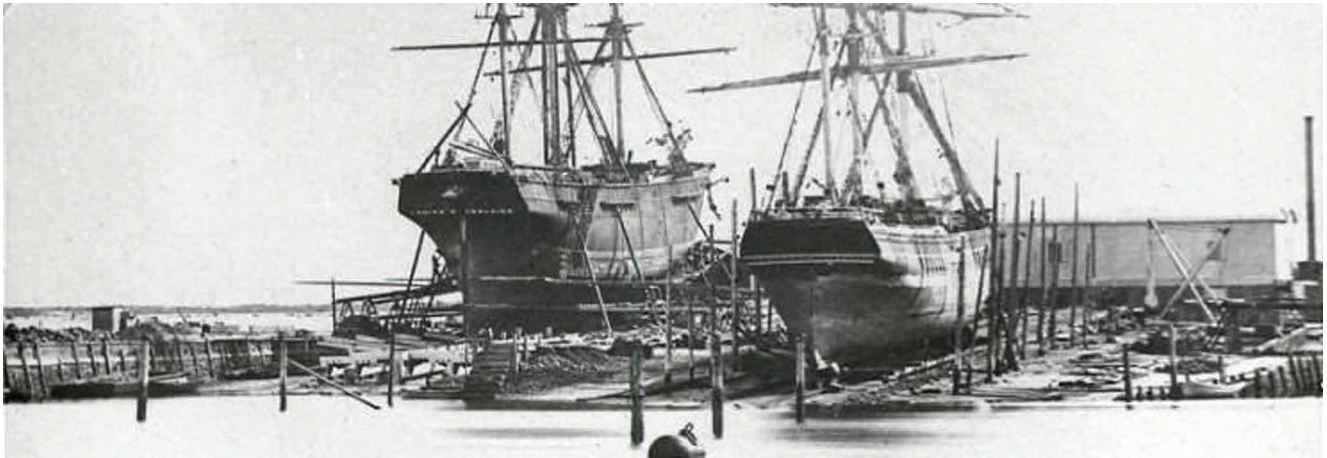
HMS Penguin at anchor (on the left) with another survey vessel, HMS Dart, in Port Jackson.

City of Adelaide

Bound for South Australia!

The composite built ship *City of Adelaide* is to be saved from the wreckers and will be going to the city from which she took her name, Adelaide. Initial proposals for the ship, which is on private land required for redevelopment, were to:

arrive in Adelaide in time for South Australia's Jubilee Year in 2011 celebrating the 175th anniversary of the state. It will not be afloat, but become the centrepiece of a land-based maritime precinct at Port Adelaide. The South Australian Government has agreed to provide land for the



The slips from which the City of Adelaide was launched in May 1864.

1. Dissection: Cut the ship into suitable lengths for later realignment and partial restoration at the Scottish Maritime Museum.
2. Deconstruction: Dismantle it piece by piece, gather information from each piece, then give the bits to various organisations for display.

Neither of these was acceptable to many organisations and people with an interest in this rare vessel – the oldest of only two composite clipper ships in the world (it pre-dates the *Cutty Sark* by 5 years). It is also one of only two passenger sailing ships remaining from the Australia run during the 19th century (the other is the *Edwin Fox*), and the only surviving one built to give regular passenger and cargo service between Europe and Australia. Most importantly neither proposal was acceptable to the Scottish Minister for Culture and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop.

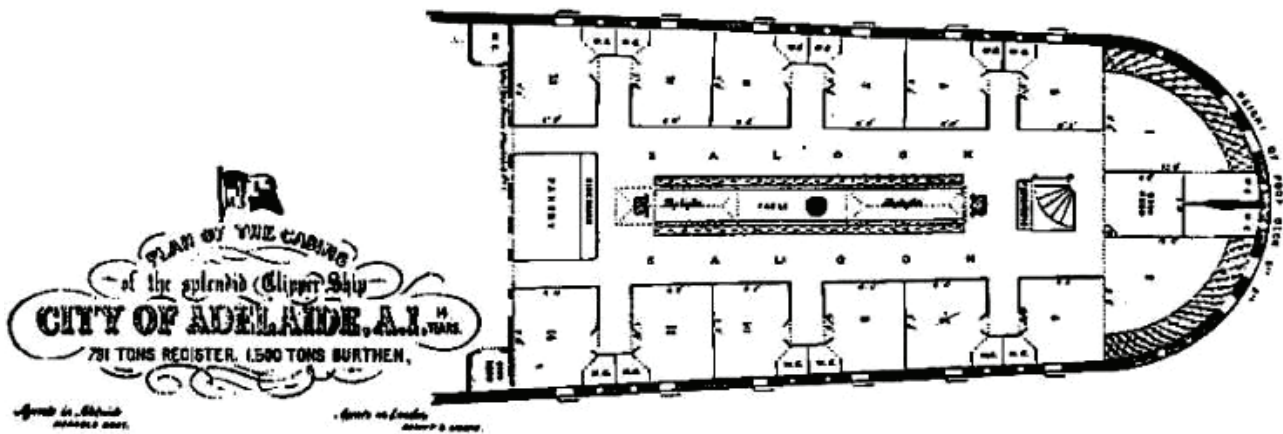
Interested parties were invited to tender for the removal and preservation of the *City of Adelaide*. On 28 August 2010 she named the South Australian-based Clipper Ship *City of Adelaide* Ltd as the preferred bidder. It is hoped that the ship will

project.

The *City of Adelaide* was built at Sunderland, UK, by William Pile (1823-1873). Building, under Lloyd's Special Survey, commenced on 1 October 1863 and she was launched on 7 May 1864. The Lloyd's survey for 1864 produced the following dimensions:

Length overall:	176.8 ft
Breadth:	33.35 ft
Depth:	18.8 ft
Tonnage:	791.33

Construction of the *City of Adelaide* was of a variety of different timbers, as well as the wrought iron frames. The keel was elm, the stem and stern posts were English oak, and the deadwood a mixture of elm, oak and teak. The planking from the keel to the turn of the bilge was American elm, and from there to the light water mark of German oak. Above this to the wales was teak, as was the topside planking, wales and the black strake. The rudder was English oak and the deck planking yellow pine with teak waterways.

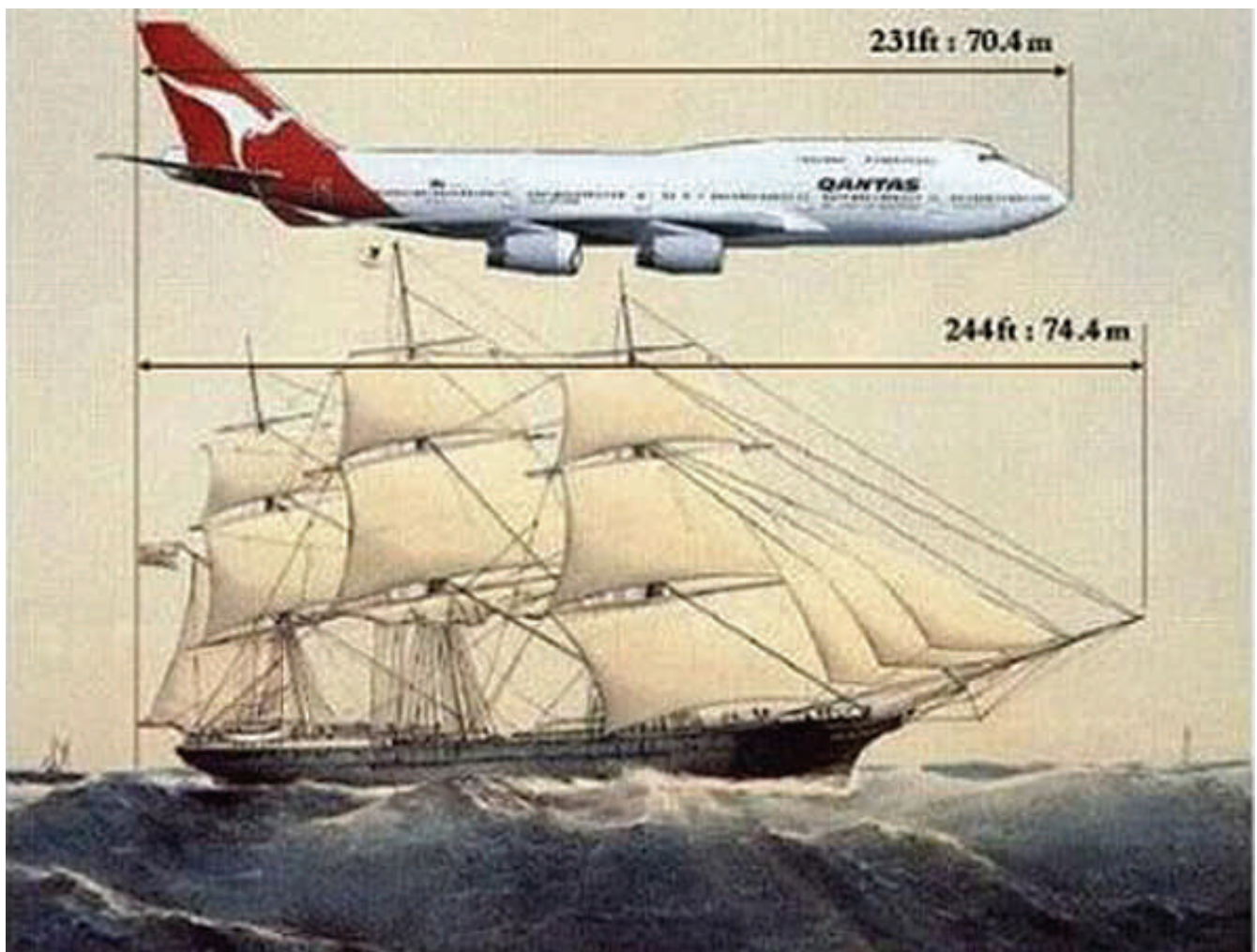


Cabin plan of the City of Adelaide

The *City of Adelaide* made 23 voyages from Britain to South Australia between 1864 and 1886, and it is claimed that a quarter of a million, or one in five, South Australians are descended from immigrants who arrived on this ship. The first voyage left from the River Thames on 6 August 1864, arriving at Port Adelaide 93 days later on 7 November. The Scottish master, Captain David

Bruce, was a part-owner and his eldest son, John Bruce, was first mate. The last voyage to South Australia arrived at Port Adelaide in June 1886. The fastest voyage, the third in 1866, took 76 days. The fastest return voyage was 87 days in 1871.

Comparison of sizes between a 747 Jumbo jet and the clipper City of Adelaide



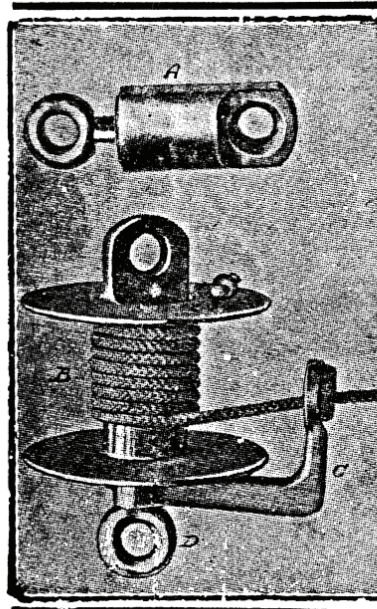
QUIZ

Answers to September

1. The Long Jetty (2,830 feet in length) was completed in 1887.
2. Princess Royal Harbour was named by George Vancouver on 30 September 1791 in honour of the daughter of George III.
3. On a fore-and-aft sail the clew is the lower aftermost corner; the tack is the lower forward corner.

Questions

1. The armed raider *Kormoran* that sank HMAS *Sydney* had been converted from a freighter. What was its name before conversion by the German Navy?
2. While it is well-known that Cape Horn on Isla Hornos (Horn Island) is the southern most tip of South America, what is the southern most place on mainland South America?
3. Mandalay Beach is on the south coast a few miles west of Walpole. Why was this beach so named?



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