

MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

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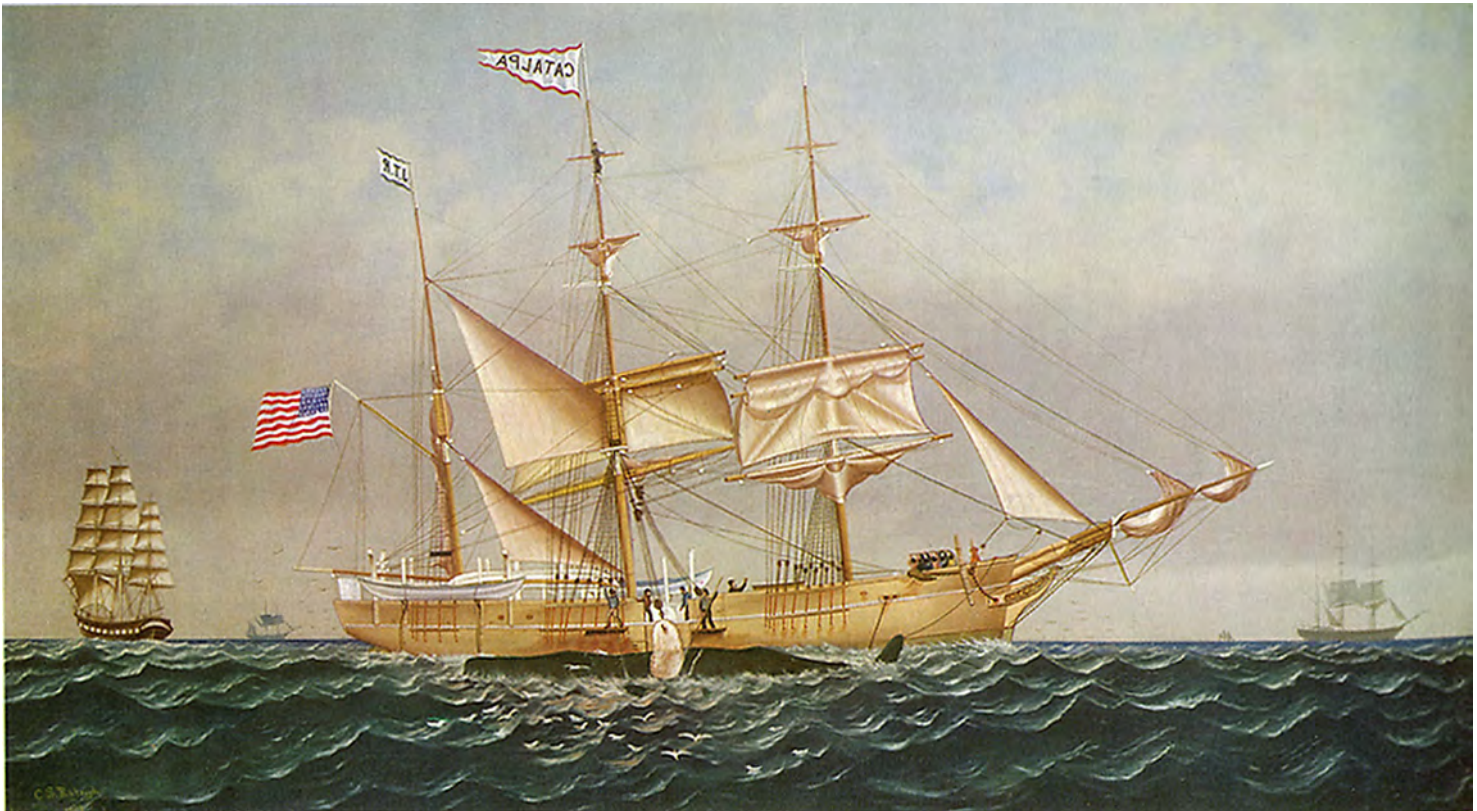
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Maritime Heritage Association, Inc.*

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*The whaler Catalpa flensing a whale tied alongside.
See article page 4*

Illustration: New Bedford Whaling Museum



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

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You are warmly invited to the *Exclusive*
Maritime Heritage Association
End of Year Celebration
10 a.m. Sunday 19th November 2017
at
the Prestigious Hicks' Private Maritime Museum
49 Lacy Street
East Cannington




For catering purposes, please let Doris Hicks know if you will be attending
email: hicksmaritime@bigpond.com
or Tel. 9451 6828

Did You Know?

23rd December 1689
Roebuck
Contract with M^r Edward
Snellgrove for building a Fireship
To be Launched last March
£ s d
7.2.6 pr Tun
4 Apr 1690 Imprest £1000

This Indenture made the Twenty third of December in the yeare of our Lord 1689 Between the Principall Officers and Com^{rs} of their Maj^{ties} Navy for and on the behalf of their Maj^{ties} of th' one part and and Edward Snellgrove of Wapping...Shipwr^t.....

So begins the contract or indenture for Edward Snellgrove to build the ship *Roebuck* which subsequently gained fame as the vessel William Dampier twice visited Western Australia during the late 17th century.

Did you know that the word indenture comes from the fact that the various pages of the contract were stitched and sealed together at the

top and then cut across the top with a wavy line. These 'indents' guaranteed that all the pages of the document were one set.

Note: I am indebted to Bob Sexton for this information. It appears in his article—*Building their Majesties' Ship Roebuck (The Great Circle, Vol. 37, No.1, 2015).*



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 deepest lock in the world is on the Irtysh River in Kazakhstan. Its exact depth is not known, but figures of 40-42m have been published. The lock provides passage around a very large hydro-electric dam at Oskemen.

On 13 October 1939 the German submarine *U-47* (Käpitanleutnant Günther Prien) entered the British major naval base at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands and sank the battleship HMS *Royal Oak*. There were 834 of *Royal Oak*'s crew lost. The interesting point is that *U-47* entered the base, fired torpedoes at the battleship, cruised round for 15 minutes while the torpedo tubes were reloaded, and then fired another salvo. The submarine then left. The complete action took place with the *U-47* on the surface, at no time was it seen or attacked. It was night, but very bright due to the Northern Lights.

The boundaries of the Southern Ocean were not clearly defined until 2000 when the International Hydrographic Organization agreed on the Southern Ocean being all the waters surrounding Antarctica northwards as far as 60° south latitude.

The author Arthur Conan Doyle, famous for his fictional detective Sherlock Holmes, was a doctor. As a medical student aged 20 in 1880 he went to sea on a whaling ship, the *Hope*, to the Arctic.

As the ship rolled heavily, two rivet heads inside each steel yard bumped, rattled, clanged rising to a roar—almost a shriek—as they travelled from yard-arm to yard-arm. When making a ship's yards. Workmen were in the habit of leaving two rivet heads inside, with the idea that as they travelled to and fro with the rolling of the ship, they would chip off the rust where it could not otherwise be touched.

Commander Frank Worsley, 1938

There are ten ropes on a sailing ship – bolt rope, back rope, buoy rope, bull rope, man rope, foot rope, head rope, heel rope, top rope and tow rope.

The deepest point of any of the oceans is 36,070ft

(10,994m) in the Challenger Deep, Mariana Trench, Pacific Ocean. The deepest point in the Indian Ocean is the Diamantina Deep in the Diamantina Trench west-south-west of Cape Leeuwin. It is 26,401ft (8,047m) deep.

In 1887 there were only nineteen flags and pennants in the International Code. They covered the alphabet from B to W (excluding the vowels) plus the answering pennant. It was later changed to cover the complete alphabet plus answering pennant, three substitutes and ten numeral pennants.

The first steamer to pass through the Suez Canal en route specifically for Fremantle was the *Xantho*. The 123.5ft long iron-hulled vessel was bought by Charles Edward Broadhurst, and sank at Port Gregory in November 1872.

The 1,965-ton ship rigged steamer *Witjas* was under construction by W. & H. Pitcher, Northfleet UK, for the Imperial Russian Navy when the Crimean War commenced. It was seized by the British Government, and launched in May 1854 as HMS *Cossack*. In 1871 it joined the Australian Station, and one of its first tasks was to carry the Western Australian Governor Sir Frederick Weld to the North-West town of Tien Tsin. The town subsequently had its name changed to Cossack.

The first English admiral was William de Laybourne, appointed in 1297 as 'Admiral of the Sea of the King of England' by King Edward I.

Christmas Island was named on 25 December 1643 by Captain William Mynors of the *Royal Mary*. Although called an East India ship on a recent stamp issue, it was probably an 'interloper', that is a vessel trading to India in defiance of the exclusive rights granted to the East India Company. It does not appear on any list of East India Company vessels.

In 1868 a Scotsman named Thomas Glover set up Japan's first modern ship-building yard at Nagasaki. He sold the yard in 1877 to a new, little company called Mitsubishi.



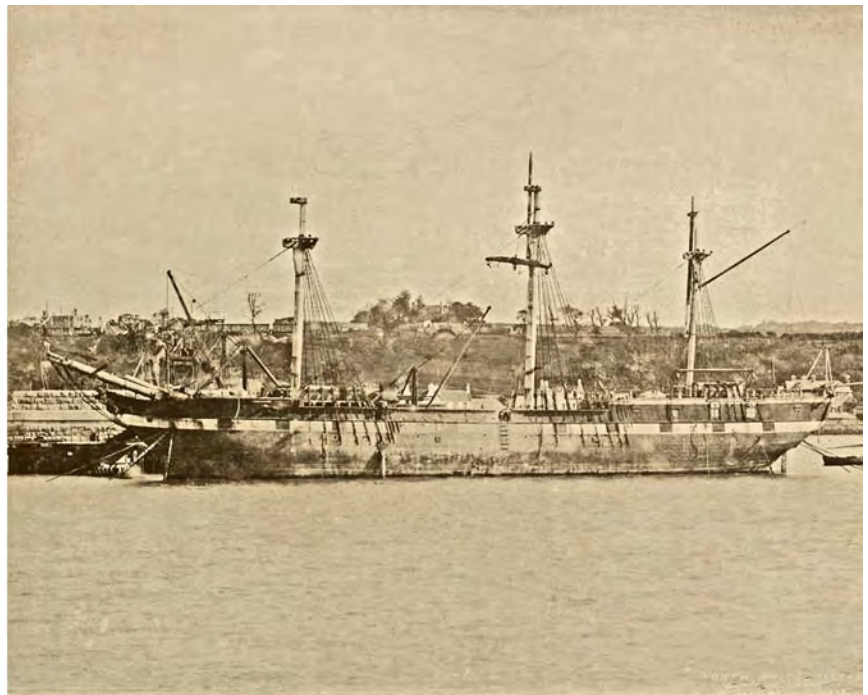
Hougoumont, Catalpa and the Fenians

The Blackwall frigate *Hougoumont* was built of teak in 1852 at Moulmein, Burma for Duncan Dunbar and Company, and registered at London. The ship was 165.5ft long, had a beam of 34ft and a depth of 23ft. The tonnage was 875, and it had been named after the Château d'Hougoumont, the farm house where in 1815 the Battle of Waterloo took place. The ship was sheathed with felt and yellow metal to protect the hull from the toredo worm, found in warm waters. *Hougoumont* had been built for the London–India route, but early on it was chartered by the French for use as a troop ship during the Crimean War. During this period the French renamed it *Baraguey d'Hilliers* after the French General Archille Baraguey d'Hilliers (1795–1878). This change of name by the French was that because of their loss at the Battle of Waterloo the name Hougoumont was offensive to them. In 1856 when the Crimean War ceased *Hougoumont* reverted to its original name, and was placed back on the England–India run. It was, however, not entirely restricted to that route, as in 1866 it carried 335 assisted emigrants to Melbourne.

In 1867 *Hougoumont*, by this time owned by someone named Luscombe from London, was chartered to take 280 convicts to Western Australia. The ship departed Portsmouth on 12 October 1867. Besides the convicts there were 44 pensioner guards, 18 wives of the guards, 25 of their children, four prison warders and their families and five passengers on board. The master of the *Hougoumont* was Captain William Cousins or Cozens, and the surgeon superintendent is variously given as William Smith or Brownlow.

Among the convicts on the *Hougoumont* were 62 Irish political prisoners from the Irish Republican Brotherhood, better known as Fenians. These were people who had been found guilty of taking part in the 1867 Fenian Rising. Among them were 17 classed as military Fenians. These were men who had been serving with the British Army, and had been therefore found guilty by courts martial of treason, mutinous conduct or desertion. It

has been reported that the transport of political prisoners contravened the agreement between Britain and Western Australia. Also the transport of military Fenians was most unusual as the British Government had a firm policy against the transport of military prisoners. Among the 17 military Fenians were seven who later came to prominence by escaping from Western Australia. They were John Boyle O'Reilly, James Wilson, Michael Harrington, Robert Cranston, Thomas Darragh, Thomas Hassett and Martin Hogan. These latter six had been sentenced to life imprisonment, O'Reilly's sentence was 20 years.



The Hougoumont in 1885 being used as a store hulk

The *Hougoumont* arrived in Fremantle on 9 January 1868. One convict, No.9689 Thomas Cochrane, had died during the voyage. This was the last shipment of convicts to Australia. The *Hougoumont* ended its life in 1885 as a store hulk during the building of the Firth of Forth Bridge.

As for seven of the military Fenian prisoners, their story made Western Australian history. In 1869 O'Reilly escaped and made his way to America, settling in Boston where he became editor of *The Pilot* newspaper. Although a number of the Fenians had been issued pardons, the military Fenians remained as prisoners. One of them, James Wilson, wrote a letter to John Devoy, a reporter for the *New York Herald*, asking for help to escape. Devoy discussed the matter with O'Reilly and



other Clan Na Gael members. Clan Na Gael had been set up to support armed insurrection in Ireland. This organization funded the purchase of the merchant vessel *Catalpa*, which was then fitted out as if for a legitimate whaling voyage. Davits and whale boat gear were rigged, a fore-castle built for the crew and other modifications made. The riding keelson under the foot of the mainmast was found to be rotten. In a feat never before attempted the man in charge of the fit out, John W. Howland, replaced the rotten piece without removing the mast.

The vessel cost \$5,500 to purchase, and a further \$12,500 to fit out. Under Captain George Smith Anthony the *Catalpa* sailed from New Bedford for Western Australia in April 1875. *The crew were purposely made up largely of Kanakas, Malays, and Africans, since they were likely to be less suspicious than other sailors...* (Pease, 1897: 78). The crew were not informed of the *Catalpa*'s destination or the proposed attempt to rescue the Fenians, but thought they were on a whaling voyage to New Zealand. The barque arrived at Bunbury on 28 March 1876, having gone whaling during the voyage. Four of the crew attempted to desert, but were caught. Three were returned to the *Catalpa*, the fourth gaoled for a week. At the

end of his sentence Captain Anthony refused to let the deserter back on board.

Two Fenians, John Breslin and Tom Desmond, had meanwhile travelled to Fremantle to arrange the escape of the convicts from Fremantle Gaol.

On 17 April 1876 Wilson, Harrington, Cranston, Darragh, Hassett and Hogan, who were with a working party outside the prison, absconded, and were taken to Rockingham by Breslin and Desmond. They were then taken by whale-boat out to the *Catalpa* which was waiting about nine miles offshore, well outside the 3-mile limit. When the escape was discovered shortly afterwards a 12-pounder cannon manned by Major Finnerty and 18 Enrolled Pensioner Guards was placed on the steamer *Georgette* (Captain M. O'Grady), which had been hastily requisitioned by the Government, and it steamed out to the *Catalpa*. On board the steamer Water Police Superintendent John Stone demanded that the captain of the *Catalpa* surrender the six convicts. When this demand was refused a shot was fired across the bows of the *Catalpa*, and Stone then stated that if Captain Anthony did not surrender the convicts he would fire at the whaler. Anthony replied that he was outside territorial waters, also



The six Fenians who escaped on the *Catalpa*



that he would not surrender the men and that the American flag flying at his masthead protected him. After following the whaler for an hour the *Georgette* returned to Fremantle. No further action was taken against the *Catalpa*, as it would have breached international law.

The *Catalpa* arrived back in the USA in August 1876, and was presented to Captain Anthony in thanks for his part in the escape. It was subsequently sold, converted to a coal barge and later condemned in Belize.

References:

- Pease, Z.W., 1897, *The Catalpa Expedition*. George S. Anthony, New Bedford.
- The Herald*, 22 April 1876 & 29 April 1876
- The Inquirer and Commercial News*, 19 April 1876 & 26 April 1876
- The Western Australian Times*, 21 April 1876 & 2 May 1876.

A few days after the arrival in the USA of the Catalpa Captain Henry C. Hathaway, the officer-in-charge of police in New Bedford, received this letter

POLICE DEPARTMENT.

CHIEF OFFICE, PERTH, WESTERN AUSTRALIA,
April 18, 1876.

James Darragh, 9707, life sentence, 2d March, 1866, aged 42, Fenian, absconded from Fremantle, 8.30 A. M., April 17, 1876.
 Martin Hogan, 9767, sentence, life, August 21, 1866, aged 37, Fenian, absconded as above.
 Michael Harrington, 9757, life sentence, July 7, 1866, 48 years, Fenian, absconded as above.
 Thomas Hassett, 9758, life sentence, June 26, 1866, Fenian, absconded, etc.
 Robert Cranston, 9702, life sentence, June 26, 1866, Fenian, absconded, etc.
 James Wilson, 9915, life sentence, Aug. 20, 1866, age 40, absconded, etc.
 N. B. — Martin Hogan's marks include the letter D on his left side; so do those of Michael Harrington, Thomas Hassett, and James Wilson.

SIR, — I beg to inform you that on the 17th instant the imperial convicts named in the margin absconded from the convict settlement at Fremantle, in this colony, and escaped from the colony in the American whaling bark *Catalpa*, G. Anthony master. This bark is from New Bedford, Massachusetts, U. S. A. The convicts were taken from the shore in a whaleboat belonging to the *Catalpa*, manned by Captain Anthony and six of the crew. The abettors were Collins, Jones, and Johnson.

I attach the description of each of the absconders, and have to request that you will be good enough to furnish me with any particulars you may be able to gather concerning them.

I have the honor to be, sir,
Your obedient servant,
M. A. SMITH, *Supt. of Police.*

To the Officer in charge of the Police Department, }
New Bedford, Massachusetts, U. S. A. }

QUIZ

Answers to September

1. A hanging knee fits vertically against a vessel's hull and supports a deck beam. A lodging knee fits horizontally against the hull to prevent a deck beam from moving fore or aft.
2. The flag is that of the Lord High Admiral, also known as the Admiralty flag.
3. The barque *Sepia* was wrecked on 28 December 1889.

Quiz

1. What part of a cannon are its trunnions?
2. Where on the Swan River is Point Roe?
3. What vessel, wrecked in Cockburn Sound near Woodman Point was originally a slave ship?

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PURE RUBBER DECK BOOTS, WITH LEATHER FEET.
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P.O. STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY,
SS. 'OCEANA,' January 20th, 1891.
SIRS,—I have much pleasure in testifying to the excellence of the "Quarterdeck" Boots bought from you some months ago. They are light, warm, well ventilated, so that they do not draw or make the feet tender, perfectly watertight, and, to my mind, the most excellent of Water Boots. F. S. TOMLIN, Commander,
Capt. B. THOMAS, of the Cunard, says—"I never wore a Boot that at all approached them in lightness and comfort in heavy weather. I have worn them for fifteen and eighteen hours at a stretch without being fatigued. I never experienced this in another boot."

ANDERSON, ANDERSON, & ANDERSON, LTD.,
The Yachtsmen's Waterproofers, 37, QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, LONDON, E.C.



My Time on Singa Betina

The tenth episode of Ted Whiteaker's tale.

When I saw John Parry again with the Dhipirri survey results, he asked me how I felt about delivering a 60-foot windmill, water tank and associated piping and gear for a bore installation at a place called Raymangirr, in Arnhem Bay. The windmill would be in kit form, with six-metre maximum pipe lengths, and the Southern Cross water tank panels would be in a crate. I was delighted with the prospect, and even more so when he suggested that I could go to Darwin to pick up the load and cart it back. In terms of economics, the Department was faced with regular barge freight from Darwin to Gove, then the logistics of getting the gear from Gove to Raymangirr. The barge operators charged \$3,000 at that time for a diversion to a non-standard destination, on top of the usual cartage rate. In addition, John asked me to add into my price a three-week contract period to assist with the windmill erection post-delivery. I spent a couple of days mulling over the proposition, and tendered a price that was accepted forthwith.

We set off for Darwin on March 24, taking along Cabbage and Shan's seven-year old son, Josh, for the ride. We dropped off a roll of two-inch poly pipe and unloaded a forty-four of petrol at Mata-Mata on the way, then went on to Elcho to deliver four more rolls of poly pipe and fittings to an outstation in the Howard Channel, called Mapuru. New navigation markers leading over the shallows into Cadell Strait were a welcome surprise. The old outer pole had been replaced with port and starboard markers, and another new outer pole placed a little further out. The new poles, complete with top-markers, made it easier to follow the channel, but they were still difficult to find on high spring tides when there was not much showing above water. Another new marker had also been placed further down the channel to indicate the narrow passage where the course required a switch from one side of the strait to the other between two consecutive sandbars.

Mapuru Landing was about ten miles from the barge landing at Wapuruwa, and the channel was formally uncharted as far as depths and hazards were concerned. We hired a local dinghy, transhipped the poly pipe, and I set off with a local bloke from the outstation, called Bakbirr, who was to guide me to the landing. We travelled over the low tide so I could draw up a mud map of the twists and turns and obstacles, and anchored for a

while at the bottom of the tide, near a shallow reef obstructing the channel, to get accurate soundings with a lead line.

Bakbirr was an intelligent and serious young man in his late twenties who understood English enough to make some communication possible. I noticed that his conversation was frequently interjected with the word "nowie", and after a time I asked, "Bakbirr, what does "nowie" mean?" He looked thoughtful as he murmured to himself, "Nowie... nowie... what dat "nowie" mean?" After a reflective pause, he gathered his thoughts, and explained, "When you want to know something (pause), and you don't know what dat something is (pause), den (with an air of triumph:) dat "nowie" tell you what dat something is!" I took it that he was referring to some benign spirit that was called upon to supply answers to the unknown, and I was bemused later to discover that "nowie" is in fact a simple filler word, much the same as "um" or "ah" in English. With elegant simplicity, Bakbirr's explanation was perfect.

A couple of days later, we headed off from Elcho to Darwin. A light south-easterly wind had been tending for a few days, heralding the beginning of the Dry Season, and we had a smooth and uneventful trip, mainly day sailing and anchoring in shelter along the way overnight.

We were in Darwin for three weeks while *Singa Betina* was careened and anti-fouled, supplies and spares restocked, and the windmill and water tank loaded on board by crane from a local jetty. Bundles of angle-iron framing, piping and equipment were manhandled down below, with some longer pieces and odd bits that would not fit in the jigsaw puzzle of available space being secured on deck. The water tank panels came packed in a low crate, which sat tightly between the engine room hatch and the compass binnacle on the back deck. Fuel was cheaper in Darwin than Gove, so we filled up our forty-fours, and spent another day or two lashing everything down and rationalising the weight distribution. A couple of bulky rolls of two-inch poly pipe added to the clutter on deck, and getting around the obstacles became a nimble exercise.

The 30th April 1983 saw us on our way for the delivery to Raymangirr. As we cleared the harbour and set course for the Vernon Islands, I was perturbed to find the compass behaving erratically.



The presence of the metal mass of the water tank in the crate so close to the compass was affecting the magnetic field and throwing the readings out wildly. We resorted to the use of our spare hand-bearing compass, and plugged on.

After passing through the Vernons, there was a considerable swell rolling down from the north; the remnants of the northwest monsoon and recent low-pressure systems of the past Wet Season. Late in the afternoon, young Josh was perched on the taffrail attempting to relieve himself over the stern when we pitched into another oncoming swell, and in the corner of my eye I noticed a windmill-flurry of arms and legs as he lost his balance and fell overboard. We were motor sailing, and with the sails up it would take a few minutes to drop the rig and turn around to pick him up. I yelled out, "HANG ON – WE'LL COME BACK FOR YOU!", and then saw him grab the trailing lure line. With awful visions of him being trolled along behind us like a big fish when the lure got to him and stuck in, I shouted forcefully at him to "LET GO!!", which he did, fortunately. All of Cabbage and Shan's kids were good swimmers, so the situation was not disastrous, and we dropped the sails and came about to pluck him from the swells.

We passed abeam Cape Don lighthouse around midnight, and altered course to the east as we rounded the cape. The wind had picked up from the northwest, slowly veering to northeast as the night progressed and increasing to 15-20 knots.



Cape Don Lighthouse

We were flying along, and I was enjoying the speed, although a bit concerned about the accuracy of our navigation. Around 4.30am Jude came up from below, looking concerned, and suggested that we perhaps we should reef the main. Absorbed in the fast sailing, I was surprised at the suggestion, and looked up at the mainsail. At that exact moment the top panel of the sail blew out and the halyard parted in front of our eyes. The sail came crashing down abruptly into the lazy-jacks, and with the loss of steadying force, *Singa Betina* began to roll heavily. The engine was hastily started and the boat pointed up into the wind while the main was secured and the jib taken down. The wind seemed to be all over the place, and the state of the sea was confused and very rough, buffeting us mercilessly. Gear stowed on deck was beginning to shift as the tie-down lashings were tested, and I frantically re-tied everything, then went below to secure gear which was being thrown about inside the boat, then did another round on deck to re-secure anything I had missed the first time.

We cut engine speed and did our best to keep the bow into the shifting winds. It was raining steadily, and the sea was rougher than anything I had ever experienced. When all was secure, I felt an urgent fight-or-flight necessity to void my bowels. With Jude on the tiller, I made my way to the shrouds. I was wearing jeans, a shirt, and one of those overall type raincoats with a one-piece hood attached. *Singa Betina* was being tossed about like a cork while I hung onto the stays and undid the raincoat buttons, slipped the hood off my head and shrugged out of the top part of the raincoat, dropping it with my trousers around my ankles. I hitched up my shirt, squatted over the gunwale, and the business took place in a speedy fashion. A fortuitous wave slapped my rear end when done, and I straightened up to rearrange my clothing. Trousers up and shirt down, I wiggled my arms back into the upper part of the raincoat and pulled the hood on over my head, grimly clutching the stays with one hand as the boat was



tossed about. I felt a nice warm feeling as I buttoned up the raincoat, and realised that something had gone amiss – the hood had been dangling below my nether regions, and had filled up with crap! When I realised what had happened, the incongruous nature of the event provoked hysterical mirth, and our immediate plight suddenly lost an edge of its fearsome seriousness. The value of cosmic humour was well and truly appreciated at the time.

We idled about until dawn to a wild sight I will never forget. The grey, featureless sky had lowered to just above our heads, with slashing rain and grey, mountainous seas heaving about in all directions. At times we were battered about down in the valleys of the troughs, surrounded by towering waves and wondering if we would ever make it back out of the depths. At other times, we were jostled and bounced around on top of the plateaus and peaks, looking down into the troughs and bracing ourselves for the descent to the bottom. The depth sounder had ceased to function, and as I was taking a hand-bearing compass reading part-way up the ratlines away from magnetic interference, it slipped out of my hand. The lanyard slid off my wrist, and the compass bounced once on deck, and disappeared over the side. There was absolutely nothing by which to navigate anywhere around the horizon.

I had only a very vague idea of where we were, and confused myself even more by assessing the charts and pondering on what might have happened to our course in the strong currents that swirl around Cape Don. A decision on direction was required, and after a long examination of the sky looking for evidence of the rising sun's position, we eventually picked the most likely lightening of the gloom as an indication of the sun's possible position, and headed off at a right angle to the south, hoping to re-discover the coast of Australia. Several hours later, with conditions unabated, we took heart from the sight of a lonely seabird skimming over the waves, and eventually sighted land again, finding our way into Port Bremer to anchor in most welcome shelter a little after midday.

I later learned from others that in times of transition from the northwest winds of the Wet Season to the southeast winds of the Dry Season, the arrival of the Dry Season proper is often announced by a violent front that sweeps westwards along the Northern Territory coast. The currents around Cape Don can create strong tidal rips and rough water in mild breezes; in a gale it can become a

maelstrom. An understated entry in the log at 1030, while still fifteen miles offshore from Port Bremer, summed up the conditions succinctly: "Log 145.5. Altered course to 160 degrees on main compass. Land in sight off starboard bow. NW swell rolling in with reflected swell off coast. Additional SE wind chop with E-W current variations – crap water."

There was an Indonesian *perahu lambo* anchored in Port Bremer. *Fajar Menyingsing* was owned by a fellow called Geoff, a casual, laid-back Pom from the North Country, and his Kiwi partner. They had left Darwin a week or so earlier on their way to Gove with a couple of crew on board. Their boat had no engine, and they were waiting for a lull in the current easterlies before moving on. Geoff had bought his boat in Pantai Mola, a Bajo village on Wangi Wangi, off Southeast Suluwesi. He had her re-rigged as a ketch, and he and his partner had sailed her down to Darwin on their way to Queensland. Geoff was of small build; his girlfriend was even smaller, and it was no mean feat for the two of them alone to have accomplished the journey from Sulawesi to Darwin with no motor.

We spent four days recovering lost sleep, tidying up the boat and mending the rips and gashes in the mainsail. The rag had done its day, suffering badly from the effects of time and weather, and really needed to be replaced. From then on, apart from a couple of brief occasions, the sails were reserved for emergency use only, and we motored everywhere we went. We intended to get new sails made when we could afford it, but it never happened, and other than on one occasion of necessity a month or so later when the old rags were called upon in a tricky situation, *Singa Betina* was not seen under serious sailing rig again for almost three decades.

We moved further east to Raffles Bay when the winds subsided a little, anchoring late in the afternoon. There was a Paspaley Pearling farm operating in the bay, and the next day, Josh and I were off fishing in the dinghy when a pearling tender appeared with half a dozen Japanese and Thursday Islanders on board. They were a little paranoid about poachers and passers-by raiding their pearl beds, and wanted to know what we were doing there. Neither Josh nor I was wearing any clothes, so I grabbed an old hessian sugar-bag off the floor of the dinghy and draped it over my lap as a concession to modesty, but there was nothing available for Josh. Fortunately he was no stranger



to nakedness, and it did not matter if he had no clothes on; Josh was always Josh.

The pearlers seemed a bit taken aback with us, and when I told them that we were moving on in a couple of days, insisted that we had to come down to anchor at the bottom of the bay where their camp was situated, so they could keep an eye on us. I did not want to camp in company, and told them we would stay put where we were that night, and leave the following morning. They did not like us being there, but accepted the arrangement and left us to our fishing. I was disappointed that parts of the country were becoming inaccessible, with Raffles Bay becoming another port to pass without any chance of further exploration. The new navigation markers in Cadell Strait had seemed a bit like the first coming of traffic lights; a sure marker of the creeping spread of civilisation's tentacles over the planet, and Raffles Bay was an inevitable progression of the subdivision of coastal real estate. It's a shrinking world out there.

We moved on to Malay Bay, in the lee of Cape Cockburn. The easterlies picked up again, and

despite attempts over the next few days to continue on to Goulburn Island, the rough conditions around Cape Cockburn and De Courcy Head had us scuttling back to shelter each time. The waves breaking on the cape had a long fetch of over 200nm of unbroken sea stretching east to the Wessel Island chain, giving them considerable power, and the easterlies were then blowing at up to twenty-five knots during the day.

After four days of waiting it became make-or-break time. Our drinking water was getting low, and if we did not go on to Goulburn, we would have had to backtrack to Croker Island to replenish supplies. Going backwards on a journey is anathema to me, so we double-checked the lashings all round, battened the hatches, girded our loins and headed onwards in the early morning. It was rough, and we were tossed about, but managed to maintain our way and finally loosened the grip of De Courcy Head, arriving to anchor at the South Goulburn Island barge landing in the mid-afternoon.

To be continued....

Coincidence

An item in *The Adelaide Observer*, 11 December 1869 commented on the similarities of fires which destroyed two sailing ships on the western side of Port Phillip Bay in Victoria. The ships were *City of Melbourne* (caught fire 26 January 1868, Hobsons Bay) and *Lightning* (caught fire 31 October 1869, Corio Bay).

The similarities were:

Both ships sailed under the same flag.

Both had the same agent – Messrs Bright Brothers & Co.

Both had captains named Jones.

Both were at a berth loading for London.

Both were berthed close to the ship *Niagara*.

Both cases of fire were first observed at 1.00am on a Saturday.

Both had fire in the fore hold.

Both fires supposedly started from spontaneous combustion of the cargo of wool each was loading.

I can add a few more:

Both were built in the north-eastern USA.

Both were scuttled in an attempt to save them.

In both cases those attempts were not producing fast enough results, so shells were fired into the burning vessels to speed the sinking.

The Argus (27 January 1868) reporting the *City of Melbourne* fire commented that the *Result* had been 'destroyed in a precisely similar manner' 16 months previously. *Result* (ex-*Amphitrite*) was also built in the north-eastern USA. Wooden ships and cargoes that could spontaneously combust were a dangerous combination.



Orizaba and the Pigeons

Have you been frustrated by trying to phone from a mobile ‘black spot’? Perhaps you thought that this was a modern phenomenon?

The 6,077-ton steamer *Orizaba* was wrecked on 15 February 1905. The wreck on the Five Fathom Bank became a Mecca for sightseers, and over a thousand went out in various boats to view the wreck. One of the visitors had the bright idea of letting his friends back on the mainland know all about his visit to the wreck. As this considerably pre-dated mobile phones, he took carrier pigeons with him on the excursion boat.

In a carefully-guarded basket he brought on board six birds, and as he wrote his first message, and commenced to attach it to the leg of a bird, he was surrounded with an interested and somewhat admiring crowd. He threw the feathered messenger into the air, and prepared to watch it take flight for the dim land beyond. Instead of doing this,

however, the pigeon quietly selected a comfortable spot on a convenient yardarm, and commenced to remove the offending message from its leg. The admiring crowd quickly turned to a jesting one, and, amid gratuitous advice and plenty of laughter, the enterprising visitor selected a second bird. The laughter increased fourfold when this was released, for after raising momentarily the hopes of its owner by flying once round the steamer, it settled down beside the first bird. A third and a fourth pigeon were released, but absolutely refused to move away from the steamer, and the disconsolate gentleman was left to wonder at the “cussedness” of things, and to admire the beauty of his birds from a distance (West Australian, 20 February 1905: 10d).



The Orizaba soon after running onto Five Fathom Bank

Correction

Thanks to MHA member Ian Fletcher who has corrected an item in last month’s Ditty Bag. The cylinder size for the Wärtsilä-Sulzer engine should read 1, 820 litres, not 1,820 cc. An error on my part, and well spotted by Ian. By my calculation this makes it a 25,480 litre engine.



To commemorate the 150 year anniversary of the arrival of the Hougoumont, the last convict ship to Australia, there will be a 10 day Irish cultural festival in various Fremantle venues between Bather's Beach and Fremantle Prison.

Program Highlights:

Music: Gigs and concerts, late night music sessions, sunset bar at Kidogo. From *Ireland*: Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill; Declan O'Rourke; Sean Tyrrell. From *Australia*: Kavisha Mazzella, Fiona Rae, Rob Zelinski, Lucky Oceans and John Reed.

Family Day – Explore Fremantle's connection to the Fenian story through walks, talks and family friendly activities, watch the sailing boats at Bathers Beach and bring the whole family along to enjoy the fun of a Ceilidh Dance.

Literature Festival –enjoy readings from the Wild Goose, the poetry of John Boyle O'Reilly and the work of contemporary Irish writers. Explore the contribution the Fenians made to Australian literature. The festival will encourage young writers to explore how this voyage shaped John Boyle O'Reilly's later advocacy for human rights.

Art – Exhibitions of historical and contemporary art and photography. In association with *Fremantle Prison*, we are seeking to display the original *Wild Goose* newspaper as part of the prison's *Exhibition of Transportation*.

Story Telling and Walking Tours– Listen to Fremantle's very own 'Great Escape' story, see the places where this drama unfolded and get to know about a centenary old 'crowd funding' scheme that helped free these Fenians and take them to the USA.

History – A story where fact is more amazing than fiction! Hear how Fremantle's residents feared an invasion to free the Fenians, how these cultured and educated men survived alongside the last of England's transported criminals and how the *Stars and Stripes* saved the day. Take a bus tour to recreate John Boyle O'Reilly's escape on the *Gazelle* and visit the place where the crew of the *Catalpa* snatched the Fenians to freedom. Get to understand the complexities of shipping at an informative presentation by the Maritime History Association and find out how the *Georgette* featured in the Fenian story.

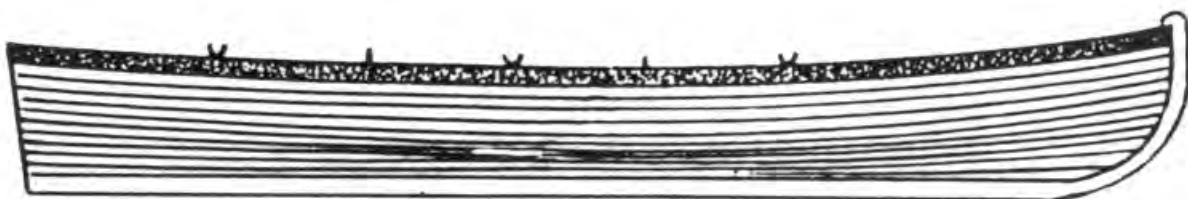
Film – Exclusive screenings of contemporary Irish films as well as locally produced documentary, *In Search of the Vigilant* (in conjunction with the John Boyle O'Reilly Association).

Commemoration Walk – Join with local Noongah people, descendants of these Irish Fenians and remember those who supported them, as we take a '*Walk of the Ancestors*' from Bather's Beach to Fremantle Prison.

Website: <https://www.kidogo.com.au/fenians-festival/>

Bookings:  eventbrite

Program:  Fenians, Fremantle and Freedom





Book Review

The Flag's Up The First 20 Years of the South Head Lookout Post 1790–1809

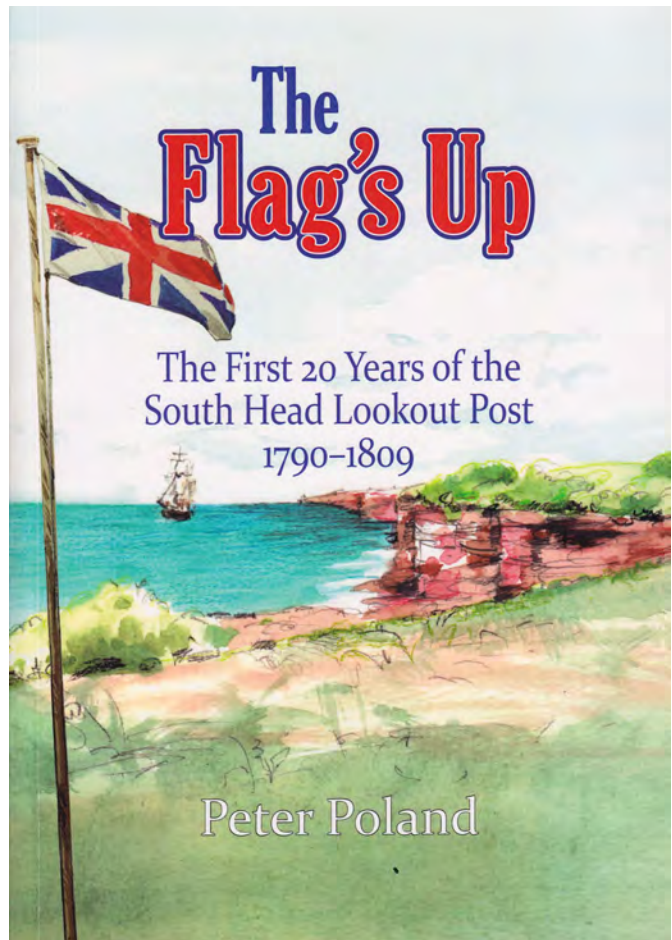
By Peter Poland

This book was published by Halstead Press on behalf of the Woollahra History and Heritage Society of which the author Arthur Poland is a founding member. Since 1990 this society has commemorated the 200th anniversaries of important ship arrivals and other maritime events at Port Jackson by a display of flags at the site of the flagstaff on South Head, Sydney Harbour. That flagstaff was first erected in 1790 to signal to the fledgling colony at Port Jackson (now Sydney Harbour) of the approach of ships, and to indicate to ships the position of the settlement. It is still manned, making the South Head Lookout Post the longest permanently manned site in Australia.

This well-researched book is a delight to read. Full of the comings and goings of ships into Port Jackson where the British settlement so far away from the homeland was being established, Poland draws so many events together through the very unusual theme of signal flags. There is a scattering of vignette appearances of Governors, ships' captains, prominent citizens and humble crew – some interesting, some charming.

The book is well-produced, with clear type and many colourful illustrations. It would have been improved by a comprehensive index to supplement the Index of Ships, though it might be argued that the short descriptions which follow the names of vessels and precede the pages mentioned in the text make it relatively easy to link people with the ships they came in. As 'always' happens, a few very minor errors have slipped by during editing, such as the rather poorly worded page 169 entry regarding the *Bellisle* and similarly the entry on page 174 regarding *Temeraire*.

The author, after 30 years of service in the Royal Navy, retired with the rank of commander, and is therefore in a position to write with some authority on maritime matters



Altogether, this is a highly-recommended book which should attract a wide readership.

Published 2016 by Halstead Press, Ultimo, NSW.

Interesting information on the Internet

Readers may be interested in this internet site:

<http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-lake-michigan-shipwrecks-20170924-story.html>



William Dampier and the Volcano

Long Island or Arop, contrary to its English name, is a roundish volcanic island at the northern end of the Vitiav Straits, east of Madang in Papua New Guinea. With a hill to both the north and south of the island and lower lying ground between, the island, from certain directions, gives the impression of being long. It first came to European notice in 1545, when the Spaniard Iñigo Órtiz de Retes visited it while on board the *San Juan de Letran*. He claimed it for Spain while endeavouring to return to Mexico from the Spice Island of Tidore, using a new route. On the way he found (and named) *Nue Guinea*, as well as Long Island. Incidentally, the new route didn't work because his ship became becalmed close to the equator, and he had to return to Tidore.



The next European visitor was Dutchman Abel Tasman who visited in 1643 while on board the *Zeehaan*. Tasman charted the part of Long Island which he saw, but thought it was part of the mainland of New Guinea which in turn he thought was part of the mainland of New Holland.

Then came Englishman William Dampier on board *Roebuck* in January 1699. He mapped Long Island, and drew the profile which led to its name. His observations helped to narrow the date of the violent eruption of its volcano, though much of his data was lost when the *Roebuck* sank off Reunion Island in the Atlantic Ocean.

The date of the eruption which formed the very large lake (10 x 12.5km) in the centre of the island was surmised to have occurred in either the 17th or 18th centuries. Professor Russell Blong, a foremost volcanologist from Macquarie University visited Long Island in 2015. He wanted to try and establish a more precise date for what is recognised as one of the largest eruptions in the Pacific region in modern times. Professor Blong had the forethought to consult the maps and drawings done by Dampier over 300 years earlier, and found that the eruption had definitely preceded Dampier's voyage. This helped narrow the date which has subsequently been found to have occurred in 1660.

At that time the caldera now named Lake Wisdom was formed. The explosion threw an estimated 30 cubic kilometres of material into the air, much of which came down in the highlands of New Guinea. This was the third largest known explosive eruption in the last 2,000 years. It was three times as powerful as Krakatoa in 1883, ten times larger than Mount St Helens in 1980, and buried Long Island under 30m of ash.

We can be glad that Dampier has made such a contribution to present day volcanological knowledge of the Pacific region, even though a major purpose of his voyage was unsuccessful. (This was to discover and map the east coast of New Holland.) The volcano last erupted in 1993.



William Dampier



Why do they use 21 Guns in the 21 Gun Salute?

<http://www.todayifoundout.com/index.php/2014/08/history-behind-21-gun-salute/>

The 21-gun salute that we know today has its roots in the ancient tradition of warriors demonstrating their peaceful intentions by resting the point of their weapons on the ground.

The notion of making a soldier's weapons useless to show that he came in peace continued even as warfare changed over the centuries. Gunpowder and cannons became commonplace among militaries and private forces, both on land and at sea around the 14th century. In order for a ship entering a foreign port to show those on shore that they came in peace, the captain would have his crew fire the guns. This rendered the weapons inoperable for a period of time, with early guns only being capable of firing a single shot before crews needed to reload them.

Traditionally when a British ship entered into a foreign port, it would fire its guns seven times. The reason for the seven shots is widely debated to this day. One theory states that the majority of the British ships at this point only carried seven guns and so firing seven shots became the standard to signal those on shore that the ship was now unarmed. Ships carried enough gunpowder and ammunition to reload multiple times, but beyond symbolism, the idea here was that the lengthy process of reloading would allow the soldiers onshore more than enough time to disable the ship with their own weapons if needs be.

Another proposed theory for the number seven relates to the Bible. After creating the world, the Bible states that God rested on the seventh day (or for the seventh "event"- there is some debate over the "day" vs. "event" translation). So it has been theorized that the number could have been chosen in reference to its Biblical significance, perhaps of resting with the ship coming to port after a long journey. Yet another theory stems from the pervasive superstitious nature of sailors combined with the historic notion in certain regions that the number 7 is sacred, and that odd numbers are lucky and even unlucky. In fact, for a time it was common to use an even number of shots to signify the death of a ship's captain when returning from the voyage during which he had died..

Whatever the underlying reason, the guns onshore would return fire as a form of welcome once the incoming ship finished firing the seven rounds.

However, the shore bound guns fired three rounds for every one fired by the incoming ships, putting the total number of shots fired at twenty-one in these cases. As with the "7" number, it's not known precisely why in the regions that used this number scheme that they chose a 3 to 1 ratio. What is known is that as time went on where this was practiced, it became traditional for the ships themselves to start firing off 21 shots as well, perhaps due to the ships becoming larger and being equipped with more guns, with the captains ostensibly preferring a 1 to 1 salute.

This then brings us to when firing the 21 shots became considered a type of official salute, rather than a symbolic way to indicate peaceful intentions. This seems to have started around 1730 when it became a recognized salute to British government officials. Specifically, the British Navy allowed its ships and captains the option to perform the 21-gun salute as a way to honour members of the British Royal Family during select anniversaries. About eighty years later, in 1808, the 21-gun salute officially became the standard salute to honour British Royalty.

While the British Navy adopted the 21-gun salute in 1808 as the standard, other nations, such as the United States, didn't adopt it until much later. In fact, the United States War Department decided in 1810 to define the "national salute" as having the same number of shots as there were states in the nation. That number grew every year that a new state joined the Union. Needless to say, this quickly became a cumbersome way to salute the United States and its dignitaries.

That said, the United States did make the "Presidential Salute" a 21-gun salute in 1842, and in 1890 officially accepted the 21-gun salute as the "national salute." This followed the 1875 British proposal to the United States of a "Gun for Gun Salute" of 21-guns to honour visiting dignitaries. Essentially, the British and French, among other nations, at this point were all using 21 guns for their salutes, but the U.S. system required many more shots for their dignitaries. Besides needing to fire off more cannons, this also potentially signified greater honour to the U.S. dignitaries than to those of other nations. Thus, the British proposed a 1 for 1 shot, with 21 being the



number, which was accepted by the U.S. on August 18, 1875.

The 21-gun salute still represents a significant honour today. In the United States, the 21-gun salute occurs to honour a President, former president, or the head of foreign state. It can also be fired in order to honour the United States Flag.

that that battle could resume. Therefore the number of volleys is more important than the actual number of shots. Even the United States Army Manuel's section on the Ceremonial Firing Party at a funeral named the number of riflemen as between five and eight, rather than an exact number.



A 1760s 12-pounder cannon being fired in a modern salute

The salute also occurs at noon on the day of the funeral of a President, former President, or President-elect along with on Memorial Day.

You may have noticed that there's no mention of the 21-gun salute occurring during military funerals and that's a common misconception. Known as the "3 Volleys," the salute that occurs during soldiers' funerals follows a battlefield tradition where both sides stopped fighting so that they could remove their dead from the field. The series of three shots, or volleys, let the other side know that the dead had been taken care of and

Bonus Facts:

When ships were engaged in battle during the 14th century, the common practice was that the captured or defeated ship needed to expend all of its ammunition in order to make it helpless in the presence of the other ship and signify surrender.

A 62-gun salute was fired upon the birth of Prince George of England. The 21-gun salute was increased to 42-guns because the guns were fired from a royal park or residence and an additional 21-guns were added in order to pay respect to the city of London.





The Masting and Rigging of the Barquentine *Leeuwin*

By Ross Shardlow

This is an account about how we did the masting and rigging of the barquentine *Leeuwin*—or how a marine artist got to design a sailing ship.

The first time I publicly referred to my role in the masting & rigging of *Leeuwin* was at Barry Hicks' funeral last year (27 January 2016) when I made mention of the rigging team in Barry's obituary. After Barry's funeral the CEO of Leeuwin Ocean Adventure, Anne-Marie Archer, came up to me and said, "I didn't know that." Subsequently, she asked me to give a ten-minute talk about the rigging team at a luncheon to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of *Leeuwin's* Launching –2 August 2016. After that talk the new CEO of Leeuwin Ocean Adventure, Carol Shannon, whom I have known for about 30-years, came up to me and said, "I didn't know that."

Len Randell was also asked to give a ten-minute talk about the building of the *Leeuwin* at the 30th Anniversary Luncheon. In giving his talk Len graciously acknowledged the role I played on the

rigging team and in doing so, to my mind at least, 'released me from my indentures'. Exactly one year later, 2 August 2017, I delivered a talk to the Amateur Boat Builders Association giving a more detailed account about how we did the masting and rigging of *Leeuwin*. The following is a transcript from that talk.

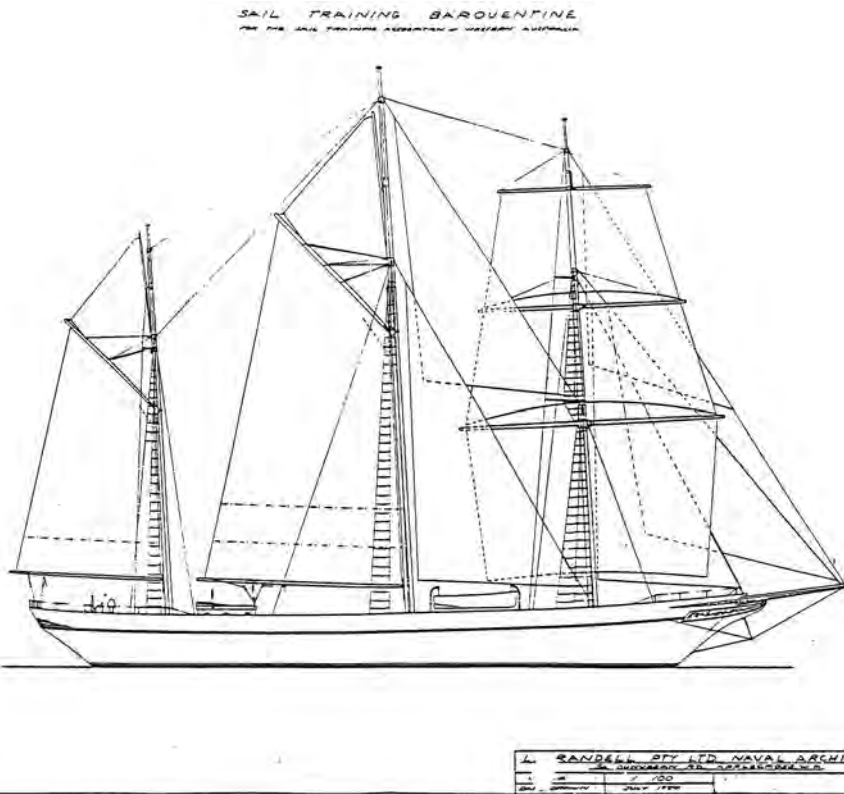
The Rigging Team:

Though there were a good many people involved with the masting and rigging of *Leeuwin*, this talk is about the immediate few that I had direct contact with – Barry & Robin Hicks (riggers), Mike McKenzie (foreman, that we called rig-master), Ray and Ken Miller (spar-makers and ship's carpenters) and, of course, Len Randell – Chief Naval Architect in Charge, the man who actually designed the *Leeuwin*.

My involvement with the *Leeuwin* project started out as a ship's artist.

I had been working as a book illustrator with the Education Department for 13-years, and then, in 1980, I quit my Government job and became a full-time freelance artist with an unaccountable passion for painting sailing ships and the sea. I don't know where that passion came from, we did have a beach shack down at Point Peron, I certainly mucked around in boats and felt very comfortable on a sea, but I had no practical experience in sailing or boat building or naval architecture, whatsoever – but I did like painting sailing ships.

I guess it was no surprise, therefore, when a chap called Malcolm Hay appeared at my studio door one day in July 1984, and asked me do an artist's impression of a proposed sail training barquentine.



Len Randell's ALARMINGLY MODERN Sail Plan from July 1984



The *Leeuwin* project was Malcolm Hay's baby. He had been relentlessly pushing to have a sail training ship for Western Australia for 10-years. He wanted this painting of the *Leeuwin Off Cape Leeuwin* to make prints from for promotional purposes. Malcolm also mentioned that they were in a bit of a hurry, and they didn't have much money. In fact, he and his dear wife Rosemary paid for that first painting out of their own pockets.

I was given a fibreglass model and a basic sail-plan to work from, which showed very little standing and running rigging. Len Randell, himself a talented marine artist, also gave me a hand explaining where things went and how they worked – but this wasn't my sort of ship and I really had no idea what I was doing.

It is an awful painting – and I really didn't expect to hear from them ever again.

The *Leeuwin* project had been bumping along the bottom for 10-years – but in 1984 the project suddenly took off with a charter to have the barquentine ready in time as a spectator ship for the America's Cup Challenge, which was to be held in Fremantle in early 1987. Construction of the hull started in earnest in early 1985.

Not surprisingly, Malcolm Hay reappeared at my studio door. This time he asked me to prepare some new artwork for a calendar, to be used for promotional purposes, but this time the painting was to show the *Leeuwin* in more detail, more like an architectural drawing.

I said I was happy to do the painting but, after my experiences with the first painting, confessed I really didn't know what the ship actually looked like when it came down to the specific detail of sail and rigging plans, and as Len Randell was now flat out trying to keep ahead of the hull construction, I had no one to advise me on the finer detail required for an accurate painting.

This is where it gets interesting – Malcolm ad-

vised me to go and see the newly assigned project riggers Barry and Robin Hicks, whom I had never met before, and said "they would supply me with everything I need."

My desk diary for 29 August 1985 recorded my first meeting:

I went round to see Barry and Robin Hicks, riggers and sail makers, and introduced myself. We got on exceptionally well.

What an understatement that was – my whole life changed from that point on.

It transpired that Barry and Robin were as much in the dark as I was – without a set of rigging plans they could not make a start on their work. Furthermore, the basic sail plan they had been given looked ALARMINGLY MODERN to Barry's traditional eye.

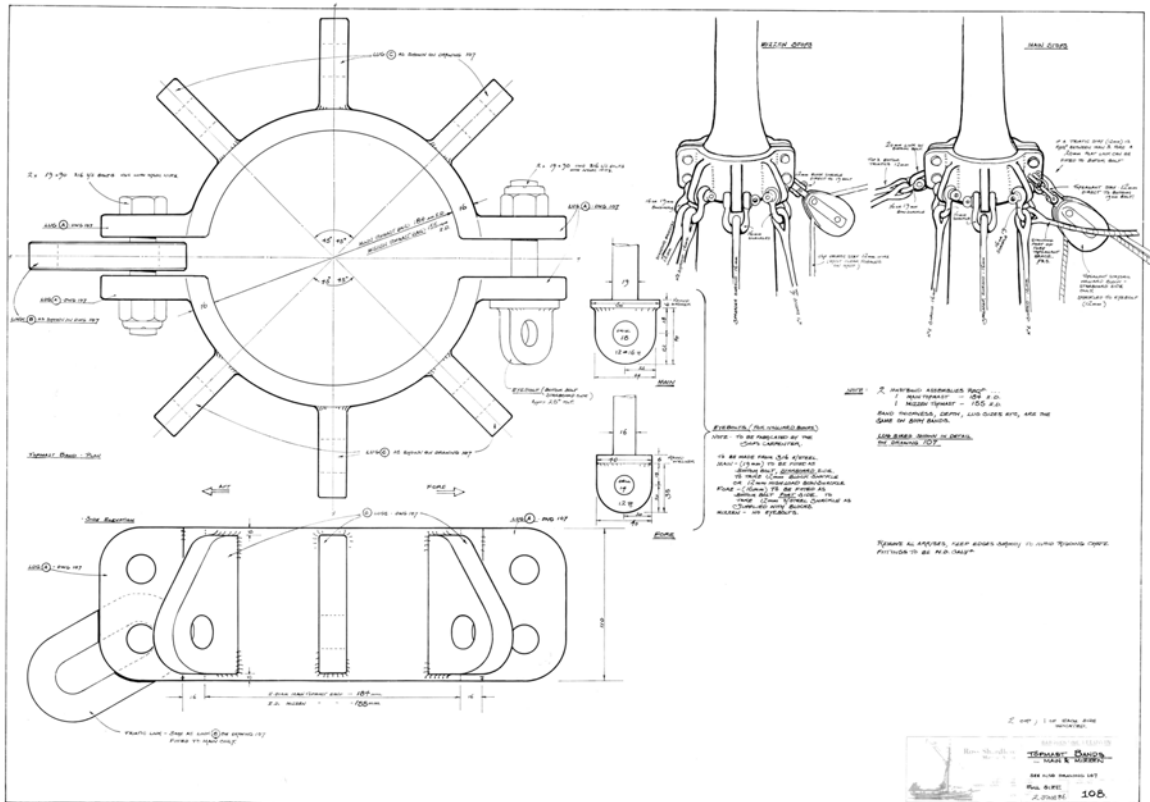
As we seemed to be in happy agreement about what a barquentine should look like, Barry suggested I go away and "just draw something up that I would LIKE to see." When I came back with a sail and rigging plan typical of the barquentines that plied the Western Australian coast in the 1880s, not the 1980s, Barry's face lit up:



Leeuwin off Cape Leeuwin (1984) — 'an awful painting'

"Well that's more like it", he said, "we can do something with that – when can we have the rest of the drawings?"

This is where it gets even more interesting – keep in mind, that up to this point, I had merely been preparing artwork for a calendar painting. What happened next launched me into something beyond my wildest dreams.



Drawing No. 108—Topmast Bands Main and Mizzen

Barry showed the plans to the rigging team foreman Mike McKenzie. Mike, in turn, passed the plans on to Len Randell – and I ran for cover imagining Len would be after me any minute with a marlinspike. Barry and Mike had presented the plans to Len with the recommendation that this was the sail plan they wanted to build for the *Leeuwin*.

Mike also showed the plans to Malcolm Hay and

the executive and one of the executive members did actually take me aside, one dark night, and said, “what makes *you* think *you* can design a sailing ship?”

Over the next few weeks I drew up eight sail plans to show slight variations and adjustments. Shortly after, Mike called around to my Victoria Park art studio to let me know that my new ‘traditional’ sail plan had been accepted and that my art studio



Barry and Robin Hicks at work in their rigging loft

was to be converted, immediately, into a drafting office so that I might complete the drawings for the masts and spars, standing and running rigging, pin and fife rails and all the fittings to go with it – everything from the deck up – a complete set of construction drawings for every single component of the masts and rig.

Reminding those lovely people that I was, in fact, a Marine Artist, not a Naval Architect, had little effect. Mike reassured me that Len had approved my ‘traditional’ sail plan and accepted Mike’s ‘generous offer’ that I would supply all the construction drawings to go with it. Len, as it turns out, was entirely pre-occupied with the hull construction and if the rigging drawings



had been left up to him, the ship would have gone to sea without masts. I would never have got the job otherwise.

Accordingly, I was informed that I would be working for Len Randell, that Len was the Naval Architect in charge and that all my drawings would be scrutinised, calculated and checked by Len, and would remain his property. Len gave me a free hand but was always there when I needed him – well, if we could find him.

With that comfort in mind, and putting such fears as stability calculations, destruction tests and safe working loads to one side, I commenced the first

of about 180 construction drawings for the Mast- ing and Rigging of the Barquentine *Leeuwin*.

To commemorate the occasion Mike presented me with a three-foot stainless steel rule engraved “To Mr Shardlow – Underwater Artist” and Barry gave me a copy of *Steels Mast- ing and Rigging* adding, “you might need this – now, how soon can we have those rigging drawings.”

I also met spar-maker Ray Miller and his brother Ken at this time; we all got on famously well and became lifelong colleagues, workmates and friends.

To be continued.....



Leeuwin II 'broadside' calendar painting by R.H. Shardlow (1986)

Maritime Heritage Association Inc.

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