

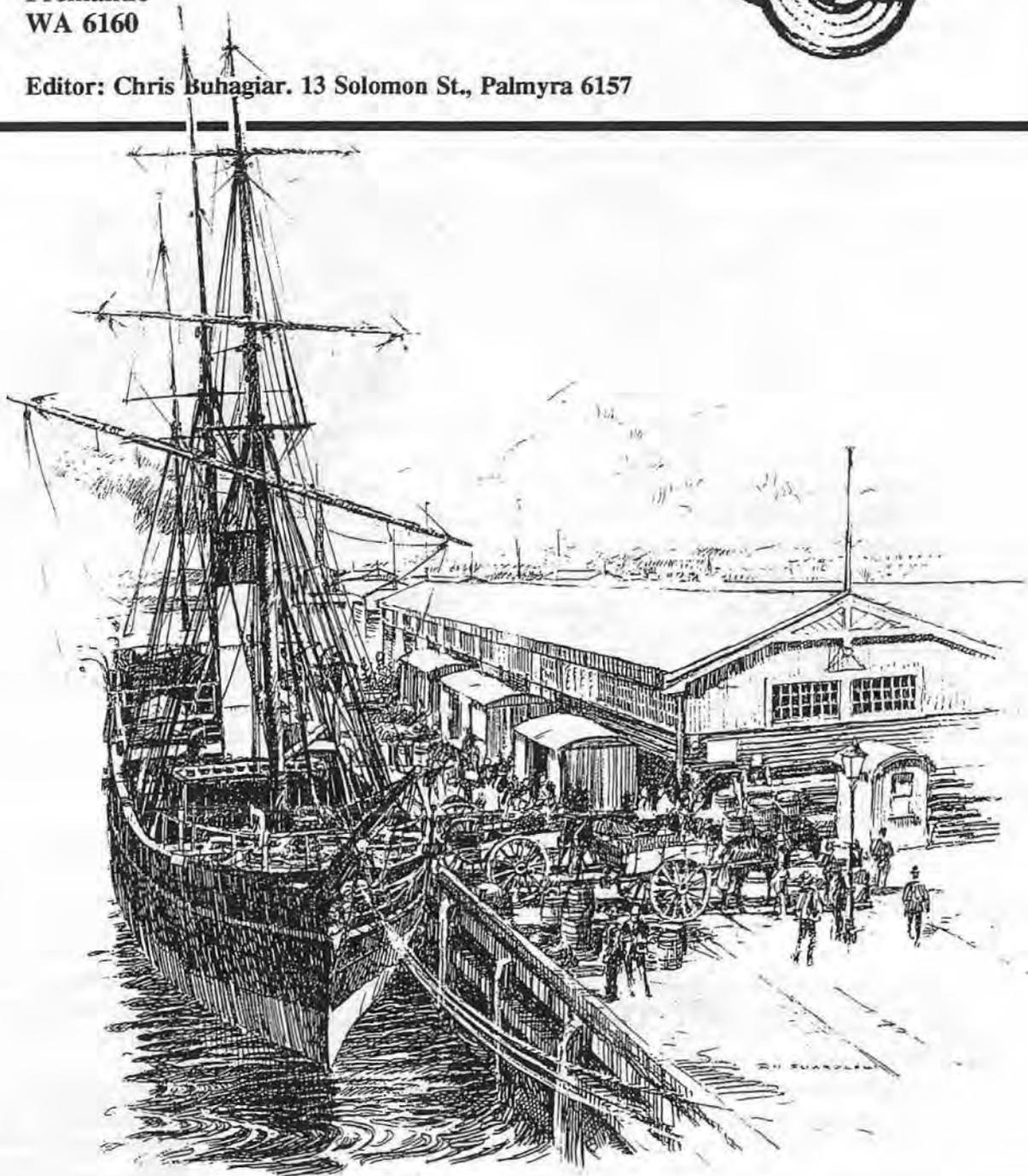
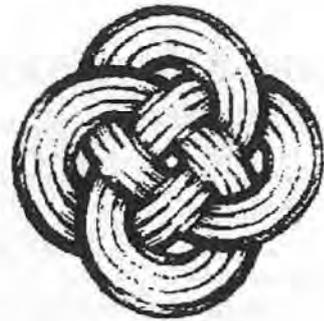
# MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

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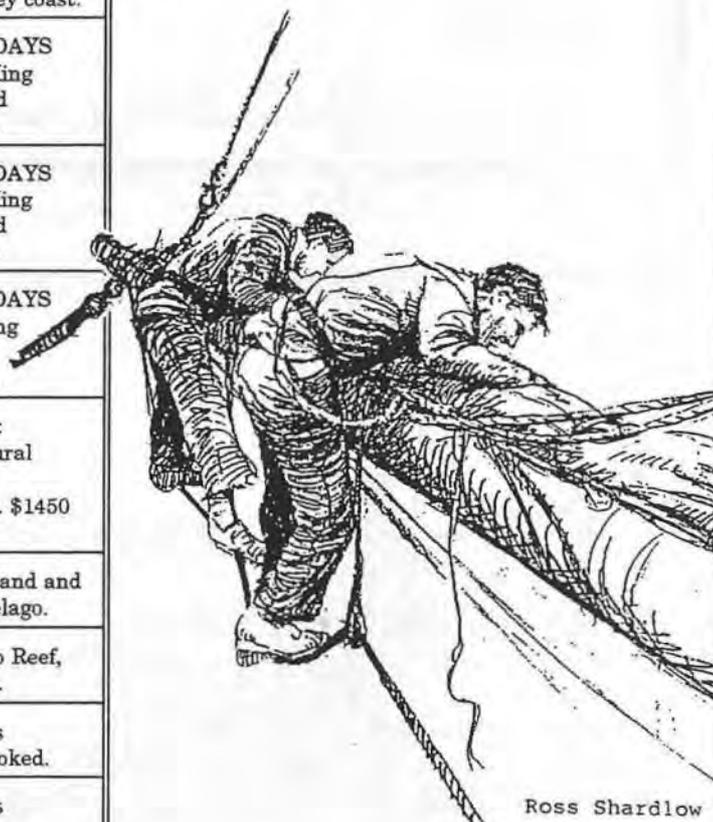


An impression, by Ross Shardlow, of a busy Victoria Quay scene in Fremantle Harbour, in the early part of this century. (See the feature article on the much-publicised maritime historic precinct, page 3.)



## Schedule: S.T.S. LEEUWIN ADVENTURE VOYAGES

No.	Departure	Arrival	Remarks
11/94	Broome 30/5/94 Mon.	Darwin 10/6/94 Fri.	FULLY BOOKED: visiting Kimberley coast.
12/94	Darwin 14/6/94 Tue.	Darwin 24/6/94 Fri.	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS (N.T.): visiting King George River and Kimberley coast.
14/94	Darwin 28/6/94 Tue.	Darwin 8/7/94 Fri.	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS (N.T.): visiting King George River and Kimberley coast.
15/94	Darwin 11/7/94 Mon.	Broome 22/7/94 Fri.	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS (WA) \$975 visiting Beagle Bay and Kimberley coast.
16/94	Broome 26/7/94 Tue.	Broome 5/8/94 Fri.	"ECO VOYAGE": discover the natural wonders of the Kimberley Coast. \$1450 ex. Broome.
17/94	Broome 9/8/94 Tue.	Dampier 19/8/94 Fri.	Visiting Pt. Hedland and Dampier Archipelago.
18/94	Dampier 23/8/94 Tue.	Geraldton 2/9/94 Fri.	Visiting Ningaloo Reef, Abrolhos Islands.
19/94	Geraldton 6/9/94 Tue.	Fremantle 16/9/94 Fri.	Visiting Abrolhos Islands. Fully booked.
20/94	Fremantle 20/9/94 Tue.	Fremantle 30/9/94 Fri.	Visiting Abrolhos Islands.
W2/94	Fremantle 30/9/94 Fri.	Fremantle 2/10/94 Sun.	Whale watching weekender.
21/94	Fremantle 4/10/94 Tue.	Fremantle 14/10/94 Fri.	SCHOOL HOLIDAYS Visiting Busselton (minimum age 15 years.)



Ross Shardlow

*For information on all voyages, contact:*

**THE LEEUWIN SAIL TRAINING FOUNDATION**

PO Box 1100

Fremantle WA 6160

Fax: (09) 430 4494

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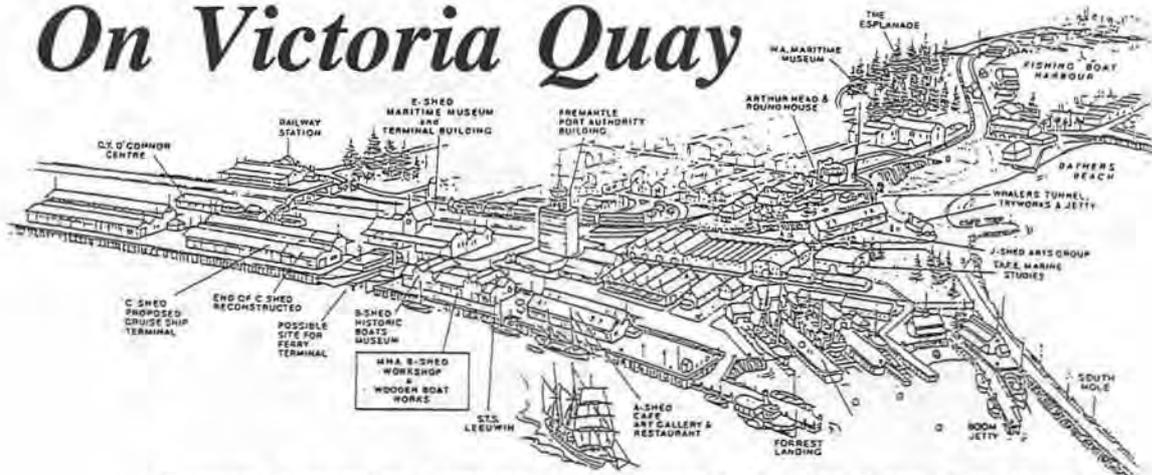
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# New Developments On Victoria Quay



*A Fremantle maritime heritage precinct concept first put forward by Ross and Barbara Shardlow in 1988 is fast becoming a reality. This report outlines some of the recent developments.*

## THE FREMANTLE PORT AUTHORITY'S VICTORIA QUAY STUDY

In December, 1993, the Fremantle Port Authority released its next stage in the port planning process for the Inner Harbour. The Victoria Quay Study report contains specific recommendations for the western end and for the Port Operational Area of the quay, including the possible removal of E-Shed. Whereas the Study encompasses all of Victoria Quay from South Mole to the Railway Bridge, it is the Western End that is of particular interest to the M.H.A.

### The Western End - study proposal: (Map 1)

The area includes the South Mole, Berths A and B and the area between Fleet Street and the harbour. It includes many of the port's older buildings and structures which collectively give the area its historic maritime character. Presently it accommodates a range of maritime-related activities including ship repairs and maintenance, a maritime college, port service and administration areas, A-Shed cafe and exhibits, the B-Shed Historic Boats Museum, the MHA boat-building school operated by Wooden Boat Works, and the home-port facilities for the sail training ship LEEUWIN.

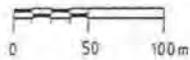
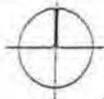
The MHA was pleased that the FPA's aim for the Western End: "is to encourage uses that preserve and enhance its historic maritime character and improve public access". Public comment on the

proposals was invited. The MHA submitted a response to the recommendations made for the western end of Victoria Quay. The response took into consideration the expected three-fold increase in inner harbour trade over the next thirty years and its impact on the quay. The operational area of Victoria Quay will play an important complementary role to North Quay in providing facilities to meet future trade and shipping needs. The FPA's aim for the operational area: "is to improve security, safety and Customs control and to provide options for future cargo handling areas in order to improve the operational efficiency of the Port".

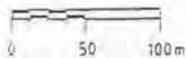
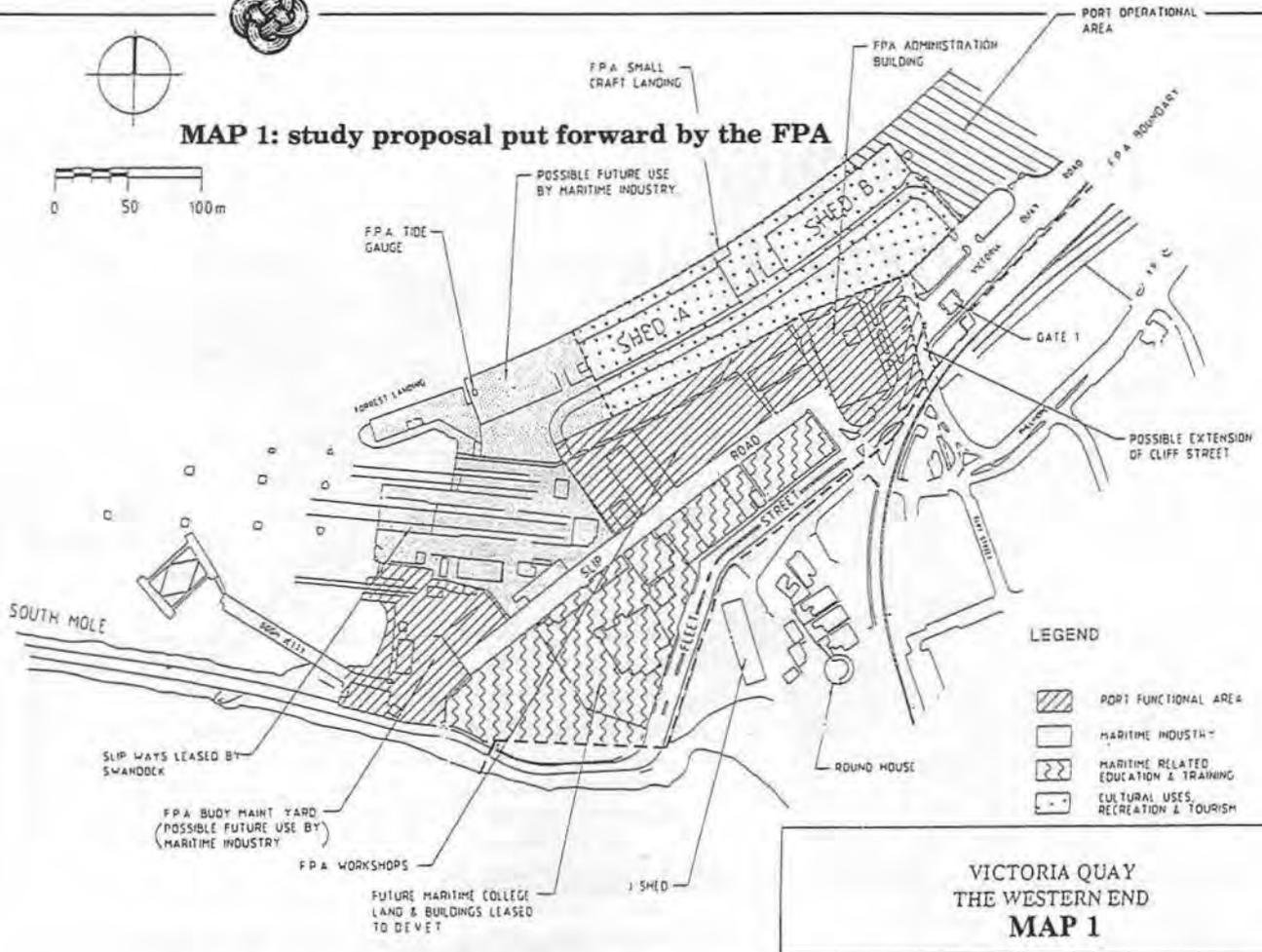
### The Concept of a Fremantle Maritime Heritage Centre

In 1989, Ross and Barbara Shardlow submitted a proposal to the State Government, Fremantle City Council and the FPA: "that the maritime heritage of Fremantle be preserved through utilisation of the existing buildings and facilities in the Victoria Quay/Arthur Head precincts for maritime related occupations, educational and recreational activities. That the precinct be free access public open space. That the proposal be incorporated into the future planning of Fremantle".

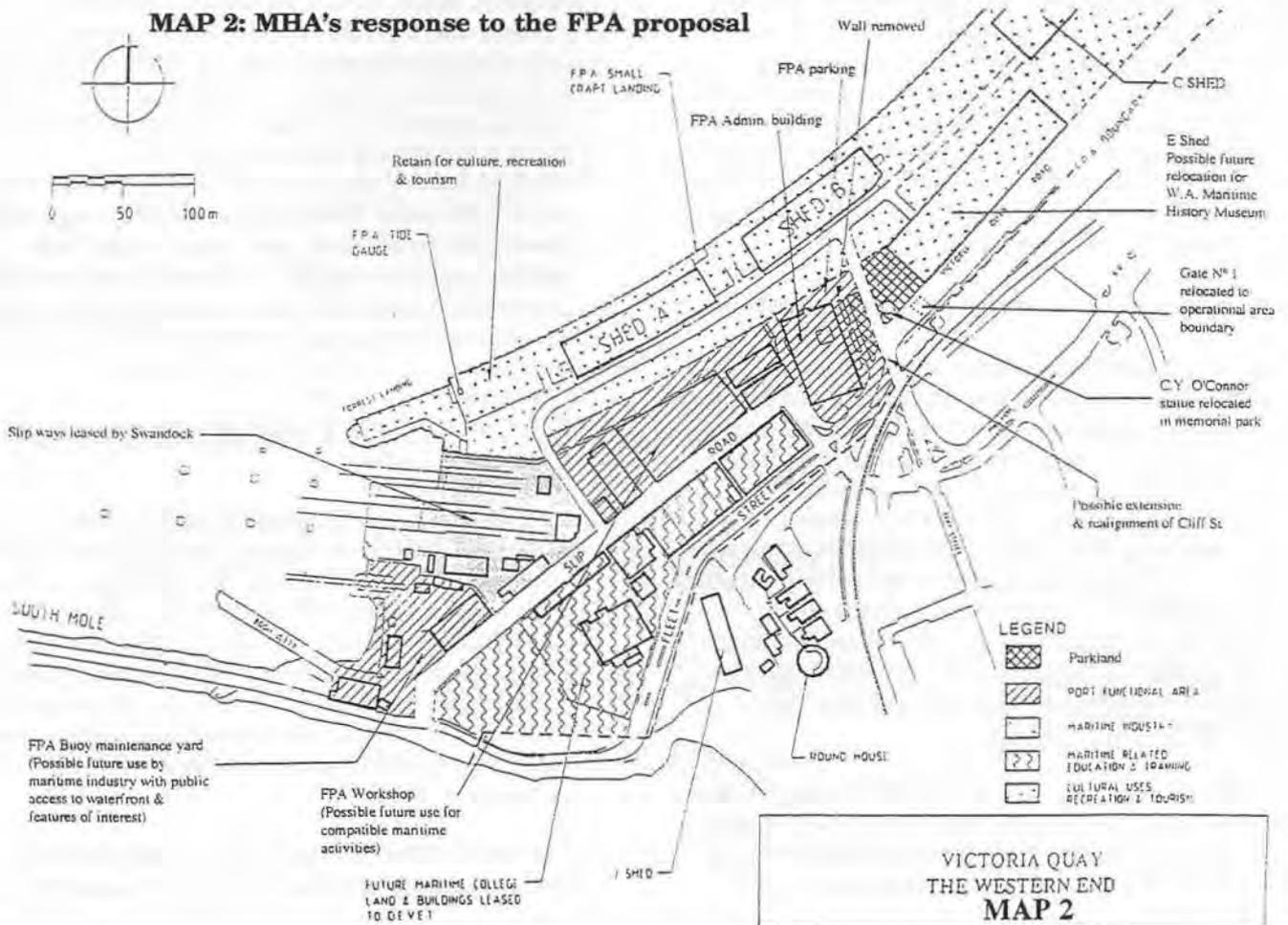
The aims of the proposal were to maintain the traditional shipbuilding skills of the shipwrights



**MAP 1: study proposal put forward by the FPA**



**MAP 2: MHA's response to the FPA proposal**





and craftspeople who built the barquentine LEEUWIN and the ENDEAVOUR replica; to preserve the historic architectural features and character of the waterfront; to provide an appealing recreational precinct for the public and tourism, and to provide an educational facility for maritime studies.

When the Maritime Heritage Association was formed in 1989 it included the lobbying for such a Fremantle maritime heritage concept as one of its ongoing projects. In 1992, the proposal was updated and resubmitted. Copies were also submitted in 1993 to each member of the newly formed Interim Board of Trustees of the W.A. Maritime Museum. The MHA's response to the Victoria Quay Study Report [printed below], was submitted in January, 1994. The response addressed specific recommendations, particularly those regarding greater public access to the area and greater community utilisation and development of facilities in the area. [Map 2 illustrates these recommendations.]

**M.H.A. Response To The Victoria Quay Study Report: (Map 2)**

The MHA was pleased that the Study demonstrated a responsible and sympathetic attitude to the importance of developing Victoria Quay not only as an operational port but also as an important recreational and historic asset to the people of Western Australia. The following comments on the Report were submitted by Ross Shardlow as President of the MHA:

**1. The Western End**

- 1.1 The preservation of the historic character of the Western End of the quay by maintaining and using the facilities for maritime activities is appropriate and ideal. I am concerned that the area from Forrest Landing to A-Shed is not included in the area open to Cultural uses Recreation and Tourism. This is a visually sensitive area; it is the gateway to the State and should not be given over to potentially unsightly industry. The area should be utilised in such a way that public access to the waterfront is preserved.
- 1.2 I support the recommendations that improvement of public access is essential. The mooted extension of Cliff Street should be included in the short-term option. Cliff Street is the key link for the maritime

heritage precinct. It provides a simple public access way from the Cliff Street Maritime Museum to B-Shed and the waterfront. It would be desirable to return Cliff Street to its original straight alignment to give a direct line of sight from the Maritime Museum through the city west end to the B-Shed entrance on the quay. As the Report states on page 17, the resulting visual continuity would help to integrate the quay and the city and make the quay more visible and accessible. The C.Y. O'Connor statue could be repositioned [as indicated on Map 2], giving it greater prominence and improving the appearance of the entrance onto the quay.

The use of Fleet Street and Slip Street as public thoroughfares is essential to the presentation of the quay as a dynamic, integrated and interactive maritime area.

- 1.3 I support the recommendation that Fleet Street be used essentially for vehicular traffic. Slip Street should be promoted as a public pedestrian thoroughfare so that its unique maritime streetscape can be appreciated. As much public access as practical throughout all designated areas of the Study will enhance the appeal of the area and link it with the city.
- 2. Operational Area**
- 2.1 I support the retention of Gate 3 as the main access point for the Operational Area and Gate 1 being taken out of service. This should happen in the short-term plan. Gate 1 should also be removed: it is a visual and psychological barrier. If needed, it could be relocated down Victoria Quay Road at the Operational Area security fence adjacent to the C.Y. O'Connor Centre.
- 2.2 Though the extension of the port security fence to the eastern wall of B-Shed is a necessary interim measure due to the cargo-handling activities currently carried out at Berth C, it will limit public access to the B-Shed Museum as well as be an unfortunately aggressive and off-putting feature of the Museum building.
- 2.3 With reference to point 2.2, it would be desirable if the considerations being given to the relocation of the cargo-handling operations from Berth C to Berth E could



be resolved in the short term. C-Shed itself is the oldest building on the quay and should be retained intact and in-situ, ideally within the west-end cultural area, if not in the short term, then in the long term.

Though it would be ideal to preserve the entire wharf, it is also desirable that the port remain a living waterfront. Therefore, should it become necessary to remove E-Shed, I feel it is vital that it is relocated to a place within the western end. The building would be preserved and add to the character of the cultural area. As suggested on page 52 of the Report, the development of Berth E would allow the operational area to move further eastward and release C-Shed and the adjacent wharf area for greater utilisation by the cultural area. It would also improve public access to the railway station, footbridge, etc.

E-Shed relocated to the site approximating the old railway sheds would provide an excellent site and accommodation for the mooted new Maritime History Museum. It would then complement the visual continuity of the Maritime Archaeology Museum and the B-Shed Historic Boats Museum. The complete removal and destruction of the building or any other heritage value structures on the quay is unacceptable. Relocation and recycling within the West End should be a first priority.

As the Fremantle Port Authority must remain the controlling authority for Victoria Quay, the Authority has an obligation to contribute to the preservation and maintenance costs of all quay facilities. The options for sharing these costs presented on page 46 of the Study are all worthy of exploration.

In light of the Authority's long-term recommendations and the desirability from all points of view to achieve goals as soon as possible, I would like the Authority to consider 1997, W.A. Maritime Year, as a possible time-frame for the achievement of the rationalisation of the Western End and the Operational Area precincts.

I congratulate the Fremantle Port Authority on its initiative and vision. The emphasis placed on public access, promotion of activities complimentary to the historic maritime character

of the quay, integration with the adjacent city centre, and careful, sensitive planning to foster cooperation and harmony between all users, heralds an exciting future for Fremantle and Victoria Quay. (January 1994)

#### **F.P.A. AMENDED PROPOSAL: May, 1994**

The FPA received fifteen responses to the Victoria Quay Study Report. As a result of these responses, the FPA modified their proposal and, on 19th May, released their recommendations (which have been endorsed by the Government).

#### **1. The Western End: (Map 3)**

The Western End has now been extended to include C and D Sheds. A security fence will separate the Western End from the Port Operational Area east of D-Shed. The wharf area west of A-Shed, as far as the tide gauge and the remnant of Arthurs Head, will also be free public access. Altogether there will be 700 metres of quay length available for public access. Provision has been made to allow closure of part of the wharf alongside C and D Sheds should that space be required under special circumstances.

#### **2. E-Shed**

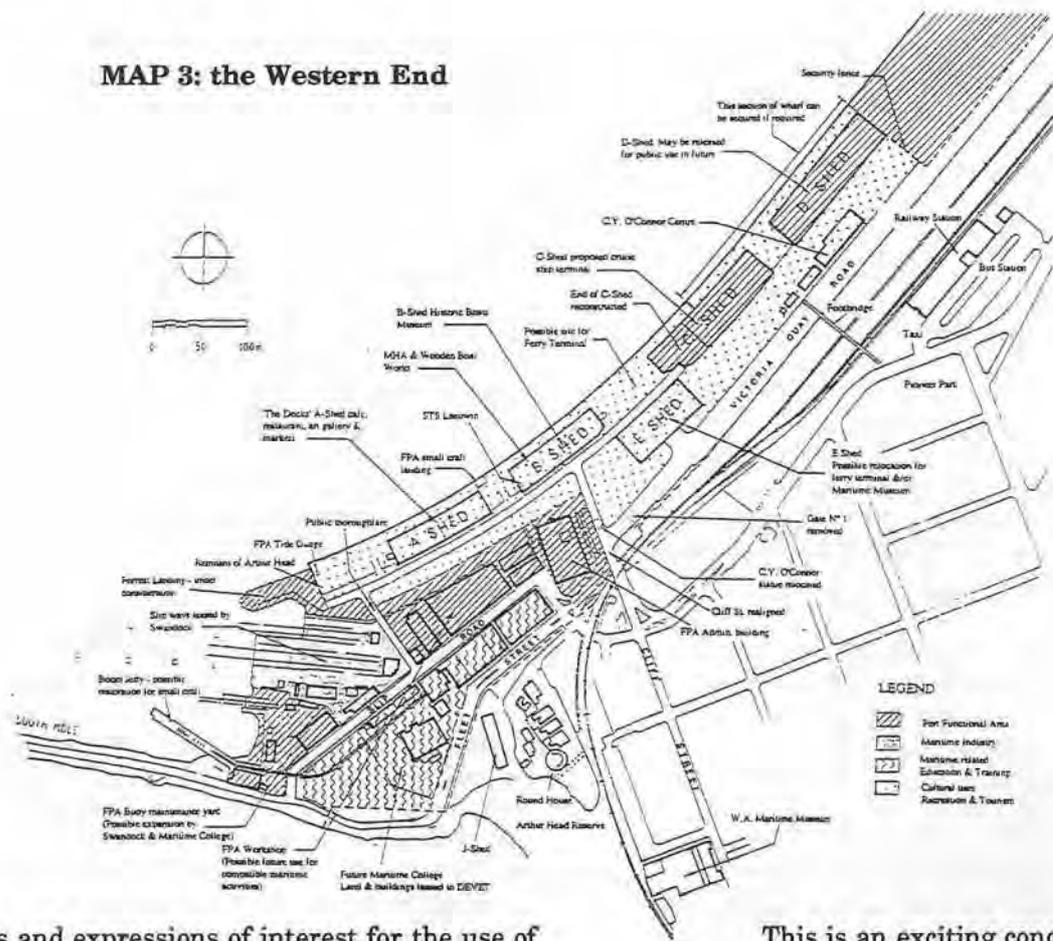
In regard to the removal of E-Shed (built in 1928), the FPA needs an open tarmac to facilitate the loading directly from the wharf of live sheep and the unloading directly onto the wharf of up to 3000 imported vehicles. The goods sheds currently block access for this type of operation. At the moment, the only areas available are the heavy lift H-berth and the open area between B and C Sheds. If the area between B and C Sheds is to be included in the heritage precinct, the loss of this operational space will have to be compensated for further along the wharf. Two proposals have been put forward by the FPA:

- (a) to demolish E-Shed and use the materials to renovate the remaining sheds, or
- (b) to dismantle E-Shed so that all or part of it can be relocated within the Western End.

The second proposal is the preferred option.



### MAP 3: the Western End



Tenders and expressions of interest for the use of the shed have already been called for and must be resolved by early July. E-Shed could be relocated to the site of the old railway sheds behind B and C Sheds [Maps 2 and 3]. It would complement the precinct and could be used for a number of purposes, including a new Maritime History Museum. Alternatively, or in conjunction, E-Shed could be used as a new ferry terminal. The success of such a move is demonstrated by the earlier relocation and re-utilisation of the very attractive J-Shed now on Bathers Beach. It was originally located near the Fremantle traffic bridge.

#### 3. C-Shed

Whether E-Shed is demolished or dismantled for relocation, one very favourable outcome will be the use of materials from it to restore C-Shed, including the reconstruction of the western end that was demolished in 1985. If any building is to be preserved on Victoria Quay it should be C-Shed. It was built in 1904 and is the oldest goods shed on the quay. With the increasing number of cruise ships calling at Fremantle, about ten to fifteen a year, the FPA are considering using C-Shed as an alternative to the passenger terminal.

This is an exciting concept as it would attract greater interest in the public precinct of the quay and also give new life to C-Shed.

#### 4. Road Access

Cliff Street is to be returned to its original straight alignment, giving direct access to the wharf. The fences, walls and barriers will be removed, including the intimidating Gate No.1. Slip Street will be promoted as a public pedestrian thoroughfare and will be extended to join up with the South Mole road. Another thoroughfare will be opened joining Slip Street to the wharf running adjacent to Swan Dock. The public will be able to view the workings of the slipways from this street which, as yet, is unnamed. Victoria Quay Road, which runs parallel to the railway line, will be kept open to allow vehicle and cycle access between the Western End and Gate No.2. Gate No.3, down by the railway bridge, will become the main gate for the Port Operational Area.

#### 5. Passenger Terminal

This will continue to operate as a terminal



and function centre. Although the area can be closed off for security purposes, it will be free public access most of the time.

### Areas Under Consideration

As the TAFE College of Marine Studies continues to expand, it will require access to the waterfront for its activities. Consideration is being given to the restoration of the boom-defence jetty (built in 1939), and the retention of the rail line which runs from the jetty to the boom-defence buildings (now part of the College). Salvaged timbers from the upgrading of the North Wharf could be used for the restoration. As the boom jetty has a ramp running into the water, the restoration of these facilities may prove a great benefit to the College and other stakeholders in the precinct.

Swan Dock will continue to operate the slipways and will most likely expand its interests towards the South Mole. As a commercially operating shipyard and with sensitive consideration to the older buildings and machinery, this facility will be an asset to the precinct.

The fate of Forrest Landing, at the extreme western end of the quay, is uncertain. The FPA agrees that the area needs cleaning up. It may be removed altogether.

A, B and D Sheds will continue in their present roles. The maintenance costs of A and B Sheds currently exceed the revenue received from their leases and the shipping charges for use of these berths. We recognise that to survive, the West End must operate as a commercial venture, returning a realistic income to the FPA. However, it is, perhaps, unrealistic to expect museums and community groups such as the Leeuwin Sail Training Foundation and the Maritime Heritage Association to generate the large funds required for ongoing maintenance of the wharf and its buildings (which are already in a poor state of preservation and in need of extensive repairs). The activities and facilities provided by such groups attract people to the waterfront and thus to the more commercial activities and venues also occupying the area. It would be ludicrous for a Victoria Quay Maritime Precinct not to have the Maritime Museum as a feature because it could not afford to pay the rent! There is a crying need for the W.A. Museum to establish a maritime history museum on the wharf to tell the story of the harbour and the stories of the stevedores and lumpers, the ships, the unions, the sailors and fishermen, the wool and timber industries, and the shipbuilders ...

etc. As suggested in the Victoria Quay Study Report: [page 46] "the care and maintenance of these facilities may also be considered as a community service obligation ...".

The Fremantle City Council has a major role to play in the development of a West End precinct that will integrate the waterfront with the city and link Fremantle again with its maritime history. The FPA, Fremantle City Council and the stakeholders in the area will form a group to a structured planning policy so that indiscriminate ad-hoc developments do not destroy the character of the area.

### Victoria quay Ferry Terminal Concept

The concept of incorporating a ferry terminal in the West End precinct was put forward as a possible option by the MHA in early 1992, as a commercially viable enterprise that would generate enough income to subsidise the costs of less profitable and non-profit making maritime activities and exhibits on the quay. Certainly a terminal is needed in the area. The terminal at the end of East Street is congested, dangerous and too far from the city. The Rous Head terminal, while catering for the needs of the northern suburbs, is difficult to access from the city. Located opposite the railway station and already connected by a pedestrian bridge, a terminal between B and C Sheds would be on the doorstep of the city. It could be the hub and drawcard of the precinct, attracting large crowds to the waterfront. As the terminal would have to be cut into the wharf, sensitive and careful planning would be essential so that none of the character of the wharf was destroyed.

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### Editor's Note

*The FPA is to be congratulated on its sympathetic and progressive attitude to the future of Victoria Quay. Members, we welcome your comments and ideas on the above proposal, on the re-use of E-Shed (before July!) and on issues that have not yet been considered - such as the future of the old wharf cranes, a steam train museum and the reintroduction of a Fremantle steam train service.*



# A Whale of a Tale Revisited

by Les Johnson

*Tradition said that Australian whaling began by association in 1788 when a ship of the famous English company of Samuel Enderby, the EMILIA, followed the First Fleet to Botany Bay, returning home two years later loaded to the gun's with sperm oil. The end came 190 years later when the last of the Australasian whaling stations, at Frenchman Bay, Albany, was closed – under the eyes of conservationists and the media. Writer Les Johnson was there. He recently returned.*

**Y**ou smell the past, an all-pervading tang of boiled oil, an olfactory relic of what was in truth an unpretty industry, as you walk carefully along the angled ramps, pathways and shop floors of the last of the Australasian whaling stations, an agglomeration of structures transformed into a collective museum to meet a no less pervasive human taste for the curious.

A German backpacker offered a perceptive comment: "*There is less to see here than feel*", and he didn't mean the rust.

True, some tourists experience a frisson of vicarious horror through the artefacts and imagery of harpoon guns, gouting blood, and the reduction of gentle leviathans to oils, hand creams and fertilisers. In others, the emotive responses are as deep as those of the visitors who finger medieval instruments of torture in the Tower of London and wonder if they can buy copies for hanging on the lounge room wall back home. Passions can fade as the years go by. After all, as a kid with a big mouth and bad manners complained on the day of my visit, "*that stuff is all yesterday, man ...*"

At least one whaler knew that whaling would end.



The late Ches Stubbs, last of the Albany whaling skippers, in a long interview for ABC radio some years ago, told me he had come to believe that "It had to end sooner or later. I'm a bit of a conservationist now".

He was also a bit of a tourist attraction himself, behatted, bewhiskered, telling visitors – with a certain glee – to be careful of the snake which lived under the front steps. That's conservation too, isn't it?

But forget the controversies and look instead at something which most decidedly should not fade into ancient memory. See the old whaling station as more than a splatter-dash of old sheds, tanks, bones and one of the world's rarest vessels – a northern hemisphere turned Pacific whale-chaser





complete with a triple-expansion steam engine many a European or American maritime museum curator would kill for, all sitting on the shoreline of a lonely but lovely bay. See it all as a composite monument to a once common Australian characteristic, a cheerful "yeah, mate, let's give it a go" attitude too often smothered in these welfare state years at the tag end the 20th century.

From a scratch start, the station became a viable economic unit which, at a peak, paid ten million dollars a year in wages alone and more again in other local spending.

In historic and social terms, the station qualifies as much as any old shanty in a wheatbelt town for listing as part of the national heritage. Here, in fact, is a forgotten tale of ingenuity, of innovation, of making do, of recycling indeed. Cheynes Beach Whaling was a local show, all but ignored by government which could see little beyond the entrenched big names of whaling. The company thrived on self help – without a consultant or a government handout in sight. Much of the plant was bought cheap from a failed up-country venture into manufacturing grain alcohol. The gear was old, the ships were old, but the energy and enthusiasm were not.

At the very least, the museum is a monument to enterprise and hard work, but the monument needs

help. The upkeep is enormous. Income is not. A Government not accustomed to helping deserving causes should see the uniqueness of this place, and reach for the chequebook.

Ches Stubbs lived out his life in a cottage overlooking his last command, the Cheynes IV. "She was the best sea boat of them all", he said. "She gave you a good ride." Not any more. "She" is in urgent need of restoration.

I am told (in one of today's obnoxious bits of jargon) that whaling is "politically incorrect", and for this reason seeking to preserve memories of the industry may create unease. The only response to this kind of comment is "Don't be so damn silly". Aiding a whaling museum should be no more dreadful than helping to save relics of the convict era – or any other distinctive slice of the Australian past. Failure to do so would be an odd reflection of a general recognition that history and tourism are valuable factors in the national economy.

But Ches Stubbs saw it all and said it all first: "People come here and stand on that old flensing deck, staring out to sea, and they aren't thinking about conservation or politics. They're seeing pictures, romantic notions, yo-heave-ho and thar she blows, and all that stuff. And they're willing to pay for it". (Photo courtesy Ed Smidt.)



Follow this plan on your own walkabout

1. Entrance Complex, Small Artifacts Museum and Video Theatre.
2. Cheynes IV Whalechaser.
3. Flensing Deck with Winches.
4. Cutting up Deck, Head Saw and Carcass Hoist.
5. Bottom Factory, Digestors and Whale Meal Store.
6. Factory Offices.
7. Factory Mess, Cook's House and Ablution Block.
8. Whale Skeleton Display.
9. Whale Solubles Recovery Plant.
10. Workshop (formerly filtration shed).
11. Engineering Workshop.
12. R&I Panorama Tower.
13. Boiler House with Cheynes III Engine.
14. Pump House for loading oil onto overseas tankers.
15. Store and Radio Workshop.
16. Start of the Wildflower Walk.
17. Mobies Souvenirs.
18. Whaler's Galley Cafe Restaurant.
19. Parry Gallery with Richard Ellis Marine Mammal Art Collection.
20. Aircraft Museum (new).



### Editor's comment

*Mr. Johnson in addition points out that the station, along with the CHEYNES IV, is currently in a sad state of deterioration and help is urgently needed for their preservation. That the station could fall into such a state of disrepair should be a great concern to all, especially the Maritime Heritage Association. The station plays a unique role in portraying a most significant role in our maritime and social heritage. The site is integral to the history of Albany and the story of whaling in*

*Western Australia. Its significance to the wider international maritime history is, in addition, not to be underestimated.*

*The Association hopes to run further articles on the whaling station and the chasers, to assist in giving wider exposure to their significance – and due recognition to the people whose initiative and common sense has preserved the site for our future.*

## The Engineless Sailing Ship: Not Dead Yet, But Looking Rather Strange.



A lecture and slide show describing the construction, rigging, trade and performance of *Perahu Janggolan*: beautiful and exotic sailing ships, still being built and trading from Madura, in W.A.'s sister state, East Java.

Presented by Nick Burningham.

6:00 pm, Monday, 11th July; S.T.F. LEEUWIN Conference Room; B-Shed, Victoria Quay, Fremantle.



# *Journal of an Expedition to Investigate the Swan River* by Nick Burningham

*February 28, 1994*

*It is nearly 167 years to the day since Captain James Stirling launched his expedition to survey the Swan River and surrounding country. Today, Captain Bill Brown will lead a re-enactment voyage up the Swan in a traditional rowing boat.*



*Bill Brown is a tough Glaswegian seaman who first went to sea as a teenager on North Sea freighters. (Nowadays Bill, and Susan, his aristocratic Swiss wife, run Porthole Prints - a gallery of maritime prints and paintings in East Fremantle.) The expedition's boat is a Penobscott Bay boat, built by Jay Lawrie; it is rather smaller than the cutter and launch used by Stirling.*

*Stirling's expedition in 1827 took nearly a week to reach the area now known as Guildford. According to modern maps this equals an average rate of progress of only about five miles per day, although Stirling thought that he had travelled further. In fact, there were many diversions and delays such as dragging the heavy boats over extensive sandbanks. Stirling had no prior knowledge of the course of the river and the position of the deep water channel; on the other hand, Bill and I are both reasonably familiar with the river between its mouth and Blackwall Reach, so we have decided to start our voyage from Point Walter where the real voyage of discovery will begin for us.*

*We have chosen to start on the 28th February (rather than the anniversary date of March 8th) because Bill has time off work, and also we intend to take advantage of the moon, which has just passed full. It is our intention that we can use an afternoon sea breeze and sail on through the night until the easterly asserts itself, in order to make a relatively easy ascent of the river.*

*But unfortunately, this morning has dawned cool, with a stiff and blustery easterly. There seems little likelihood of any sea breeze today. We will launch after midday when the easterly should have moderated a little.*

*Captain Stirling's party had to land each afternoon in time to set up camp, shoot local fauna, and make the fires to cook their dinner. But we shall not be doing that: today there is a total fire ban and, in any case, wallabies have been largely displaced by domestic dogs and cats which we should probably not eat. So, we shall take along some bread and cheese (plus various salamis and cold meats, pickles, olives, salads, a curry and rice, beer and half a crate of wine).*



## The Voyage

We actually launched from Deepwater Point on the Canning River at 1320hrs. The wind was moderate, with some stronger gusts out of the east, or slightly south of east. We were able to set the spritsail to reach out of the Canning and northwards along the Como and South Perth shores of Melville Water, enjoying our first beers. Bill's boat FRIEND is very stable and sails well on a reach or fetching to windward, despite a deplorably cut spritsail.

Out on Melville Water it was easy to understand how Stirling's expedition could have spent so much time getting up the Swan - The Narrows would have been very difficult to find if one didn't already know they were there. However, we had no trouble finding The Narrows: we just sailed parallel to the traffic on the Kwinana Freeway. Sailing quietly in a traditional open boat, it doesn't take long to develop a sense of the surreality of modern urban social organisation. At 1430 on a Monday afternoon, the Kwinana Freeway is thick with traffic speeding in either direction. Where can they all be going? Bill reasoned. The offices in the city are all crammed with workers; the shopping centres and city centre are all aflood with gently ambulating shoppers; yet this wide freeway is a torrent of speeding cars. It was a mystery to both of us, and the ecological implications of it all were too horrible to contemplate on a sunny afternoon. We sipped our beer and followed the traffic to The Narrows; and it was there that we turned eastwards and met the easterly wind funnelling in from Perth Water.

We beached FRIEND in the shade under the Narrows Bridge and unstepped the mast in preparation for a long row to windward, up to Heirisson Island. With the mast and sprit stowed, we both rowed, taking one oar each, and made fairly slow progress when the wind gusted against us. Our timing and co-ordination on the oars was good enough to make headway, but it was far from perfect as we slogged slowly past the City: Bill favours rowing in waltz-time - slow, slow, quick-quick, slow - while I have a random pattern which I insist is completely regular. On that bright and clear afternoon, the glass and chrome skyscrapers of the City looked curiously small, like a jumble of models, and we had plenty of time to look at them.

It was 1530 when we rowed into the little cove on the northeast side of Heirisson Island. There we stretched our legs and ate bread and cheese, etc., along with a delicious can of beer. As we ate, we were watched by a squawking flock of black and white birds - quite probably they are called Heirissons and the island is named after them. Bill tried to catch a heirisson for our tea, but the sly creatures avoided his grasp.

At 1600, with the mast re-stepped and the sail set, we reached and then ran northwards from the Island, under the Bunbury Railway Bridge and on to Bardon Park, in Maylands. The river meanders eastwards there, and we again met a headwind. We tried tacking for a while, but FRIEND does not like going hard to windward. We brailed-up the sail and rowed to windward for a while, but it was slow work, so we unstepped the mast to reduce windage, and settled in to a long and slow row to windward. The

wind tends to veer and follow the course of the river, constrained by the river's banks, so it is either a following wind or a headwind much of the time. We experienced a headwind as we rowed south, then east, around the Maylands meander. Eventually we were able to run under sail again, past Tranby House and Maylands Boatshed. But

soon we had to unstep the mast as we rowed east, under the Garratt Road Bridge.

Just before the sun set, at 1830, we tied up at a jetty, not far from the Tonkin Highway Bridge. With the mast resteped and the sail furled to get it out of the way, we took our dinner on board. Our *aperitif* was a Minton Farm sauvignon blanc/colombard - not a particularly promising blend, I thought, but it was dry with plenty of acid and enough fruit, and it proved to be invigorating and refreshing. Dinner was rice and a very good *rendang* curry, made for us by Susan.

While we were taking dinner, the easterly breeze dropped away completely. This gave us much better conditions for rowing upstream. I took the oars, and Bill, whose fundament was rather worn and sore from a long afternoon on the rowing thwart, took the tiller, sitting uncomfortably in the stern sheets. I rowed gently into the night, towards Guildford,





FRIEND gliding easily through the calm waters.

I'm not very familiar with the suburbs west of the City, and I had only a vague idea where we had got to. Bill assured me that we were already close to Guildford. I knew that before we reached Guildford we should find the confluence of the Helena and Swan rivers. In the dark, before the moon rose, we peered into a couple of short creeks that might have been the Helena, but weren't. I felt less and less certain that Bill knew where we were or, alternatively, that Bill might be exaggerating how far we had progressed in the hope of persuading me to turn round. On and on I rowed, at a very gentle pace. Bill kept predicting that we would see Guildford Road Bridge around every bend in the river, but we didn't. Eventually he asked two fishermen on the northern bank where the bridge was. *"It's up that way, over the river. You can't miss it."* they replied helpfully.

And they were quite right: the bridge is built over the river. We found it a few hundred metres past the confluence of the Helena. There were also two railway bridges and, a little further upstream, a very fine cantilever suspension bridge carrying a water main. Here the river's banks are steep and high. With the moon still low in the sky, the river was dark and mysterious.

When finally we entered the reach of the river that runs east past Guildford, at a little after 2130, I agreed to turn around.

Bill took the oars and, despite obvious discomfort, rowed vigorously downstream. We stopped at a riverside park provided with a jetty and street lighting, to fortify ourselves with half a bottle of Taylor's 1988 cabernet sauvignon. By that time it was distinctly chilly and Bill was actually shivering with a recurrence of the ague he caught on one of his expeditions up the Limpopo river. Nevertheless, after a couple of glasses of red and a short lie-down, he rowed on downstream to where we had taken dinner. And there we finished the cab-sauv.

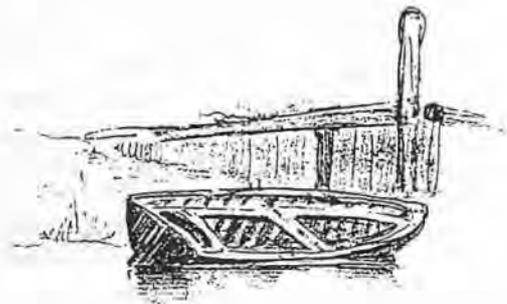
I took over the rowing and Bill, somewhat addled by wine and the Limpopo ague, took the tiller to bounce us off the river banks and sandbanks before turning eastwards into a dead-end arm of the river in Belmont. Eventually we unshipped the rudder and FRIEND kept sensibly to the middle of the river thereafter. From Rivervale to Maylands, Bill rowed again with a gradually increasing southeasterly breeze, while I took a snooze in the stern sheets. Then I rowed against the wind under

the Bunbury Railway Bridge, and at 0300 reached the little cove on Heirisson Island (eleven hours since we had left it).

We shipped the rudder again and prepared the sail for setting. I rowed out of the lee of the island and there we set the sail. Bill slept fitfully under a pile of sarongs and tarpaulins, balancing on the midship thwart, while FRIEND broadreached sedately across in front of the glittering city. The breeze improved gradually as we sailed back through The Narrows.

Out on Melville Water it was a little choppy and we had to sheet-in, in order to head south, clear of Point Currie. By dawn we were reaching along, half a mile off the Nedlands shore. As the sky grew lighter, and then the sun rose, we ran northwest to pass around the end of the Point Walter sandspit. We ran aground three times trying to short-cut around the end of the spit, and then had to tack up to Chidley Point, using the oars to improve the windward performance. Bill gamely rowed up to Chidley Point. We found Blackwall Reach becalmed and I took the oars until a breeze returned and carried us round Roe Point, to Rocky Bay.

At 0750, on the morning of 1st March, we landed at East Fremantle boat ramp - rather cold, tired and blistered. But on the whole it had been an interesting and not too-unpleasant trip. I had rather expected to find that areas of the river bank, to the west of the City, would be blighted with scruffy light industry and dusty acres of pre-fabricated warehouses. I was pleasantly surprised to find that the banks are everywhere green, and there are considerable stretches that have probably changed very little in character since Stirling first passed by, blasting away at the waterfowl with muzzle-loaders.





## MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

### President's Annual Report: 1993-1994

"Looking through the list of objectives for 1994 I note, with one exception, that we achieved all our goals – the exception being our participation in the Tranby Maritime Pageant, which was taken out of our hands.

Our membership is down slightly – from 87 to 82. This seems to be our consistent average.

Social functions for the year were well attended, particularly the sausage sizzles and the KRAIT launch at the Hicks' museum. These functions attracted over half our members.

#### VICTORIA QUAY MARITIME PRECINCT

Considerable development of this concept has taken place over the past twelve months. The FPA put forward their proposal to set aside sheds A, B and C for "culture, recreation and tourism", and to remove barriers and gates to improve public access. Along with DEET's continued development for a college of maritime studies and the continuation of commercial shipbuilding at Swan Docks, I believe we now have the basis for a Maritime Heritage Precinct.

The MHA can be well satisfied that it played a significant role in the outcomes of the proposal and in responding to the Victoria Quay Study. Some interesting developments may well take place as we approach Maritime Year 1997.

#### CLASSIC AND WOODEN BOAT FESTIVAL

Last October the boat show was held at the Royal Perth Yacht Club annexe in Challenger Harbour and the MHA took responsibility for organising the marquee exhibits. It was a highly successful festival and the marquee was the best ever, with over twenty displays and much greater enthusiasm from participants. Brian Lemon of the Model Steamship Association, in collaboration with the MHA, completed a working model of the KRAIT to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of Operation Jaywick, and featured the superb model in the marquee display.

We look forward to future shows at the RPYC Annexe and are most grateful to the Yacht Club for its support. I would also like to thank and congratulate the Festival Committee for organising this wonderful event.

#### MHA NEWSLETTER

This year we were successful in obtaining a Lotteries Commission grant to purchase a computer. Our editor, Chris Buhagiar, has put this to good use and done a great job producing a first-rate newsletter. We have had nothing but favourable comments about his production, and everyone wants more of the same.

We are grateful for the support the Maritime Museum has given us in the printing and mailing of our newsletter. The Museum is no longer able to continue this support and the MHA is now fully responsible for its production and distribution.

The computer will also be used to compile and produce a "*Register of Classic Watercraft of Western Australia*". My thanks to Nick Burningham, Mike Igglesden, Frank Marchant and Chris Buhagiar, who have started work on this project. I expect this will be our major project for 1994.

#### ALEC UPJOHN MODEL COLLECTION AND WORKSHOP

The collection is under Nick Burningham's care at the moment. Materials from the collection were used in Brian Lemon's model of the KRAIT. Nick is currently working on Alec's model of HMS SUCCESS.

#### B-SHED WORKSHOP AND WOODEN BOAT WORKS

A little over two years ago, Graham Lahiff put a proposal to the MHA that would see the ongoing management of the boat building school that was started in 1991 by Brian Phillips, Mike Reveley and Sally May. Graham's aim was to promote the preservation of traditional maritime skills through traditional boat building, operating within the aims and objectives of the MHA. He also envisaged he would work in close cooperation with the Maritime Museum, with the workshop forming a dynamic display that would increase public awareness and attendance of the B-Shed Museum.

We estimated it would take about two years for the venture to be self supporting. Accordingly, we undertook an agreement to appoint Graham as workshop manager for the duration of the Museum's lease agreement. (It runs till the end of this year.) I am pleased to report that Graham,



operating as Wooden Boat Works, has fulfilled all the objectives as outlined in the initial proposal. The boat building courses are fully booked; in a practical sense the skills are being preserved and the workshop forms a practical display of maritime heritage in its own right.

I believe full credit should be given to Graham, Mike Reveley and their team of supporters for all they have done to promote an awareness of maritime heritage through traditional boat building. I must say, however, that the Maritime Museum's appreciation of the boat building school has been disappointing; indeed, the Museum's response seems to be that we are not doing enough to promote the Museum.

Our future with the B-Shed workshop space is in some doubt. The likelihood of the Museum renewing our agreement, (or being able to renew it), is uncertain.

I hope therefore, that the new President and Committee may be able to improve the situation and our liaison with the Museum. Whatever the future may hold for B-Shed, the MHA is most grateful for all the help and assistance the Maritime Museum has extended to us – in particular for making the workspace available at no cost to us for the past three years.

#### **APPRECIATION**

I wish also to give special thanks to Bob Johnson and the Leeuwin Sail Training Foundation for making its facilities available to us, including our mailing address and collection. Thanks also to Tana for acting as our membership secretary.

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#### **Annual General Meeting**

The MHA Annual General Meeting was held on April 11, 1994, at the Leeuwin STF conference room. Office bearers of the MHA are now as follows:

President: *Nick Burningham*  
Snr. Vice President: *Chris Buhagiar* (newsletter editor)  
Vice Presidents: Frank Marchant and Mike Igglesden  
Secretary: *to be appointed*  
Treasurer: *Bob Johnson*  
Committee: Ross Shardlow and Barbara Shardlow  
Ex-officio: *Graham Lahiff* (Workshop Manager) and

Thankyou to my Committee for your excellent support – especially to my secretary, Barbara, who really did all the work.

Thanks too to Mike and Margot Beilby for their handiwork with the MHA bags and aprons. It was also great to see Mike's article about the Classic and Wooden Boat Festival published in the *Australian Amateur Boat Builder*.

I thank our general members, particularly the Model Steamship Association and the Hicks family, who always rush in to lend a hand without being asked.

Thanks again to our honorary solicitor, Greg Gaunt, and to Jim Hunter for auditing our books.

For tonight's treat, a special thankyou to John Longley and the Endeavour Foundation for generously allowing us to look over the ENDEAVOUR, and to Mike Lefroy for giving his time to conduct the tour.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Having served as President for the past two years I will not be standing for re-election, but I am happy to finish my term knowing the Association will be in good hands. I'm looking forward to seeing some new ideas, particularly those that will provide more opportunity for member participation. It was very pleasing, for instance, to see the response from some of our members to the Leeuwin Foundation's volunteer guide programme to keep the B-Shed Museum operating."

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Tana Bailey (Membership)  
Auditor: *Jim Hunter*

#### **Editor's note**

*I'm sure I reflect the sentiments of all members, in expressing a wholehearted thanks for the tireless effort outgoing-President, Ross Shardlow, and "his" Secretary, Barbara Shardlow, have put into the Association. Thanks are also extended to the outgoing Vice Presidents, Mike and Margo Beilby. I am quite certain that the Association is held in high regard in many circles – largely through their selfless dedication, hard work and friendliness.*



## ***Nothing Like a Picnic***

All members of the Association who are the proud owners of a boat or two and aren't too averse to let others' feet tread their hallowed decks – even to take others for short jollies on the river – as part of the attractions of a proposed MHA family and friends picnic, perhaps at Point Walter this spring or summer – are asked to contact Mike Igglesden on 386 4128 after hours.

*He will be only too pleased to pass on names, boats etc. to whoever will end up organising the event!*

## **Forest Sheoak**

**S**heoak is one of the lesser known but uniquely West Australian hardwoods. The tree grows to a height of about thirteen metres, with a bole of about three to five metres and a diameter of about one metre. It grows naturally in the jarrah forest but does not like the drier regions. Its principal uses in the past were for shingles, barrels and ox yoke timber. In a few years time, it will be almost unobtainable.

Some time ago, a gentleman rang me to ask if I would like to buy some dry sheoak. He said that it had been given to him as a wedding present and he had intended to make a bedroom suite out of it. However, his wife had died and he therefore did not want to go ahead with the project.

We went over to see the timber and, noticing that it looked very old, I asked him how long he had had it. He replied that his wife had died two years earlier and that they had been married for fifty eight years. So it appeared to me that the timber was some sixty years old.

He in fact thought it a bit older because it had been given to him by a friend who had cut it some six years earlier still, to renovate an old house. This friend had also decided not to go ahead with

that project. So this made the timber some sixty six years old.

It had been well stored and, apart from the dirt and dust and a few worm holes, was in good condition. So we bought the parcel.

As yet we have not used any of it. But when we do, I will make sure that this little story goes with whatever is made from it.

In the latter part of 1989, my son and myself manufactured seven hundred wooden pulley blocks for the Endeavour Project - all of which were made from versatile sheoak. The sea chests and ships' wheels on show today in the family museum are all hand-crafted from this beautiful timber from the West Australian forest. We believe our Australian forests should be conserved but we also believe that the timber used in these pieces and the workmanship that goes into making them are worthy to be passed on to future generations.

The items that can be seen today are for the museum and for the benefit and pleasure of future generations of our family. The craftsman was my eldest son Robin, of whom I am justly proud. *(Thanks to Barry Hicks.)*

# WOODEN BOAT WORKS - BOATBUILDING COURSES

## *Lofting and Boatbuilding classes running*

**GROUP BUILDERS: 8 DAYS**  
\$150.00 (approx) per STUDENT

**OWNER BUILDERS: 12-14 DAYS**  
\$650.00 (approx) per STUDENT  
(Materials extra.)

**LOFTING: 4 NIGHTS**  
\$60.00 per STUDENT



**CONTACT:** Graham Lahiff - WOODEN BOAT WORKS, B Shed, Victoria Quay, Fremantle.  
Tel. 335 9477 PO Box 1091, Fremantle, WA 6160 \* Reduced price for MHA members.

## **WANTED!** *An MHA Secretary*

**With the stepping down of Barbara Shardlow, the Association finds itself without someone to carry out this challenging but interesting role.**

If you would like to become more involved in the Maritime Heritage Association's activities and play a very worthwhile role in shaping its future, then the incoming President, Nick Burningham, will be only too pleased to hear from you. (*Being able to type would be a distinct advantage!*)

Nick can be contacted after hours on 430 6457.