

MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

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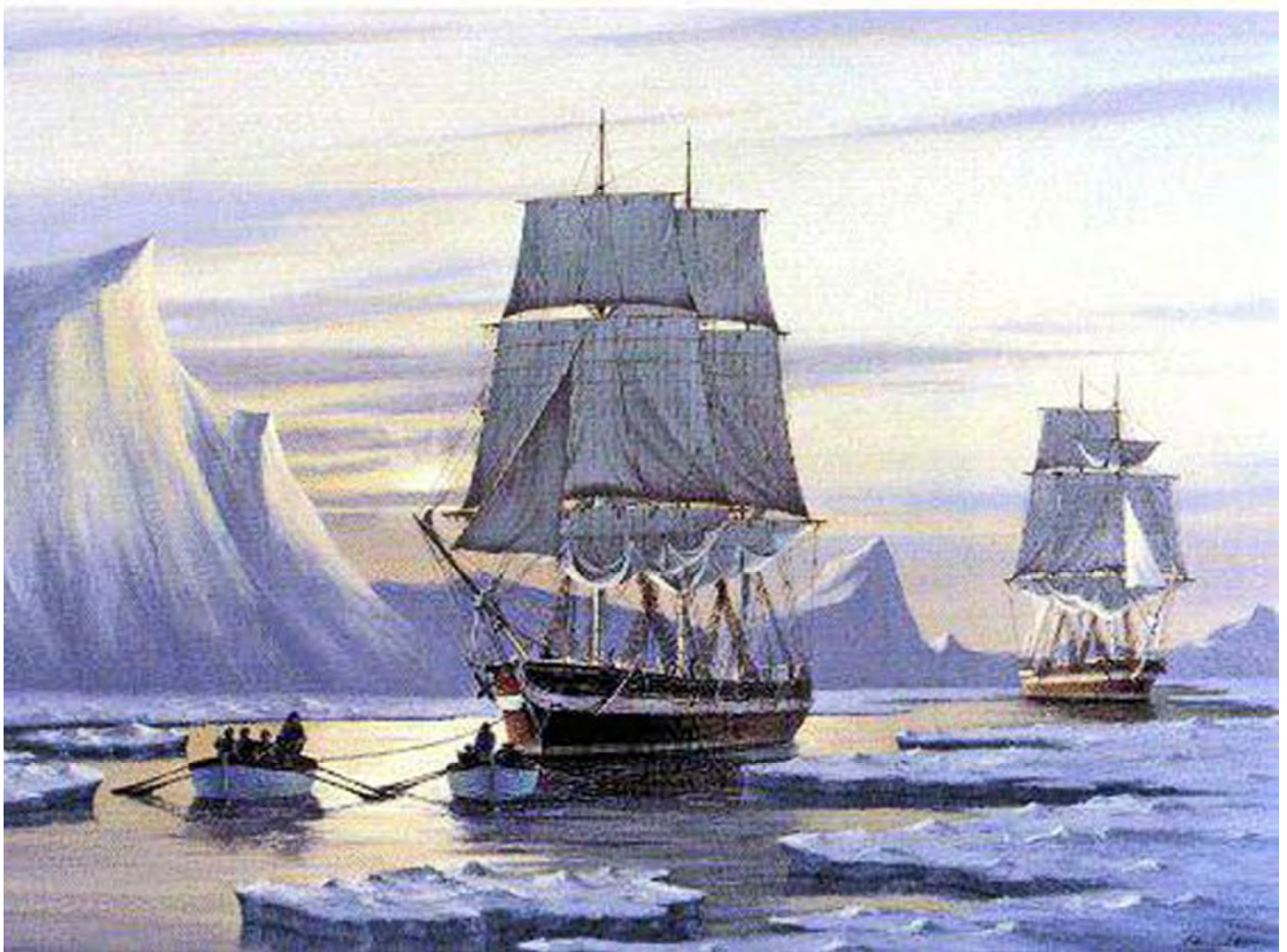
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**C/o: The Secretary (Marcia Van Zeller)
47 Conochie Crescent
Manning, W.A. 6152**



**Editor: Peter Worsley. 12 Cleopatra Drive, Mandurah, W.A. 6210
Email: mha.editor@gmail.com**



The Erebus and Terror

Painting by Canadian marine artist J. Franklin Wright

See article pages 19–20



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

(If you have an unwanted collection of magazines of a maritime nature, then perhaps its time to let others enjoy reading it. Contact the Association; we may be interested in archiving the collection.)

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The Editor, 12 Cleopatra Drive, MANDURAH, Western Australia, 6210. mha.editor@gmail.com**

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EDITORIAL

The MHA has recently suffered the sad loss of two of its members, Geoff Shellam and Brian Lemon. Each man had a well-deserved reputation for excellence in their own field that was recognised world-wide.

If anybody deserved the epithet of “a scholar and a gentleman” it was Geoff Shellam. The list of his contributions to the scientific world is long and distinguished.

Brian Lemon was a true artist in the field of model shipbuilding. His quiet, self-deprecating manner hid the fact that he was recognised well beyond these shores for the quality of his models.

Both men will be sadly missed by the MHA, and our deepest sympathies go to Fiona and Irene, and their families. See tributes pages 3–6.



Did You Know?

England occupied the Falkland Islands in 1766, Captain John MacBride on HMS *Jason* having also at that time made the earliest charts of the islands. Sovereignty was later contested by France who had established a settlement there in 1764 under the leadership of Louis Antoine de Bougainville. This settlement was abandoned three years later. In 1767 the French settlement was transferred to the control of the Spanish, who remained there until 1811. When Argentina became a republic, the islands, called by them Malvinas, were used as a penal settlement. With the growing importance of the Straits of Magellan as a route to the Pacific, England decided to reassert its claim. HMS *Clio* rehoisted the colours in Berkeley Sound in January 1833.

Vale – Prof. Geoffrey Randolph Shellam

12 August 1943 – 02 July 2015



photo: David Nicolson

IT WAS IN SEPTEMBER 1988 that the battered hull of a once beautiful little boat, made fast to a rickety jetty in the old Mandurah Lagoon, met my gaze. ‘Where have I seen her before?’ I mused. I hadn’t, but I had sailed on Geoff Shellam’s boat *Senang* – a sister ship to the wreck almost floating before me. *Senang* and the wreck, named *Oriel* were both born in Singapore in 1950 at the Thornycroft yard, built as 18-foot half-deck ‘knockabout’ boats. A joy to behold, they had spent their long lives miles apart. The boats were reunited after I had acquired and restored *Oriel*, and they now swing together on moorings in Matilda Bay. Geoff and I enjoyed many wonderful sails together in *Senang* during the 1980s and 1990s. I am sure Geoff was more than happy to take a break from academia from time to time. Some of these sails could possibly be described as unforgettable – in an educational sense! Although he would have often experienced wet and cold sailing in his Tumblaren design boat on Port Phillip Bay, handling *Senang*, a much smaller boat, in Perth’s warm but strong sea breezes, called for skills of a different nature. We enjoyed each other’s company and I was able to suggest various courses of action if an interesting situation arose. Geoff’s love of small boats was not confined to sailing them. He was besotted with the sight and form of small wooden boats, in fact, I can assert, with no fear of contradiction, viewing the sensuous lines of a well-designed boat whether on paper or afloat, would possibly have given him as much pleasure as actually sailing one. We were as one there! These two old wooden boats cemented a friendship between two men of completely alien backgrounds.

GEOFF HAD A KEEN INTEREST in family history, particularly if it had a maritime connection. Geoff’s great grandfather was a Police Inspector in Mauritius before retiring to South Australia in 1882. The Shellams came to Western Australia from South Australia in 1896. Geoff’s father and grandfather (who was born in Mauritius) both became bank managers in Western Australia. On Geoff’s maternal side his forebears go back to February 1830 with the arrival of the *Hooghly* at Clarence in Cockburn Sound, the *Eliza* in 1831, and the arrival of Nicol Paterson, shipwright from Stromness, in 1840. Paterson went into partnership with Anthony Cornish in 1847, and included in their various business ventures, they ran the brig *Hamlet* and the barque *Swan* to Singapore, India and China in the 1850s. In 2014 Geoff followed his Paterson lineage back to the Orkney Islands and sailed a traditional Orkney Yole around Stromness Harbour.

There were also literary connections in Geoff’s family. Through Geoff’s mother, Norah Shellam (nee Stow), Geoff was a close relative of Geraldton born Randolph Stow, author of *To the Islands* and *Merry-go-round in the Sea*, and even shared the Randolph name. Author ‘Seaforth’ MacKenzie was another close relative.

GEOFFREY RANDOLPH SHELLAM was born in Kalgoorlie in 1943 to Herbert and Norah Shellam. In 1950 the family moved to Victoria where Geoff did his schooling at Bendigo before completing a Bachelor of Science majoring in microbiology and biotechnology at the University of Melbourne. It was while undertaking a PhD in immunology at the



Walter & Eliza Hall Institute, that Geoff met Richard Stanley, and it was through this friendship that Geoff met Richard's sister, Fiona Stanley. It was also at the Hall Institute that Geoff met Gustave ('Gus') Nossal who had just taken over as Director of the Institute; indeed, Geoff was Gus' first PhD student, and it was from that time they became lifelong colleagues and friends. Geoff finished his PhD in 1968 then worked for the Commonwealth Serum Laboratories before obtaining a Royal Science Fellowship that allowed him to study immunology at the College of London from 1972 to 1976. As Fiona was also travelling to London, to study epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, they decided to set out together and were married in London in 1973.

Fiona was born in Little Bay, Sydney, and learnt to sail around Botany Bay on weekends in a yacht built by her father. In 1956 the Stanley family moved to Perth where Fiona's father, Neville Stanley, became Foundation Professor of Microbiology at the University of Western Australia. With Geoff being encouraged by Fiona's father to apply for a UWA Post-doctoral Fellowship, and with Perth being a good place for Fiona to continue her epidemiology studies, Geoff and Fiona settled back in Western Australia in 1977. Neville Stanley retired in 1983 and Geoff succeeded him as second Professor of Microbiology in 1985, a post he held for thirty years. By that time Geoff and Fiona were blessed with a young family, Hallie and Tiffany.

Returning to Western Australia reinforced Geoff's passion for family history and maritime heritage. In late 2003 he became a member of the Maritime Museum's Advisory Committee and in 2004 chaired the newly formed Fremantle Slipways Group with the aim of preserving the old Swandock slipway by incorporating it as a Slipway Precinct within a proposed Waterfront Masterplan. As the Maritime Heritage Association was also represented on the Slipway Group this formed the beginning of our happy association with Geoff. Geoff joined the MHA in March 2006 and in September he was appointed to form and chair a subcommittee to promote and develop a wider concept of a Maritime Heritage Precinct for the West End of Fremantle and Victoria Quay. As Senior Vice President for eight years Geoff formed a valuable link between the MHA and the Maritime Museum. He was also an advocate for the recognition and preservation of the Hicks' Private Maritime Museum and never missed an opportunity to show the academic world what a 'real maritime museum' looks like. As the MHA moved towards the promotion of maritime heritage through research and publishing, Geoff's passion for the preservation of the printed word and physical books soon proved one of our greatest strengths.



Geoff's 18-foot Thornycroft knockabout *Senang*, sister ship to Mike Igglesden's *Oriel*.
Photo: Mike Igglesden

In 1988, Geoff was elected to the Advisory Committee of University of Western Australia Press and became Chair of the Committee from 1991 to 2006. It is no surprise that there were so many maritime titles published during Geoff's term on the Advisory Committee. Despite his battle with cancer over the past four years Geoff continued to offer his guidance and support to the MHA's publishing plan. Gentle man that he was, it was also no surprise that with our last communication with him, just a few weeks before his passing, he advised that he was about to retire from the University to have more time to do the important things in life, that he was looking forward to our next meeting, and that he was going sailing on the morrow.

JULIA JANE, Geoff's beautiful Vertue class sloop, built by H & J Griffin in 1963, now awaits a new skipper. I hope, whoever he, or she is, they will be as passionate about wooden boats as he was.

A bright, cheerful, sensitive, caring man, a wonderful human being; I feel privileged to have been counted among Geoff's numerous worldwide friends.

Mike Igglesden (MHA Committee)

The Maritime Heritage Association extends its deepest condolences to Fiona, Hallie and Tiffany, family, friends and colleagues.

Vale – Brian John Lemon

02 December 1932 – 03 July 2015



I MET BRIAN LEMON over twenty-five years ago at the inaugural Classic and Wooden Boat Festival at Challenger Harbour, Fremantle, where Brian and the Model Steamship Association were putting on a display of the finest ship models I had ever seen in my life. I was at the Boat Festival to recruit members for a proposed Maritime Heritage Association and it was Barry and Robin Hicks who directed me to the remarkable display of models in the big marquee – so began an extraordinary association of friendships, which formed the very foundation of the Maritime Heritage Association.

BRIAN JOHN LEMON and his twin sister Jeanne were born 2 December 1932 to Charles and Marjorie Lemon of Mt Lawley, Western Australia. Brian's father was a journalist, a talented man with an appreciation of art, theatre and writing. In 1937 the family moved to Floreat Park where Brian received his schooling during the war years at Wembley and West Leederville Primary Schools before attending Perth Boys High School in 1945. Showing skills as an artist, his father encouraged Brian to pursue a career in art, but when Brian won a new camera in a photographic competition, he turned his attention to photography. Though he had considered joining the Navy as a career, in 1948 Brian started a five-year apprenticeship with J. Gibbney & Son as a Process Photographer in the blockmaking and engraving trade. With his specialist training in large format cameras he transferred from Gibbneys in 1955 to join the newly formed Air Photo Section of the

Lands and Surveys Department, a post he held until his retirement in 1989. As an aerial photographer he boasted of flying three hundred hours on DC3s and survived two engine failures. Brian recalled, 'on one occasion we happened to be in the area where the *Alkimos* broke adrift and we were called in to find her.' Besotted by a VW Beetle that he saw on display in 1954, Brian purchased his own Beetle the following year and helped set up the VW Club of WA. He was the first person to race VWs in Western Australia at Caversham. Beetles and driving the open road remained a lifelong passion. In 1968 he met Irene, a widow with two young boys, Kim and Rod, and they were married in 1970.

In 1975, thinking he would rather do something other than watching TV in the evenings, he decided to take up model-making and purchased a wooden kit of a model Torpedo Boat. His second model was also a kit, but already discontent with the finish of 'production' models he decided to personalise it to give it a quality of life. He had found his niche. The next 115 models, thirty of which were radio controlled, were scratch built – made by hand from timber, brass, string, bits of old clocks and things found in gutters, each model brought to life by the marks of ageing and use, artistically applied by a process Brian called 'Lemonising'.

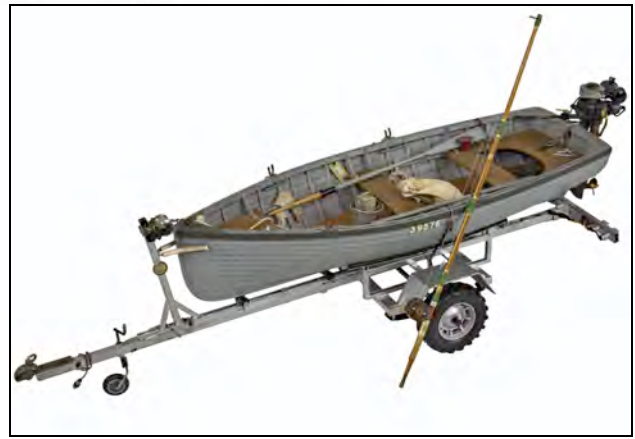
Where Brian picked up his skills and interest in maritime history is not entirely clear. His father was a skilled craftsman and when Brian was eight years old he and his father built a good-sized pond-yacht made of cedar, which he sailed on Lake Monger.



Brian counted this as his first model. His maritime experiences, however, were more prosaic. He had been introduced to boats by ‘hanging around’ the City Beach Surf Club, and he did become a champion oarsman rowing bow-oar in Racing Fours and Eights with the ANA Rowing Club. He also tried his hand at sailing VJs during his time with ANA, claiming he ‘knew which strings to pull to make it go but seemed to spend a lot of time in the water.’ Brian’s building method was basic; with just a few hand-tools, scrapers, files and a Stanley knife, he fashioned miniature masterpieces using the end of Irene’s kitchen table as a workbench – much to her annoyance and a great test of her tolerance. We have, however, seen Irene working at that same workbench sewing up miniature sails, hatch covers, fenders and baggywrinkle. Morning teas at the Lemons were frequent and famous, with Brian’s latest creation at one end of the table and Irene’s carrot cake at the other.

After that chance meeting at the Boat Festival Brian’s work was regularly displayed at the Hicks’ Private Maritime Museum; indeed, Brian donated a large number of models to the museum for that purpose. On public ‘open-days’ Brian would bring in an extra Kombi-load of models to bolster the collection and while Irene helped Doris with the catering, Brian would ring the bell to welcome the guests. Always an active contributor and supporter of maritime heritage, Brian went on to become President of the MHA in 2006 and was the first member to be made an Honorary Life Member. His regular participation in the Maritime Book Club will long be remembered for the fact that he only ever reviewed VW or camera instruction manuals!

Brian never sought recognition, fame or wealth. He was an artist who lived in humble circumstances and gave his work away to anyone who might appreciate it, knowing it would open up more space for him to create more models. He said he was a modeller, not a collector, and did not wish to enter into any commercial arrangements, as he was ‘not prepared to sacrifice quality for speed and profit.’ Brian’s work was acclaimed the world over and has been published in many journals with over twenty-three articles in the prestigious *Model Shipwright* alone. Brian had his favourites, the disguised Z-Special Unit trawler *Krait* first and foremost, our first joint MHA project. We launched Brian’s *Krait* at the Hicks’ Museum in 1993 on the 50th Anniversary of ‘Operation Jaywick’. Another favourite was *Oriel*, Mike Igglesden’s knockabout, said by Brian to be the finest model he had ever made; and for sheer satisfaction there was Model No.100, the Scottish Fife *Reaper*, a surprise presentation to Master Shipwright Bill Leonard from Master Model Shipwright Brian Lemon.



“Dinghy on a trailer” – the humblest and most romantic of models.
photo: David Nicolson

In 2008 David Nicolson took Brian on a momentous tour of museums in Canberra and NSW, including the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney where Brian saw the original *Krait* for the first time. It was from that time that we noticed Brian was quietly suffering some health issues, but though his output was slowing down his promotion of maritime heritage through display of his work, was not. The extent of his declining health became evident when, in August last year, he wrote-off his beloved VW Beetle – yet, just a month later, the WA Scale Model Expo featured Brian as “A Showcase of One Man’s Passion for Marine Modelling”, and with his “dinghy on a trailer” he won 1st prize in his class, 1st prize Judges Choice and 1st prize Peoples Choice.

In November 2014, on the 25th Anniversary of our meeting at the Boat Festival, and the 25th Anniversary of the formation of the MHA, Brian rang the bell for the last time at the Hicks’ Museum. On that occasion both Barry and Brian were each awarded a one-off presentation book, one about *Barry’s Museum*, the other about *Brian’s Models*. In May 2015 Brian was diagnosed with rapid onset Lewy Body type Alzheimer’s and congestive heart failure. On 3 July 2015, just one day after we lost Geoff Shellam, we lowered the ensign on Brian’s model of the *Gem*, as he too ‘crossed the bar’.

There were eleven models in Brian’s back room when he died. According to his wishes these have been placed in the care of the MHA at the Hicks’ Private Maritime Museum. Brian’s models are his legacy and it is the wish of his family and the MHA that these models will form the basis of a permanent collection of his work.

Ross Shardlow (Past President MHA)

The Maritime Heritage Association extends its deepest sympathies to Irene, Brian’s twin sister Jeanne, Kim, Rodney, Sharon and families, friends and colleagues.



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!)



In late 1793 the 36-gun frigate *HMS Thetis* sailed from Plymouth to Halifax, Canada. About mid-way across the north Atlantic a large group of icebergs were sighted. One had three vessels embedded in it, one of the vessels: *being a polacca-rigged ship, elevated at least a hundred feet; the berg having rolled round or been lightened by melting, so that the vessel had the appearance of being on a hill forming the southern portion of the floe.*

In 1709 the Honourable East India paid the widow, children, or parents of any seaman killed while defending a company ship or drowned in the service an amount of £30. The same sum was also given to a seaman if he suffered the loss of an arm or leg.

On 9 March 1869 The 1,790-ton ship *Blue Jacket* caught fire and was abandoned off the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic. On 8 December 1871 the figurehead from the ship, scorched but easily identifiable, washed up on Rottneest Island.

William Dampier's 292-ton ship *Roebuck* had a length of 96 feet and a beam of 25 feet. It was armed with 12 canon.

In 1936, after the first six months of building his 39-ft yacht *Lang Syne*, Bill Crowe had received no account from the supplier of his timber. He asked when he would receive an account, and was told: "Our custom is to send statements every January. Was there a special hurry?"

The Government will pay a bonus of £60 to the first importer of one male and two female camels in healthy condition; also a bonus of £50 to the first importer of two male and eight female alpacas in healthy condition; provided the same be landed within 12 months from this date (Government Gazette, 3 August 1858).

In 1906 the Englishman Sir Thomas Lipton presented a perpetual trophy to be contested by fishing schooners annually in Boston, USA. The *Rose Dorothea* from Provincetown was the inaugural winner of the Lipton Trophy in 1907.

The 32-gun US frigate *Essex* was launched on 30 September 1799, having taken less than six months to build. Construction of the 119-foot 22-gun schooner *Peacock* was even quicker. The contract to build was signed on 26 July 1813 and the 509-ton vessel launched at New York two months later, on 27 September.

Keeping the water out is not only the first and most important element of seamanship, but also it is the only necessary element of seamanship. All other elements of seamanship are niceties, but keeping the water out is a necessity.

Roger C. Taylor, 1982.

In 1864 the squadronal colours of the Royal Navy were discarded. The Royal Navy adopted the White Ensign, naval auxiliary vessels used the Blue Ensign and the merchant navy was allocated the Red Ensign.

In the early part of Sir Ernest Shackleton's famous Antarctic expedition, a young man named Perce Blackborow stowed away on the *Endurance* just before it left Buenos Aires. He was discovered three days later and brought before Shackleton, who said "Do you know that on these expeditions we often get very hungry, and if there is a stowaway available he is the first to be eaten?" Unabashed, Blackborow replied "They'd get more meat off you, sir." (The youngest person on board, he was employed as a steward, and subsequently, because of frostbite, lost all the toes on his left foot. These were amputated while the men were living under the upturned boats on Elephant Island.)

On 24 October 1910 the schooner *Hugh Norman* was wrecked near Cervantes. The captain was drowned, and the subsequent inquiry found the wreck was caused 'by the misconduct of the master, to wit, drunkenness and neglect of duty and navigation through excessive indulgence in intoxicating liquor.' He had drunk three bottles of whisky and three of methylated spirits in three days. The *Daily News* reported 'A hardy old salt would not, as a rule, be much upset by that quantity of whisky in the time...' However, it considered that the meths would have sent him mad.



Day on the Solent

This salutary incident occurred in 1974, and is an extract from Mike Igglesden's autobiography

The container ship had been steaming up the Solent, and when first noticed by the two cold, exhausted men was about a mile distant. They had just righted their Wayfarer dinghy for the second time in 10 minutes and, having wearily climbed aboard, the question, 'Are we having fun yet?' was no longer on their lips. The dinghy was part of the training fleet which had been, in spite of the precautionary reduced rigs, completely dispersed by a rather vicious squall which had scattered the boats far and wide. The breeze had settled down to a 25-knot westerly, with the resulting wave pattern throwing the partly submerged boat around in a wallowing, drunken fashion, boom crashing from side to side, jib streaming out to leeward cracking and whipping in a most unnerving manner. The crew's bailing was frantic. It soon became patently obvious that the approaching ship was on a course which could bring her uncomfortably close to their present position. It would be a great idea to manoeuvre themselves into a more favourable situation. Being run down by a 15,000-ton ship seemed to be an undesirable finale to their sailing course. Tension aboard was rising. A fierce argument arose between the two frozen and frightened dinghy sailors. The for'ard hand believed their options were nil. His view was that, since the boat had been righted onto a potentially port tack situation, to regain control of the water-logged dinghy she would have to be jollied around to bear away on a port reach. Unfortunately, he conceded, this procedure would place them on a collision course with the looming menace but, upon gaining speed, they would then be able to 'go about' and head away on a reciprocal course. The skipper, on the other hand, was all for gybing around, in spite of the strong gusting breeze and the sloshing bilge water. This action, the crew believed, would be courting disaster – probably another capsized. Mutiny.... The crew, in desperation, staggered back to the helmsman, pushed him to the floorboards, and told him it was his turn to get bailing – as a warm up exercise. Time passes quickly when you're having fun.

Eventually, enough way was gathered to enable a 'go about' attempt. The monster was very close and bearing down on them at a frightening rate. The helm was put down, prayers muttered – it is surprising how some situations engender religious fervour – the sails were trimmed, as the dinghy

slowly responded. The choppy seas breaking onto the port bow of the sluggish hull stalled her when she reached the head to wind position. She gathered sternway. The ship was, by now; close enough for its bow wave to be a further threat to the Wayfarer's stability. Steerageway had to be re-established. Reverse rudder and a backed jib finally coaxed her round onto a broad reach on starboard tack, which, at least, was a heading away from the threatening mountain of steel. Survival of this bow wave with its large curling breaking top was achieved, but not without the unwelcome addition of more Solent water into the bilge. Venturis were opened. Bailing continued at a frenzied rate.

A momentary feeling of relief and hopes of better things to come followed this successful manoeuvre. The new helmsman, since he was not now occupying his time with the bailing bucket, could return his attention to the world around them. He noted the arrival of the sailing school's inflatable runabout, which had been positioned by a somewhat worried instructor between the ship's side and the tossing, rolling Wayfarer. Looking up, he could see a row of faces, apparently interested in the proceedings taking place far below, peering over the ship's rail. Glancing astern, he judged about a cricket pitch length away, the steel wall, the starboard side of the ship, was gliding past. She was nowhere near loaded to her marks, and a sumptuous growth of marine life was on display. Barnacles and seaweed, tenaciously gripping the rusty iron plates, were interspersed with patches of some of the remaining red antifouling which still graced her hull. At the far end of this aquatic garden could be heard the sound of the rapidly approaching, measured, thump-thud, thump-thud of the barely immersed propellers.

This herald of a possible new danger was reminiscent of the resonance emitting from a distant, very powerful, hi-fi system, with the predominating rhythm, pumped out by the bass, the only discernible sound.

Question: Was the dinghy in danger of being embroiled in that maelstrom of seething churned up water? Answer: Apparently not, since, after surviving the huge quarter wave, the experience was over. All that was left to do was to enjoy an uneventful, cold, wet beat back to the sailing school,



and, after a long hot shower and a glass or two of a reviving liquid refreshment, compare dramas of the day with other members of the dispersed fleet. Tales of helicopter rescues, people stranded on naval mooring buoys, boats lost...many lessons learned, none, fortunately, at too high a price.

I understand that this episode was related to participants of later Cowes Instructor's courses, when a "bloody Australian tried to sink a container ship."

In a perverse fashion I believe this little adventure pushed me from a 'perhaps' to a 'pass' in the overall assessment of the course. I had had no trouble with any of the practical tests on the water, but the Director of the Centre, Bob Bond, told me my theory was 'not up to par'.

er to be known as the Australian Yachting Federation Training Scheme.

Ron Tough, President of the YAWA (Yachting Association of Western Australia) was a tower of strength getting Australian clubs to adopt this system. They could see no reason for changing teaching methods they had used for 100 years. The current Principal Sailing Master of Scotland, Alistair Mitchell, was engaged to co-ordinate the Australian States, with his headquarters in Sydney. What a job! I could write volumes on this subject, but I won't. I will later make further comment on the situation that arose upon our return to Perth in 1975.

The day following the end of the course the family made the ferry voyage and bus trip and joined (what was left of me) for a look around the Isle of Wight. We watched the famous cannon being fired for the yacht racing starts at the Royal Yacht Squadron, saw something of the Uffa Fox museum and then back in camp by ferry. I spent the next day doing nothing and sleeping. Wonderful!

R.Y.A./N.S.S.A.

**COACH
AWARD**



This is to certify that

Name M. IGGLESDEN,
Address 8 Kingsway,
..... Nedlands, 6009, Western Australia.

has been examined to the standards laid down by the R.Y.A. and N.S.S.A. and is qualified as a Coach for a period of three years from this date.

(N.B. A holder of this award is personally required to submit this Certificate and Log Book for revalidation to the R.Y.A. after the expiry of three years. Failure to do so invalidates.)

Signed on behalf of the R.Y.A. and N.S.S.A.

.....
Date 12 August 1974
..... Valid August 80

pto

Coach Award Certificate.

Less than half of this intake passed; in fact, some came out at a lower level than they were upon entering. Perhaps my pass mark was related to a political situation where-by I could then 'spread the word' regarding the RYA Scheme in Australia. Don't know. Anyway I was awarded 'Senior Instructor Sailing Master and Coach Award' which enabled me to become a Principal of a Sailing Centre in the RYA Scheme. As one of my achievements in life I am very proud that I was largely instrumental introducing, over the coming years, an Australia-wide programme, lat-

Dear Michael,

Many thanks for your letter. I am sorry to hear that you are returning to Western Australia but no doubt you will be glad to get back to the sunshine.

I am pleased to say that nobody has had chance to sink container ships recently though I must admit that the letter I had from the Master was very pleasant considering the circumstances!

Kindest regards

Bob Bond Training Master



QUIZ

Answers to June

1. The vessel that rescued the survivors of the wreck of the VOC ship *Batavia* was a *jacht* named *Sardam*.
2. The *Rockingham* was commanded by Captain E. Halliburton.
3. The Flying Dutchman is Captain Vanderdecken, who in a howling gale swore an oath to beat into Table Bay in spite of God or man. His ship sank, and because of the wicked oath he was condemned to sail those seas until eternity. A strong superstition is that anyone who sees the ship will die by shipwreck.

Quiz

1. Until 1864 the Royal Navy had three squadrons, each under the command of an Admiral. The squadrons were designated a certain colour. For instance, in 1854 Sir James Stirling became Rear Admiral of the White. What were the three colours, and what was their seniority or ranking?
2. What is a cringle?
3. The ship featured in Jeff Thompson's Ships of the State Shipping Service is the *Jon Sanders*. When did Jon Sanders, the man after whom the ship was named, carry out his famous non-stop triple solo circumnavigation?

NOTICE

Please note that MHA fees are due, and can be paid either into the MHA bank account or to the treasurer, Bob Johnson, PO Box 1080, Guilderton, WA, 6041.

Model cutter

MHA member Ian Fletcher has been restoring this model cutter, and has found the MHA journal helpful in answering some of his questions.

(Editor: I am so pleased to hear this!)





Jarrah for Ship Building

There was an article in the June journal regarding a request by the Colonial Secretary to James Manning, Clerk of Works, to report on the suitability of jarrah for ship building. Manning contacted various well-known ship builders and owners to gather their opinions. Here are some of the replies.

Perth, Western Australia. Dec. 12, 1870.

Sir— I have the honor, in reply to your request for my opinion as to “the suitability of the Jarrah timber for ship-building purposes,” to submit the following. That having had upwards of twenty years’ experience in the use of this timber for the purposes above mentioned, it is my decided opinion that, whilst under water, age has no detrimental effect whatever. I would also mention that one of its principal recommendations is, that it can be worked for planking without the aid of steam. With regard to its effect on iron, I have removed a half-inch bolt from a vessel in which it had been over fifteen years, and the only evidence of its having been there was a black scum, which was easily washed off, leaving the bore as if burnished, but the surrounding timber and the bolt undamaged. I might further remark that I have broken up small clinker-built boats of half inch planking that have been built from ten to twenty years and have invariably found that the timber has been as sound under the water-line as when it was first used. In conclusion, I have no hesitation in saying that it is my unalterable opinion that Jarrah is invaluable for, and no timber in the world is equal to it, when in ship-building purposes.

I have, &c.,

WM. LAWRENCE

Fremantle, 26th November, 1870

Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 24th instant, I have to state that I have for the last six years been engaged in ship-building in Fremantle, and have used no other timber but the Jarrah, both for planking and timbers. I have worked both oak and teak in Pile’s yard in Sunderland, where I served my apprenticeship, but I consider the Jarrah superior to either for ship-building purposes. It works easier, is more durable, is got in longer lengths, planes up smooth, bends without steaming, takes the fastenings with a fair drift without splitting, and is remarkably tough. A great advantage it has for ship-building purposes is its immunity from attack of the sea worm, thus enabling small craft to run without coppering. And I may mention in the year 1866 I repaired a small lighter called the Pilot, which had been stove by a large steam boiler falling into her; she was eighteen years old, and had never been coppered, but her original planking and frame timbers were perfect-

ly sound and fresh-looking when a mere shaving was taken off them. I have since repaired several old craft in Fremantle, and have invariably noticed the sound appearance of the Jarrah planking, even when uncoppered. A craft built throughout of this timber, carefully selected, and seasoned for about six months before use, copper-fastened, would I believe, last a lifetime, saving accidents. Though rather heavier than teak, I have remarked that its weight does not in any degree detract from the sailing qualities of craft built of it. The Rose, 94 tons, of this port, built by me of jarrah throughout, is a fast-sailing craft, and has made some of the quickest passages on record to and from Singapore, Batavia, China, &c. Even with iron fastenings, I consider craft built of this timber more durable than any other timber with copper fastenings; and I am of opinion that it should be classed at Lloyd’s as A1 for ship-building purposes.

ROBERT WRIGHTSON, Shipwright.

Fremantle, 27th December 1870.

Sir.—At your request I forward you my opinion respecting the qualities of Jarrah for ship-building, framing, planking, and trenailing. I do not think it could be equalled as it resists the attack of all sea-worms. I have seen this timber after being twenty years in the water, when the iron was completely rusted away and the timber was quite sound; so that an original hole of half an inch, after the lapse of twenty years, will be safely filled with a $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch bolt. I further state that the Jarrah will bend without steam; but, with the assistance of steam, I believe would twist in any shape required. Jarrah is well adapted for house work, such as joists, rafters, beams, &c., as it resists the attack of the “white ant;” likewise for piles, for bridges, jetties, &c. I have known a pile, after being 30 years in the water, perfectly sound when taken up. Jarrah is well adapted for rails and sleepers for railways, and, in fact, is almost imperishable, and only wants a trial against any other timber to show its peculiar qualities.

I am, &c.,

THOMAS MEWS, Sen.,

Boat-builder, Fremantle.

The Inquirer and Commercial News, 13 September 1871: 3c–f.



Ships of the State Shipping Service

By Jeff Thompson

No. 37 *Jon Sanders* I M O No. 8607658

With the sale of the *Irene Greenwood* imminent, replacement vessels were sought and found in three similar but smaller ships built in China for a Danish owner, that were chartered for a period of three years. The first delivered was completed in January 1988 as *Baltimar Venus* by Zhong Ghua Shipyard, Shanghai, China (Yard No 8602) for M/S 'Baltimar Venus' Ltd, Nassau. As built she was 2,854 gross registered tons, 3,169 deadweight tons, 91.0 metres overall, 14.7 metres breadth, 4.6 metres draft with a 4-cylinder Hudong - B&W 4L35 MC diesel of 2,300bhp to give a service speed of 13 knots.

On 20th January 1988 *Baltimar Venus* was handed over to the State Shipping Service in Singapore, where she was drydocked and altered to meet Australian manning requirements. On the 15th February 1988 sailed from Fremantle for Co-

cos and Christmas Islands, Singapore and Port Hedland to commence a new service to these ports. Renamed *Jon Sanders* on 21st March 1988 at a ceremony at No 2 Berth North Quay, then sailed on her first voyage under the Australian flag. The other two ships were also to be named after notable West Australian pioneers.

On 11th January 1991 was returned to her owners and renamed *Baltimar Venus*. Later in 1991 was renamed *Permint Suria* on charter to Kemaman Feeder Services, Malaysia. In 1994 was renamed *Baltimar Notos* under Bahamas flag, and renamed *Industrial Navigator* by same owners, Baltimar Notos Ltd, Bahamas, in 1996. In 1997 was renamed to *Baltimar Notos*, again by the same owners. Renamed in 2001 to *Industrial Spirit* and later that year renamed *Baltimar Notos* by the same owners.

Still listed in 2005/06 Lloyds Register.



Old Nautical Quotes

If the rain before the wind, tops'l sheets and halyards mind.
If the wind before the rain, soon you may make sail again.





My Time on the *Singa Betina*

Part 4 of Ted Whiteaker's article.

We spent three months in Kuala Terengganu. Another boatie from Darwin's Dinah Beach community, Steve Bissett, was also there on *Anak Duyong*, a 36-foot Bedor that had been built and launched in Terengganu the year before. Steve left after a few days, and being without an engine in his boat, we gave him a tow out over the entrance bar. It was rough, and *Anak Duyong* had waves crashing over her bow on the end of the towrope as we crossed. Heightened instincts and a modicum of fear added a sharp definition to the experience. I was on the tiller of *Singa Betina*, scanning the oncoming breakers as we started pitching and tossing, and catching quick glances behind to see how *Anak Duyong* was coping. A fair wind in our faces, the early morning air, and the roar of the breakers enhanced the scene; and the view of both boats, plunging about in the constantly changing perspective of troughs and crests, invoked fleeting archaic visions of a primal battle with the elements. We felt like heroes when we got through to the calmness of the outer ocean swell, and after dropping the towline and saluting a farewell to *Anak Duyong*, the return passage over the bar was quite an anti-climax.

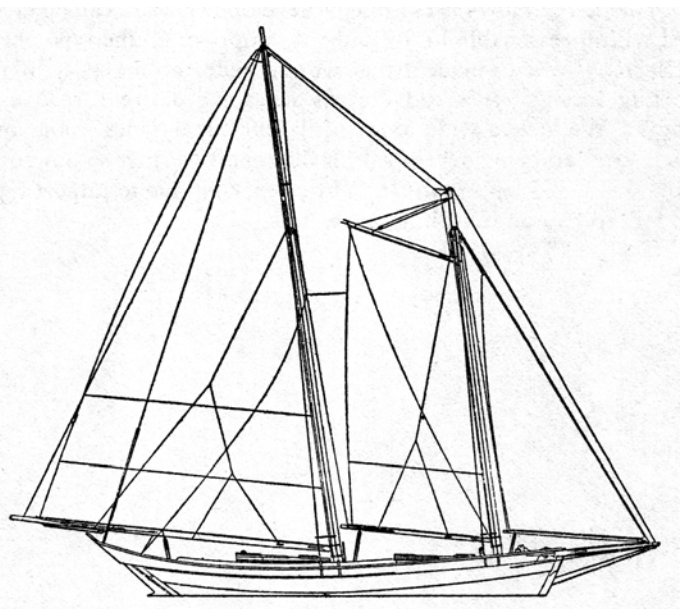
Our last crewmember from Darwin, Peter Kirkham, had left to continue his itinerary to the UK, and Jude and I settled in to pass the rainy season, which had commenced in earnest. On one occasion, it poured down for 21 days, non-stop. The river reached peak levels, and the boatyards tied up their timber stocks to prevent them floating away.

I met an American fellow, Tom Brady, who was having a 54-foot Pinky built by master boat builder, Abdullah bin Mudah. The Pinky is a traditional North American double-ended fishing schooner, originally designed to chase mackerel feeding upwind at five knots. Tom, a Halibut fisherman from Seattle, spared no expense with his boat, which was a beautiful example of workmanship. The hull planking had been completed, and deck and cabin faming was proceeding. The local Malay method of caulking was to lay strips of paperbark between the edge-dowelled planks, but Tom wanted traditional Western caulking. The locals had no real expertise with this style, but I did, and I also had a set of caulking irons, so Tom employed me on a modest wage to spend six weeks helping him do the job.

The predominant population on the Malayan east coast was Malay, with a scattering of Chinese commerce. Malay attitudes towards non-Muslims had been well demonstrated by the race riots against the Chinese of the 1960s, and the young men lounging around generally regarded foreigners with what can only be called a hate stare. It was rather unpleasant, but after we had been around for a week or two our features blended in

with the accepted daily landscape and we were able to relate to some of them on more friendly levels. (I hasten to say here that I visited Malaysia again for three weeks early in 2014, and found major changes. National attitudes have become far more circumspect, and the Malaysian Government now encourages its citizens to be nice to foreign currency. The people were friendly, helpful, and in the main, honest – with the usual exemption for taxi drivers). The boatyard crew were a respectable bunch of locals with little English, but my pidgin Malay was good enough to communicate about most things. I also occasionally translated for Tom in his conversations with Abdullah over nitty-gritty details of boat construction.

The caulking job on Tom's boat was tedious. The hull seams first had to be reamed to get a consistent v-shaped groove to take the caulking. We used flat files, bending the tang of the file to a semi-circle, and then sharpening the tang to produce a cutting profile that would remove timber when it was raked along the seam. We used three cutting profiles; a narrow one to start with, followed by wider ones to the required finish size. Then the seam was liberally dosed with red lead paint, followed by popping a looped line of thin cotton caulking into the bottom of the seam, between



A Pinky schooner

the remaining flat edges of the adjoining planks, using irons and a wooden mallet. This was then painted over with more red lead. Next was a looped layer of oakum, teased and hand rolled to size, driven into the seam and again coated with red lead. Another filling layer of oakum and red lead followed, with a finishing



coat of varnish ready for the paying sealant. The boat tightened up audibly as we progressed from the garboard seam to the topsides and the mallet blows on the caulking irons rang with a progressively higher pitch.

About half way through the job, I had bashed my knuckles with the mallet so much that my left hand was swollen, and I was having trouble keeping up the pace with the caulking. We had a few days off during an extended public holiday, and motored up the river searching for tall, straight trees that might become a mast. We found one after a couple of days of riverbank scrutiny, and went ashore to find the owner. He was an old man with no English, but seemed willing to sell the tree for 60 Malay dollars (about AUD\$20). The tree was Chengol; perfectly straight, about 50 feet to the first branch, and a metre or so in diameter at the base. I could not believe my luck, and quickly paid the landowner. I then had a closer look at the tree, and cogitated on how best to get it down. It was in soft, swampy ground that smelled like a sewer and had maggots crawling around in the mud. There were a couple of huts in the vicinity which were vulnerable to a falling tree, which meant the upper branches required lopping as a first measure to allow for a controlled fall in a safe direction. A thick growth of vines encased the trunk and provided a multi-lane highway for a massive population of keringga, a weaver ant with a reddish coloured body similar to the tropical green ant. Like the green ant, they bite when disturbed. The bites are sharp, but bearable, and do not have any lasting effect, but when there are thousands of them crawling up one's extremities and invading every nook and cranny, they can be a force to be reckoned with.

I climbed a more accessible tree nearby, and gained enough height to throw a fishing line and sinker over the first branch on the Chengol. This pulled up a small rope, and then a larger rope, and eventually we had a bosun's chair rigged up to a double pulley system hanging from the branch. I got up on the branch, and cut away the vines around the trunk to foil the ants. The ants weren't taking this lying down, and some sort of chemical message was sent out to the extremities of the foliage. They started advancing upon me en masse from all angles while I was balancing on the branch, a long way above ground level, and trying to make an impression with a tomahawk. They eventually overwhelmed me to the point that I was not achieving anything other than proficiency in aerial ant-dancing, and I had to make a hasty exit down the trunk, madly brushing away at the mass of attacking ants and wishing I had worn jeans instead of shorts.

We left for the day to give the ants a chance to disperse, hoping the vine clearance would reduce the numbers somehow. However, when we returned the next day the ants were alertly waiting for us, and the best we could do was to get the rope work down and leave it for another time. We returned to the boatyard,

and as far as I know, I still own a Chengol tree in Kuala Terengganu.

When the caulking job finished, Tom paid me off. I wanted to upgrade the stern gear on the *Singa Betina*. We had enough money to get some engineering done in Bangkok, where Tom had a working relationship with a marine engineering shop. Tom had to leave Malaysia periodically to renew his visa, and was due to go again; so leaving Jude on the boat, Tom and I bussed up to the Thai border and caught a train to Bangkok. I was able to negotiate the purchase of a new propeller with an inch and three quarters diameter prop-shaft, complete with couplings, stern tube and bearings. It left us skidding along the bottom financially again, but we were used to it by now. A week later, I returned to Terengganu and we prepared to leave for Singapore, where we knew of a local boatyard where we intended to get the stern gear installed for the return trip back to Australia.

On the morning of 1 February 1982 we set off down to the river mouth, joining a queue of fishing boats putt-putting along in the dim light of dawn. There was a stiff breeze blowing directly onshore, and the waves were standing up on the entrance bar. The boat traffic was idling around the protected basin inside the entrance while assessing the prospects, and every now and then one of the fishermen would decide to give it a go, and enter the short channel leading to the bar. Most of them went a little way out and then beat a hasty retreat back into shelter, returning upriver to their moorings. Some of the bigger boats with more powerful motors got through. We watched a 60-foot timber ex-Vietnamese refugee boat, operated by the Red Crescent, go out to service the Vietnamese refugees camped on Pulau Bidong, about 15nm NNW from Terengganu. The boat pitched severely through the breakers, seeming to stand almost vertically on its transom through the worst of it. After an hour or so, the tide was no longer conducive to an exit, and the fishermen had all given up and gone home. We anchored in the basin, contemplating a crossing on the next tide late in the afternoon if conditions seemed right.

It turned into a sunny day, so we did a bit of house-keeping, pegging our big red acrylic blanket over a bamboo rail to air it, and in the early afternoon went below to have a nap. When we re-emerged on deck an hour or two later, the wind had dropped, and our blanket was gone. Someone had sneaked alongside and taken it while we were asleep. I had owned the blanket for a number of years, and it had always been a source of comfort when needed on cold nights (particularly when I was single), so I was not very happy with this parting gesture from Terengganu. We pulled the anchor and headed out, crossing the bar with hearts in mouths. We bumped the keel once, softly, in the depths of a trough, which was an alarming sensation, but made it over without further incident and sailed off into the gathering night.



We covered 45nm overnight, and anchored just after dawn in a sheltered bay in the lee of Pulau Tenggol, a small, uninhabited island of typical tropical hue, with white sandy beaches, steep jungle-clad mountains, and beautifully clear seawater. After a couple of hours sleep, we woke to the sound of a Yanmar diesel putt-putting past outside. A fishing boat with three Malays on board was giving us the once-over as they came in to anchor nearby. They were friendly, and after basic introductions invited us to accompany them for a couple of hours fishing. We threw out hand lines, each fitted with two flies as lures, and trolled around, catching small tuna and a couple of emperors, then returned to anchor.

The crew cooked up a spicy fish soup with the emperors, and later that evening came over to *Singa Betina* for a cup of tea. They asked if they could sleep on board our boat for the night. Bearing in mind the old saying that most fishermen are pirates of opportunity, and aware of our isolation and vulnerability to pillage and rape, I was a bit dubious about the proposition. They said their boat rocked a lot, and it was uncomfortable on board for sleeping. I could not bring myself to refuse them after their friendly hospitality, so they bedded down on the forward platform while Jude and I were in the main cabin section, with Jude against the hull and me on the inside, ready to spring into action if anything untoward occurred during the night. We were tired, and despite the circumstances, fell asleep quickly. Next morning we woke up to find the Malays had already quietly left, and a quick check showed our possessions and virtues were still intact.

With brisk winds pushing us, and a knot and a half of favourable current over the distance, we covered the next 100nm to Pulau Tioman in 24 hours, with two hours spent hove-to awaiting the light of dawn before anchoring. The main halyard block fell apart on the way, which caused the sail to collapse heavily into the lazy-jacks. This put a small tear in the top of the luff and tore off a short section of boltrope from the sail along one of the batten lines. It was a frisky business rigging up the bosun's chair and replacing the halyard block with the sea running, and the sail repairs were carried out after anchoring at Tioman in a beautiful little bay just north of Teluk Tekek, the main area of settlement on the island. After an overnight stay, we left for Singapore.

Three hours after departure, the light wind petered out and we were becalmed. We lay ahull with the sails down for another three hours, when a fifteen-knot breeze sprang up quite suddenly from the northeast and pursued us for the next twenty-four hours all the way to an anchorage at Pasir Panjang, a couple of miles to the southwest of the main commercial centre of Singapore. This was the sort of sailing I liked. While we had to contend with a few storms along the way, *Singa Betina* was in her element, and we covered a lot of miles at a good speed, fully engaged in sailing the boat.

A month passed by in Singapore. We applied for an Indonesian sail permit, and while waiting for bureaucratic wheels to turn, put feelers out for paying crew to Bali and beyond. The boat was scrubbed and anti-fouled, and a Chinese boat-builder on nearby Pulau Tekong re-bored the sternpost and fitted the new stern tube. The bigger propeller shaft ironed out a lot of vibration, but I would still rather sail than motor. The engine was noisy; it heated up the hull space below, and used diesel at about four litres an hour. Sailing was quieter, cooler, and cheaper.

The anchorage at Pasir Panjang, while convenient for access to the business end of town, was heavily industrialised and extremely polluted. It was exposed to frequent afternoon squalls to 30 knots, with a hard clay bottom that was difficult to grip securely with an anchor, and seemed to be a focal point for all the noise generated by the Singapore metropolis. The dull roar of civilisation was very wearing at night-time; a pervasive, loud and heavy drone that was only drowned out briefly by the squally winds, locally known as "Barat" ("west") in recognition of their origins. We moved around the Johore Strait up the back of Singapore to Raymond's Boat Yard at Sembawang, near the Johore Causeway linking Singapore to Malaya. Raymond's was the usual haunt for the less well-off travellers who did not fit in with Changi Yacht Club formalities, and much quieter than Pasir Panjang. It was also an excellent vantage point to observe the nightly smuggling runs by powerful speedboats operated from ramps on the Singapore side to dark places across the strait on the Malayan side. There was always the chance of a pursuit by Malayan authorities, and sometimes a standoff with the appearance of a Singaporean patrol boat to head off the Malays from coming too far into their waters. As Singapore had duty-free status and it was Malayan customs duties being thwarted, the Singapore authorities considered the smuggling to be a Malayan problem and did nothing about stopping it.

A very pale-skinned fellow hailed us from the beach one day. It turned out to be Alistair, late of *Siola Tau*. He had used the insurance payout from the sinking of *Siola Tau* to do a trip on the Trans-Siberian Railway, and was returning to Australia from the depths of a northern hemisphere winter, which explained his loss of tropical tan. We had a quick catch-up before he left for the airport to catch his flight home.

Our Indonesian sail permit finally arrived, and we found three crewmembers to Bali. Steve Bissett was also in Singapore on *Anak Duyong*, now with an engine installed, and we both departed Singapore in company for Pulau Penjantan, 220nm to the southeast and lying practically on the equator in the Karimata Strait between Borneo and Java, on 04 March 1982.

Penjantan was another idyllic tropical island. Uninhabited, it offered sheltered anchorage under steep-pitched mountains to 750 feet, with a clear freshwater stream on the beach. There was plenty of reef and the spearfishing was excellent. We stayed for two days



before heading off for Pulau Bawean, 480nm to the southeast.

At Bawean, the locals at Sangkapura remembered us from our previous stopover, and we were inundated with constant visitors banging away at the Hydroseal on the hull with their sampans. Curiously, many of the visitors were women, which was quite unusual – ordinarily men and boys were the only visitors. The women brought woven baskets and rectangular mats, known as “tikars”, to trade. Tikars are made throughout Asia, but these had striking geometric designs in the colourfully dyed pleating, and we bought a few to sell back in Australia. The Harbourmaster warned us of an “orang gila” (madman) who was loose on the island, and considered to be potentially dangerous, but he did not appear in our presence. He would not have stood much of a chance – wherever we went, we attracted an entourage of locals, young and old, who surrounded us and clamoured for our attention.

The Harbourmaster invited us to a meal at his place, with an audience of locals observing the proceedings. Afterwards, he asked me for a souvenir – “something from Australia”. We had nothing much on board, having disposed of any trinkets long before in the course of our journeying, but I found a small pocket-knife which had come all the way from Australia. I apologised for the smallness of the gift when I gave it to the Harbourmaster, but he accepted it with gratitude and all was well. However, a little later he returned with a grim look, and took me aside to complain that the knife was made in China! It seemed that the community considered the gift to be of some significance as a genuine Australian artefact, and while showing off the knife, someone had examined it closely and discovered the manufacturing origin. This resulted in a terrible loss of face for the Harbourmaster. I apologised and explained that I had bought the knife in Darwin, and did not know where it was made. He was a bit miffed about it, sadly, but we had nothing else with which to placate him, and the incident remained a slightly sour note to our stay.

After a couple of days, we set off on the 230nm leg to Bali. Our route lay via the Sapoedi Strait at the eastern tip of Pulau Madura, then south through the Bali Strait separating Java and Bali. After rounding Madura, we saw a pod of whales breaching in the distance as we headed down towards the entrance of Bali Strait, providing a welcome diversion from the boredom of the glaring heat and humidity of the mid-morning doldrums through which we were then motoring.

The northern approaches to the strait were obviously fertile fishing grounds. Night overtook us, and as we closed in on the strait, we could see hundreds of pinpoints of light dotting the blackness, indicating a fleet of lantern-lit jukungs (double-outrigger planked canoes about six metres long, powered by a lateen sail before outboard motors became common), going

about their business. The lights stretched across our path, and we sailed through the stationary fleet in the darkness in a light breeze, close enough to hear the fishermen’s shadowy outlines calling to one another. It was very much a magical fairy-tale scene. A favourable current swept us down the strait overnight in light airs, occasionally performing tight 360-degree circles in strong whirlpools, and we arrived in Benoa Harbour late the following day.

An idle month passed by in Bali. We found four potential crewmembers available for the Darwin leg. Two of them were waiting for funds in the mail, and while delaying our departure for them, Jude and I sailed across to Pulau Lembongan for a couple of days. It was a short trip of fifteen miles, and we found our way into another beautiful reef-encrusted bay with a white sandy beach, making a pleasant change from the muddy shallows of Benoa. When we left to return to Benoa, a good breeze was blowing from the starboard quarter, and we decided to sail out from anchor. We hauled the mainsail part way up, flew the jib, got the anchor up, and with Jude on the tiller, I went forward to haul up the rest of the main. Somewhere in that brief span of activity, our course went awry and we went up on the reef at the side of the channel. There was a bit of a swell bumping us on the bottom, and many coral bommies about. We dropped the sails immediately, fired up the engine and tried manoeuvring under power, but we were stuck. I jumped overboard and tried lifting the stern of the boat, which drew the most depth, from the aft end of the rudder. This procedure had saved me in a few sandbar scrapes in the past, but it achieved nothing in this situation.

We then put the anchor out into deep water to keep the bows into the swell, and shifted weight on board to lean the boat to one side as the tide was falling. We stuck planks of timber between the hull and a few bommies to act as cushions. It was a very tense time, and I was conscious of a growing crowd of villagers on the beach and gathered around, poised expectantly and waiting for the kill. The boat settled eventually after a bit of bonking about, and I think we had a cup of tea while we waited for the tide to turn and bump us about again. The rising tide was a little gentler on us, and eventually we kedged our way off the hard stuff and got away as the disappointed villagers on shore slowly dispersed.

I had stirred up a few mud- and sand-banks in *Singa Betina*, and had gone aground for a couple of hours on a reef in the Vernon Islands, some 30nm northeast of Darwin, on my first exploratory venture out of the harbour under engine power. Fortunately, the conditions at the time were calm and no damage was done. However, this incident was more serious. We were leaking a bit, and had to careen the boat in Benoa to attend to caulking repairs.

Finally, six weeks now having passed in Benoa, the crew were flush with funds; their paid passage money



had been spent on supplies and fuel, and we set off up the Lombok Strait for Sumbawa and Kampong Kawienda Toi. It was 03 May 1982 – the dry southeast monsoon had set in, and we intended sailing along the northern side of the island chain stretching from Bali to Timor. A decision on the best departure point for the Timor Sea crossing to Darwin was dependent on conditions experienced along the way. Punching directly into the monsoon winds on the open sea was an unattractive proposition, and it was relatively calm and enjoyable sailing in the lee of the islands while we made our way east.

At Kawienda Toi our old friend Arsyad, the village headman, was apologetic when I asked him about a sampan that I thought we had arranged to purchase on our previous visit. It seemed he had not realised it was a firm arrangement, and as they were built to order there were none available. He found another twelve-foot canoe which the owner sold to us for 20,000 rupiah (about AUD \$30.00). It was not the sampan of my dreams, but it was light and well-constructed, despite a slight twist in the fore-and-aft axis. I gave Arsyad three old anchors I had salvaged in Darwin harbour and still had on board the boat, with some old rope. He invited us to his house for an evening meal, and was very hospitable.

During the meal, someone came to Arsyad with news of wild pigs in the community gardens. The large garden areas, covering several acres, were fenced by a palisade of brushwood, and feral pigs frequently broke in and disturbed the plantings. They were going to hunt them out the following day, and Arsyad was amenable to our male crewmembers joining in the action. I asked what they did with the pigs when they killed them. Being Muslims, they did not eat pork, and they simply buried the dead animals. I asked Arsyad if it would be possible for us to have an animal to eat. He was a little taken aback by the idea, but agreed to the request.

The Indonesian government frowns upon armed citizens, but Arsyad had a muzzle-loading rifle that he loaded with lead shot and gunpowder that he manufactured for himself from locally available materials. The local lads, about thirty of them, armed themselves with short, sturdy-looking stabbing spears about a metre and a half long, and we set off with the crowd the following afternoon, traipsing through the long grass and tangled growth within the garden palisade. The hunters were fairly hyped up, and seemed on edge about dealing with the pigs. There were figures running about in all directions, and occasional shouts, whistles and calls to direct the action. It turned out there was only one pig, and the delegated rifleman put a shot into it as it ran into some high grass. I was lost on the periphery of the action, and following progress by the shouting. Then everything suddenly went quiet. Someone led me to the pig, which had expired from the rifle shot. We tied it to a pole and carried it over our shoulders down to the beach, and took it on board the boat to butcher it. It was an adult boar, far too much meat to keep without refrigeration, so we hacked off a hindquarter and disposed of the rest overboard. Arsyad had given us permission to cook it on a fire on

the beach, and that night we ate boiled pork, not being sufficiently equipped to cook it any other way. It was too fresh, rank in flavour and disappointingly tough and unpalatable, and we did not eat much before it joined the rest of the carcass overboard.

We sailed on via a brief stop in Bima, to a small island called Gili Banta, in the mouth of Sape Strait, where we spent another couple of days idle, before slipping into the strait and pulling up for a week of leisure in the superb bay on the southern end of Pulau Rinja. *Singa Betina* was leaking more than usual, a legacy of our encounter with the reef at Lembongan, so we careened her and attended to any obvious weeping of the seams. There was not enough tidal range to get at the garboard seam, where I suspected most of the leaking was coming from. We made a slight difference to the rate of water ingress, but still ended up pumping more than usual.

Fishermen in sampans, keen to trade their catch for sugar, soap, empty tins, bits of wire and fishing lines, visited us. The pace of outer civilisation had not yet fully consumed them, but they all wanted to come to Australia with us. Australia was the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, and no amount of philosophising could make them believe that their lives would not be better if they could get there. I tried to dissuade them with stories of people in Australia jumping out of high-rise apartment blocks to end their miserable lives, but they had no terms of reference to get the point, other than falling out of a coconut palm, and it washed over their heads. Two of them had obviously been thinking about it for some time, and tried hard to pin me down to agreeing to take them with us. I asked them what they would do when we got to Australia. They had no money, but they exchanged conspiratorial glances and outlined a plan to capture a couple of Komodo Dragons and sell them when we arrived. They believed the dragons, an Indonesian protected species in a National Park, were worth small fortunes on the global black market. I explained that Quarantine and Customs inspectors in Australia would confiscate them on arrival, and they were mightily disappointed with me.

During our stay, there were occasional muffled explosions as fishermen visiting from surrounding areas dynamited the waters on the northern side of Nusa Kode, the island that practically fills the outer portion of Rinja Bay. It was disturbing to observe this happening, as the reef in the area was extensive and attractive, with an abundance of marine life. The effects of past dynamiting were obvious all around, with bare, circular patches of death pock-marking the colourful mosaic of living corals, and clearly visible in the pristine waters. As we left our anchorage to continue or journey back up Sape Strait and on to Maumere, on Pulau Flores, we passed patches of dead fish floating about; the result of explosive concussion. My mental picture of Rinja Bay as an image of Paradise took on a slightly darker hue.

To be continued...



Bankskøyta



Cod fish drying on wall

On a recent visit to Ålesund, a town of 45,000 on the west coast of Norway, Jill and I noticed a wooden boat under construction on the wharf a little distance from our ship. We went to investigate and found that it was a replica of a fishing ketch from the 1880s being built by the local Sunmore Museum. Ålesund is the home port for Norway's largest cod-fishing fleet. The dried cod, called stock-fish, is still an important industry in the country. From 1861 to about 1900, more than 300 fishing vessels were built at Ålesund to fish the banks off the nearby coast. They were called bankskøyta, or banks cutters, though many were rigged as ketches. They were the first off-shore fishing boats in Norway to be decked. Previously boats, including those going well out to sea, were all open boats in the Viking tradition.



The Anna

This particular boat is based on the ketch *Anna*, built in 1888, with a length of 57.7 ft, beam 16.8 ft and depth 6.4 ft. The new vessel will have to have an engine to comply with regulations re-

garding its use in teaching the maritime skills of sailing, fishing, navigation, maintenance of hull, rig and equipment, and the history of the fishing industry. The vessel is built of pine from far northern Norway, as this pine grows more slowly and is therefore stronger with closer growth rings. It is fastened with trunnels cut from the heart of the pine.



The bankskoyta under construction

To modern eyes the hull looked exceptionally heavily built with doubled frames and thick



Trunnels and double frames

planking. From memory each frame had a siding of at least 6 inches (12 inches doubled), and the planks would have been about 8–10 inches wide by at least 2 inches thick.

Peter Worsley



HMS *Erebus* Discovered

On 19 May 1845 the two ships *Erebus* and *Terror* sailed from the Thames under the command of Sir John Franklin, on an expedition to attempt to discover the Northwest Passage. The last contact with the expedition was in early August 1845 at Baffin Bay when they met two whaling ships, *Prince of Wales* (Captain Dannett) and *Enterprise* (Captain Robert Martin). The subsequent disappearance of Franklin's two ships and the 129 officers and men was followed by many searches, starting in 1847 to the present. The discoveries made during these searches led to various conclusions regarding the fate of the men, some of whose bodies have been found. Captain Frances McClintock was engaged by Franklin's wife, Lady Jane Franklin, to conduct one of the many searches. He left England in the *Fox* (177 tons) in 1857, and found much that helped ascertain what had happened to the men of the expedition. One poignant discovery was the finding of the remains of two of the crew in an abandoned boat:

...there was that in the boat which transfixed us with awe. It was portions of two human skeletons. One was that of a slight young person; the other of a large, strongly-made, middle-aged man. The former was found in the bow of the boat, but in too much disturbed a state to enable Hobson to judge whether the sufferer had died there; large and powerful animals, probably wolves, had destroyed much of this skeleton, which may have been that of an officer. Near it we found the fragment of a pair of worked slippers, of which I give the pattern, as they may possibly be identified. The lines were white, with a black margin; the spaces white, red, and yellow. They had originally been 11 inches long, lined with calf-skin with the hair left on, and the edges bound with red silk ribbon. Besides these slippers there were a pair of small strong shooting half-boots. The other skeleton was in a somewhat more perfect state, and was enveloped with clothes and furs; it lay across the boat, under the after-thwart (McClintock, 1998: 197).

Despite the finding of many relics, including other human remains from the expedition, no one was successful until recently in locating either the *Erebus* or the *Terror*.

The *Erebus* (370 tons) and the *Terror* (340 tons) had been originally Royal Navy bomb vessels, but

had been re-rigged and ice-reinforced for the 1839–43 expedition to Antarctica led by Sir James Clark Ross. For the Franklin Expedition they were victualled with stores sufficient for five years, although Franklin told Captain Martin that these could be stretched to last for seven years. The ships were fitted with boilers providing hot water which was fed through pipes under the deck to warm the crew's berths. Both vessels were fitted with propellers run via shafts from railway locomotives supplied by the London and Greenwich Railway.

Parks Canada had been searching for the two ships, and between 2008 and 2013 covered a search area of some 1,600 sq km. In early September 2014 they eventually located the wreck of the *Erebus*, identified by the ship's bell, in the icy waters near King William Island north-west of Hudson Bay. It lies in 11 metres of water, and stands some 5 metres above the seabed. Because of the near freezing waters the ship is in remarkably good condition after its long immersion. It has been suggested that Franklin's body may be in a casket on board. There will be many more seasons of work to be done on this wreck, so interested readers should continue to monitor the Parks Canada website.

Peter Worsley

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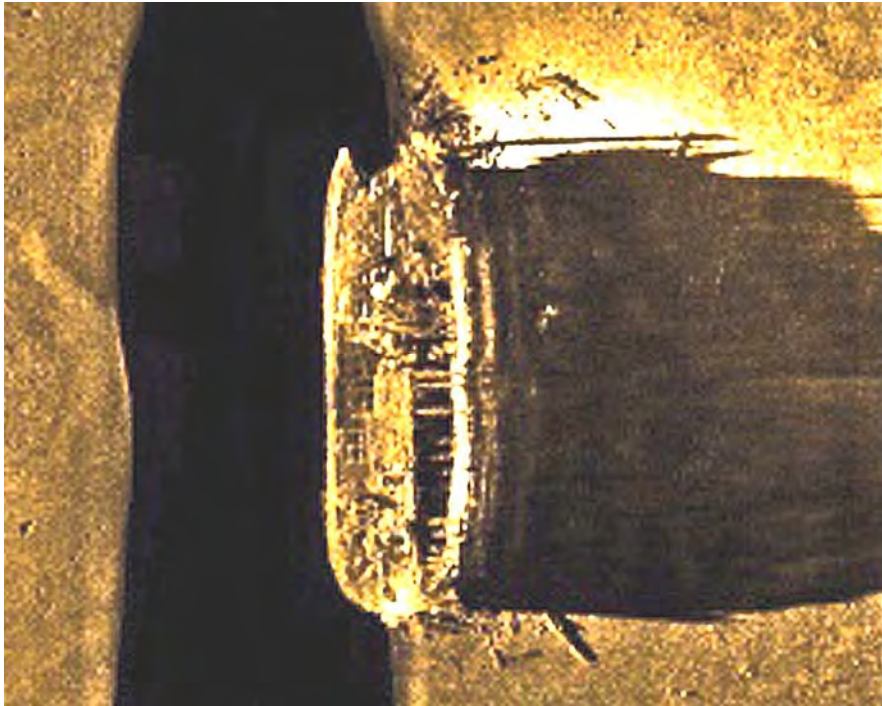
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Sonar image of the wreck of HMS Erebus, bow towards the bottom. The black area represents the water column immediately beneath the tow-fish where no echo is returned. Sonar reflections from solid objects appear as bright yellow returns, while the dark area to the right represents the acoustic shadow where the sonar beam is blocked by the intervening height of the wreck.

A diver from Parks Canada examining timbers and two small cannons from the wreck of the Erebus.



Maritime Heritage Association Inc.
PO Box 1080, Guilderton, Western Australia, 6041.

