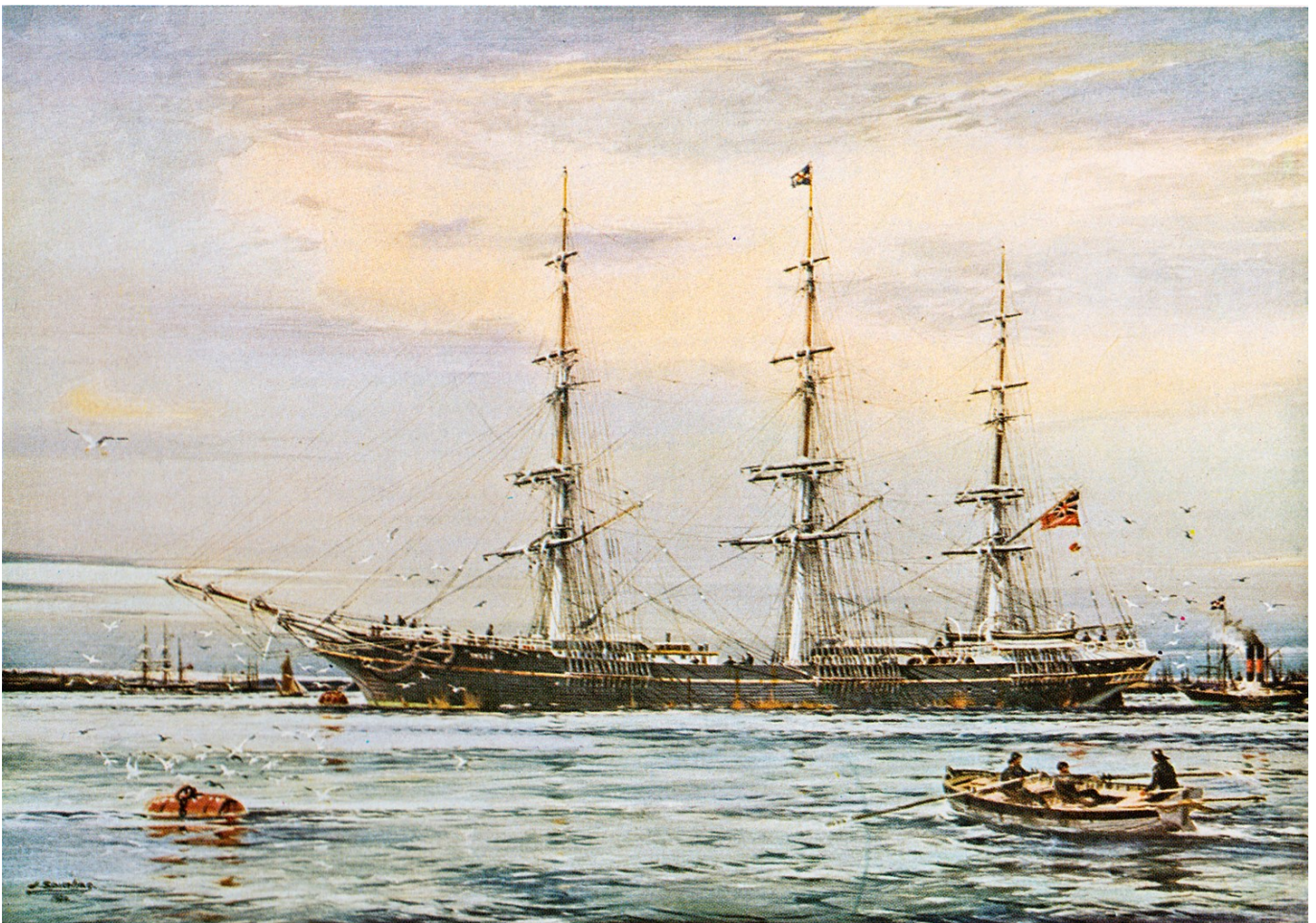


Volume 37, No. 2



June 2026

MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL



"The Tweed"
Built 1854 Blackwall Passenger Ship.

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- * A Long Voyage
- * *USS Constitution*
- * *Bambra*
- * Naval Sea Power in Miniature

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Charles Watson's boatbuilding yard, Perth, 1888

Did You Know?

A Lanby (**L**arge **A**utomatic **N**avigational **B**uoy) buoy was a large buoy about 40ft in diameter with a depth of 8ft on which was mounted a lattice mast about 40ft high. The mast carried a light with a set characteristic, a radar beacon and a sound fog signal. The light was visible for 16 miles in clear weather. Lanby buoys were much cheaper than lightships which are normally manned, and can be moored in water up to 50 fathoms deep. They were capable of operating for up to six months without attention. They are now obsolete due to the almost universal reliance on GPS.



President's Annual Report

AGM 12 April 2026

This past year has been one of consolidation and celebration. I am indebted to committee and our general members who have done so much to buoy up and sustain everything we stand for in promoting our Maritime Heritage. We officially launched the MHA thirty six years ago on board STS *Leeuwin II*. After her tragic dismasting in 2024, it was a joyous celebration to see her at anchor in Princess Royal Harbour (Albany) on Friday 13 March 2026 during the Albany Light Show – albeit rigged as a three masted gaff rigged schooner shy her four square sail yards. Robin Hicks and his formidable team of ship carpenters, boiler makers and riggers will soon have *Leeuwin II* all squared away by August 2026.

In keeping with that momentous occasion Len Randell OAM celebrated his 100th Birthday with a large (but younger) group of friends and family at the South of Perth Yacht Club on 1 March 2026. Len's speech was brief and to the point: '*I wouldn't be dead for quids.*'

Maritime Museum, Barry formalised these get-togethers with a legacy of words: '*To get people like ourselves together to talk about maritime activities and to help keep alive traditional skills that are becoming extinct in Western Australia.*'



End of Year Lay-up 2025. Left to right - Brian Phillips, Bill & June Leonard.

Photo: Barbara Shardlow



Robin Hicks's Sailmakers & Riggers Shed – masts and spars for STS *Leeuwin II*

Photo: Robin Hicks

The MHA's End of Year Lay-ups are scheduled for the closest Sunday to 20th November, that being the birthday of the late Barry Hicks. Our 2025 Lay-up in Robin's Shed marked a special occasion as it would have been Barry's 100th Birthday. Though Barry, Doris, Robin and the Hicks family started these gatherings back in March 1980, it was the building of *Leeuwin II* in 1985–86 that really brought the team together. Under the banner of the Hicks Family Private

Though Barry would have been well pleased with our 2025 End of Year Lay-up, I feared we might have run into deep water. Not only did we have our usual large crowd of '*people like ourselves*' with book stalls, show-and-tells, raffles, catering trestles and banners, we also had a shed loaded to her marks with select Oregon timber all being machined, glued up and shaped for *Leeuwin's* replacement masts, spars, yards and fittings. How Robin and Pam managed to re-size the shed to accommodate everyone while maintaining production schedules and supervision of a younger workforce in training, is quite beyond comprehension. It was an incredible sight and an absolute privilege to be there to see first-hand those very maritime activities that Barry spoke about that keep our traditional skills alive and intact. We extend our wholehearted thanks to Robin and Pam, and to Robin's crew of workers and volunteers who made this day possible for us. I do not think we will see the likes of such things again.

And to cap it off – I finally won a Jill Worsley Maritime Quilt. Admittedly, I had to purchase



nearly all the raffle tickets to affect my prize, but I am now the proud owner of a Francis Meadow Sutcliffe Whitby Quilt, something I will hold dear to my heart for the rest of my days.

Jill Worsley's Sutcliffe Whitby Quilt, End of Year



Lay-up 2025.

Photo: Barbara Shardlow

We also paid tribute to the passing of Bernard (Bernie) Unwin, 16 November 2025 (the day we were celebrating our End of Year Lay-up in Robin's Shed). As Founding MHA Member No. 2, Bernie signed up on the 14th February 1990, the same day Barbara and I signed up as (Family) Member No. 3. Bernie was Honorary Principal at the Swan Maritime Institute but we all remember him for his work on the MHA Whaleboat Committee, crew instructor, and as Master of the hydrographic survey vessel from whom we get the Unwin Shoals just south of Two Rocks.

Special mention must be made of our Secretary/Events Manager and Independent Art & Projects Curator Elly Spillekom. Besides sending out all the notices, keeping in touch with our sister groups, and organizing MHA promotions during Albany's Maritime Month in July 2025, Elly has also been working tirelessly for the past eighteen months to organize a Maritime Heritage Exhibition of Early History of Boatbuilding Around Albany – and the 50th

Anniversary of building the *Amity* replica. The exhibition of photos, models and artworks will run for five weeks during Albany's Maritime Month of July 2026 at the Museum of the Great Southern (Albany) to commemorate Albany's Bicentenary 1826–2026. The MHA Exhibition will include four lectures over the festival period by local historians and boatbuilders. We are indebted to Elly who continues to promote Maritime Heritage at every available opportunity.

Southern Ports Albany celebrated Albany's Bicentenary with PortFest – Albany Port Open Day (11 April 2026) celebrating 200

years of the Port of Albany with live entertainment (Theatre 180), harbour tours (by sea and by land), playgrounds, food stalls, AMF boats (including St Ayles skiffs and whaleboat), harbour tugs and workboats and open ship tours on the visiting *Anzac*-class frigate HMAS *Warramunga (II)*. Southern Ports invited the MHA to participate in a Harbour History Display which we shared with historian Malcolm Traill and archaeologist Dr Shane Burke, each with our own stall to promote the History of Albany Port with a particular emphasis on the Albany Pilot Station Precinct. Barbara and I, with dedicated assistance from Rose and Charles De Bruin



Rose De Bruin (left) accosted by the Crab Lady. PortFest Open Day, Albany

Photo: Barbara Shardlow



(who also supplied the Albany Pilot Boat *Pelican* banner and brochures), managed a respectable and well received event for 4,500 visitors.



MHA Display. PortFest Open Day, Albany.
Photo: Barbara Shardlow

cient funds are in hand to commence work after a *Pelican* Open Day in August 2026.

As President of the MHA I am grateful to the community of Albany and members of the MHA who have so willingly stepped forward to help preserve and protect this significant vessel. I am also grateful to the MHA for the support offered particularly through the use of the *MHA Journal* to promote, encourage and support the preservation, restoration & knowledge of our Maritime Heritage.

Albany Pilot Station – There is much the MHA can offer Albany Ports in the conceptual and planning aspects of the Albany Pilot Station Precinct – like having a Pilot Boat on display, or a flagstaff, or a pilot jetty. At this stage, however, I think it prudent if we simply offer our services as Friends of the Pilot Station. It is gratifying, however, that Southern Ports Albany regard the MHA as ‘stakeholders’ in this venture.

Model Ships & Shipwrights – Model collections continue to come to our attention and we are already full to capacity. We have also received requests over the past year to display some of our models at special events and to place models on

PROJECTS – Supported by MHA:

Albany Pilot Boat *Pelican* – As reported in the December 2025 edition of the *MHA Journal*, the *Pelican* was successfully transported from Denmark to the De Bruin shed in Willyung (Albany). To overcome ownership and asset management issues, a Friends of the *Pelican* group has been formed

by independent members of the MHA who wish to support the preservation and restoration of this vessel. An evaluation and assessment programme has been undertaken to establish a conservation plan. Southern Ports Albany have shown an enthusiastic response to permanently display the boat at the Albany Pilot Station Precinct and have offered to build a display structure at the Station that will protect the *Pelican* from the elements. Peter Wilson and his mate Ian Cooper have been assigned to the project as boat-builders to undertake the restoration work. Suf-



MHA Display. PortFest Open Day, Albany.
Photo: Barbara Shardlow

loan at various institutions. We are indebted to Robin Hicks for housing the Lemon/Miller/Phillips Collections, and to Charles & Rose De Bruin for holding the BHP Collection, another half dozen models that came in over the past year are now on display with the Shardlow Collection. Clearly there is a need to find a repository/showroom/workshop for models and model shipwrights. I wish to commend Steve Loach for his dedication and tireless efforts to recognise, protect and preserve the art of the model shipwright.



Fremantle Ports Maritime Day – With the closure of the Fremantle Traffic Bridge, the biannual Fremantle Maritime Day has been deferred to November 2027 when it will return bigger, better and more accessible than ever before. Fremantle Ports will soon be looking for registrations of interest. The MHA has always enjoyed a group participation with the Old Gaffers, Amateur Boatbuilders, WA Museum and MAAWA at these events – perhaps we could all push for a bigger, better and more accessible Model Ship Expo.

Special thanks are extended to Paul Reiffer, MHA’s Inner Harbour Community Liaison Officer, who keeps us informed of heritage matters and logistics on Victoria Quay. I am hoping through the joint efforts of Paul, Steve Loach and Elly Spillekom, we might be able to introduce Model Ships & Shipwrights to Victoria Quay.

PUBLISHING – Our mainstay, the *MHA Journal*, stands firm, our very reason for being. Again we offer congratulations and hearty thanks to our untiring editor Peter Worsley and his lovely quilt making wife Jill for their devotion to excellence.

Special thanks go to our webmaster, Bob Johnson, who, by putting our quarterly journal online transforms our message beyond geographical and monetary barriers to make it accessible to a global audience.

Julie Taylor has all but completed the final reading, editing, compilation and design of Peter’s *Smokestacks on the Swan* and expressions of interest have now been called for its publishing. Ian Forsyth’s *A Hazardous Port: Fremantle 1600–1900* continues to do its rounds of launch and release. We have also attended recent launchings for Mike and Joy Lefroy’s, *Catalpa: Escape to Freedom* (Fremantle Press); Ian Brayshaw’s, *A Man, his Boat, his Town: A Stan Austin memoir* (self-published), and Malcolm Traill’s, *South: Stories from Albany and the South Coast of Western Australia* (UWA Publishing).

Special thanks are again extended to our treasurer Bob Johnson – the real helmsman of Maritime Heritage. It was with a feeling of deep regret that

Bob informed us that our long standing auditor Jim Hunter will no longer be able to accept the role he has held for so long. The President’s Annual Report for the MHA AGM, 19 April 1993, concludes: *And thanks to Jim Hunter for his generous assistance with the auditing of our books.* After 33-years of service Jim is standing down for the good of his health. Jim not only navigated us through the mysteries of incorporation, he became a close and personal friend, part of the crew, always ready to lend a helping hand for the MHA or to individual members as we steered our own course through life’s sometimes turbulent waters.

Jim and Carol joined us after the AGM for lunch on the Quarterdeck. Bob thanked Jim for his outstanding contribution and bestowed a small token of our appreciation. Jim responded with the reminder to send him an invitation to next year’s lunch on the Quarterdeck.

Special thanks are again due to Commodore Brian Cross and the friendly and attentive staff of the South of Perth Yacht Club for allowing us to have our meeting in the Heritage Room and the pleasure of a very fine luncheon with all the warm conviviality it brings on the Quarterdeck.

Ross Shardlow – President

Election of Officers:

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| President | Ross Shardlow |
| Vice President (Senior) | Nick Burningham |
| Vice President (Fremantle) | Steve Loach |
| Vice President (Albany) | Charles De Bruin |
| Treasurer & Webmaster | Bob Johnson |
| Secretary & Events Manager | Elly Spillekom |
| Editor: | Peter Worsley |

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Committee: | Paul Reiffer— |
| Inner Harbour Community Liaison Officer | Rose De Bruin |
| | Roger Price |
| | Tom Saggars |

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Supernumerary: | |
| Jill Worsley | quilt maker |
| Julie Taylor | lighthouse girl |
| Rob Shawcross | marine art |
| Gerard O’Neill | book reviewer |



Ben Dearg

Peter Worsley

The *Ben Dearg* was originally built By Cook, Welton and Gemmell Ltd, Beverley, UK, for the UK Admiralty as the *Thomas Alexander*, and launched on 18 July 1919 and completed on 22 April 1920. It was one of the Castle-class trawlers designed for both naval and commercial duties. It had a length of 125.5ft, beam 23.6ft and draught 12.7ft. Its displacement was 360 tons. Propulsion was by a triple expansion steam engine delivering 480ihp to a single propeller. *Thomas Alexander* had a brief Admiralty service as an auxiliary boom defence vessel before being sold in 1921 to the French company Rémy & Huret and registered at Boulogne, France as the *Étoile Polaire II*.

In 1930 the vessel was sold to Fred Parkes of Blackpool, England, registered at Fleetwood and re-named *Daily Express* (Fleetwood number FD 68). In November 1933 it was sold to Hellyer Brothers Ltd, Hull, and re-named *Turcoman* (Hull registration number H 523).

In September 1936 it was bought by R. Irvin & Sons Ltd, Aberdeen bought the vessel, and re-named it *Ben Dearg* (Aberdeen registration number A 416). *Ben Dearg* means 'Red Hill'. During the periods of commercial ownership the vessel fished the North Atlantic and North Sea.

On 29 August 1939 the UK Admiralty requisitioned the *Ben Dearg* for use as a minesweeper. In June 1940 it was attached to Minesweeping Group 23, Hartlepool, operating off the north-east coast of England. There were no major incidents during its naval service. At the end of WW II it was demobilised and sold off to commercial interest.

The *Ben Dearg* arrived in Albany in late 1949 with its sister ship *Commiles*, both owned by the Anglo-Australian Fishing Company. The trawlers were employed in trawling the Great Australian Bight, but the venture was unsuccessful. Having been deemed unsuitable for this work the *Ben Dearg* was bought in June 1954 by Krasnostein and Company. That firm later advertised *Ben Dearg* for sale at £8,000, but without success. On 14 April 1956 it was scuttled off Swarbrick's Beach east of Albany in an area today known as Ben Dearg Beach. The *Commiles* was sunk in the Rottneest Island Ships' Graveyard in 1953 after being used for target practice by the RAAF.

Ben Dearg arriving at Albany



The Ditty Bag

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

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

The sailor out of water is, indeed, as wretched an animal as a fish out of water; for though the former hath, in common with amphibious animals, the power of existing on land, yet if he kept there any time he never fails to become a nuisance.

Henry Fielding, 1755

In 1895 the colonial stallion and Melbourne Cup winner Archer was sold to the Duke of Portland. Archer had already won the Australian record of £13,650 in prize money. As he was loaded onto the steamship *Orizaba* for the voyage 6,000 fans and a brass band bade him farewell him from Melbourne's Sandridge Pier.

The first mail steamer to enter the inner harbour at Fremantle, replacing Albany as the port of call, was the Orient line RMS *Ormuz* which arrived on 13 August 1900. She beat the P&O line RMS *India* by one week. *Ormuz* was built in 1886, was 6,116 GRT, 141.7m in length; and *India* built in 1896, 7,911 GRT, 152.37m in length.

The famous and very fast, 1,745-ton clipper ship *Tweed* began life as a paddle steamer named *Punjaub*. Built in Bombay in 1852 the *Punjaub* had 700hp steam engines and served during the Crimean War as a horse carrier, then in other wars, including the Indian Mutiny in 1857. Sent to England in 1862 for conversion to propeller driven, *Punjaub* was instead bought by John Willis. He took out the engines, removed the paddles, renamed her *Tweed* and launched her as a pure sailing ship. In all her subsequent years under her new captain, William Stuart, the *Tweed* never lost a man or damaged a spar. This record was never surpassed by any other master of any sailing ship of any country.

James Stirling, first Governor of Western Australia, had been promoted to the rank of Commander on 19 June 1812. His first command was the 28-gun sixth-rate ship HMS *Brazen*.

Satellite navigation began far earlier than the GPS era. The first practical system was the U.S. Navy's TRANSIT network, developed in the early Cold War and made operational in 1964. Using Doppler shifts from low-Earth-orbit satellites, TRANSIT allowed ships and submarines to fix

their position with unprecedented accuracy, and it was soon adopted by commercial mariners and survey vessels. This marked the moment when

navigation first moved beyond dependence on celestial observations, radio beacons, and dead reckoning, laying the technological foundation that GPS would later refine and globalise.

Queen Elizabeth II visited Albany in 1977 to admire the newly-completed *Amity* replica. Boat builder Stan Austin was invited to meet her, but he was worried about the effect that his long, wild hair might have. It didn't seem to 'fit' with meeting Royalty! So, to keep it under control, Stan applied a few dabs of woodworking glue to hold the mop down. He said later that it had done the job satisfactorily, but had taken a month to get rid of afterwards!

During World War II, Winston Churchill asked for the gift of a live platypus to be brought to the UK as a national morale booster. A platypus named Winston was chosen. It had to be fed 700 worms a day during the voyage, but died four days before arriving in England as shock waves from a German depth charge which did not sink the ship but fatally upset the platypus's sensory system. The dead specimen ended up taxidermied on Churchill's desk, but its whereabouts is currently unknown.

All the world's time zones converge at the South Pole, so what time do the various countries' research stations use? Some use the time of their home country, some use Greenwich Mean Time and some use the time of the country of their nearest supply station.

The Circumpolar Current, flowing clockwise around Antarctica, is the world's most powerful ocean current. It carries 150 times more water than all the world's rivers combined.

After seizing control of the *Bounty*, it took Fletcher Christian four months to locate Pitcairn Island.





Peter Heywood 1772–1831

Peter Heywood is noted in Western Australia for a small island 120 nautical miles northwards of Derby named after him. Phillip Parker King in his survey of the coast mentions *Captain Heywood's Red Island*, one of the Champagne Islands off the Kimberly coast. Peter Heywood 1772-1831

As a 15-year old midshipman Heywood sailed with Lieutenant William Bligh in the *Bounty* in 1787. During the famous mutiny in 1789 his behaviour was ambiguous. Despite his claims to have been asleep when it happened, he knew of Fletcher Christian's plans and did not show himself sufficiently loyal to Bligh to avoid a trial later. He did not join Bligh when the latter was cast adrift, and went to Tahiti with the ship. He stayed on Tahiti when the hard core of mutineers went on to Pitcairn Island.

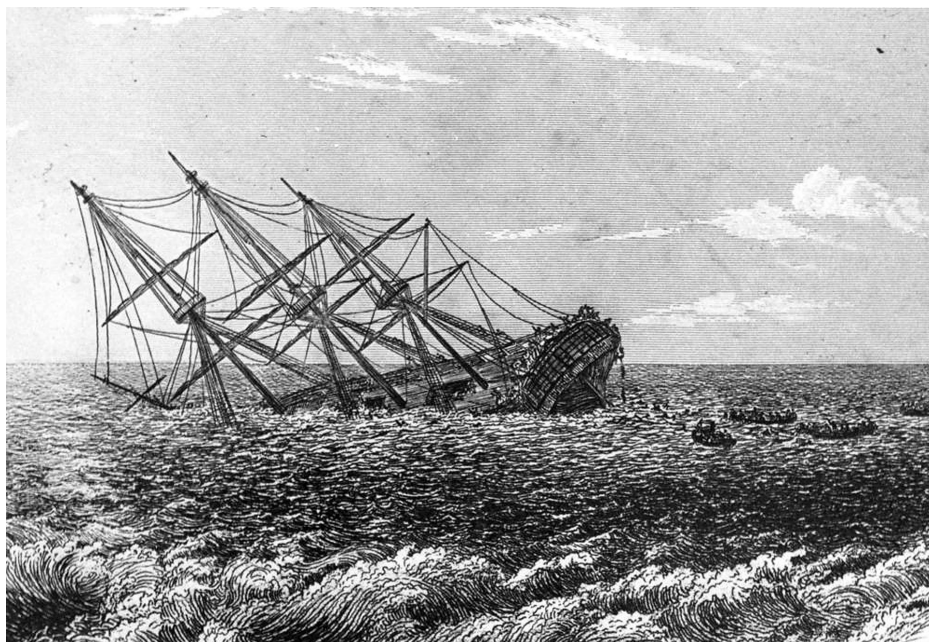
On the arrival at Tahiti of the *Pandora*, Heywood immediately joined her. Despite this, Captain Edward Edwards imprisoned him in 'Pandora's box'. Heywood survived the wrecking of the *Pandora*, and in 1792 he and the other mutineers were tried and Heywood was condemned to death. Because he was well-connected he obtained a royal pardon. He was reinstated in his career became a post captain in 1803. In command of HMS *Leopard*, he carried out surveys on the eastern coasts of India and Ceylon. He also produced charts of the coast of Sumatra and north-west Australia. It is presumably during these surveys that the island was named after him.

Heywood's good standing was such that in 1818, he was offered the position of Admiralty Hydrographer. He declined the offer, but recommended Francis Beaufort, who accepted the position. He retired in 1816 and died in 1831 after suffering a stroke.



Peter Heywood as a captain in the Royal Navy

Photo: Royal Museums Greenwich



Etching of the wreck of the Pandora based on a sketch by Peter Heywood



Driftwood

The following advertisement appeared at the end of a short book published in 1902 by H.S. Hutchinson & Co., New Bedford, USA, titled *Bark Kathleen Sunk by a Whale* by Thomas H. Jenkins

DRIFTWOOD FOR OPEN FIREPLACES

Driftwood consists of the sheathing and planking torn from old whaling ships, forming the only satisfactory and reliable form for Driftwood, as each piece of it being completely impregnated with copper through the action of the salt water will, while burning, delight the eye with brilliant changing colors.

It should be used in the fireplace, not to kindle the fire, nor when the wood or coal is blazing freely, but after a glowing bed of coals is formed, as the crowning touch of beauty, lay on one, two, or three pieces of this magic wood.

Then with more than sunset splendor, it will flame and glow and die away and glow again, giving up itself in a glory of color that breathes out beauty, witchery, mystery, all in one.

Packed in barrels and shipped to any address by
H. S. HUTCHINSON & CO.
New Bedford, Mass.



BREAKING UP OLD WHALERS FOR DRIFTWOOD



WESTERN
AUSTRALIAN
MUSEUM

***Naval Sea Power in Miniature* returns with its most ambitious exhibition yet**

Naval Sea Power in Miniature opens at the WA Shipwrecks Museum on Tuesday 24 February, marking its most ambitious presentation to date.

The exhibition brings together more than 170 exceptionally crafted models by West Australian master modeller Gerry Westenberg, offering an exploration of 4,000 years of maritime history in miniature.

CEO of the Western Australian Museum Alec Coles said, “Gerry’s models are remarkable for their precision and scope. Created over fifty years, the collection is the culmination of Gerry’s tireless research, craftsmanship and dedication. It is a privilege to be able to show them.”

Tracing the evolution of seafaring from ancient Egypt to the present day, the exhibition brings together iconic vessels and pivotal moments in exploration, cruising, trade, conflict and discovery.

Anchored by the RMS *Queen Mary* and the British airship *R101*, visitors will encounter vessels ranging from the ancient Egyptian Cheops Royal Barge to the Tudor-era *Mary Rose*, and Columbus’ *Niña*, *Pinta* and *Santa Maria*.

Building on this sweep of global exploration, key Royal Australian Navy ships — including *Sydney* (I–V), *Canberra*, *Anzac* (I) and *Arunta* — appear alongside legendary Royal Navy vessels such as *Dreadnought*, *Hood* and *Ark Royal*.

The exhibition then dives beneath the waves, where submarines from the pioneering *H. L. Hunley* to the nuclear *Vanguard* SSBN class chart the evolution of underwater warfare. From there, VOC ships such as *Vergulde Draek* and *Ridderschap van Holland* illuminate early global trade, while flying boats such as the *Catalina* and *Dornier Do 24* add an unexpected aerial dimension.

This is the fourth iteration of *Naval Sea Power in Miniature* and the first to be presented by the Western Australian Museum, in partnership with Gerry Westenberg. The exhibition has been made possible through the generous support of the D.G. Myers Fund and the Foundation for the WA Museum.

Visitors are invited to explore this remarkable collection firsthand and experience maritime history brought to life in miniature. *Naval Sea Power* is a free exhibition and is on display at the WA Shipwrecks Museum, 47 Cliff Street, Fremantle, from 24 February to 26 July 2026.

Interview opportunities available.

About Gerry Westenberg

Gerry’s passion for model making began with the Airfix kits he bought using savings from his childhood paper round. He soon progressed from adapting commercial kits—famously converting an HMS *Ajax* into HMAS *Perth*—to fully scratch-building ships from balsa wood. Working at a 1/192 scale that balances detail with practicality, he has completed more than 180 meticulously researched models. His exhibitions, the result of tens of thousands of hours of dedicated work, stand as a testament to his patience, precision, and exceptional craftsmanship.



Gerry Westenberg with models © WA Museum



Gerry's model of HMAS Fremantle

Photo: David Nicolson

QUIZ

Answers to March

1. Compass timbers are ship building timber sourced from trees with natural, useful curves as required for stems, frames, knees, etc. See illustration right
2. The man is Isambard Kingdom Brunel, designer and builder of the steamer *Great Western*. This was the first steamship built to make regular crossings of the Atlantic Ocean. He then designed and built the *Great Eastern*, the first large iron steam ship and the largest afloat at that time.
3. The *Zeewijk* was wrecked on 9 June 1727.

Quiz

1. What is a swinging basin?
2. In August 1839 a barque was wrecked at Cottesloe. What was its name?
3. What is a deadeye?

Compass timbers





Brunel's Block Mill in Portsmouth

By Roger Price

Did the 1793 Reign of Terror and a yellow fever epidemic in Philadelphia propel some of the greatest achievements of Britain's Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century? As a Royalist sympathiser and public critic of Robespierre, Marc Brunel was marked for the guillotine. Fleeing to a sympathetic emigré French community in the newly hatched United States he found himself in the maw of a yellow fever outbreak in Philadelphia. He quickly moved on to New York, where he flourished as an outstanding civil engineer for several years. Through his growing reputation and a connection to Alexander Hamilton he emigrated to England in 1799 and presented to the British Admiralty plans for 22 distinct steam-powered iron-built machines that, working in cooperation enabled the precise fabrication of ship's pulley blocks—at the time laboriously hand-made by craftsmen. Brunel would need only unskilled labour and a tenth of the traditional workforce. A ship of the line might employ 1,000 of these blocks of different sizes. They were needed to hoist sails and haul anchors. In the fury of the Napoleonic War the Admiralty required over 100,000 per year and Brunel's proposal was adopted. The Portsmouth Block Mill operated until the 1960s and represents the earliest example of assembly-line mass production. The arc of Brunel's genius attracted the admiration and support of Nelson, Wellington, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, but his entrepreneurial gambles

also led at one time to debtor's prison. His last and greatest achievement, aside perhaps from fathering Isambard Kingdom—the greatest engineer of the nineteenth century—was to build the Rotherhithe tunnel under the Thames. This remains one of the icons of the Industrial Revolution.



Sir Marc Isambard Brunel
Painting by James Northcote (1736–1841)
Wikipedia

and (left)

His block making mill





A Long Voyage

Ron Forsyth has found interesting information during his research regarding a very long voyage by one sailing ship. Here are some of the newspaper articles edited by Ron.

THE *INVERNEILL'S* TRIP.

A REMARKABLE VOYAGE RECALLED

The British barque *Inverneill*. 3,146 tons, Captain Shippen, from Bunbury, West Australia, with a full cargo of railway sleepers, arrived at Cape Town on January 17. The vessel had fairly good weather across the Indian Ocean to Algoa Bay, off which she was on the forty-second day out. Head winds delayed her arrival in Table Bay for a week, the run from port to port being accomplished in 52 days, which is reckoned very good time. The *Inverneill* was built by Russells, of Clydebank, 20 years ago, and is still a staunch and sound ship. She carries the figurehead of a Highland lassie. She is comfortable under the quarter deck, amidships and in the forecastle. Indeed, she is a very handsome and well-appointed vessel, maintaining the high reputation of the builders of the Clyde. She was built for the Inver Line of Aberdeen, the heads of which were the Milnes. At present she is one of the line owned by Sir William Garthwaite, of London, and her name is down to be altered to *Garthneill*, which has already been painted on some of her boats. The present port of register of the barque is Montreal. The *Inverneill* came into port in the first-rate condition that befits a classy ship. She was well, looked after all through her years of voyaging. The *Inverneill* in her voyage from Melbourne to Bunbury put up a world's record. The distance between the two ports is roughly just under 2,000 miles. The *Inverneill* left Melbourne on July 6. After passing through Port Phillip Heads a strong westerly gale was met with. The vessel was drawn out of her

course, eventually passing Wilson's Promontory on the south-east coast of Australia and taken up to the south of Sydney Heads. The barque was taken into Port Jackson, and remained there for some little while. Now it must be explained that Port Jackson, or Sydney Harbour, is on the east and Bunbury on the west of Australia. So that it will be understood how far the barque was drawn off her course. Captain Shippen, putting off to sea again, found the westerly winds still at their tops. He then decided that instead of working back through Bass Straits and across the Great Bight he would go with the westerly wind around the world. Five days after the barque was off the north end of New Zealand, 1,200 miles from Sydney Heads, the daily average run being 240 sea miles; remarkably good for any vessel in 'flying light' ballast trim. Twenty-eight days Cape Horn was rounded. Thirty-three days later the barque was off St. Paul's Island in the mid-Indian Ocean. Thence to Bunbury took ten days. The whole voyage from Sydney, the second port of departure



The Inverneill before it had a change of name

Photo: State Library of South Australia



to Bunbury occupied 76 days, a speedy run, the average sailing being 192 sea miles a day, quite reminiscent of the famous tea and wool clippers of the days before steam. Altogether the barque travelled about 14,500 miles to get from Melbourne to Bunbury a distance of less than 2,000 miles. During the voyage the crew experienced the temperate, frigid, and torrid zones. Captain Shippen is of opinion that such a passage had never been made by a mariner, and it may be regarded as doubtful if it will ever be repeated. There was no shortage of food or water, and consequently there was no suffering on board by anyone. It only requires for one to look at the map of the world to be able to realise the wonder of the voyage round the Horn and back to Australia. Captain Shippen, when master of the *Garnmoney* during the war, had a disagreeable experience. When about 160 miles off the Fastnet, in the south-west of Ireland, his ship was shelled and sunk by a German submarine. When the crew took to the small boats they were again shelled, although the captain had his wife in the boat with him and 11 of the crew. Captain Shippen appealed to the submarine commander for a tow towards shore, as the wind was dead ahead. The submarine commander asked if the boats were sound, and the reply, being in the affirmative continued: "Well, you can die just as well out here as nearer land." After three days at sea a rescue was effected, and the captain and those with him landed in Glasgow. Captain Shippen said that the submarine commander was himself at one time engaged in the British mercantile marine.

Daily Commercial News and Shipping List, 28 February 1920: 4

AN INTERESTING BARQUE *GARTHNEILL* IN BUNBURY

With her tapering masts, her spars, and smooth white decks agleam in the morning sunlight, the three masted barquentine *Garthneil* is a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, a graceful survival of the great and glorious days in Britain's naval history when her wooden walls were her only sure shield against an invasion of the French. A visitor to the *Garthneill*, now lying alongside Bunbury wharf, will find much of interest to engage his attention, from her great carven figurehead of a sailor boy to the interesting Danish mariner, who will be found, like as not, sitting on an empty rum cask stroking the ship's pet, a brown, smooth-haired monkey. The Dane will tell you all about the vessel, declaring with pride in his eye that there was never such a ship afloat and never such a skipper

for kindness and geniality as Captain Shippen, well known in Bunbury. The *Garthneill*, the Dane will explain, was built 24 years ago by Messrs Russell and Co., the famous Port Glasgow shipbuilders. She is as sound now as ever she was, and if her present almost perfect condition is maintained, she will easily have another 24 years on the flowing highway. Vessels of her type are becoming rarer every day, at least in the British merchant service. Great Britain has sold, and is still selling, many sailing vessels to the Scandinavian Government. The *Garthneill* was until very recently called the *Inverneill*, as she was then, a unit of the Inver line. But she has now been purchased by a Mr Garthwright—hence her change in name. The ship arrived here from Mauritius and, as can be seen, she is no whit the worse for her long voyage. After taking on board a large quantity of timber—her gross, dead weight cargo carrying capacity is 1,341 tons—she will leave Bunbury on the voyage to Cape Town, where she will discharge prior to another trip to a port not yet announced. The conversation will be terminated that you may listen to the clear note of the sailor boy high in the rigging singing his song to the morning, and after being taken on a tour of inspection over the vessel, you will feel that you know more of sailing ships and sailor men than before.

Bunbury Herald and Blackwood Express, 2 November 1920: 4

PASSING OF THE *GARTHNEILL*. LAST OF A LONG SAILING LINE.

By A. J. VILLIERS.

She was built at Glasgow by Russell and Co in 1895, and launched in the name of *Inverneill* to the order of an Aberdeen shipowner. For more than 20 years she sailed under this name, frequently visiting Australia. In 1919 her name was changed to *Garthneill* while she lay in the Yarra and from then her luck seemed to desert her. She left Melbourne in ballast in the middle of that winter to pick up a cargo of jarrah at Bunbury, in Western Australia for the Cape-Cairo railway. Seven weeks later a strange barque in distress was reported to be making for Sydney. It was the *Garthneill* coming back from a losing fight with the storm devils of the Great Australian Bight, which ended in her being blown somewhere off the South West Cape of Tasmania, short of sails and provisions. After refitting in Sydney, at considerable expense, she put to sea once more. Again the westerly wind howled defiance at her; again it was found impossible to make westing.



There was only one way left to get to Bunbury in time to keep the charter, and that was the rather desperate route round the Horn and the Cape of Good Hope almost round the world. Hoping that the westerly gales would hold, *Garthneill's* master decided to take this course. The wind, respecting a brave man, held from the west and two and a half months after leaving Sydney the *Garthneill* arrived at Bunbury where hope of her arrival had been almost given up. She was just in time to keep the charter.

Argus, 10 July 1926: 10

Editor's note:

The steel barque *Inverneill* (O/No. 104512) was launched in July 1895 by Russell and Company (Yard

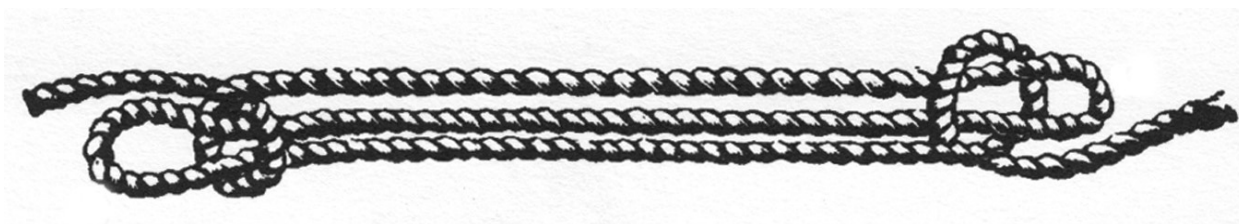
No. 374) of Glasgow for G. Milne and Company. Her dimensions were 238ft x 36ft x 21.7ft, tonnage 1,470, and initial registration was at Aberdeen.

In July 1926 the *Garthneill* was one of the last British square-rigged sailing vessels to be decommissioned. It was sold and sailed to Port Adelaide where, owned by the Yorke Peninsula Barley Growers Association, it was converted into an electric barley-grading mill and storeship – the only floating grain mill in Australia. On 29 November 1935, with most fittings removed, the hulk was towed down the Port River to Garden Island. The bow plates were cut away and the vessel holed fore and aft with explosive charges. Today the *Garthneill's* forward section lies partly hidden amongst the mangroves, with sections of the port bow extending through the mangroves and visible above the treeline.



The Garthneill as a barley grading mill and storeship

Photo: State Library of South Australia





USS Constitution

By Roger Price

*F*rom the Halls of Montezuma; to the shores of Tripoli; we fight our country's battles; in the air, on land, and sea. These words from the folksy 'Marines' Hymn' recall the young US republic and its six original 'fighting frigates', one of which is still sailable today—227 years following its launch in Boston—albeit as a fine example of 'grandfather's axe' restorations funded by an adoring public. With the forging of a new but perhaps naive nation in 1789, all the warships of the American Revolution had either been sold or broken up. The United States was to be a republic of traders, not imperial conquerors. It was the subsequent harrying of their merchant vessels in the Mediterranean by Barbary pirates out of Tripoli and Algiers that angered Americans enough for George Washington to order in 1794 the laying down of six frigates. The choice of the frigate class as the foundation capital ships of the fledgling US Navy was inspired. In that era, an imperial 'ship of the line' boasted up to 110 guns on 2 or 3 decks. Though it was the alpha maritime predator of its day, in rough weather its lower gun deck might be inoperable, while its speed and manoeuvrability in lighter

conditions were limited. The Yankee heavy frigate as conceived by the naval architect Joshua Humphreys, was a clever compromise for a young country needing to protect her far-flung merchant fleet. Ship-rigged and with one dedicated gun deck, it carried up to 50 long guns and carronades (including on the spar deck), could roam the seas for months without resupply and capture merchantmen as it pleased. It could engage with an enemy ship of the line in rugged seas and yet flee when necessary. Today we have the *USS Constitution* as tangible evidence of these vessels. At 92 metres from bowsprit to spanker, with 67 metres of main mast, a 21-inch-thick oaken hull, a displacement of 2,200 tons and a top speed of 14 knots she captured the imagination of the American public through her actions on the Barbary coast, skirmishes with Napoleonic France and in the 'real' War of 1812. During that conflict, she took numerous prizes and defeated five British warships; her impenetrable hull earning her the affectionate nickname 'Old Ironsides'. Today, she is both a US national treasure and the world's oldest commissioned naval warship still afloat.

*USS Constitution
firing a salute*
Photo: Wikipedia





Letter to the Editor

Hello Peter and greetings from Suffolk in Eastern England.

I've just come across your excellent Association and the extensive archives you have published; I have a lot of reading to do ...

I hope you won't mind me mentioning a couple of things about the answer to question 2 in the quiz [December 2025]. The answer is correct but there is a bit more to add: it's possible, and maybe more common, for the dolphin striker to be bracing the bowsprit alone and not the jibboom extending forward of the bowsprit—especially if the bowsprit is relatively long. Here is an example:



Additionally, the spar is often not vertical ('perpendicular') to the water but at an angle—as

in the picture. The reason of course being simple mechanics to spread the compressive forces and decrease the lever moment.

We can also have a dolphin striker without a bowsprit or jibboom, e.g. on the Tornado and Hobie cats, but its function is the same.

Slightly off topic, but it's probably worth mentioning (I'm sure you know this!) that a 'jibboom' is also quite literally, a boom for the jib. This is Nat Herreshoff's *Alerion* (as re-imagined by Chuck Paine):



The wonderful world of maritime terminology ...

Best wishes!

Richard.

Early History of Boatbuilding Around Albany

50 years of the Amity replica

When: 25th of June 2026—31th of July 2026

Where: Museum of the Great Southern, Residency Road, Albany

Times: Daily 10am–4pm

This year, Albany is the site for Western Australia's first bicentenary and the 50th anniversary of the building of the *Amity* replica - a time of remembering a place in time.

Whilst European seafarers had been visiting since as early as 1627, with Pieter Nuyts first mapping of the coastline, it was on the 25 December 1826, that HM colonial brig *Amity*, carrying Major Edmund Lockyer and his party, arrived at King George Sound to establish a military garrison. On 21 January 1827 the Union Jack was raised and a *Feu de Joie* fired by the troops, formally annexing the territory and in doing so, preventing the French from staking a claim of sovereignty.

Boat building at Albany and its environs appears to have taken place on a more or less irregular basis, and vessels were constructed only when a wealthy local settler was able to order one. As a result, not



a great many larger vessels were built. Early vessels were for the most part constructed in clearings, often with sawpits, along the banks of the Kalgan and King rivers

And 200 years on, the replica of the brig *Amity* sits as a silent witness on the foreshore of Princess Royal Harbour, part of King George Sound, in Albany on the south coast of Western Australia.

The MHA and WAM acknowledge the Menang people of the Noongar Nation—traditional custodians of the land where replica Brig *Amity* stands.

Information about the lectures

Tuesday's talks

10:30am start for 45mins + question time.

Place: The Co-op Building

July 7 Malcolm Traill; history of Maritime Albany

July 14 Darren Russel, *Amity* Replica maintenance

July 21 Lawrence Cutbert; history of Restoration Albany Maritime Foundation

July 28 Ian Forsyth; History of Forsyth family in connection with Albany

Bambra

Text and painting by the late Pat Rodriguez

In 1912 the Government of Western Australia formed their own shipping company, the State Shipping Service, to operate from Fremantle to ports along both the western and southern coastlines the state. They began operations with a tiny vessel named *Una* then bought three second-hand ships, and in 1915 took on charter one of the German ships that had been seized when war broke out, and later named *Bambra*. This vessel had been built for the well known German shipping company, North German Lloyd, and was named *Prinz Sigismund*. She had been built with a sister ship *Prinz Waldemar* for a service from Singapore to Australia, being completed in August 1903 and despatched to Singapore to begin operations. On 24 October 1903 *Prinz Sigismund* left there on her first voyage to Australia, arriving in Brisbane on 23 November and Sydney on 25 November, then continuing to Melbourne where she berthed on 28 November.

For the next ten years the vessel operated out of those ports, calling en route in New Britain, New Guinea, Macassar and Batavia, becoming a familiar sight in Australia. On 4 August 1914 *Prinz Sigismund* arrived in Brisbane from Singapore and only a matter of hours later that same day Britain and Germany declared war. The ship was immediately seized by the Australian Government

on behalf of the British Government and remained in Brisbane for many months while court action was completed to decide the fate of German ships in Australian waters. In the meantime the ship was renamed *N2* by the Australians, and in May 1915 it was decided that she be chartered to the Government of Western Australia for use on their coastal service. Still named *N2* the vessel left Brisbane on 24 May for Sydney, arriving three days later and being drydocked to have her bottom cleaned. On 31 May the vessel left, calling first at Melbourne before proceeding to Fremantle, where she arrived on 12 June.

Over the next ten days the ship was prepared for her new service, and sailed on 23 June on her first voyage to ports in the north west of the state. She was known as *N2* for some time after entering service, but eventually in 1916 was given the name *Bambra*. Although the ship could carry a good number of passengers and large amounts of cargo, she was not a success, being too large and deep for the west coast, and proved very difficult to berth in some of the ports of call. All the men who served as captain on her hated the ship.

On 8 August 1916 *Bambra* went aground between Derby and Wyndham, and on being re-floated next day had to be beached in Cambridge Gulf



while temporary repairs were effected. Once the vessel was seaworthy again she sailed directly to Singapore, which was the nearest port with a drydock large enough to take her, where repairs were completed, and she then returned to service.

Despite all her drawbacks *Bambra* continued to operate on the Western Australia coast for over ten years, mainly because no other more suitable ship could be found. After the war ended *Bambra* was listed as being owned by the Commonwealth Government Line of Steamers, but remained on charter to the State Shipping Service. It was not until new ships were designed and built for the service that *Bambra* was no longer required, and the arrival of the new vessel *Koolinda* in late January 1927 brought the end to the service of *Bambra* in Australian waters.

The Australian Government had no use for the ship, and they handed her over to the British

Government. On 28 February 1927 *Bambra* left Fremantle for the last time, heading across the Indian Ocean to Colombo, thence to Suez and through the Canal, eventually arriving at Harwich on the east coast of England on 15 May. The ship was registered in the ownership of the British Board of Trade, but it seems she could not be put to any worthwhile use by the British, and within a couple of years the vessel was sold to shipbreakers.

Specifications

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| Builder | A.G. Wesser, Bremen |
| Tonnage | 3,302 gross, 1,844 net |
| Dimensions | 327 x 42ft (99.6 x 12.8m) |
| Service speed | 14 knots |
| Engines | Triple expansion |
| Propulsion | Twin screw |

