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Thames Sailing Barge Match Racing

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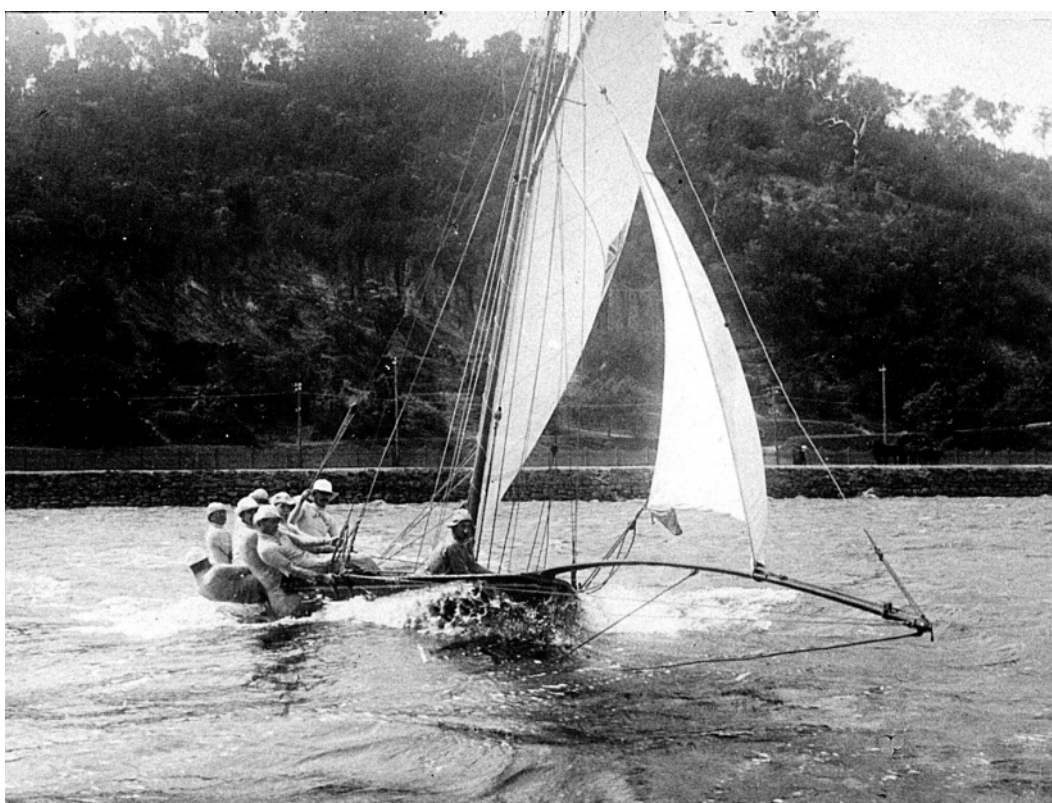
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Because the editor has nothing much to say in an Editorial, he has decided to share some of his collection of old photographs of yachts on the Swan River to fill the gap. How is that for a bowsprit !



The 18-foot skiff *Aeolus* was designed by Bill Golding and built by F. Thomas and G. Perry in 1904. Two years after launching, with skipper Ted Tomlinson at the helm and a crew of nine, *Aeolus* won the 1906–7 Australian 18ft Skiff Championship held in Perth. The yacht belonged to the Mounts Bay Yacht Club.

Did You Know?

Did you know that Tasmania has a land border with the mainland of Australia? The border between Victoria and Tasmania runs through Bass Strait along the latitude of 39° 12'S. This border passes through a small 2 hectare island named Boundary Islet, part of the Hogan Group. This makes it not only the land border between Tasmania and the mainland but also the shortest land border of any Australian state or territory, the islet being only 85m wide at that point.



William McDonald Leonard OAM



William (Bill) McDonald Leonard OAM

Photo: David Nicolson

The Maritime Heritage Association is delighted to congratulate one of our most revered and distinguished members, Bill Leonard (William McDonald Leonard) on his being awarded the Order of Australia Medal.

Bill was honoured “For service to community history through boat restoration”, which is not inappropriate, but it is just the tip of an iceberg in terms of Bill’s contributions to maritime heritage.

Bill Leonard is a shipwright from the Clyde, the origin of many of the finest ships to sail the seas, and he is the son of a shipwright. Between serving his apprenticeship at Fairlie’s Yard on the Firth of Clyde and coming to Western Australia in 1986, Bill had worked in yards in Scotland, England and Bermuda, and sailed the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, ever increasing his understanding of shipwrightery, shipyard management, naval architecture, and the mysteries of making a ship both seaworthy and a superb aesthetic creation.

That Bill was appointed master shipwright of the Endeavour Replica Project was more than fitting – it is widely agreed that without him the project could scarcely have started, and would certainly never have completed so outstanding a ship. When financial problems seemed to have sunk the project, Bill persevered and even took over the role of naval architect with complete mastery.

Such was the glorious success of the Endeavour Replica construction that there was widely the feeling that Fremantle must continue to be the centre of excellence in replica ship building. In retrospect, we should have proclaimed that Fremantle must continue to be the Bill Leonard Centre of Excellence for Replica Ship Building. But Bill is a man of quiet modesty.

When the Duyfken Replica project began to take wing there was no thought that anyone other than Bill should be the master shipwright. Bill’s creative genius is built on a hugely solid foundation of



precision, attention to detail, and technical know-how. But the building of Duyfken Replica was to be “experimental archaeology” – building the ship as the original would have been built four centuries back. She was to be built plank-first, and therefore built largely by-eye, with only minimal recourse to technical drawings. It was for everyone a real leap in the dark, and for Bill a profound conceptual departure from much of his previous experience. And yet he calmly took it on, with apparently cheerful confidence, leading his team of shipwrights and apprentices in learning new skills and reinventing lost skills. Everyone who has learned their trade under Bill has been extraordinarily fortunate. And, of course, the Duyfken Replica is a creation of outstanding beauty that sails so willingly and loyally: qualities that can only be imbued by the greatest of master shipwrights.

When the construction of *Duyfken* was complet-

ed, Bill went to work for the Western Australian Maritime Museum, restoring the very large collection of watercraft for display in the new museum on Victoria Quay ... and doing so much more. His book, *In Search of Fish and Fortune Along Australia's West Coast*, is a splendid testament to his work with the museum – meticulously recorded history, clearly presented, and crowned with immaculate technical drawings every bit as good, if not better than, the work of H.I. Chapelle and David R. MacGregor.

Having attempted to write a short article congratulating Bill and outlining some of his contributions to Maritime Heritage, I now better understand the difficulty of the committee who award the Australian honours in deciding what to state Bill's award is for – it has to be a brief statement, and Bill's breadth of achievements defy that.

Nick Burningham, president MHA.



Perth City Baths

The Perth City Baths was a public swimming facility located on the north shore of the Swan River between William and Barrack streets. During his 1881 sojourn in Perth, exhibition impresario Jules Joubert had recommended that the city consider a public bath. The ornate Moorish style building was opened on 5 March 1898 by the Mayor of Perth, Alexander Forrest M.L.A., and had cost the Perth City Council (with some State Government assistance) £2,600. The mostly jarrah building had four towers capped by cupolas and was designed by G.R. Johnson and built by C. Nelson.

There was some debate about the positioning of the baths, as it was thought that people in Kings

Park might be able to look down and (Heaven forbid !) see into the ladies' side of the baths.

The baths were approached from The Esplanade along a 200-foot jetty. There were two separate baths inside, each 86ft by 150ft, varying in depth from 2½ft to 6ft. The baths were separated by a sheet metal partition, so that the ladies had complete privacy. There were 62 dressing rooms.

For the first month of operation the baths made a profit of £56 19s. after deductions for costs such as insurance, wages, etc.

The Perth baths were partially demolished in 1917, and completely removed by 1920.



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 famous whaling man William Scoresby was born near Whitby, UK, on 3 May 1760, and first went to sea at the age of 19 as an apprentice on the ship *Jane*.

Between 1786 and 1920 approximately 3,700 square-rigged vessels of 500 tons and over were built in Canada.

The UK has sold aircraft carriers to more countries (seven) than any other nation.

Between 1866 and 1957 approximately 1,100 lives were lost in the pearl fishery on Western Australia's coast. The worst years were the loss of 140 at Eighty Mile Beach during a cyclone in 1887 and 135 in another cyclone in 1935.

King Sound in Western Australia is an extensive drowned river valley, measuring roughly 160 kilometres by 90 at its greatest width, an expanse of water in which the whole of Scotland would be lost.

M.A. Bain, 1982

Traditionally, territorial waters were considered to extend three miles from the coast: 'This distance, it is well known, was settled by the range of a cannon ball which was taken at three miles' (W. Clifton, Colonial Secretary, 31 May 1888).

One of the longest port to port voyages by a sailing ship during the last days of sail was that of the 1,988-ton, steel *Denbigh Castle*. It departed Cardiff on 9 October 1908 en route to Chile. The ship struck serious trouble trying to round Cape Horn, and eventually turned and ran its easting down, arriving in Fremantle on 19 June 1909, a 253 day voyage. After taking on supplies and water there were still 5,000 miles to go to reach Chile.

William Dampier was the first European to discover pearl shell beds in Australia, and, after Lieutenant Benjamin Helpman discovered oyster shells at Shark Bay in 1850, commercial pearling began there.

The 360-ton gunboat *Gayundah* became part of the Queensland Marine Defence Force in early 1885. The vessel's task was to patrol the enormous

stretch of coastline from Thursday Island to Broome, to prevent poaching of pearl and trochus shell. Only one shot was fired during its long career in this role when two Dutch schooners were arrested at Scott Reef.

Happily, steam is overtaking canvas so rapidly that we are becoming more independent of sail-ors every day.....

Thomas Mackay of the famous Blackball Line in a letter to *The Times*, 11 January 1861

Scientists have discovered that the most efficient pattern for a school of fish to swim is a flat diamond arrangement. By taking advantage of the vortices produced by the two fish diagonally in front, an individual fish can save up to 80% of its energy. This has big implications for the positioning of wind farm turbines.

A **shoal** of fish is a disorderly group of fish. A **school** of fish is a highly structured group with co-ordinated movements travelling in the same direction.

In December 1909 the WA Government established a fourth order automatic light on Bedout Island, about 60 miles north of Port Hedland. The notice to mariners issued on 14 December carried the warning: 'Special attention is drawn to the fact that the Light is unwatched, and therefore Shipmasters are cautioned against placing too much reliance on same.'

The War of 1812 was the last time Britain allowed privateering. The Treaty of Paris in 1856 banned all privateering, but the USA did not sign the treaty, seeing their large fleet of merchantmen as potential privateers in case of war.

The last lighthouse in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland to become automated was the North Foreland Lighthouse. It was automated on 26 November 1998.





The Second Woman to Circumnavigate the World

In the March 2023 Journal there was a short article on the first woman to circumnavigate the world. The second woman to do so was Rose de Freycinet (1794–1832) who accompanied her husband, Louis Claude de Saulces de Freycinet, on the French expedition of 1817–1820. De Freycinet's ship, *Uranie*, was wrecked

in the Falkland Islands before the voyage was completed, but the crew were all saved and later arrived in France, so completing her circumnavigation. Rose's presence on board the ship was illegal, so she dressed as a man to board in France, and on other occasions. Although the French Government fairly quickly found out that she was on board, there was little they could do as the *Uranie* had left France.



During this voyage the *Uranie* visited Shark Bay in Western Australia, and an illustration from the voyage shows Rose outside her tent on the shore. Rose does not appear in the official version of this illustration.

Rose kept a journal of the voyage, and these, together with her many letters, provide an excellent insight into a woman's perspective of life on the ship and ashore in strange lands.

A Tale of Two Voyages.

By Ron Forsyth

In her maiden voyage in 1892 the four-masted steel barque *Beechbank* ran into serious trouble when 1,200 km or so off the Cape of Good Hope. Departing La Plata, Argentina, for Newcastle, New South Wales, on July 27 she ran into an armada of icebergs eleven days later:

... the *Beechbank* was found to be completely surrounded with icebergs varying in size. Over a hundred huge floating mountains of ice were counted, and as far as the eye could see large bodies of floating ice were turning up. The vessel was tacked about in all directions, but no opening could be discovered. As the wind was strong and squally, considerable difficulty was experienced in keeping the vessel from colliding, she being under low canvas. The bergs came so close that at times a stone could be thrown on to them from the deck (*Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate*, 13 October 1892).

Providence or good luck with, no doubt, no small degree of seamanship, saw the barque with all hands escape what had appeared almost certain disaster. The papers headlined her as being *In the Jaws of Death Over Three Days*.

Seventeen years later, her then captain, John Bremner, made a fortuitous decision after departing Port Augusta, South Australia, laden with wheat. The exuberant skipper recalled:

It was my intention to go home via Cape Horn, but owing to the continuation of south-east winds after leaving Spencer's Gulf I altered my mind. We left Algoa Bay [South Africa] on April 3, and had fine, weather all the way. The royals and topgallant staysails were set about 70 miles east of Cape Agulhas, Cape Colony, and were not taken in until we got off the Old Head of Kinsale [County Cork, Ireland]—something that might never occur again. Just fancy, coming a distance of 7,000 miles



without lowering a sail down (Register (Adelaide), 11 June 1909).

(John Richardson, The Sailing Ships of Andrew Weir Shipping & Trading Co. Ltd, Part Two).

Memories of a voyage two years earlier no doubt influenced Bremner's decision to change course. On that occasion he had taken a punishing fifteen days to round Cape Horn in the same barque.

Beechbank was a four masted barque measuring 2,288 gross tonnage with the dimensions of 277.5 x 42 x 24.2 feet. She came to a peaceful end when scrapped in 1924 in Norway after over three decades of service.



*The four-masted barque
Beechbank under full sail,
1898*

Vale Sir James Hardy OBE

Sir James Gilbert Hardy OBE died in Adelaide on 14 June 2023 aged 90 years. Sir James was a great-grandson of winemaker Thomas Hardy and was born at Seacliff, South Australia on 20 November 1932. He was the youngest of four children and his seafaring ancestral roots could be traced back to Thomas Masterman Hardy who was Nelson's Captain on HMS *Victory* at the Battle of Trafalgar. He joined the family wine company Thomas Hardy and Sons in 1953 where he first worked as a shipping clerk, rising to Chairman in 1981, then as Non-Executive Director in 1992 when the company merged to become BRL Hardy Wine Company.

He had a great passion for yachting and represented Australia at two Olympic Games, first at Tokyo in 1964 and Mexico City in 1968. He skippered three America's Cup challenges in 1970, 1974 and 1980, and he competed in four Admiral's Cup Ocean Racing Championships.

He was an integral advisor to the successful 1983 Australian challenge for the America's Cup.

Among his public service achievements was 25 years on the Executive Committee of the Neurosurgical Research Foundation of South Australia and he was Chair of the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust Advisory Committee for 8 years.

In 1975 Sir James received an Order of the British Empire and in 1981 he was invested as a Knight Bachelor by Queen Elizabeth II for services to yachting. In 1994 he was inducted into the America's Cup Hall of Fame and in 2000 he was awarded the Australian Sports Medal.

A State Funeral was held in Adelaide on 23 June 2023. Sir James is survived by his wife Joan, brother David, sister Pamela and sons David and Richard.



USS *Bennington* and the Pirates

When the U.S. aircraft carrier *Bennington* sailed majestically into Sydney Harbour to help Australia celebrate the anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea (May 7, 1942), its 2,970 officers and men were blithely unaware of one important matter: the University of Sydney would hold its annual Commemoration Day festivities, when students stage zany parades, pull off outlandish pranks, and badger citizens for donations to charity. Last week the proud *Bennington* became the victim of the most ignominious fate of all—capture by ‘pirates.’

The ignominy began when ten students, dressed as pirates and armed with toy flintlocks, rowed over to the *Bennington* one cold dawn and simply marched up the gangway without anyone's seeing them. Though they eventually ran into a few crewmen in the course of their wanderings, no one bothered to challenge them. One group of pirates ended up in a crew's quarters to collect money for a children's charity. Another group headed for the bridge, where a ‘good-natured bloke’ turned on the public-address system so they could appeal for donations. Instead, ‘Pirate’ Paul Lennon shouted: “Now hear this! The U.S.S. *Bennington* has been captured by Sydney University pirates!” Then, for good measure, says Lennon, “we turned two handles labelled ‘Battle Alarm’ and ‘Chemical Warfare.’”

As the clangs and hoots echoed through the ship, officers and men tumbled out of bunks, rushed headlong for battle stations. No one seemed to hear the PA system's agitated plea: “Belay that last order!” Meanwhile, the bridge pirates headed for the officers' quarters. Finally a steward asked them the question no one had thought of before: “What are you doing here?” “Of course,” says Lennon, “we didn't have any answer.”

Within a few minutes, a grim detachment of Marines rounded up the pirates and put them ashore. Next day the episode hit the headlines, and there was at least one facetious reference to Pearl Harbour. It was all so embarrassing that the Royal Australian Navy felt obliged to announce that, of course, the United States Navy had known about the gag and simply played along. The men of the *Bennington* knew better, but decided to take their humiliation in stride. They collected \$1,800 for the boys' charity and handed it over to Sydney's Lord Mayor Harry Jensen. His lordship was most grateful—and most sympathetic. After all, on the same day another group of students had seized him and whisked him off, a prisoner, in a car.

Time, May 20 1957





QUIZ

Answers to June

1. A binnacle is a non-magnetic housing for a compass.
2. Wrecks with the same names as WA towns or suburbs—*Kwinana, Rockingham, Cervantes, Seabird, Perth, Alkimos, Karrakatta, Eglinton, Koorda, Parmelia, Day Dawn, Fremantle, Belle of Bunbury, City of Perth, City of York, City of Carlisle, Lass of Geraldton, Carnarvon Castle*. Please let me know if I've missed any !
3. Despite being originally Norwegian whale chasers they were both built in Middlesborough, North Yorkshire, UK.

Quiz

1. Who was Captain of the *Leeuwin* in 1622? This is one you should know !
2. The clipper ship *Samuel Plimsoll*, built by Walter Hood & Company in 1873, became famous for its beauty and speed. The ship was built for the emigrant trade between England, Sydney and Melbourne. Where did the *Samuel Plimsoll* end its days?
3. After whom did Captain James Stirling name Point Walter on the Swan River?

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Antifouling

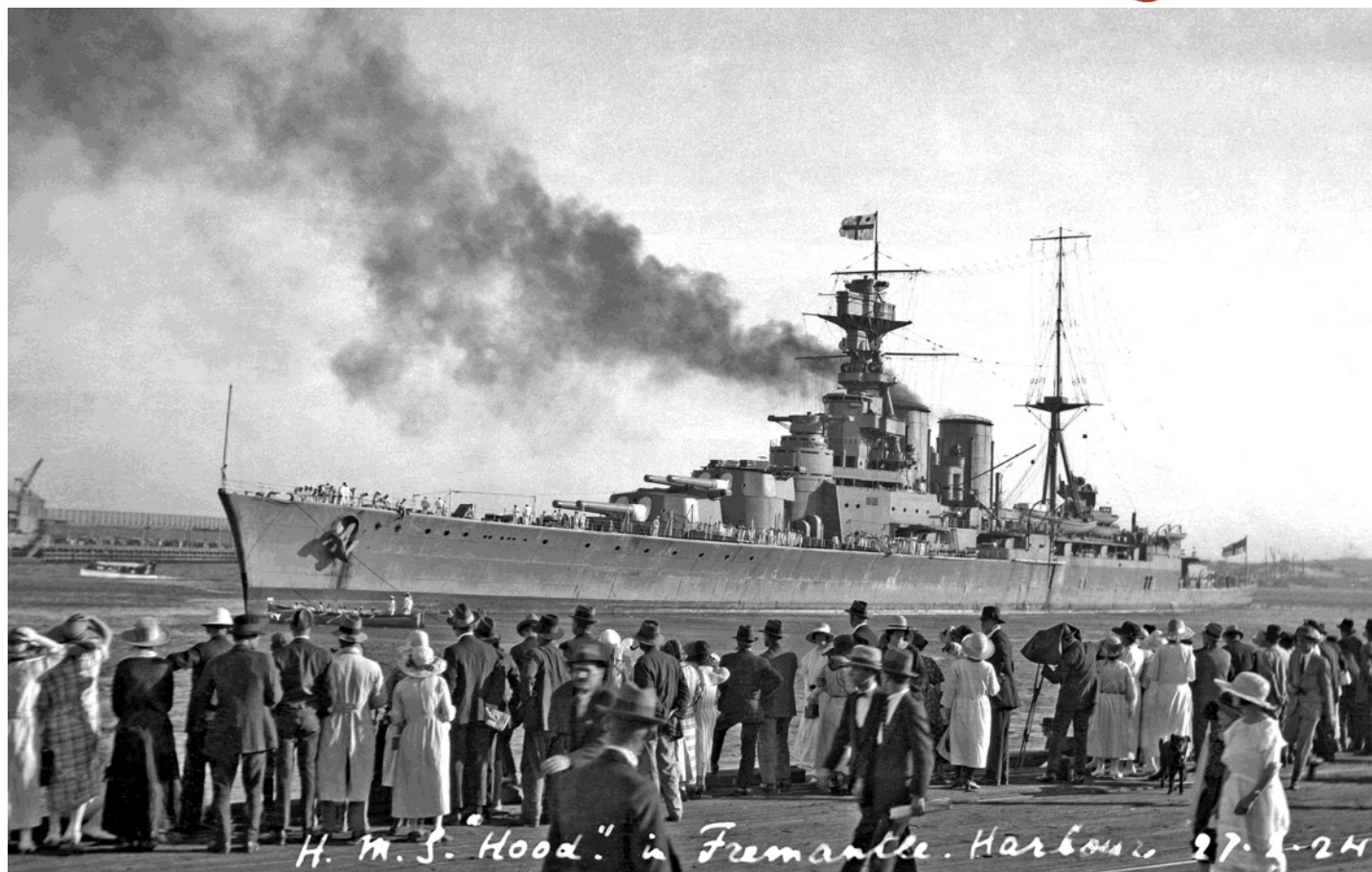
Scientists are taking inspiration from sharks' skin to design a new form of antifouling for ships. Fouling starts with bacteria that cling to the hull. Their excreta attracts other organisms, resulting in a gradual build-up of algae, barnacles and so on. Sharks don't get barnacles, algae and other organisms on their skin, so what prevents this?

It appears that shark skin is made of millions of tiny V-shaped scales called dermal denticles, each having minute grooves along its length in line with the flow of water over the skin. The grooves stop the turbulent swirls called eddies from forming. This straightens the flow of water, allowing it to flow more smoothly thereby reducing friction. So efficient is this system that Speedo used it in a new swimsuit design that in the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games resulted in swimmers wearing these swimsuits winning 98% of the medals. This type of suit is now banned at the Olympics. The other, and major, benefit of

this is that bacteria can't stick to the dermal denticles, and so antifouling can't commence.

An antifouling surface using the dermal denticle as a design basis has been found to work, and is currently being developed by Professor Anthony Brennan of Florida University.





HMS Hood

On 27 February 1924 the Royal Navy's Special Services Squadron arrived at Fremantle, their first port of call in Australia. The squadron consisted of two battle cruisers, HMS *Hood* and *Repulse*, and five light cruisers, HMS *Delhi*, *Danae*, *Dauntless*, *Dragon* and *Dunedin*, and was on a circumnavigation showing the flag at almost every country in the British Empire. *Hood* was described by one newspaper as 'the largest, swiftest, and most powerful man-of-war in the world—a combination of the qualities of the battleship and the battle-cruiser on a displacement of no less than 41,200 tons' (*Albany Advertiser*, 30 January 1924: 3). As the flagship of the fleet it carried the pennant of Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick Field, G.C.B., K.C.B., CB., K.C.M.G., C.M.G.

Some consternation at the size of the battle cruiser was felt by Fremantle Harbour authorities when the visit was first announced. With a length of 860ft, beam of 104ft and draught of 32ft, there was some doubt that *Hood* would be able to enter the port. However, after careful calculations and manoeuvring, the battle cruiser tied up alongside C and D sheds. The smaller *Repulse* occupied berths 1 and 2 at the west end of North Quay, while the light cruisers were berthed on both sides of the harbour.

The main armament of *Hood* was formidable—eight 15inch guns (two in each of four turrets), each gun firing a shell weighing 1,920lbs to a maximum range of 30,180 yards (27.6km) out of barrels 52½ft (16.5m) long. The armoured plating on the hull was 12 inches thick for most of the ship's length, but, as everyone knows, the main deck was a mere 3 inches thick.

The squadron later went on to visit Albany, en route deliberately sailing close to the coast as it past Bunbury so that the towns' people could get a good view of the ships.

From Albany the squadron sailed to Adelaide, Melbourne, Hobart, Jervis Bay and Sydney where the battle cruisers were on show for eight days while the light cruisers, after three days in Sydney, sailed to Brisbane. From Australia the squadron left for New Zealand, Fiji, Honolulu and Canada.

The whole circumnavigation took ten months, returning to England on 28 September 1924.

The photograph shows HMS *Hood* approaching its berth alongside C and D sheds on Victoria Quay.



Bill Leonard – master of the art of the shipwright's trade

On the King's Birthday Honours List, 12 June 2023, Bill Leonard was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) – for service to community history through boat restoration. Ross Shardlow, part time assistant to Bill on the Endeavour Replica Project, pays a personal tribute.

William McDonald (Bill) Leonard was born by the Clyde 20 December 1946. Following his father's footsteps he started a five-year apprenticeship to learn the art of design and construction of boatbuilding at the Fairlie Yacht Slip on the Firth of Clyde, the same yard his father worked in. On completing his apprenticeship Bill worked at several shipyards in Scotland and England working his way up from dinghies to supertankers before moving to the south of England to study boatyard management and to return to his first love of building wooden sailing boats. Bill was also a keen sailor and ended up working as a shipwright and yachtsman based in Bermuda. His work involved sailing to the Mediterranean and the east coast of North America where he continued to study the art of shipbuilding and shipyard management; indeed, Bill never has stopped learning. Bill returned to Scotland and married his beloved June, continued work as a shipwright in Bermuda and the UK, and eventually migrated to Fremantle in 1986 with June and their four children, Martha, Morag, Moira and young Billy, in the hope of finding work with Australia's defence of the America's Cup. When Bill found work at Steve Ward's yard he was destined to become master shipwright of the ultimate wooden boat, a replica of HMB *Endeavour*.

It was my privilege to meet and work with Bill on the Endeavour Replica Project. I joined the project in 1988 and I got to know Bill by his reputation long before we actually met. I might have met him earlier but with his humble, unassuming and cheerful manner I could easily have mistaken him for one of the lads. My mates in the rigging and spar lofts (Barry and Robin Hicks and Ray Miller), who had been working on the project some time before I came along, asked if I had met Bill yet. When I replied that I had not they said, "you'll like him, you will get on well with him." When the Chief Naval Architect David White asked if I had met Bill he added, "if it wasn't for Bill we would not have a project, he is the only one who knows what to do and how to do it, he is a true master shipwright."

Bill and I were at opposite ends of the yard – master shipwright at one end, ship's artist at the other, yet there was a thread that joined us by a common appreciation and respect for the master shipwrights and draughtsmen that had gone before us. Working with Bill truly was a privilege. Seeing his genius first hand left me in awe. Bill reads old draughts like a bible, finds detail that others are blind to, he understands every mark and forms a bond with the old draughtsmen as we might our favourite authors. If there are no plans he will draw them up himself. Bill will then take out his three-foot, chalk up a mark on a baulk of timber and shape it in three dimensions cut to a snug friction fit. Bill takes delight at doing the best he can when only the best will do. His enthusiasm is infectious, his work team adore him. Bill's contribution to maritime heritage is not just the genius of his work, it is his willingness to share his joy with others and to record the things that he has learnt for the benefit of future generations.

Just as some captains can run a tight ship with a nod and a wink, without shouting and bullying, so Bill ran a tight shipyard – and he was always in there with his team to give a hand himself. He was loyal to his team, his employers and the owners, but he was even more loyal to the ship, what is best for the ship comes first. I recall a time when I was having trouble convincing management about a research problem I was having, and asked Bill for his advice on how to deal with it. "They are not Gods," Bill replied, "just talk to them – but remember we have a ship to build, the ship comes first." When the project looked like it was going down by the head, Bill was the only man on the job, the last man standing, taking what little wages he could glean from visitor fees. After the Chief Naval Architect left the project Bill took over the drawing office and became, in effect, the Chief Naval Architect (though he would never call himself that), for Bill it was just part of being a master shipwright. Ironically, the words of the deposed Chief Naval Architect were right: "if it wasn't for Bill we would not have had a project, he is the only one who knows what to do and how to do it, he is a true master shipwright."

While the *Endeavour* was still under construction, plans were being made for the next replica. Several vessels were suggested: HMS *Beagle*, *Catalpa*, *Recherche*, and the VOC yacht *Duyfken*. Bill and I were also putting in some time for a replica of Phillip Parker King's Colonial Cutter *Mermaid*.



It was also at this time (1989) that Graeme Henderson and I, supported by the WA Maritime Museum (Sally May and Mike Lefroy), the Leeuwin Sail Training Association (Bob Johnson and Tana Bailey) and a large contingent from the Endeavour Replica Project headed by Brian Phillips, formed the Maritime Heritage Association to promote and preserve the traditional maritime trades, skills and values.

After the *Endeavour* was launched in 1993, Bill was offered employment with the WA Maritime Museum – the only maritime museum in Australia to employ a master shipwright. Bill had a fleet of boats to restore, plans to prepare and unemployed youth programmes to run. The real joy, however, was to build the next replica, which transpired to be the *Duyfken*, the first (recorded) European ship to reach Australian shores in 1606. The *Duyfken* was to be built in the WA Maritime Museum's carpark and Bill was engaged to be master shipwright. Being built the 'old way' (plank-first with fire-bent timbers), Bill saw

a wonderful opportunity to extend his knowledge to learn the ancient art of the shipwright's trade and to appreciate just how clever those old shipwrights were. The *Duyfken*, a remarkable achievement of experimental archaeology, was launched 24 January 1999. It is often claimed that the *Endeavour* and the *Duyfken* have been our ambassadors for the State and the Nation. The truth of the matter is, it is Bill Leonard who is our ambassador, as evidenced by Peter Weir calling on Bill's artist's eye to look over the replica of the frigate *Rose* to see if it might be converted to HMS *Surprise* for Weir's film *Master & Commander*.

After the launch of the *Duyfken*, Bill returned to the conservation and restoration of the vintage and historic boat collection for the opening of the new WA Maritime Museum on Victoria Quay, Fremantle, 2002. It was also from that time that Bill took an active interest in the Maritime Heritage Association joining as Family Member No. 151, 7 January 2002. Bill laments that nothing lasts forever – not even wooden boats. Addressing the members of the MHA, Bill pointed out the difficulties of cost and time required to restore the Museum's historic boat collection. It was all very well, Bill thought, but while working on restoration projects countless other wooden boats were rotting and falling to pieces around us. We needed to find another way to preserve these historic craft. Bill's proposal to the MHA, therefore, was to help him set up a programme to record and document as many historic boats as possible by lifting their lines to make a permanent record of their shape and structure *on paper* and to include where possible any documentation, oral history, photographs and sketches to accompany the plans as a permanent record, not just of the boat, but of the people connected with them – the boat builders, shipwrights, owners, fishermen and sailors. To help set up that programme Bill gave demonstrations on how to lift the lines off boats (by the Leonard method) and published articles on that process in the *MHA Journal*. Bill then set about gathering information and lifting the lines off various watercraft up and down the Western Australian coast, talking to the old hands, the old fishing families, collecting photos, documents and memories from which to write a book. Bill selected 15 fishing boats to cover a variety of regions, designs, fishing types and constructions that became a celebration of Western Australia's history of fishing and the communities that supported it. It took four years to write and assemble his book, but it took 15-years to take the lines off the boats (in situ) and then to



Bill Leonard, at work on part of the stern of the *Duyfken*. He was a superb adzeman – this being a very tricky tool to use.

Photo: Peter Worsley



prepare 60-lines plan, construction and sail plan drawings in exquisite detail, supported by the social and family histories, photographs and documentation that became a tribute to the fisherfolk of our coast. *In Search of Fish and Fortune Along Australia's West Coast* (Western Australian Museum, 2017), is Bill's lasting legacy of the art of the shipwright's trade. Bill left the WA Museum in 2017. He had been engaged as Research Associate but unable to cope with the bureaucracy declined from that position and stayed on as a volunteer.

When Bill and June visited Whitby on a holiday in 2004 he was obliged to stand and listen to the tour guides espousing the wonders of the *Endeavour* Replica that had visited Whitby a few years earlier. Bill didn't let on that he had 'something to do with it', he didn't want to make a fuss. Bill is not one to seek glory and recognition. It is up to others to do that for him.

While visiting family in New Zealand in June 2021, Bill had a massive stroke, lost his speech and the use of his limbs, and was air-lifted back to Perth for emergency treatment. Under June's care and attention he is now making progress on his own restoration with a determined and positive recovery. It is gratifying to catch up with Bill and June at the MHA End of Year Wind-ups where we look forward to catching up with old friends and to lend a hand where we can.

Ross Shardlow – ship's artist.



*Bill Leonard in conversation, November 2021.
Irene Phillips listens.*

Photo: Peter Worsley

Stockholm Tar

Stockholm tar, one of a sailing ship's most useful items, is made from dry-distilled resinous pine wood and roots, and is a natural antiseptic. On sailing ships it was used to preserve rope rigging and wooden spars, to help waterproof iron rigging wire, for waterproofing canvas (such as in hats) and for tarring the pigtails of sailors.

Medicinally, the tar could be used to remedy a wide variety of on board ills. It was considered equally suited for boils, burns, carbuncles, psoriasis, eczema, rosacea and open cuts—in fact almost any conceivable injury. *Editor's note: Don't try to use Stockholm tar at home to cure any of your ills or injuries without first seeking competent modern medical advice !*

Stockholm tar is still used for treating injured

hooves of horses, cuts caused while shearing sheep and in poultry farms if chickens are pecking at their feathers.

While today it has been banned in some European countries, in previous times it was probably one of the less dangerous items carried in the ship's medical chest (if it had one).





Army Watercraft in the Vietnam War

By Dr J.K. Haken

During the Vietnam War, the activities of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) were legendary. HMAS *Sydney* (111), a former aircraft carrier which had been commissioned as a fast transport, made 25 voyages to Vietnam carrying troops and equipment and was widely known as the 'Vung Tau Ferry'. Less well known are the activities of the Army Royal Australian Engineers (RAE) who at the time were responsible for water transport including sea going vessels. In 1972, the Government decided that all sea going vessels would be passed to the RAN, and RAE activities would be restricted to coastal and inland waters¹.

About 1,000 members of the RAE served in Vietnam, the water transport unit being 32 Small Ship Squadron and 30 Terminal Squadron, the dockside unit. The Small Ship Squadron was formed in 1959 from 32 Inland Water Transport Operating Squadron, and before Vietnam served in New Guinea and the Indonesian Confrontation in North Borneo². Formation of the Squadron allowed independent transport by water. Centurion tanks were too large for railway travel and the roads poor and the distances great. In Vietnam, the Squadron commanded five vessels, four LSMs (Landing Ship Medium) and a Cargo Ship¹. All of the vessels were named after former distinguished Australian generals. The headquarters of the Small Ship Squadron was in Brisbane although with purchase of the third and fourth LSMs, two vessels were based in Sydney. The 30 Terminal Squadron served in North Borneo between June and December 1964 and on 31 May 1973 was transferred to the newly formed Royal Australian Corps of Transport³.

The Small Ship Squadron or part thereof served from April 1966 until March 1971 as shown below, while the Terminal Squadron served from 9 January 1967 until 20 March 1971(3).

1. Small Ship Troop (*Clive Steele*) 26 June 1966–23 November 1966, 3 December 1966–9 January 1967, 17 January 1967–16 May 1967, 29 January 1968–27 April 1969, 21 July 1969–2 March 1970, 11 July 1970–3 Sep-

tember 1970 and 2 March 1971–12 March 1971.

2. Small Ship Troop (*Harry Chauvel*) 23 October 1967–21 March 1968 and 2 May 1970–6 June 1970.

3. Small Ship Troop (*Vernon Sturdee*) 11 April 1966–25 June 1966 and 23 January 1967–14 December 1967.

4. Small Ship Troop (*Brudenell White*) 22 September 1970–24 October 1970.

Detachment 32 Small Ship Squadron (*John Monash*) 5 May 1966–14 May 1966, 3 December 1967–31 January 1968, 17 February 1968–31 March 1968, 16 December 1968–26 December 1968, 20 February 1969–4 March 1969, 25 October 1969–7 December 1969 and 27 July 1971–14 August 1971.

Detachment 32 Small Ship Squadron (*Clive Steele*) 23 February 1971–20 March 1971

Detachment 32 Small Ship Squadron (*Harry Chauvel*) 11 November 1970–15 December 1970.

The cargo vessel *Marra* was purchased by the Army from Adelaide Steamship Company in 1965 and re-named AS3051 *John Monash*. At 1,396 tons and 213 feet in length, this was the largest ship operated by the Australian Army. It functioned as a general cargo and training vessel



AV 3051 John Monash at Prau, Malaysia, in 1969

and made seven voyages to Vietnam in six years. The ship passed to the RAN in 1972 but her sub-



sequent career was short as she was laid up early in 1974 (1)⁴.

Four LCM's were purchased from the United

States from mothballed LCM's held in Japan. The first designated AV1354 *Brudenell White* (formerly USS *LSM-477*) and the second designated AV1353 *Harry Chauvel* (formerly USS *LSM-319*) arrived in Sydney on 31 December 1959.



The other two designated AV1355 *Vernon Sturdee* (formerly USS *LSM-315*) and AV1356 *Clive Steele* (formerly USS *LSM-547*) arrived on 4 July 1960.

The vessels were modified for Australian conditions and put into service.

The LCM's were 62 metres in length and 682 tons and could carry 306 tons of cargo. In service the vessels had a crew of four officers and 47 other ranks and travelled at 11–12 knots.

AV 1354 Brudenell White (above)
and
AV 1353 Harry Chauvel (below)
both off Vietnam



The LCM's all served in New Guinea while *Harry Chauvel* and *Vernon Sturdee* also served in North Borneo in 1964 during the Indonesian Confrontation. All vessels served in Vietnam as detailed above. The *Clive Steele* was the only LCM to sustain battle damage, being hit by three rockets but suffering no casualties. The *Vernon Sturdee* was sold in June 1970. The other three vessels were sold to Pacific Logistics of Panama on 20 December 1971 (1)⁴.

At sea, the RAN had operational command although crewed by the RAE. In Sydney and in Vietnam the Army had command. Detachments of 32 Small Ship Squadron served in Vietnam throughout the war with a vessel on station at all times, although the squadron's vessels made many voyages to Australia and the squadron's headquarters remained in Australia.



AV 1355 Vernon Sturdee off Saigon

The 30 Terminal Squadron provided in Vietnam dockside facilities for the 32 Small Ship Squadron. Subsequently the 30 Terminal Squadron was transferred from the Royal Australian Engineers to the Royal Australian Corps of Transport on its formation on 1 June 1973 as part of the 10 Terminal Regiment⁵. With amalgamation the Squadron became a sub-unit of 10 Forces Support Battalion located at Townsville which was formed on 1 March 1998.



The 32 Small Ships Association, incorporating RAE Training was formed in 1972 after disbandment of the Squadron.

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² P.J. Bayliss, 1992, *The Forgotten Fleet*. (This is online)

³ RAE Association W.A. Order of Battle

⁴ Army Mariners Australian Water Transport Association, 2014

⁵ P.J. Greville, 2012, *The Royal Australian Engineers, 1945 to 1972: Paving the Way*. The Corps Committee Royal Australian Engineers, Vol 4, p 20.



AV 1356 *Clive Steele* off Vietnam in 1968

A Chain of Islands

By Jill Worsley

This title has almost nothing to do with the story below.

'Early Naval explorers knew how to map coastlines, and their methods were learned and passed down' (Peter Macinnis 2008) is a truth that can be seen in the case of several early Australian explorers. The great explorer James Cook had William Bligh as sailing master on board *Resolution* during his third voyage to the Pacific. Bligh later commanded Matthew Flinders. Matthew Flinders in turn commanded John Franklin, later Governor of Tasmania and even later to search for a Northwest passage in Arctic waters.

Flinders also encouraged a young Phillip Parker King to go exploring. John Septimus Roe, Western Australia's most famous surveyor, sailed with

King on the *Dick* and later as midshipman on the *Mermaid*. King also met John Lort Stokes in Tierra del Fuego while the latter was serving on *Beagle* along with Charles Darwin. Stokes was no doubt inspired by King, and they later corresponded regarding methods of surveying. He was later to continue King's charting of the north coast of Australia, naming King Sound off Derby not after the monarch, but after the explorer. Stokes was hosted while in Hobart by then Governor John Franklin, who (as mentioned) later took *Erebus* into Arctic waters where he lost his life. Franklin's company on this fatal voyage included William Gibson, an elder brother of Alfred Gibson who died while trying to save the life of Ernest Giles, leader of the expedition to cross the unexplored W.A. desert which now bears Gibson's name.



The cutter HMS Mermaid depicted in Ross Shardlow's beautiful painting



Sunbeam of Lord Brassey.



Sunbeam

Illustration: National Maritime Museum,
Cornwall

When Lord Brassey was appointed Governor of Victoria in 1905, he sailed to Melbourne via the Cape of Good Hope in his own yacht *Sunbeam*. He recorded:

I was the first Governor who had ever travelled in his own yacht navigated by himself, with the constant aid of his brave, true-hearted wife, who had learnt to handle a sextant with a skill equal to that of a professional navigator. It may be predicted that no succeeding Governor will undertake the voyage under the same conditions.

The *Sunbeam* was a composite built three-masted schooner-rigged steam yacht of the following dimensions:—Length overall, 159ft; beam, 27ft 6in; depth of hold, 13ft 9in; tonnage, 334 tons builder's measurement, or 532 tons yacht measurement. Her engines are compound, with inverted cylinders of 24in and 42in respectively, and are of 70-horse power, nominal.

"The truth is," said Lord Brassey, "that, so far from being a strain, it is rest to me to sail the *Sunbeam*. The sea is in my eyes a refuge from the land. As soon as my feet are on these old timbers, all the petty worries that besiege a more or less public man float off me.

Before sailing to Canada he said: "The worries of the sea are nothing — its winds and waves, its fogs and shoals, are old friends of mine — or old foes, which comes to the same thing. They may

have rough manners now and then, but to know them is to love them. At 74, I am pretty far down the hill of life. I have sailed the *Sunbeam* for over 34 years, storm and shine, and perhaps I may be pardoned for confessing that the sea at its surliest is more to my heart than the most cordial committee meeting."

Sunbeam sailed to the Dardanelles in 1915. Brassey's conclusion: 'I never met any officer, military or naval, who was not of the opinion that the operation contemplated in the Dardanelles from every point of view was a huge mistake.'

He is reputed to have sailed 300,000 miles over forty years to all corners of the globe.

Sunbeam was finally donated to India in 1916 as a hospital ship.

He inherited enormous wealth from his father who was a railway magnate. As well as his governorship of Victoria he served as a British M.P., was Civil Lord of the Admiralty, was appointed K.C.B. for his work establishing the Naval Reserve and was an enthusiastic publicist of naval and maritime affairs. (*The British Navy* (1882–83) and the periodical *Brassey's Naval Annual* (from 1886)).

Brassey, a serious sailor, owned ten yachts during his lifetime:— *Spray of the Ocean* (8-ton cutter), *Cymba* (50-ton cutter), *Albatross* (118 tons),



Meteor (164-ton auxiliary schooner), *Muriel* (60 – ton cutter), *Eothen* (340- ton steam yacht), *Sunbeam* (532 tons), *Norman* (40-ton cutter), *Lorna* (90-ton cutter), *Zarita* (115-ton yawl). (National Maritime Museum, Cornwall.)

His first wife, Annie Allnut, wrote lively accounts of their voyages together aboard *Sunbeam*. She was to pass away on board her in 1887 seven days out of Port Darwin.

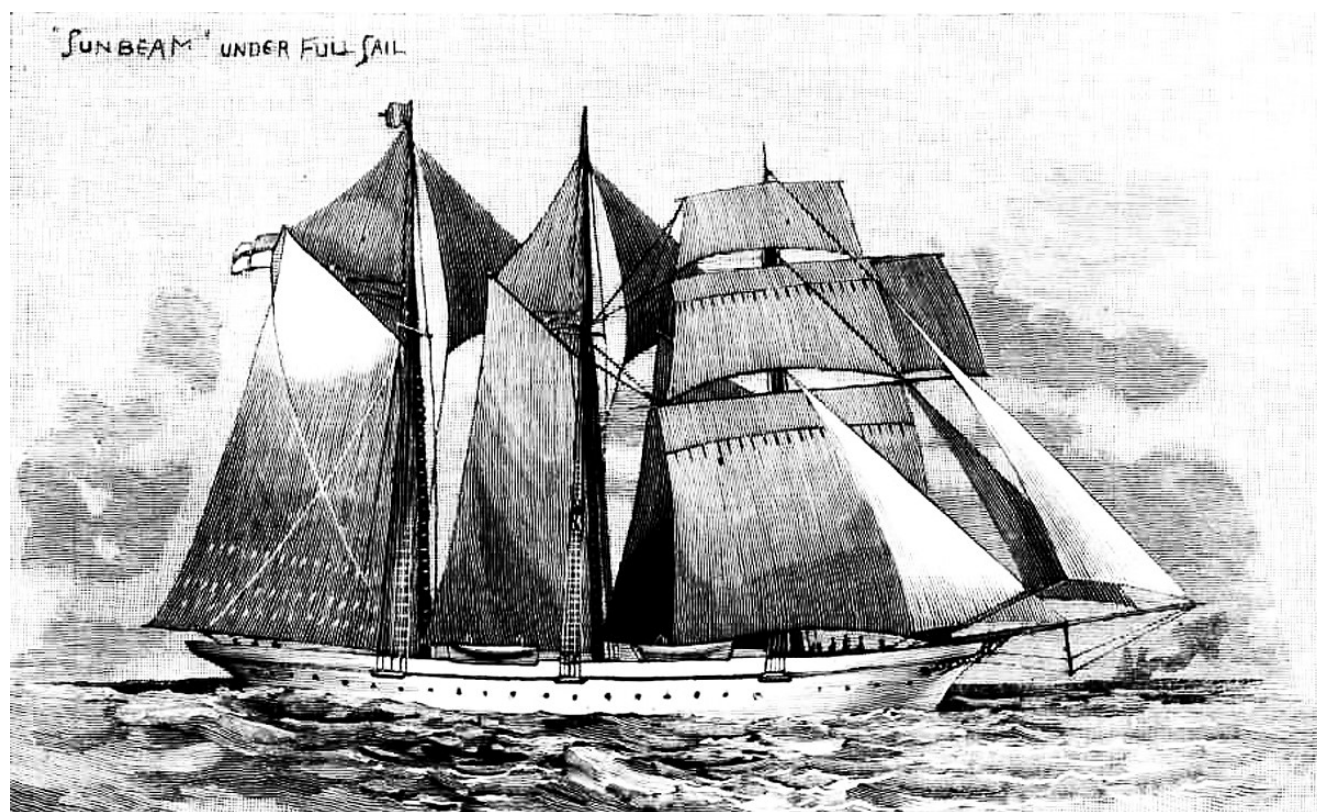
On a number of occasions, the Brasseys visited Western Australia where they had a 26,000 acre holding called Goblup Estate near Broomhill. ‘General’ Boothey, founder of the Salvation Army, expressed interest in the estate for a proposed

immigration project but it was subdivided and sold off.

He died in England in February 1918, survived by his second wife and their daughter, three daughters of his first marriage, and briefly by his son.

Ron Forsyth

Editor’s note: It should be noted that, although Lord Brassey was captain and his wife navigator, the crew of the *Sunbeam* varied between 14 and 21. These included a sailing master, mate a cook and a cook’s mate, gunner/signalman, carpenter, coxswain for each of the *Sunbeam*’s three boats, chief steward and from five to nine seamen. A hard life !



Sunbeam under Full Sail

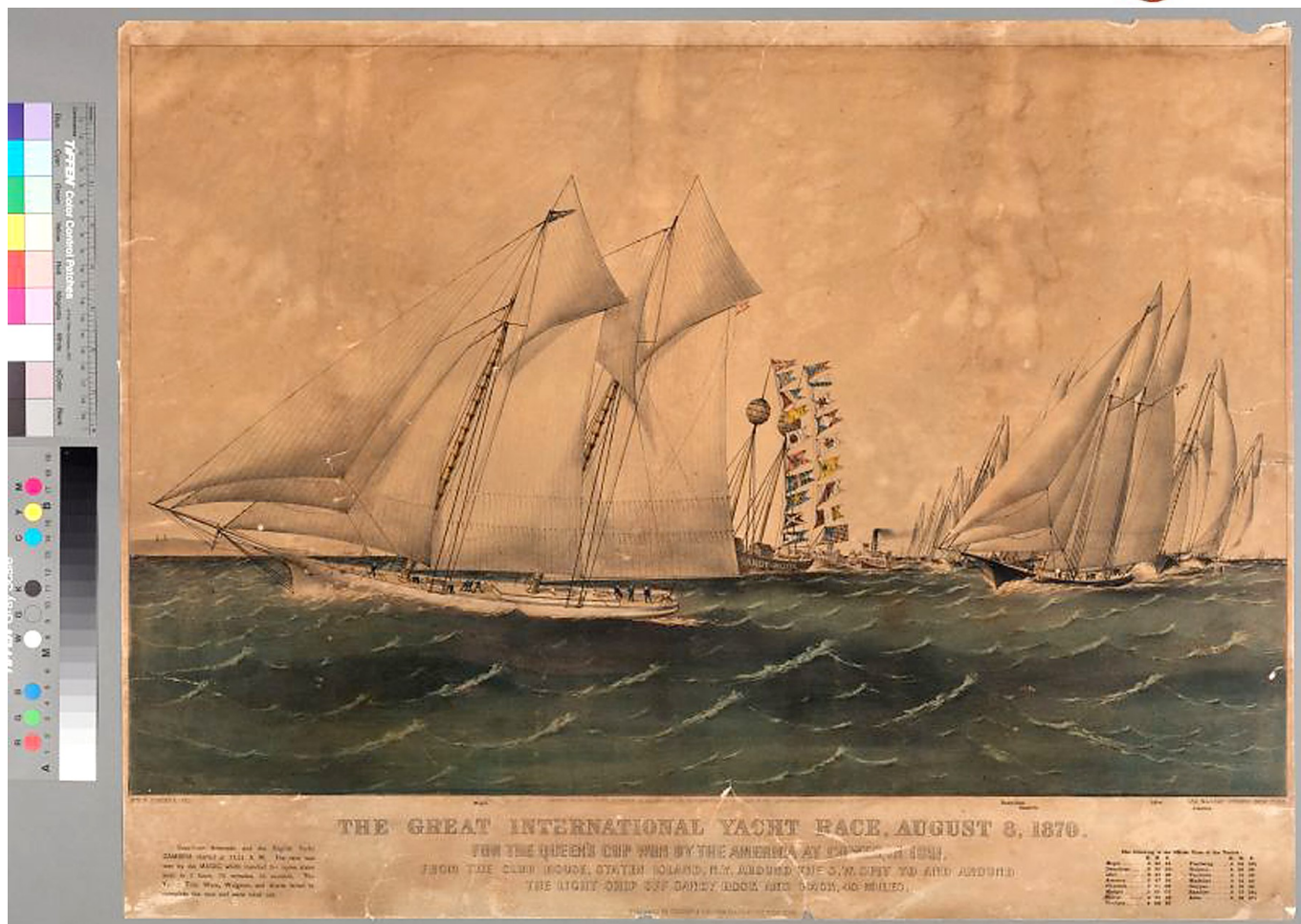
Illustration: The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser, 16 July 1887



Australia’s Greatest Maritime Disaster

A shipwreck discovered in June 2023 at a depth of over 4,000 metres off the coast of the Philippines has an historic and vital link to Australia. On 1 July 1942 the Japanese Transport *Montevideo Maru* was sunk by the US submarine USS *Sturgeon*. The unmarked

transport was carrying 1,053 prisoners of war captured during the fall of Rabaul. All 1,053 prisoners (an estimated 845 military and 208 civilian) died. This is Australia’s greatest maritime disaster, and deserves much more recognition than it has received in the past.



Is the yacht race illustrated above the oldest sailing race in the world?

The Oldest Sailing Race in the World?

The oldest sailing race in the world is supposedly the America's Cup Race. However, this is open to dispute.

In 1851 the 101ft schooner *America* sailed to England with the owners' (a syndicate of six men) intention of competing in in yachting regattas and match races, and winning money. The yacht was entered in the Royal Yacht Squadron's annual 53 mile race for the 100 Guinea Cup. The race around the Isle of Wight was won by *America*, which finished eight minutes ahead of second placed *Aurora*. The syndicate donated the trophy to the New York Yacht Club in 1857 as a perpetual international trophy later to be renamed the America's Cup.

In 1870 Englishman James Lloyd Ashbury challenged the Americans for the cup. The challenge was a single race over a 38 mile course between Ashbury's 108ft, 188-ton topsail schooner *Cambria* and 17 American schooners. The largest of

the American schooners was the 262-ton *Dauntless*, the smallest *Magic* at only 92 tons. *Magic* took the lead right from the start, and a few hours later *Cambria* lost her fore topmast when a preventer backstay carried away. A little later *Cambria* was fouled by an unnamed American yacht (allegedly *Tarolinta*), parting her port foremost shroud. Ashbury did not protest.

The America's Cup Race has always been considered to date from the 1851 race, but this is not quite correct. That race was for the Royal Yacht Squadron's 100 Guineas Cup. In 1870 the race was not for the America's Cup. There is a hand coloured lithograph (see illustration above) in the Arthur H. Clark Collection in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Museum dated 1870 entitled *The Great International Yacht Race, August 8, 1870 for the Queen's Cup Won by the America at Cowes, in 1851. Seventeen American and the English Yacht Cambria started at 11.21 A.M. The race was won by Magic, which rounded the home*



stake boat in 3 hours, 33 minutes, 54 second. The yachts *Tidal Wave*, *Widgeon*, and *Alarm* failed to complete the race and were ruled out.

The yachts in the illustration are identified in the margin, from left to right: *Magic*, *Dauntless*, *Cambria*, *Idler* and *America*. The list in the bottom right corner gives the yachts' times for the race.

Another lithograph from the same collection depicts the winner of the race, *Magic* (see below). The caption reads:

The Schooner Magic of the New York Yacht Club; Lester Wallack Esq. Owner and Commander. Winner of the great international yacht race for the Queen's cup at New York Aug. 8; 1870. Beating seventeen competitors including the English Yacht Cambria and the famous Yachts Dauntless; Idler; Fleetwing; Phantom; America and others.

Magic's owner during the 1870 race, Franklin Osgood, sold the schooner to Lester Wallack for

\$16,500 two months later. Osgood later bought the schooner back, price unknown. The publisher of both illustration was Currier & Ives, a print-making company in New York.

By contrast, the Thames Sailing Barge Match Race first held in 1863 is still held every year (the last was on 8 July 2023). The rules and the course followed are the same as that in the first race, 43 miles finishing at the Three Daws public house at Gravesend on the Thames. The race is open to all spritsail-rigged Thames sailing barges, and originated through the initiative of Henry Dodd (1801–1881). The Thames Sailing Barge Match Race remains true to the original vessel design and sail plans of the 1863. Of the 38 barges which raced in 1865, six were still in service in 1931. Some of the barges currently racing are over 100 years old.

Surely this deserves to be known as the oldest sailing race?

Peter Worsley

