



MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION of VICTORIA Inc.

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October 2007

NEWSLETTER No. 15

Report from the President

We are pleased to advise that the Friends of Cerberus have become a new organisation member of MHAV, taking our total number of member organisations to twelve. One of the key purposes of the MHAV is to provide individual maritime heritage organisations with direct access to a broader body of community support, and we extend a warm welcome to the Friends of Cerberus as a member of the MHAV community.

It is to be hoped that recent signs from the Victorian Government will lead to a joint Federal / State funding arrangement to save what remains of this internationally significant historic vessel. It is clear that Australia is considered a laughing stock by other nations which value their maritime heritage, for allowing *Cerberus* to rot for so long. It is difficult to imagine her being allowed to languish in this way if she had remained in Britain.

Several of your committee members have been fortunate in recent months to visit maritime heritage sites overseas, in the UK, Europe and North America. We hope to have a joint presentation on these visits at our November AGM and member's night. **Don't miss it!**

Unfortunately these visits only serve to highlight the indifference of our Victorian Government, when compared against other states and the attitude of international governments and communities. For years Mr Bracks told us that the site at Williamstown would be preserved as a maritime heritage precinct, but the valuable land, wharves and other infrastructure remain largely derelict and under-utilised in 2007. We hear rumours of restaurant or apartment developments, *on public land!* If we care about our rapidly disappearing maritime heritage, we need to make our voices heard by the community and by our political leaders. It may soon be too late so please help us to spread the message! Let's act now so that we can in the future be proud of our maritime heritage preservation and presentation at home.

Our few remaining heritage vessels are struggling for survival. The *Alma Doepel* and the steam tug *Wattle* are desperately seeking sponsorship or financial support to return to survey. Without being in survey, they are unable to operate, and therefore generate income for the future maintenance of the vessels. Members will recall how popular these vessels were with the public, but they are currently "out of sight, out of mind" and facing bureaucratic indifference if not outright hostility. The Oceanic Research Foundation, after years of work, find that the *Dick Smith Explorer*, has to be sold in the absence of an affordable berth being available in Melbourne, according to the bureaucracy. We now learn that the *Wattle* may also be forced into a change of ownership which will see her leave her Melbourne home. What has happened to our sense of community? **Surely Melbourne will not let the *Wattle* "sink"!**

Sydney has a splendid fleet of operating heritage vessels, but currently has no site where they can be permanently displayed in a historical context. Melbourne has the opportunity to create a working maritime heritage seaport which would be unique in Australia and one of only a handful in the world. This would provide a spiritual and practical home for our heritage vessels, and create an active and vibrant landmark in our urban waterfront, which is becoming increasingly sterile. The Williamstown precinct must become a place for education, entertainment and recreation, a major tourist attraction and a home for local and visiting vessels. The MHAV is preparing a submission to Government in support of this vision and will continue to work towards its eventual reality. We need your support to make it happen!

We are excited to learn that the 1874 built barque *James Craig* will visit Melbourne again early in 2008. The MHAV has been fortunate to secure two day charters and details of these are enclosed. Those who enjoyed sailing Port Phillip in this superbly restored vessel in 2006 will need no encouragement to sign up with friends and others for a repeat experience. Those who missed out in 2006 have an opportunity to enjoy the rare thrill of sailing in a genuine three masted barque, without the expense of an air fare, but only if they book quickly – our experience in 2006 suggests that these tickets will not be around for long!

I would encourage you all to support the association and look forward to seeing you at our future events.

John Milne

NOTICE OF MEETING

MHAV ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 2007 AGM will be held at the Port of Melbourne Corporation Education Centre, Lorimer St, Fisherman's Bend, (Melway Ref 42E10, next to Port Control Tower) at 6.15pm on Wednesday 28 November 2007.
Reports and committee election.

The General Committee consists of:

- A representative nominated by each accepted member maritime organisation
- Four members elected by and to represent the MHAV membership

Current member representatives are Miles Allen, Catherine Lance, John Milne and Jose Moyses-Middleton. Nominations are invited for these positions and must be received 7 days prior to the AGM. Please phone 9846 7110 for a nomination form. Nominations will be only be accepted at the AGM if insufficient nominations have been received to fill available positions by that time.

The meeting will be followed by a meal and presentation on international maritime heritage sites.
See further details enclosed

All welcome – it is important for members to attend!

WELCOME TO FRIENDS OF CERBERUS



This organisation is actively campaigning for the preservation in situ of the former Victorian Colonial and later Royal Australian Navy monitor *Cerberus* of 1869 which has been acting as a breakwater at Black Rock since 1926. The deplorable state of this unique vessel is obvious in this 2006 photo.

Members are encouraged to attend the organization's Cerberus Celebration Day at Black Rock (Melways 85H2) between midday and 4.00pm on Sunday 9 December for free inspection cruises out to *Cerberus*, to view models, obtain information and show support.

Cerberus is the only surviving monitor class warship in the world, was the first modern battleship and also the first British warship to dispense with sails.

Contact: Peter Tully. Ph: 9298 4211. Email: cerberus@cerberus.com.au. Web: www.cerberus.com.au

MHAV POLO SHIRTS - ORDER YOURS NOW!!!

Show your support for maritime heritage in Victoria! The MHAV has very smart polo shirts available in a grey colour, with the blue sailing ship emblem of the MHAV on the front and the words "Maritime Heritage Association of Victoria" in black lettering underneath.

Available in a range of sizes for only \$20.00 each!

Contact the Association to place your order, or purchase at the upcoming AGM and Members' Night.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2007/08 ARE NOW DUE

We hope that all Members, Newsletter recipients, and their friends will support us.

Renewal and New Membership form is enclosed.

Membership remains at a low \$5.00.

Renew at the AGM if attending, or send the form and payment to our PO Box.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

In August we were entertained by Ian Pullman, executive director of the Oceanic Research Foundation, who spoke about his recent voyage to the Antarctic aboard a 60ft schooner. Ian's talk was fascinating and accompanied by some stunning photographs of the voyage, the scenery and wildlife encountered. Thanks to Ian for a memorable presentation.

URGENT HELP NEEDED!

For many years the steam tug *Wattle* was an active and popular feature of the Melbourne waterfront, operating charter cruises on Port Phillip and Yarra waters. She is currently out of survey and needs \$120,000 spent on hull repairs to return to survey. Without this essential maintenance, the vessel cannot operate to generate income, and is likely to be lost from the Melbourne scene. While there are potential donors in the wings, they will not contribute funds until more commitments are received. *Wattle* probably represents the last opportunity for the people of Melbourne to cruise their home waters with the smooth, silent operation of her wonderful steam engine fascinating young and old alike.

Wattle has proven in the past that she can operate profitably. Surely there are funds available out there to save this popular vessel. With politicians currently throwing billions of dollars at Australian voters, it seems inconceivable that such a small amount cannot be found to save this link with our maritime past.

We have so few operational historic vessels in our city – let's save this one from disappearing!

If you have any ideas of how this project may be funded, please contact the Association.

REPORTS ON HERITAGE VESSELS

ALMA DOEPER: TOPSAIL SCHOONER: Recently hull surveys have been undertaken by Marine Safety Victoria and a naval architect engaged by owners Sail & Adventure Ltd. The plan is to return the ship to survey with shared operations between Melbourne and Port Macquarie, where Alma remains. A location for the proposed refit is undecided and funding has not yet been sought. The organization had to vacate the 20 Victoria Dock shed, from where the ship operated when in Melbourne, by late September, to facilitate Docklands development and equipment is now stored elsewhere.

During the coming months the Alma Doepel Supporters Club will increase fundraising efforts and work towards a larger supporter base by getting as many past and new people involved as possible. A Fish & Chip Cruise will be held on Saturday 27 October and the AGM will be held on Thursday 1 November, followed by a film with pizza and drinks. For further details and to indicate support to bring Alma back please contact Chris Coghlan.

Contact: Chris Coghlan Ph: 0407 860 296. Email: chriscoghlan@iprimus.com.au. Web: almadoepel.com.au

CASTLEMAINE: CORVETTE: This WWII Williamstown Dockyard built Bathurst class ship has been open as a museum ship at Gem Pier for many years, operated by The Maritime Trust of Australia. Over time the exhibits have been developed and the ship has been painstakingly restored, so that now there is much to see and experience, well beyond just what *Castlemaine* represents, mostly with a naval emphasis. The result is a credit to all involved. Anyone who has not visited in recent years would find much to warrant a return visit. Open weekends 12.00 – 5.00 and at other times.

Contact: Prior 10.00am weekdays Ph: 9457 1559, Ship Ph: 9397 2363. Web: hmascastlemaine.com

CERBERUS: MONITOR: The response to submissions to Malcolm Turnbull encouraging the Commonwealth to join with the state government to save *Cerberus* has been disappointing. Efforts are now being directed to Brendan Nelson as Minister for Defence and others, suggesting saving *Cerberus*, as one of the initial RAN vessels, be linked with RAN centenary celebrations in 2011. Please

consider writing in support, details are available in Friends of Cerberus Newsletter No 78, available from MHAV committee members or Peter Tully. Also see *Cerberus* announcement above.

Contact: Peter Tully. Ph: 9298 4211. Email: cerberus@cerberus.com.au. Web: cerberus.com.au

DICK SMITH EXPLORER: RESEARCH/EXPLORATION VESSEL: Opportunities have continued to elude the ship's owner, Oceanic Research Foundation and the vessel remained in the lock at the Polly Woodside, pending lifting of the walkway over the dock as part of the adjacent plenary project development. An opening was finally made in August and the *Dick Smith Explorer* with masts etc on deck was towed out by Korevaars late in September and taken to a berth next to the Melbourne Maritime Services slip operation in Appleton Dock. The vessel will be lifted out, blasted and painted and an assessment of her future made while she is out of the water.



The Government has still has not responded positively with any guidance on how they see volunteer groups such as this continuing to operate in the Port of Melbourne and no assistance has been forthcoming. Alas the future remains very uncertain for the operation of the organisation.

Contact: Ian Pullman Ph: 9826 6776, Email: casey@i.net.au

CURLIP: REPLICA PADDLE STEAMER: Work progresses on this largest traditional wooden shipbuilding project currently under way in Victoria at Orbost. Reports from visitors are very positive so anyone in the area should endeavour to call and view progress.

Contact: Gil Richardson. Ph: 5154 1853. Email: curlip@eftl.net.au. Web: paddlesteamercurlip.com.au

ENTERPRIZE: REPLICA SCHOONER: The 10 year anniversary of the launching of *Enterprize* was celebrated on 30 August by volunteers and guests at two functions held in conjunction with the annual Melbourne Day celebrations. *Enterprize* was built to commemorate the foundation of Melbourne, and launched on 30 August 1997 from a slip in Williamstown.

The ship continues to be very busy, working with schools in both the local community and in ports along the Victorian coastline involving recent visits to Portland and Port Fairy. For the next ocean voyage, *Enterprize* will depart from Williamstown bound for Western Port Bay, visiting Cowes and Stony Point, followed by Port Welshpool and Eden. During this voyage, the *Enterprize* will work with regional schools and local communities to bring a practical history experience to students and residents alike. A busy summer is planned with the highlight being Australia Day when, as usual, the ship will be sailing to Geelong, this year being joined by the barque *James Craig*.

Contact: Ph: 9397 3477. Email: sailing@enterprize.com.au. Web: enterprize.com.au

LADY CHELMSFORD: EXCURSION VESSEL: This ex Sydney 1910 built timber ferry remains berthed in Victoria Harbour and is now owned locally. Plans are currently being developed for a major overhaul which is hoped will enable the vessel to be operated commercially in the port. We hope these plans come to fruition and result in this heritage vessel receiving a new lease of life. *Lady Chelmsford* is one of only two large wooden Sydney ferries still afloat. The other is the 1912 built *Kanangra* owned by the Sydney Maritime Museum (owner of *James Craig*) which has been laid up there for many years. Work has recently begun to restore the vessel. Both were originally steam powered.

LYTTELTON II: STEAM TUG: Unfortunately broken up at Rippleside, Geelong per previous report. As part of the removal of items stored in the 20 Victoria Dock shed, the wheelhouse brasswork and other associated items have been removed and stored elsewhere with the hope they may be displayed in future. The teak wheelhouse structure has gone to a property on the Bellarine Peninsula and the Melbourne Steam Traction Engine Club is working towards display and operation of engine room components which are already at their Scoresby site.

Contact: Leigh Doeg. Ph: 9699 6763 Mob 0419 883 334. Email: info@victoriastar.com.au

OTAMA: SUBMARINE: The Association has now submitted a council planning application to bring the *Otama* class submarine ashore at Crib Point in Western Port. Concern has been expressed by the organisation and many others regarding recent proposals for a bitumen plant alongside which is seen as a large threat to the submarine proposal. This proposal is being progressed despite assurances from government that such a development would not occur. The Maritime Centre at Crib Point is currently open in weekends 10.00 – 3.00. *Otama* remains moored just offshore.

Contact: Max Bryant. Ph: 5979 2467. Email: maxbry@alphalink.com.au. Web: otama.com.au

POLLY WOODSIDE: BARQUE AND MARITIME MUSEUM: BMT Defence Contracting are now conducting the state government funded hull survey of *Polly Woodside* including work to ensure current ship's lines plans are accurate. It is hoped the survey will provide a comprehensive and accurate picture of the hull condition enabling a well founded long term conservation plan to be developed, based on the ship remaining in the present dock. The wooden mizzen topmast was struck down (lowered, with the deck winch) early on October for maintenance or replacement. Routine maintenance continues from the workshop etc facilities in South Wharf Shed 4 which will later be refurbished as part of the site revamp.

The library and associated offices have been relocated into temporary buildings in front of Jeff's Shed towards the Clarendon St end, and are manned on Mondays and Fridays. Sheds 5 (where the Museum exhibits were) through to 9 next to the Charles Grimes bridge, have yet to be removed to permit renewal of supporting structures over this area. Later the sheds are earmarked for re-assembly.

Initial proposals for the new museum building are being developed. This, together with the revamped Shed 4 and the reassembled and upgraded Shed 2 (round top roof, currently in storage), will together house the new Museum facilities. The new museum website address follows.

Contacts: Ongoing site activities: Graeme Cooper, Ph: 9656 9821 Mob 0407 009 128. Library: 9699 7695. Development: Steven Cooke, Ph: 9656 9802 Email: polly@nattrust.com.au. Museum Web: melbournemaritimemuseum.com.au

THALA DAN: ANTARCTIC SUPPLY VESSEL: Unfortunately despite many approaches for financial support, funds to purchase the ship were not forthcoming and the ex *Thala Dan* is being broken up in Rio de Janeiro. This was the last remaining "Dan" ship employed in Antarctic waters.

Contact: David Dodd, Ph: 9592 2014. Email: kelpie101@optusnet.com.au

WATTLE: STEAM TUG: Along with most other maritime heritage/history ventures in the State of Victoria, Bay Steamers Maritime Museum Ltd, keepers of *Wattle*, are battling to raise funds for refurbishment work to put the ship back in survey.

The ship lies at Victoria Harbour awaiting a fairy godmother, and the Museum has been forced to enter into negotiations which could see ownership of the vessel pass to commercial interests, and see her relocated away from Melbourne – this would be a sad outcome for those volunteers who have worked to keep her in service for so long.

In the meantime, with VicUrban having advised of pending demolition of Shed 20, Vic Dock, so long the home of *Wattle*, a small band of active volunteers has been busy cleaning up, as have the *Alma Doepe*/volunteers who shared the shed along with sundry bits and pieces of tug *Lyttelton* and assorted vermin. As a side benefit, the sale of several tonnes of scrap metal has benefitted the bank balance a little. Small comfort to a somewhat disillusioned group.

Contact: Tony Lewis Ph: 9846 1819. Email: lewist@conwag.com

WYUNA: Ex PORT PHILLIP PILOT CUTTER. *Wyuna*, owned by Queensland based mining company Mineralogy Pty Ltd remains laid up in Launceston and although now not maintained was raised on the synchrolift there and inspected in August. No problems were evident.

The proposals for rebuilding *Wyuna* into a luxury yacht have been progressed but have not resulted in a contract at this stage. No work will progress unless a firm purchase commitment is agreed on. If conversion does progress it is hoped the work will be done in Australia.

WEBSITE INFORMATION AVAILABLE

This and earlier MHAV newsletters
Enterprize Port Phillip sails
Warwick Turner's address

<http://www.mhav.net/newsletters.html>
<http://www.enterprize.com.au/sailschd.htm>
<http://www.mhav.net/wturner.html>

MARITIME HERITAGE MUST BE PRESERVED!

YOU ARE INVITED

to join us for our

YEAR END TWILIGHT GATHERING

**28 November 2007
at the Port Education Centre
Lorimer Street Fishermens Bend
(Next to the Harbour Control Tower)**

Join old friends from the maritime community or meet new ones as the sun sets over one of the best maritime views in Melbourne!

PROGRAM

**6.15pm
7.00pm for 7.30pm
8.30pm**

**Annual General Meeting
Dinner – two course meal with wine, tea and coffee
Presentation on International Maritime Heritage Sites**



There will be a charge of \$24-00 per person to cover the cost of catering.

RSVP: By 31 October 2007 to Jose Moyse-Middleton, tel. 9397 1772

ALL WELCOME!