



MAINSTAY

Maritime Heritage Association of Victoria

Contact: Chris Coghlan
Email: secretary@mhav.net
Ph: 0407 860 296 Web: www.mhav.net
PO Box 3080, Syndal VIC 3149 Australia



EDITORIAL

Welcome to our new-look newsletter, MAINSTAY – we hope it helps you keep in touch with Victoria's maritime heritage scene. 2009 has already seen some exciting progress due to the dedicated efforts of our heritage vessel groups. We saw the *Alma Doepel* return to Melbourne after nearly eight years in Port Macquarie, and a fine team of volunteers is restoring to her former glory as a sail-training vessel. Progress has also been made towards plans for the *Wattle* after some years of frustrations for her operators.

Alas, we cannot report similar progress in our primary quest to see a world-class maritime heritage precinct at Williamstown, a working home for vessels such as these. The MHAV applauded the commitment made by former Premier, Steve Bracks, to protect the historic Port of Melbourne workshops site at Williamstown for a maritime heritage precinct. This was followed by the establishment of Seaworks Foundation to plan and guide development. A strategic development plan, commissioned by Seaworks and Parks Victoria, was due for release in November 2008: *six months later we are still waiting.*



Enterprize on Australia Day 2009. (L. Rex)

In the meantime, Melbourne has been left without a significant maritime museum following the decision of the National Trust to walk away from previous commitments at Southbank, and the *Polly Woodside* faces an uncertain future there. This occurred without adequate consultation, in the face of the overwhelming pressures of the adjacent commercial development.

As the nation's premier trading port, Melbourne is sadly lagging in the recognition and presentation of its rich maritime heritage. A precinct at Williamstown could become a unique national and international attraction, providing facilities for local and visiting heritage **vessels**, housing our maritime **collections**, commemorating traditional **livelihoods** and creating **awareness** of our common past through education and entertainment.

More than ever we need your support! Subscriptions for 2009/2010 are due - see enclosed form. If you are not a current member, please consider joining us.

Finally, we are proud to announce a special event on Wednesday 27 May 2009, the launch of MHAV member Kate Lance's latest book, *Alan Villiers: Voyager of the Winds*. Melbourne-born Villiers became world-famous for his writings and images of life at sea in the final days of sail. Don't miss this chance to hear more about Villiers **or get a signed copy of the book at a special discount for members.** Details enclosed.

The MHAV Committee

MARITIME HERITAGE AND VESSEL REPORTS

ALMA DOEPPEL, TOPSAIL SCHOONER: There is a great deal to report since our last newsletter. *Alma Doepel* was slipped at Port Macquarie in December, and a canvas skin placed over the underwater sections of the hull, followed by painting of the same areas in preparation for the voyage to Melbourne. A crew of 15 assembled in Port Macquarie on 10 January 2009. On 13 January *Alma Doepel* departed. She encountered severe weather on the afternoon of 15 January and sought shelter in Jervis Bay. After 36 hours the ship headed for Eden, where she took on provisions, fuel and water, before continuing to Port Phillip Heads.

Alma entered Port Phillip at 1500 hrs on 20 January, and anchored at Port Melbourne late in the evening. Early next morning the last leg of the voyage was the short trip up the Yarra to Victoria Harbour. Sponsors City of Melbourne, VicUrban and Lend Lease held a welcoming ceremony alongside Wharf 5, before the ship was moved to her new home at Shed 2, Victoria Harbour, just across the water from her former home at 20 Victoria Dock. It had been a voyage over 8 days covering 854 nautical miles at an average of 6.96 knots while underway. Not a bad effort for a 105 year-old ship!

Only days after arriving in Melbourne *Alma* headed to Williamstown for the Tall Ships Victoria Tall Ship event over the Australia Day weekend, a great opportunity to let everyone know she was home! A great weekend was had with the ship open to the public. Back at Shed 2 things quickly turned to *Alma's* refit. Every weekend and some weekdays there have been working bees, with more than 1000 volunteer hours already spent, removing equipment from the relocation, and all running rigging, gaffs, booms, topmasts, the jib-boom, and the power generators. The volunteers have started refurbishing a number of spars. These working bees are continuing every Saturday and Sunday from 1000 to 1700 hrs at Shed 2. Volunteers are always needed, so if you are interested, please feel free to drop in and sign up. For further information, please make contact below.

Contact: Chris Coghlan. Ph: 9372 7389, Mob: 0407 860 296. Email: chriscoghlan@iprimus.com.au.

Web: almadoepel.com.au

CERBERUS, MONITOR: At this stage no commitment has been made by the state government to match the \$500,000 federal commitment of July 2008 towards stabilisation of the ship at Black Rock. Meanwhile a heavy lift company with experience in vessels the size of *Cerberus* has indicated interest in moving the ship ashore. As a result, Friends of Cerberus is now seeking funds specifically to pay for a detailed study and a firm quotation to move *Cerberus* ashore for preservation and display. The Friends are funding a study by two experts from the Western Australian Museum with specialist iron and corrosion knowledge into what would be required to preserve the vessel out of the water. This should be completed over the next two months.

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



Curlip, 28 March 2009, Marlo. (L. Rex)

CURLIP, NEW WOODEN PADDLE STEAMER: The new *Curlip*, built as a community project at Orbost and celebrating the earlier 1890-built vessel of the same name, was commissioned late in November. *Curlip* has since been operating 2-hour excursions from the Brodribb River jetty at Marlo, down the Brodribb and Snowy Rivers, past Marlo to near the Snowy River bar. Several MHAV members have experienced these pleasant excursions and recommend them. The organisation now has dedicated offices and a display and booking centre at cnr Browning and Lochiel Sts, Orbost (the former Rain Forest Centre).

Contact: Ph: 5154 1699.

Web: paddlesteamercurlip.com.au

DICK SMITH EXPLORER and OCEANIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION: In late 2007, after many years located adjacent to the *Polly Woodside*, this non-profit company was forced to prepare their research and exploration vessel *Dick Smith Explorer* for sale. After the loss of the vessel's berth and shore refitting facilities, approval for a new berth and facilities to enable the work to be completed in the Melbourne area was denied by all organisations approached. As a result *Dick Smith Explorer* was sold early in 2008 and sailed by the new owner to Hobart, where adventure sailing is planned. The organisation management then transferred to Sydney. Victoria has thus lost a unique maritime organisation and the base for their fascinating, well credentialed and well-travelled vessel.

ENTERPRIZE, REPLICA SCHOONER - MELBOURNE'S HISTORIC TALL SHIP: Welcome to new Operations Manager Lisa Mostyn. Following a successful series of events over the summer holidays at Geelong, Rye and Portarlington, February saw the *Enterprize* again sail to Hobart for the 2009 Australian Wooden Boat Festival. She went on to Port Davey on the Tasmanian west coast, returned to Hobart and then back to Melbourne. *Enterprize* resumed school history sails at Williamstown, weekend sails at Geelong and Portarlington, and Rye at Easter. Unfortunately, recent severe weather curtailed some of the events. The Sunset Cruises are in high demand, with extra dates added to the schedule. The winter lay-up will start in July, with a complete make-over of the standing and running rigging in preparation for the annual Melbourne Foundation Day celebrations in August. Details can be found at the website below.

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

FLAGSTAFF HILL MARITIME VILLAGE, LADY BAY LIGHTHOUSE COMPLEX: The Lady Bay Lighthouse Complex was originally built in 1858-9, so 2009 marks its 150th year of activity. It is of historical, scientific and architectural significance to the State of Victoria, and the lights remain today a maritime navigation aid. The modest, dignified and sturdy structures indicate the importance of lighthouses to the communities that relied upon them for safe passage for shipping, at a time when that was crucial to relatively isolated towns like Warrnambool. The battery of two 80-pounder rifled, muzzle loading guns was added in 1887 as part of a general upgrade to the defences of Victoria, which saw Port Phillip Bay transformed into a fortress. Guests to Flagstaff Hill Maritime Village can explore the Lady Bay lighthouse complex daily, and the lighthouses are also able to be viewed through the flagstaffhill.com webcam overlooking Lady Bay.

Contact: Web: www.flagstaffhill.com

MELBOURNE TALL SHIPS PARADE, AUSTRALIA DAY: For the second year, Tall Ships Victoria co-ordinated a spectacular Port Phillip (Brighton to Williamstown) Tall Ships Parade on the morning of Australia Day 26 January. In ideal weather, ships participating were Melbourne's *Enterprise*, brigantine *Windward Bound* from Hobart and the RAN-run *Young Endeavour*, Britain's gift to Australia for the 1988 bi-centenary, with *Alma Doepel* open at Workshops Pier in Williamstown. The public was treated to a free Bay cruise to view proceedings from the ex-Sydney ferry *Lady Cutler* (Melbourne Showboat). Tall Ships Victoria was formed to promote, co-ordinate, support and facilitate the activity of Tall Ships within Victoria.

Contact: Web: tallshipsvictoria.org

NORTH WHARF SHED 5, POTENTIAL MARITIME MUSEUM: The Mission to Seafarers and the World Trade Centre, with support from the Polly Woodside Volunteers and the Company of Master Mariners, are investigating the possibility of setting up a Maritime Museum or attraction in the currently-derelect North Wharf Shed 5. This is just upstream from the Charles Grimes Bridge and downstream of the new Yarra River walking bridge which connects to the Duke and Orr dock. The MHAV will be discussing this proposal with representatives of the group at its next committee meeting. The development could fill the void left by the National Trust in not proceeding with a new Maritime Museum building etc at Southbank, and could be complementary to our vision for Williamstown.

OTAMA, SUBMARINE EX RAN: Plans to set the vessel up ashore at Crib Point in Western Port have not received approval. The organisation became extremely frustrated at attempting to obtain a shore site for *Otama* after 7 years of dealing with numerous authorities, and ran an intensive media and lobbying campaign for action late in 2008. *Otama* was also advertised for sale on eBay at a minimum \$4.9 million and this attracted at least four serious expressions of interest. This resulted in the state government setting up a new DSE-chaired group with representatives of authorities involved to resolve the issue. A site alongside and upstream of the Stony Point jetty is now proposed (on the shore side of the Port facility) with all groups apparently in agreement. The result is awaited. In the meantime *Otama* has been moved 500 metres upstream from Crib Point jetty, to facilitate use of the jetty for commercial work (which has not eventuated).

Contact: Ph: 5983 9102 (Crib Pt Maritime Memorial Centre, open Sat-Sun, 11.00-2.30), Web: otama.com.au

POLLY WOODSIDE, DRY DOCK and FACILITIES: State government-funded work to modify the old Duke and Orr dock to finally enable *Polly Woodside* to be dry docked is now proceeding rapidly, with the possibility that she will be moved back into the dock late in May, in time for the open day for the new development on Sunday 31 May, when the public may possibly be able again to go aboard the ship. Later this year it is planned to dry dock *Polly Woodside* for important hull inspection and maintenance, after being afloat continuously since January 1975, a period of 34 years. North Wharf Shed 4 (the former *Polly Woodside* workshop etc facility) is currently being refurbished, including new piling, floor supports, floor and roof for commercial leasing as a riverside café. North Wharf Shed 2 (the brown shed with "round" roof previously on the site to the west of the dock) will be re-erected later on the site east of the dock for fitting out and work associated with the ship.

Contact: John Wroe. Ph: 9531 5626

Mob: 0407 530 940

Email: jacwroe@bigpond.net.au

Web: pollywoodside.com.au



Duke and Orrs Dock, 9 April 2009 - new floor and side work, old side timber with old POLLY wharf. (L. Rex)

PRINCES PIER, PRESERVATION PLAN?: The state heritage-listed Princes Pier at Port Melbourne has become partly derelict, with several fires and demolition of all buildings except the guardhouse. In 2006 the state government announced a \$14 million (estimated) plan to fully restore the inner 196 m section including the guardhouse, and to remove decking from the rest to expose the piles as a "heritage and sculptural centrepiece". Little progress has been made. It is reported that "piles have been found in serious disrepair" and recent questions about the plan have not been satisfactorily answered.

RAVEN, REPLICA CARAVEL: In 2002 former furniture maker Graeme Wylie laid the keel of a 21m long 70 tonne c.1500 design Portuguese or Spanish caravel on his property at Bushfield, 9km from Warrnambool. The vessel is similar to *Nina*, one of Christopher Columbus' ships. This is the first such ship built in Australia and will be one of only a handful in existence. It is hoped to launch *Raven* at Port Fairy by early 2010 and sail the ship around Australia. Visits are encouraged and best on Sundays 1-4, Tues and Thurs 10-12.

Contact: Ph: 5565 4208. Email: raven@aussiebroadband.com.au Web: madeiraship.com

SPIRIT OF MYSTERY, REPLICA CORNISH MOUNTS BAY LUGGER: Many readers will have heard of or seen this vessel recently while berthed at the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, Williamstown. *Spirit of Mystery* was sailed from Cornwall to Australia by

English adventurer Pete Goss and three others, arriving in Williamstown on 9 March 2009. This was to commemorate the 116 day voyage of the earlier 37ft Cornish lugger *Mystery*, which brought seven related Cornishmen to Melbourne and the gold rush in 1854. *Spirit of Mystery* was built as close as possible to the earlier vessel using traditional methods. She left for Hobart late in April and will then visit Sydney in July. It is a wonderful story, told in detail on the website below.

Contact: Web: petegoss.com



Young Endeavour, 26 January 2009. (L. Rex)

WATTLE, STEAM TUG: *Wattle* steamed back to Melbourne from her berth at the Stony Point jetty in Western Port early in November 2008, the commercial repair program proposed at Hastings having proven too expensive. It is believed the voyages between Victoria Harbour and Western Port are the longest single steamings *Wattle* has made in her 76 year history. After berthing at No 2 Victoria Harbour, Bay Steamers Maritime Museum and Sorrento Steam researched alternative methods of refurbishment. The decision was taken to seek a hard-stand site, lift *Wattle* onto the site and work to regain survey. Refurbishment will be carried out by volunteers, trained and assisted where necessary by paid professionals. In April 2009, VicUrban generously offered Bay Steamers Maritime Museum a site at 19 South Wharf, at the city end of the former BHP Shed, where storage, workshop and amenities containers are now established. *Wattle* is progressively being lightened for the lift onto the site, and it is hoped she will be on blocks by the end of May. A time frame for refurbishment of eighteen months to two years is considered realistic.

Contact: Tony Lewis. Ph: 9846 1819. Email: ailston@iprimus.com.au



Otama, Crib Point 2009. (Andrew Mackinnon)

WYUNA, EX PORT PHILLIP PILOT CUTTER: *Wyuna*, now apparently with controlling ownership by a Western Australian mining figure, remains laid up in fresh water in Launceston. Plans for a major rebuild as a luxury private yacht are not proceeding. Numerous people have expressed the wish that she be brought back to Melbourne for preservation, and such a future would seem most appropriate for this classic vessel. Anyone interested in assisting such a venture should contact below.

Contact: Lindsay Rex.

Ph: 9589 4575. Mob: 0417 014 644.

Email: shiprex@optusnet.com.au