



AMATEUR BOAT BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

Sept/Oct 08



The lightship *Carpentaria* at the National Maritime Museum, Sydney

ABBA, THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM was held at the commencement of the Technical Meeting of Wednesday, 30th July. There were several significant changes to office bearers called for but fortunately these had all been arranged “behind the scenes” in advance, so the meeting didn’t take too long anyway.

Importantly, Bob Walsh wanted a rest as president because his wife, Ruth, although convalescing, remains ill, and needs his attention and Paul Thompson has valiantly agreed to fill that gap. At the same time, vice pres., Chris Davis, agreed to relieve Rosemary Nayler as secretary/treasurer. Chris has been treasurer in the past and so the

work load will come as no surprise to him. By way of compensation, Rosemary agreed to take over Chris’s old vice pres. role. The other, lesser committee positions aren’t voted on anyway, but they remain unaltered, viz: yours truly as editor, Jay Niven as assistant editor and Mike Rogers as librarian.

We are very grateful to Bob Walsh for his work as president, up until Ruth’s falling ill, and to Chris Davis for stepping into his shoes thereafter, and, of course, to Rosemary for all her work as secretary/treasurer throughout the year. Our thanks are also due to Jay Niven and Mike Rogers for their continued efforts over the time.

THE MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

This talk was to have been given by Craig Wilson on the subject of boat maintenance but he had to be removed from the list due to family commitments. Hopefully we'll get him for the next meeting. Fortunately, Bob Johnson, treasurer of the MHA was able to attend and talk about the functions of that particular association instead. Considering that this was one of our best attended meetings ever, including five new members, things would have been very embarrassing without him.

Bob told us that the MHA was first established in 1989. At that time it had strong links to the Maritime Museum with Sally May as a link. It was possible for the MHA to act as a mouthpiece, a lobbyist and as a grant-applicant, all roles a government instrumentality such as the MM could not take on. One significant initiative of the MHA was to establish The Wooden Boat Works, under the principalship of Brian Phillips. Since the association was meeting in the offices of the Sail Training Association in the western end of B shed, and since the MM occupied the rest of that shed, it's not surprising that the Wooden Boat Works ended up physically between the two. Later, under Graeme Lahiff, it moved to much larger premises west along Slip St, and now it's in Henderson, once again with Brian, but its original establishment was down to the MHA.

Of course, the MHA's interests extend well beyond mere boats and covers such diverse fields as buildings, skills, art, model making, you name it. In particular, the west end of Victoria Quay remains a focus with the Association's views not always aligning with those of the Fremantle Port Authority. It was the MHA which initially suggested saving E shed when it was scheduled for removal. The result? It was dismantled and re-erected on the other side of the carpark where it serves as a very successful commercial hub for eateries, etc, within an olde worlde cloak. The only problem is that the FPA seems to have developed a taste for such commercial success and some of its future plans may not be as historically sensitive as the E shed development. The Association wants to see a proper Maritime

Precinct established to cover the West End of Victoria Quay and Bob showed us plans of proposals it has in the pipeline for this area but getting government and the FPA to agree to any of it seems a long way off.

One successful, continuing collaboration is with Barry Hicks and his private maritime museum in Cannington. The group enjoys the Hicks' hospitality at this delightful venue on two or three occasions each year, where, amongst many other things, many of Brian Lemon's exquisite models are always on view. We should contact Barry about a Tool Box visit for ABBA sometime. I wonder how many of our members have seen it so far?

Another area of interest to the MHA concerns the original townsite of Clarence. This was the site of Thomas Peel's original, aborted, group settlement scheme of 1829-30, somewhere in the Cockburn Sound region. Recently it has been established as having been quite close to the coast, level with Henderson and Woodman's Point, and close to Mt Brown. Archeological studies have started, but it appears that the access road for the new island port in that area is set to run right over the site! So the MHA has an interest in lobbying to have the road moved appropriately. Since one of your editor's forbears came out with Peel and lived in Clarence, I guess he'd better join the MHA and get behind it.

Bob told us that the group's membership stands at about 80, which makes it quite a bit bigger than ourselves, and includes people from all walks of life. Like us, meetings are bi-monthly and memberships costs \$30 pa, including a quarterly newsletter which I think is hard copy. The meetings, which are quite social in nature, take place on Monday nights. People interested should contact Bob at 46 Sandgate St, South Perth, 6151, or phone him on 6461 6927. We are indebted to him for being available at such short notice and for presenting such an interesting insight into what amounts to a sister organization to ourselves.

A CHUBBY BUBBY

It's a dreadful title but the best I could come up with at short notice to lead us into a description of a delightful Toolbox visit to the new Pres's workshop in Osborne Park on Saturday, August 9. We had at least fourteen members arrive to view Paul's progress on his restoration project which is an interesting little half-cabin cruiser. We had a great time and very much enjoyed the afternoon tea which Paul laid out for us as well.



Paul acquired the boat from Rob at Trailezy about a year and a half ago and a registration sticker on it suggests that it was last registered and presumably operating in 2003. It's carvel planked, about twenty feet long with a generous beam of eight feet, hence the title of this article. Despite this the little launch has very good lines and would slip through the water with very little effort. Unfortunately Paul has no documentation or history on the vessel but assumes it dates from the fifties. This doesn't appear to be its first restoration, either, as there's evidence of previous work, but Paul's endeavours will result in a very complete rebuild.



Sorry this one's so fuzzy folks!

The boat is now very dry and all the seams are well and truly open as several of my photographs show. The gaps are so wide that

Paul is going to have to insert splines along most seams to reduce the caulking gap to reasonable dimensions. Rot at the ends of some planks also requires cutting out and scarfing in of replacements and of course there are quite a few ribs in need of replacement.



For this latter exercise Paul has set up a really luxurious rib steamer on a Dexion angle iron frame (see picture). It's based on a HWS tank, insulated, mounted over a gas ring burner and feeding its steam into an overhead steaming box which is pierced with lots of dowels which are rests to keep the various pieces of timber separate while being steamed. The box even has an oven thermometer built into its side! The whole she-bang is mounted on castors (Paul just loves castors) to facilitate movement around the shop. Unfortunately it was placed in a fair draft from the open door so in the planned demo it didn't warm up as much as was hoped, but it should work well. To precede the steaming Paul also has a vertical length of about 5" plastic pipe, filled with water, for soaking the ribs extensively before steaming.

On a separate Dexion-made stand Paul also had the engine on display. This was a single cylinder Yanmar SB12 diesel set up for running. It's not a new engine but would appear to have been well looked after and powerful enough for this easily driven hull and a big improvement on whatever the original engine was. It should give years of service.



And if this project isn't enough, Paul has two smaller exercises awaiting attention in a loft area. One's a fourteen foot racing dinghy (with 27' of aluminium mast) and the other's a transomed lifeboat from a tender vessel of some sort, very heavily built. So all in all it was a fascinating visit and we are indebted to Paul for making his time, his workshop, his project and above all, his afternoon tea available to us. Many thanks, Paul.

ADMINISTRATION NOTES

ABBA COMMITTEE

President	Paul Thompson	0419 193 605	Vice Pres.	Rosemary Nayler	9455 1470
Sec/Treas	Chris Davis	9387 5042	Editor	Mike Beilby	9397 6209
Library	Mike Rogers	9527 7313	Asst Editor	Jay Niven	9291 8460

TECHNICAL MEETING

This evening meeting will be held on Wednesday, Sept 24. For guest speaker we have Craig Wilson back, talking on regular maintenance. This time he will allow more time for questions as his previous talk about a year ago generated a lot of interest and is sure to do so again. Don't forget the club's evening meal if it suits your timetable.

TOOLBOX VISIT

The Toolbox Visit this month will be to new member, Mick O'Shea's workshop In Henley Brook, where he's working on an Elliott Bay, fantail steam launch of about 23'. This is a replica 1900's open launch from Oregon, USA, very clean lined and quite fast. When I was designing my own equivalent, about '93, I stole a lot from the Elliott Bay lines, particularly in the bow sections. I've never seen one in the flesh, so this visit will be very interesting. That will be on Saturday, Oct 11, between 2 and 4pm at Grandis Cottages, 45 Casuarina Pl, Henley Brook.

COMING BOAT SHOWS

City of Perth advises us that the East Perth show will take place on March 22, 2009, at Claisebrook as before. With this early warning, hopefully we can plan something a little better than this year. The site's a little cramped to get into, certainly for hardstanding exhibits but when the weather's good (which it has been) it makes a lovely day.

But wait, there's more! A group is trying to re-start the old Classic and Wooden Boat show at Challenger Harbour, Fremantle, for much the same time. There's a lot of water still to pass under the bridge on this one, including liaising with other groups such as the Classic Launch Association, the Old Gaffers, the MHA, the Wooden Boat Works and of course, Royal Perth Yacht Club on whose moorings it's planned for. Details such as insurance have to be taken care of too. Paul Thompson has been talking on our behalf with Brian Phillips and it's to be hoped that more information will be available at the September meeting of ABBA.

AND STILL MORE!

I have just received a communication from the organisers of The Australian Wooden Boat Show in Hobart, giving early advice of the 2009 event. This will take place, chiefly on Constitution Dock, from 6th to 9th February, 2009. It's possible to query the adoption of the title "Australian" in AWBS but it is by far the biggest show in the country, with over 500 boats, plus tall ships, and 50,000 attendees. An innovation this year will be the racing of traditional Sydney 18' skiffs on the Derwent – now *that* will be something to see. Certainly, Sandgroppers who have some other reason to go east at about that time would be fools to miss the show. In '07 Marg and I went over for it,

then did some touring in Victoria and Sth Aust, before going on to the Goolwa, SA, show in March. It made a great trip.

MEMBERSHIP

With the AGM now over, it's time to call for membership subscriptions again. The fee is unchanged at \$20 with electronic newsletter or \$30 with hard copy. Cheques or cash will be readily accepted by Chris Davis at the September meeting or you can post to him at 5 Johnson St, WEMBLEY, 6014. Let's hope we can get all fees in promptly again this year. Many thanks.



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