



AMATEUR BOAT BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

June July 2017

FULL STEAM AHEAD

On a wet winter's day in July, Mick and Janice O'Shea made us all welcome again at their magnificent property in Henley Brook. After some recent health issues for both Mick and Jan, things are on the improve and it was great to see them looking so good and back to doing what they are so well known for, going the extra mile to help others.

At our last visit in 2013, Mick was part way through building a Selway Fischer 30' Edwardian Steam Launch in timber and restoring a 1926 compound steam engine to power it. At that time, the hull was upside down with the stem and keel fitted and all of the frames installed. For pictures of the progress at that stage, see our "April May 2013" newsletter in the Library section of the ABBA website. The article also gives details of the engine, boiler and boat design.

Mick put in a lot of hard work to complete the boat, engine and boiler, putting it all together to form the JANICE LORRAINE as shown in the following pictures provided by Mick and taken on the day of our visit.









Mick designed and built a tri-axel trailer to suit the 4.5 tonne JANICE LORRAINE. He towed her to the Wentworth Junction Rally and events on the Murray River at Echuca. A friend also towed his other boat, the Elliot Bay 23' steam launch, EMMAMADALINE for double the fun and adventure.

Watch this space!

The rectangular block of metal shown below in Mick's extensive workshop is the start of another steam engine that Mick plans to build to power a 16' vessel that will be easier for him to transport and launch.



AMATEUR BOAT BUILDING — THE REAL THING

In contrast to Mick's high quality, precision craftsmanship, evident in his steam boats and numerous other projects, he had 8 stitch and glue marine ply kayaks stacked neatly in his workshop.



Much of the preparation was done by Mick but the work on display is the product of many hours effort by a group of 8 severely disabled men aged 14 to 42 who, together with their individual carers, spend 2 hours a week under Mick's direction building their own Kayak. Some are in wheelchairs and require assistance even to hold a glue brush but they eagerly get involved working on their own boat. One of the participants never spoke, but after a few visits was laughing and enjoying himself along with the others.

Mick came up with the idea after talking to a friend who did similar work with troubled kids over east. He enlisted the support of some local businesses to contribute to the cost. Mick said that he gets as much pleasure and satisfaction out of this project as the participants obviously do.





Mick has recently had a blacksmith mate come along and the group also get involved in making smaller simple metal items such as key rings which gives them a great feeling of achievement.

While the lads are in the workshop, Janice works with a similar group of ladies who bake and decorate cup cakes that they all get together and share. Well done to Mick and Janice for making this valuable contribution to enrich the lives of those less fortunate.

Once again it was a great ABBA afternoon at Mick's workshop and we thank Mick and Janice for their hospitality. Members especially appreciated Janice's hot scones, jam and cream on this very wintery day.

THE ARGOSY STORY

The presenter for the June meeting was your editor, Chris Davis, on his project to restore the 29 foot jarrah plank gaff cutter 'Argosy'. This is a project commenced in the late 1980's but largely dormant since the mid 1990's. However, as Chris pointed out in his closing remarks on the night— retirement is not far away and he hopes to restart the project very soon.

Argosy has some history attached to her . She was substantially built prior to the second World War, completed following the war and launched in 1946. At the time, she was one of the largest boats on the river and she won the first Bunbury (one way only) race in 1948. Chris has completed much of the hull structural work and gave us a step by step account of the challenges and achievements to date. The 'picture story' of this significant project follows;



The West Australian 27th Feb 1948

Ocean Race To Argosy

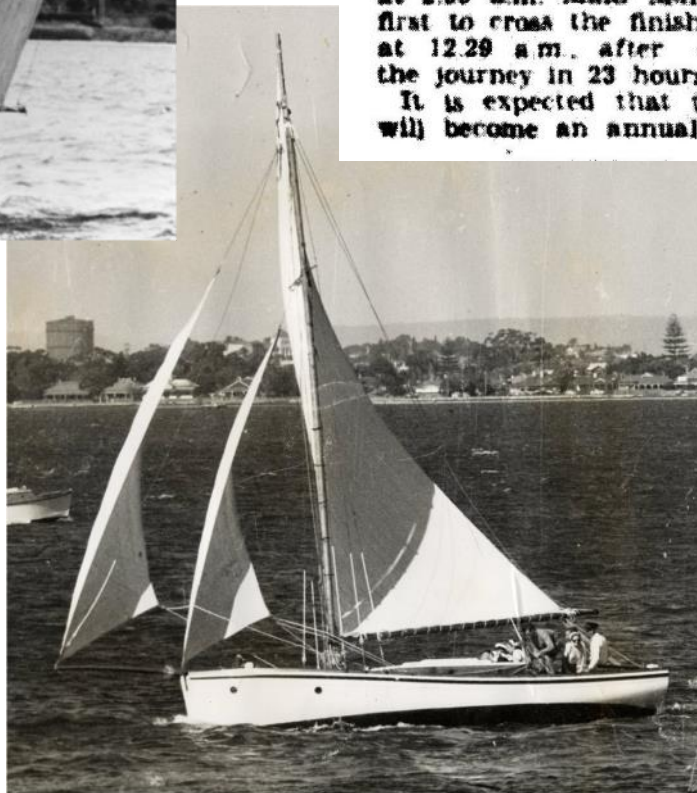
BUNBURY, Feb. 26: The first deep-sea yacht race conducted in this State—over a 130-mile course from Fremantle to Bunbury—ended early this morning. The race was won by Argosy, of the Royal Perth Yacht Club, skippered by R. Luck. She won by an hour from Nova (J. Fitzhardinge) Maid Marion (K. Stevenson) was third and recorded fastest time.

Argosy, a 30ft. ocean-going cruiser, was on a handicap of 18.6min. She crossed the finishing line in Koombana Bay at 4.24 a.m. today. Nova arrived at 2.39 a.m. Maid Marion was first to cross the finishing line at 12.29 a.m. after covering the journey in 23 hours 29min.

It is expected that the race will become an annual event.

Great photos of Argosy with her original gaff rig and Royal Perth Yacht Club R21 sail number on the Swan River late 1940's.

Unusually for a vessel of this age, her name has never been changed.





Chris commenced by explaining how he found and purchased Argosy. In the late 1980's, he paid a number of visits to the East Fremantle Yacht Club area whilst cruising down river on Peter Leggatt's Carmen Class Restless III. Argosy was on a mooring nearby and presented as a very solid traditional timber yacht with good potential for a more major refurbishment. Peter knew the owner from Rottne connections and in 1987 offered to arrange a slipping of Argosy at RPYC (the EFYC pile slip would no longer take the 4 ton load) . The boat was also for sale at the time. Chris was on hand to help with the slipping and as the saying goes 'the rest is history'.



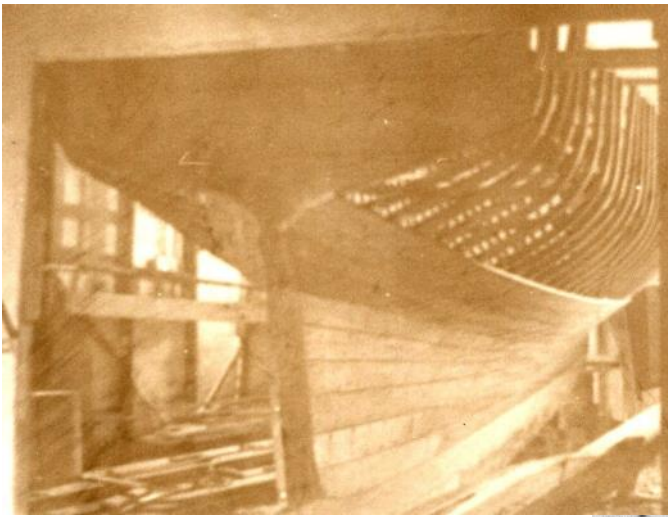
Although she had had a number of owners over the years, she remained largely original and much of her original bronze hardware remained aboard. Subsequent photos show that the original cabin trunk had been replaced and the doghouse added at some stage. The doghouse had then been somewhat amateurishly raised by one more plank at a later time. The cockpit comprised simple storage under the seating with no self draining arrangements. Her original gaff rig had been converted to Marconi during the original owners time and this oregon mast remains aboard. The oregon boom from the gaff rig also remains aboard but has been cut short to accommodate the backstays which replaced the runners in the gaff to Marconi conversion.



Internally, the fitout contained much of what appeared to be original, with two bunks in the main cabin, a galley to port and a large ice box to starboard adjacent to the companionway. There were lockers on both sides of the boat moving forward with a door to the heads in the bow and the usual anchor and line stowage in the forepeak. Large jarrah members seen each side of the compression post in the photo above were stepped on the deadwood and passed through the deck to provide the support between which the deck stepped mast was mounted. This provided openings to deck beam and the like which were severely rotted.

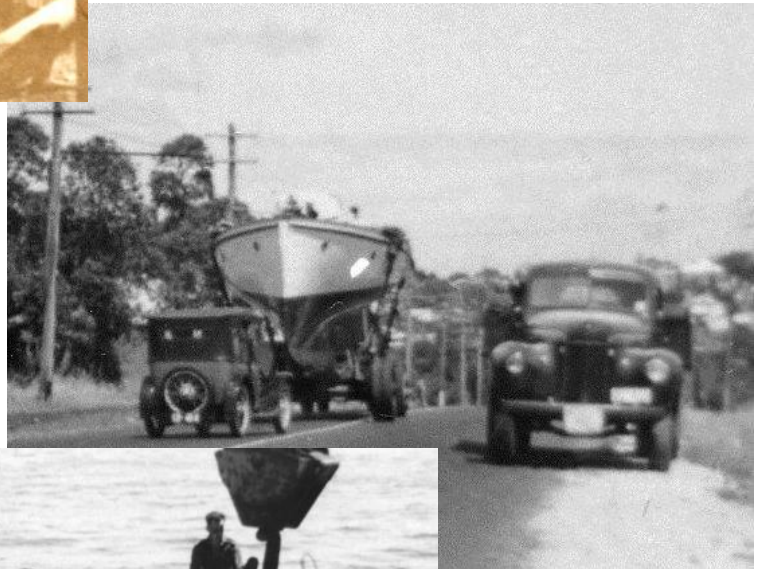


The 'look & feel' of the interior was very traditional but once again fresh water ingress had taken its toll and much of the structure was no longer sound. The limited camber built into the decks of these older vessels and their tendency to incur sagging of deck beams around the cabin trunk edges resulted in fresh water collecting along the trunk/deck joints leading to rot travelling into the cabin structure. Chris has retained much of the interior fitout as patterns for the rebuild.



Chris then moved back in time to explain some of Argosy's history that he has managed to unearth. She was built in a backyard in Labouchere Road South Perth by a group of five very young men. The build was completed to deck beam level prior to WWII. All five saw active combat in the middle east but thankfully returned home.

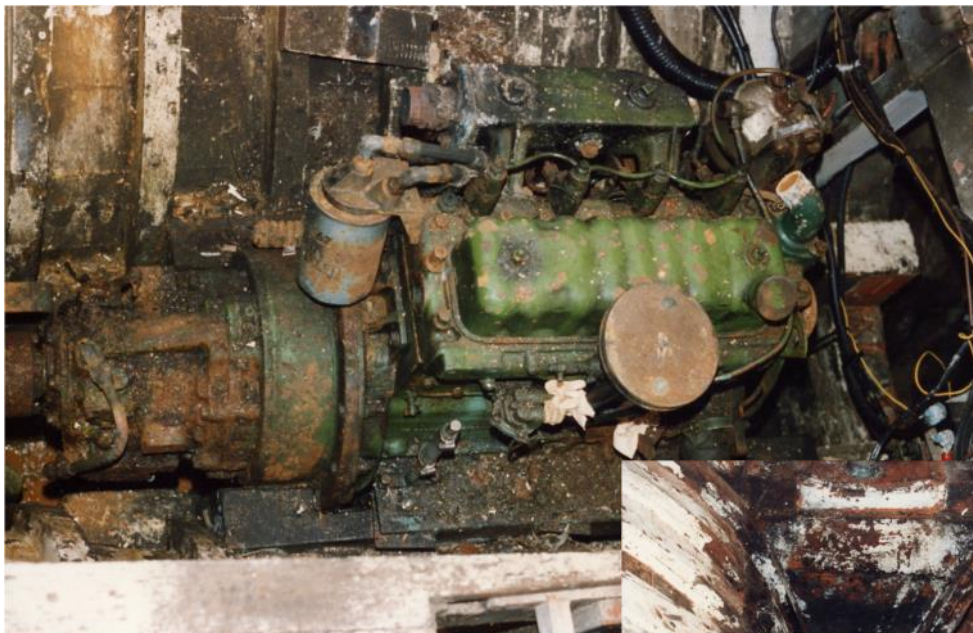
Argosy was completed and launched in 1946. In those days, transport arrangements were rudimentary—in this case a modified tractor and gun carriage journey down Canning Highway to Fremantle Harbour where the only cranes and wharf facilities capable of this sort of lift existed.



Somewhat symbolically, the image to the left is representative of Argosy's 'launch' as a restoration project in Chris's ownership - as she moved up the slipway at RPYC in May 1987 - a classic crying out for some serious TLC. This also marked the commencement of Chris's measuring and recording of all the detail prior to anything being dismantled.



Having committed to the sale as the slipway winch came to a halt, the weekend plan changed from a quick overcoat of the already very thick residual anti fouling to a complete burn off of the underwater areas. This not only raised confidence in the way ahead, given the pristine nature of the jarrah planks underneath, but resulted in an altogether better looking vessel by the time relaunch time arrived on Monday. All of this was achieved thanks to great assistance from family and friends — Don Davis, Mike Igglesden and Peter Leggatt included.



During the many months that followed, a weekly dose of scraping took place on the inside of the hull. Chris also removed a substantial quantity of Wundowie Iron 'pig' ballast and other material accumulated in the bilge.

The 4 cylinder Perkins 499 diesel with its 1:1 Borg Warner Velvet Drive gearbox also begged some attention. After the engine was removed, about 50mm of diesel/oil sludge was removed from the bilge below the engine. This had also penetrated right through the 1¹/₈ inch planks and was later cleaned to paintable stage on the inside using Peerless Emulsions Activ DOT commercial pavement cleaner.





Early in the project, Chris obtained a mooring at Crawley Bay and manufacture of a frame from PVC pipe and a vinyl cover to keep the fresh water out took on the form of a significant sub-project. This included nets and other patented devices to keep the birds off. Scraping, sanding and dismantling of the hull interior continued at the mooring.



It became evident fairly early in the internal cleanup process that a number of ribs amidships near the gunwale and at the turn in the bilge were broken. Various stories came to light of her being grounded on a beach or being squashed between other vessels during her life but none has been authenticated. Chris sought advice on the way forward from well known boat builder Warren Mews prior to his passing. Warren advised that Argosy was in too good a condition to warrant removing and replacing full length ribs. He recommended sistering with sectional ribs three planks each side of each of the break points. He also advised that tuart was the best timber to use as it did not suffer nail sickness as it aged—the reason it had been used in conjunction with iron fixings for railway carriage construction in earlier years. So Chris contacted CALM and sourced some tuart approved for cutting. Once again the team of Don, Mike and Chris cut the trees at Binningup and they were milled into slabs at Hamilton Sawmills in Osborne Park.



Chris and Don then used a fairly light table saw to cut strips/laminations about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick from each tuart slab. Whilst very green, the tuart still presented some challenges but thankfully the saw didn't burn out until the very last cut!!



On Friday 16th September, 1988, Argosy was lifted out of the water for an extended period of time on the hard. Although it was winter, hessian was draped around the hull to limit the drying out of the planking. A 44 gallon drum was used to provide the fire power for the steam box with a blanked off piece of bore casing serving the purpose as the water/steam bath.



Ample scrap wood was available to fire the 'boiler' as work continued on demolition of the parts of the interior fitout that were not required for patterns in the restoration process to follow.



A small frame was used to provide support to the short ribs in the top end of the bore casing — primarily in the steam rather than the boiling water.



Chris had designed and constructed a powerful jig system to allow the ribs to be positioned quickly and held in place after coming out of the steam box (you only have about 30 seconds). Three of the $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick ribs were used for each sister rib. A template was used to mark out the rib position and drill the nail holes through the planks from the inside before the rib 'arrived'. The rib was then fitted over the mark-out and the holes in the rib drilled from the outside. The nail was then driven, the rove driven over from the inside, the nail cut off and the riveting process completed with the unlucky helper holding up the 'dolly' on the outside of the nail.





Following the completion of the 36 ribs, each of which covered 6 planks, the scraping and sanding of the entire inside of the hull up to the first stringer down from the gunwale was completed. A liberal coating of Cupronol (no longer available) was applied before all surfaces were painted with Epicraft red lead, followed by Epicraft white undercoat and one gloss topcoat. She then returned to the water in much sounder condition.



The next task was to remove the plank deck which was fixed down with large steel pins that had become entirely rusted and non-existent. The cabin trunk and doghouse were then dismantled and removed, leaving Argosy at the same stage of construction as she had been during WWII.



By 1991, work on Argosy was put on hold whilst Chris built a purpose designed shed at the back of his house in Wembley. This is more the shed that has the house in its front yard! It has an 80 square metre floor, double brick construction and 5.5 metre high steel portal frames. Apart from specialist trades such as the grano, steel, brick and electrical work, Chris completed the details himself including manufacture of the large doors each end and the associated heavy duty hinges.



There was a small delay in the project in early 1993 due to a wedding and honeymoon but by October, the demountable frame/cradle that Chris had designed and constructed was ready to receive the boat.



An early start on Friday 22nd October, 1993, and after an 8.00am lift out and cleanoff at RPYC, she is loaded aboard Rohan Chick's truck for the trip home.

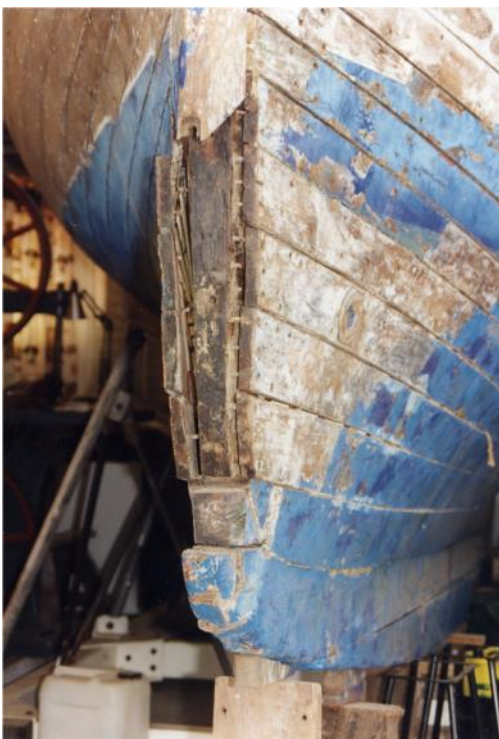


How lucky Chris is to have a back lane. Everything had been well planned and the crane hoisted off the truck at the end of the lane. Three houses down the lane, half the boat went into the shed before the cradle was rolled out on 2 inch steel rollers over heavy flat bar sitting on large planks. She fitted neatly on her new cradle, the crane was able to release the load and she rolled fairly effortlessly into her new temporary home –with just a little bit of help from family and friends once more. By 10.00am everyone was ready for morning tea — mission accomplished.

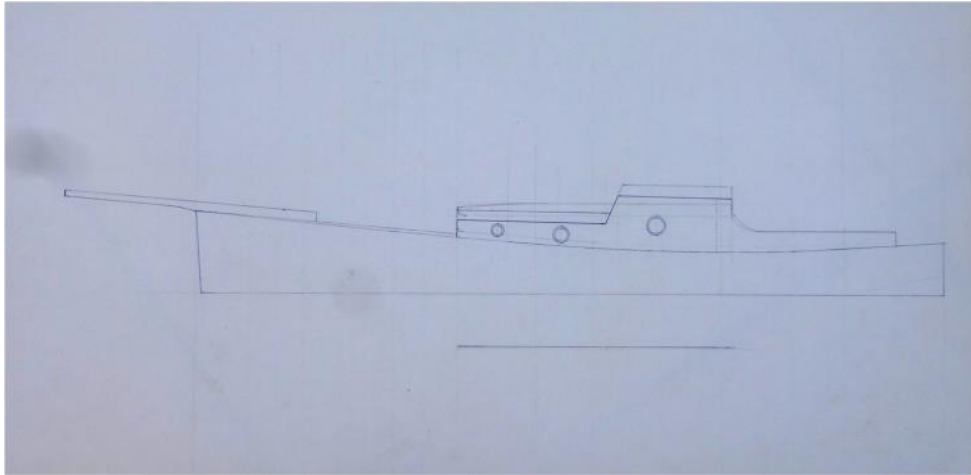




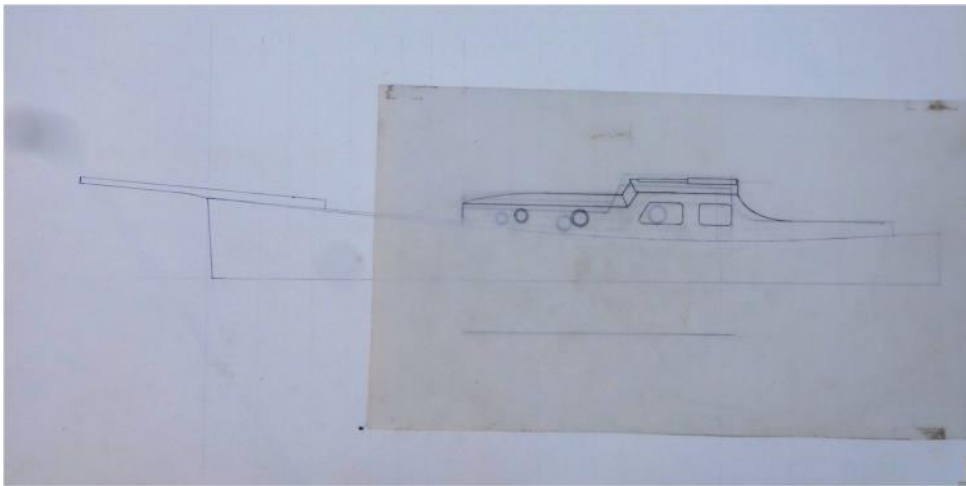
Chris, together with helpers Don and Mike, spent subsequent 'work days' burning off the paint on the topsides and stripping out the caulking. The topsides have largely been sanded up and fixtures such as the portholes in the bow removed.



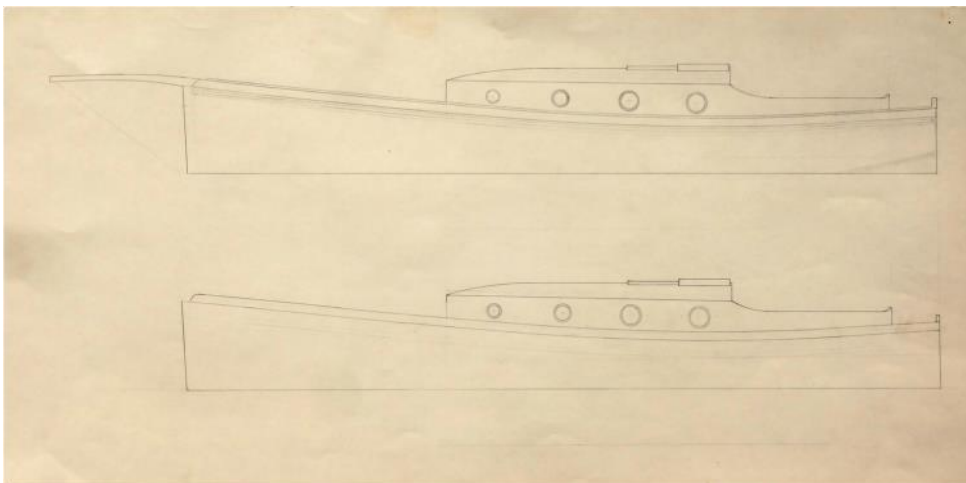
Prior to work ceasing in the mid 1990's, Chris commenced work on the stem post, removing the degraded fixings in the plank ends with a view to replacing the stem post before re-fixing the planks. This remains 'work in progress'.



In the meantime, Chris has worked on some sketches to scale of how Argosy might be restored to look like she did at launch in 1946 but with some additional headroom inside. The sketch above depicts how she looked when Chris purchased her; and below with her original single level trunk cabin with a more attractive doghouse than had currently existed.



However, Chris would prefer to maintain the single level trunk as she was at launch. Additional headroom can be achieved by adding a narrow plank above the current gunwale line and increasing the deck camber to the side of the cabin. Two slightly different drawings of this arrangement are shown below.



Chris closed a very interesting presentation by advising that despite 20 years of delay, he was getting close to retirement and the re-starting of this major project was imminent. So, stay tuned!

ADMINISTRATION NOTES

ABBA COMMITTEE

President	Ken Potts	0421 178 991
Sec/Treasurer	Bruce Cadee	9259 0844
Newsletter Editor	Chris Davis	9387 5042
Event Coordinator	Damien Bourke	9249 9439
Library	Rosemary Nayler	9455 1470
General Committee	Rob Bingham	9246 0202
	Ed Essers	0406 050 989
	Neil McKenzie	0424 533 063

AUGUST MEETING

The speaker for our August meeting is Ross Shardlow, a Perth born marine artist who now lives and works in Albany with his wife Barbara. He was a book illustrator for the Education Department before becoming a freelance artist. Ross was commissioned to produce a number of paintings including the LEEUWIN. This led to the design and production of numerous construction drawings for the masting and rigging of the LEEUWIN. He worked closely with many others including riggers, Barry and Robin Hicks who are well known to ABBA. Later Ross worked on the design of the ENDEAVOUR replica project. Ross has been commissioned by many other international and Australian organisations including Mystic Seaport and Australia Post. He is a Fellow of the Australian Society of Marine Artists.

Art is not his only passion, Ross was one of the founding members of the Maritime Heritage Association and also served as its President for some years.

To hear Ross talk about the design of the Masting & Rigging of the STS *Leeuwin*, join us at our next Technical Meeting in the Heritage Room of the South of Perth Yacht Club at 7:30 pm for an 8:00pm start on Wednesday 2nd August 2017. All welcome to attend.

SEPTEMBER TOOLBOX VISIT

Our next Toolbox will be on Saturday 2nd September as usual 2.00pm to 4.00pm. This Toolbox will be a visit to the workshop of Robin Hicks, known as The Green Workshop, at 33A Gosnells Road East, Orange Grove 6109. It is ¼ km off Tonkin Highway.

Members will have fond memories of visits to Robin's father's museum in Cannington. Like his father, who passed on not long ago, Robin is an artisan extraordinaire — sailmaking, ropeworking and woodworking amongst other things. He has had an involvement in the traditional boat environment of Perth for a very long time. Whilst the plan is to move all of Barry Hicks' collection to Robin's workshop, this has not yet occurred. However, Robin has plenty to see in his workshop so this will certainly be a very interesting afternoon with our very special host. Once again All welcome to attend.

Please take special note of Robin's advice that this is an operational workshop and attendees are requested to wear covered footwear (steelcaps not needed) but no open toe shoes or thongs, no alcohol and no smoking on site please.

PLEASE ALSO SEE THE ADMIN NOTES CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGES.

ADMINISTRATION NOTES (Cont'd)

ABBA SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE

Yes members, another year has gone by and Committee hope you have all enjoyed the value the Association has offered over the past 12 months. It's now time to put your hand in your pocket again so please see Treasurer, Bruce Cadee, at the next meeting with your \$20 subs for 2017/18, mail to Bruce at 7 Fifth Avenue, Rossmoyne, WA, 6148 or phone Bruce on 0419 508 785 to get the Association bank account details for an EFT payment.

RARE OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE HUON PINE FOR BOAT BUILDING

The Association has been contacted by a timber mill in Tasmania that has sourced a significant supply of Huon Pine logs and is cutting timber in sizes suitable for boat building. The sawn timber is available in lengths up to about 5metres. They are currently carrying a reasonable stock of Huon Pine and have transport arrangements in place for freighting to anywhere in Australia. Members or friends interested in seeking more information should contact Corinna Timbers on the following contact details;

Corinna Sawmills Pty Ltd

PO Box 2 Cooe Tas 7320

Contact Dean Groves

Phone 03 6435 1422

Mobile 0419 158 474

Fax 03 6435 2748

Email corinnatimbers@bigpond.com.au

TWO YACHTS FOR SALE

ABBA Life member John Skevington has run into heavy seas with some health issues and is looking to sell one or both of his yachts.

Yacht 1 is Indra, a 30 ft steel Boro with Volvo twin cylinder 10HP diesel and new headsail.

Yacht 2 is Wilhelmina, a 30 ft foam/glass multi chine Van de Stadt racing/cruising design.

Please contact Editor Chris Davis in the first instance on 0418 954602 for further information and John's contact details.

ADMINISTRATION NOTES (Cont'd)

ABBA LOGO

Members are reminded that Bruce Cadee has made arrangements with Shaun Luong of Image Embroidery at 26 Tulloch Way, Canning Vale (Phone 9456 2324 Mobile 0403 250 389) for an embroidered ABBA logo. The logo can be applied to your own clothing (assuming it can be accommodated in their equipment) or to shirts, caps or hats purchased through Image Embroidery. Feel free to call in on Shaun to look at the limited range of clothing he has on site or visit the following web sites to choose your preferred style, size and colours. The weblinks below are only examples of the wide range available. Half chest measurements are included on the web sites to help ensure you select the correct size. Ladies styles are also available.

Clothing (excluding Logos)

Style 1300 – Aussie Pacific Mens Murray Polo, Navy/White/Ashe or White/Navy/Ashe - **\$20.00 + GST each**

Weblink: http://www.aussiepacific.com.au/the-murray-polo-navy-white-s?color=Navy%2FWhite%2FAshe&primary_color=Navy&secondary_color=White

Style 1304 – Aussie Pacific Mens Eureka Polo, Navy/White/Ashe or White/Navy/Ashe - **\$21.00 + GST each**

Weblink: http://www.aussiepacific.com.au/mens/polos/eureka-polo-sky-navy-s?color=Sky%2FNavy%2FAshe&primary_color=Sky&secondary_color=Navy

Hats/Caps (excluding Logos)

Style 4199 – Headwear Brushed Heavy Cotton Cap, White/Navy (many other colours available too) - **\$6.50 + GST each** **Weblink:** <http://au.headwear.com.au/productDetails.cfm?&prodID=53&prodCatID=2&pageNumber=1>

(Also refer poly/cotton legionnaires hats Styles 4057 or 4126 for maximum sun protection under website sub heading 'Hats, Visor & Beanies' <http://au.headwear.com.au/productList.cfm?&pCategoryID=7>)

Style 4199 – Headwear Brushed Heavy Cotton Cap, White/Navy (many other colours available too) - **\$6.50 + GST each (includes poly/cotton legionnaires hats for maximum sun protection under website sub heading 'Hats, Visor & Beanies')**

Weblink:

Style 4223 – Brushed Sports Twill Bucket Hat, White/Navy (many other colours available too) - **\$8.00 + GST each**

Weblink: <http://au.headwear.com.au/productList.cfm?&pCategoryID=7&page=2>

To make your annual membership even more value for money, ABBA will pay for up to 2 logos per financial year to be applied to your items of clothing. The current cost to ABBA is \$7.15 per logo. There is no intention for this to be an ABBA uniform so the choice of style and colour is totally yours. If you are seen wearing the logo while building, working on or using your boat or anywhere for that matter it might get people asking questions and wanting to join our association. You are free to deal direct with Image Embroidery but please ensure you get an itemised invoice showing a separate price for the logo and present this to Bruce Cadee for reimbursement. Bruce Cadee is happy to take orders and liaise with Image Embroidery if you so