



# WAVE



Number 152

“the ship comes first”

March 2016

The Newsletter of the Barque *Polly Woodside* Volunteers Association Inc.

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Roger Wilson.

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## Chairman's Annual Report for 2015

Another year has passed by for the PWVA, and *Polly Woodside* is now 130 years young. It has been a year of accomplishments, unfortunately with some disappointments, but we, the volunteers, are still a dedicated group striving to bring the ship back to her former glory.

Only 6 Polly volunteers are getting down to the ship on the Tuesdays. Regular members being Don Knowles, Roger Wilson, Campbell McCullough from Bendigo, Paul our latest recruit from National Trust, also Simon with Ash his carer and me. Richard Barber has returned but is still nursing a shoulder after surgery and rehabilitation. Unfortunately we lost John Maxwell, but hope he may return as he is sorely missed. It would be great if our numbers could swell, so we are looking forward to seeing you down at Polly on a Tuesday.

**Maintenance Co-ordinator:** The National Trust did not renew BMT's contract, which concluded at the end of last year, and have appointed Ferdi Darley as our new leader.

Roger Wilson has supplied me with the following information about Ferdi:

- He is a Shipwright of many years' experience having done his apprenticeship in one of the major U.K. Shipbuilding Yards.
- He spent quite some years serving as a seagoing shipwright.
- He supervised the 'Green Army' that refurbished the poop-deck timber-sheathing.
- Lead the team which rebuilt the after/guard accommodation to a most excellent standard.
- He is at present replacing a number of the margin boards.
- Indications are that he is keen to go aloft, which will allow the necessary maintenance/renewal to be properly undertaken.

I feel he will be a big 'plus' insofar as the vessel goes.

**The ship:** At the last AGM you will recall, it was proposed to send a letter to the Nat Trust and BMT re our concerns about current maintenance priorities for Polly, and future developments to enhance and increase public interest for the site. This letter resulted in a meeting attended by the Tuesday volunteers, Martin Green, Drew Grove, our Manager Steve Richardson, and BMT, when we were told that Nat Trust was getting a Government grant of \$20,000 towards the rigging, and a number of other details including the ship was to be dry-docked in 2017.

The 'Green Army', sponsored by a government grant, has completely restored the Poop decking. Old caulking was removed, recaulked and sanded, this taking 1800 hours work. New margin boards are being fitted by Ferdi to replace the ones in poor condition, for which we contributed \$8000. A bolt of canvas was purchased by us enabling Roger Wilson to make a new cover for the forward hatch/entry, and repair the deck-house roof... We also have a new main hatch cover thanks to the National Trust. The treatment of pin-rails and fife-rails with linseed oil as well as other timber units such as the skylight, steering box etc. on the quarter deck has also been undertaken. The majority of belaying pins have been sanded and re-oiled by Simon and Ash. Many thanks to Simon and Ash, his carer, for their work each week.

We give a huge thank you to a Community Volunteer Leave scheme which included several visits from ANZ Bank's personnel, who carried out various tasks. These included painting, timber oiling, assisting in testing the bilge pumps, and one had a lesson in canvas sewing with Roger. On another occasion seven members painted the inside of the site fences. Twelve members from Exxon Mobil commenced the preparation for painting the Polly's stbd. boat which is now on the wharf. Would you believe it, but the following Tuesday a bee swarm started to set up a hive in the boat – one way to get out of work!

The new Spanker Gaff, thanks to Don Knowles, is now looking like a gaff after much shaping to fit the goose-neck (I wonder if he dreams about it), but still has to have the spider band and cap fitted, then to be painted, and then sent aloft, for Polly to receive our birthday present. This has only been possible thanks to Don Knowles organising its manufacturing and George Vodden, organising the transport through Mike McCumisky at the Fire Services Museum of Victoria, also with Steve Richardson for liaising with the National Trust for us.

It is with relief I can inform you that we have two halves of the pontoon on our side of the dock-gate – now to reunite them, so now we can paint the ship's hull.

The initial replacement tools have been purchased by Nat Trust thanks to Steve Richardson, our Manager. These consisted of a cordless drill, batteries and a charger, a power saw and an orbital sander.

You may recall we had submitted a 'Volunteer Recruitment Letter' to Hayley Jenkins – Nat Trust's Manager for People and Culture in June – well, we had seven more attendees on Tuesdays. Scott, Paul and Jerzy were regulars, with Denise, Katrina, Wenjuan and Nerius attending whenever possible. Then came Paul, and unfortunately he is the only one left.

We must have done the right thing this year because this must be the longest ship report I've done.

**The Signal Mast** is looking great, but still has not had a single flag flown from it.

**'The Volunteer Plaques Memorial':** My son Mark is coming to Polly has designed and is constructing the 'Volunteer Plaques Memorial'. The working design places the plaques on a background resembling a ship's deck, which will be surrounded by a capstan shaped frame. About one third of the plaques have been mounted.

On completion, the memorial will be placed in the 'Ship Restoration' display area of the Interpretive Centre, where we will organise a 'Rededication Ceremony' after its installation. Our thanks to Mark for taking it on.

**The Pump House:** In recent months has seen a continuation of usually monthly visits to the Pump House by Engineering Heritage members, Owen and Miles, and of course Derek. They have continued their conservation and maintenance efforts, including lubrication of the engines, plus some painting of the staircases leading down into the pit and the catwalk around the cylinders of the engines.

*The Pump House Tour on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May in Heritage Week:*

Derek Moore ran the Pump House tour, and 30 to 40 people attended with ages ranging from 12 to us seniors. Included in the group were George and Jennifer Duke, members of the dry-dock owner's family. The tour commenced in the Theatrette at Polly with the showing a film of 'Lake Torrens' the last ship being dry-docked prior to its closure. It was really well done commencing with the ship entering, then being centred in the dry-dock, the dock gates closing and the steam pumps commencing operation. As the water level was dropping, the men on the punts are seen scrubbing down the lower hull to remove the marine growth. The measuring sticks then were used to establish the length required of the stays to keep the ship upright while dry-docked, and the stays being placed in position. With the dock pumped dry, the dock gates were caulked to seal them. At the end of the film Derek answered questions, and it was interesting to note that some of the answers came from the attendees. The group then moved to the Pump House where Derek described the layout and operation of the pumps in detail. He then detailed the amount of work he and the members of Engineering Heritage had done, from the clearing and cleaning up of the area, and construction of the railings, as well as rectifying the water leaks from the dock and the river – very impressive.

If it is on again next year try and go – it is well worth it.

Thanks Derek – all improvements in the Pump House are thanks to you.

**The committee:** Finally, I would like to give special thanks to these dedicated people, without whom we couldn't have progressed as far as we have:

Ralph McDonell, Vice Chairman, can't be with us in body, but certainly in spirit and emails.

John Wroe, Treasurer, I fall back on him more and more, and he never hesitates to give his support.

Jenny Hunter, Secretary, Efficient, dedicated and doesn't hesitate to pull us back in line when we meander off course, and I feel she also keeps us motivated.

Roger Wilson, always there with practical advice and negotiation skills. His seaman's knowledge and expertise are invaluable,

Don Knowles – whose expertise in woodworking and ability to organise jobs, is a great asset to the maintenance and restoration of the ship.

Neville Keown, Always willing to help, but a little hampered at the moment.

Also, you the members of the PWVA for your continuing support.

Unfortunately again, I have to finish on a sad note. In 2015, Our numbers have thinned again We lost John Yunken, the first member of the PWVA, Dorothy Minkoff, Marion Sargood, Harold Lovig, Alison Hall, and Peter Allen's wife sadly passed away in December. Please forgive me if there is someone I have missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to their family members.

Thank you.

### ***"The ship comes first"***

#### **Ship Report**

The new spanker gaff has had two coats of sealer applied but the fittings are yet to be applied.

The navigation light boxes have been painted and the supports are being cleaned.

The pin rails are being oiled and the ship's wheel has been remounted.

Two new impact drills and two new sanders have been bought.

Roger is working on a ratlines platform.

**PWVA Member Kate Lance author of *The Turning Tide*, Alan Villiers and Redbill has writted a new book- here are some details:**

#### **New! Atomic Sea**

*Atomic Sea* by C. M. Lance is a contemporary thriller set in north-west Australia. It was published as an ebook in February 2016 by Seabooks Press. Some of its characters appear earlier in *The Turning Tide*.

- **First Chernobyl. Then Fukushima. And now ... Broome?**
- **Burnt-out scientist Lena Whalen is at a Broome conference on a new nuclear-waste reprocessing plant, Worm Turning, fast-tracked after a recent disaster. Everyone loves the award-winning plant: unfortunately they're lying about why.**
- **Floating just off Broome is a blue boat with two corpses and a glowing cargo. The grand gala opening of Worm Turning is just days away. A distant cyclone called Cyril is on the move.**
- **And Lena discovers a committee isn't her worst nightmare after all.**
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