



Number 143

“the ship comes first”

Sept 2013

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

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Meetings between PWVA, National Trust and BMT

The periodic meetings between PWVA, NT & BMT are continuing and the next one is scheduled for Tuesday 24th September. Three of the topics under discussion are replacement of margin boards on the Polly, the recruitment of volunteers and Working at Heights training. A quote has been obtained for the replacement of the margin boards and the PWVA has offered to make a contribution to this work. The number of volunteers is likely to be boosted by the setting up of a Polly Woodside Mens Shed which will be allied to the PWVA. The rules are being finalised and it is anticipated that the Mens Shed Members will have access to the Polly workshop and will carry out work on the ship. A TAFE “Working at Height” training programme is proposed on board the Polly for up to 12 volunteers. PWVA has offered to pay half of the cost.

We now have the green light to go ahead with installing the 50 volunteers’ memorial plaques on a suitable mount in a Volunteers’ Space in the Interpretation Centre and this is underway.

A full audit of maintenance requirements for Polly has been done and a qualified rigger may have to be sought to assess the maintenance required aloft.

The Trust and the PWVA is keen for more volunteers to get involved at the Polly site and we jointly plan to identify those areas where volunteers may make an active contribution. We are all keen to see younger people get involved in this initiative. In particular, Ship Guides who can talk to guests

about the history of Polly and more broadly the Maritime Industry. They would mostly be required at weekends. Fundraising and Volunteer Recruitment Guides are also required.

Ann Gibson's Farewell Party – by Neil Thomas

We arrived at Polly at 5:15 pm on Friday 16/08/13, armed with a large card which Neil got all the volunteers there to sign, as well as Don and Roger's signatures on Ann's Honorary Life Membership certificate.

The piper escorted Ann and a group of guests up from Spencer Street to the ship - that was awesome. I would estimate there were approximately 60 people there - Hank, Ann's children, and grandchildren, Nat Trust, including Felicity who is taking over Ann's job. Simon Molesworth was there, plus 22 from PWVA (see list below). Drinks outside on deck (beer, wine, and soft), cool and chilly when the wind blew. Meal provided was excellent - 3 meats, spuds, rice, and salads.

All back inside Interpretive Centre for speeches, Neil being up first - thanked Ann for her dedication and service to Polly, and told a potted history of her time at Polly until she was shanghaied to Tasma Terrace.

In appreciation for all she has done at Polly, Neil presented her with her 'Honorary Life Member' certificate (she was really appreciative), the card, \$50 Dymocks book voucher and a set of coasters on a nautical rack. Speeches and presentations followed first from Nat Trust woman expounding the joys of volunteering with the Nat Trust, followed by Martin Purslow giving the retirement speech.

Toasts (champagne) with cake and socialising with the evening winding up about 9:30 pm.

Lots of photos, and with a bit of luck, see if we can get copies of photos taken by photographer from Nat Trust.

Apologies given for John Wroe and Ralph (both having mobility problems).

Food and grog really laid on.

Neil Thomas

PWVA attendees:-Miles Allen, Trish Hart, Liz Alger, Betty Cromb, Margaret Connor, Eve Park, John Maxwell, John Mercer, Don and Pat Knowles, Neville Keown, Roger Wilson and Fran Sciarretta, Derek Moore, Tim Page -Walker, Emily Waterman, Lindsay Rex, Cathy and Lachlan Campbell, Margaret Goddard, Anne and Neil Thomas.

The Signal Mast is up at Last

With the Signal Mast having been reassembled, painted and dismantled on our wharf area, and the installation area also ready to go – the date was finally decided for the re-erection of the Signal Mast. Tuesday 27th August 2013.

Trevor Dove, our Maintenance Co-Ordinator. brought four of his staff from BTM to help with the heavy lifting, including Andrew who is building our computer based maintenance planning program.

The lower section of the mast was carried out, and connected to the base plate. Then the topmast was connected to the lower mast, but didn't look right. Oops! Wrong way round – fixed. The yard was then assembled onto the mast, and finally the gaff was fitted. Halyards were attached to the mast head, yard and gaff, then attached to the pin rail.

Lunch, and we awaited the crane's arrival. The crane arrived about 1pm, and John the crane driver was highly delighted that we were ready to go. A sling was placed around the junction of the masts and the Signal Mast pivoted up to the vertical position, where it was locked into position. Trevor making a herculean effort, managed to finally free the sling from the Signal Mast. Ahh! we thought - connect the stays to the turnbuckles and we are done, but then we looked up and there were 2 stays not going the right way. But with some ingenious effort this was rectified. The stays were seized onto the turnbuckles on the two following Tuesdays.

Many thanks to Trevor and our four volunteers from BTM for helping with the heavy stuff, Also Sean DeCourcy , our Manager, and especially our Volunteers John, Peter and Richard for their efforts in showing how easy it was to achieve.

The History of our Signal Mast

The 15.85 metre (52 feet) signal mast was the idea of Arthur Woodley (Shipwright, Crib Point) who was a long term and Honorary Life member of the PWVA. Among other services he has made many of the wooden fittings on the Polly Woodside (e.g. deadeyes, fife rails, deckhouse skylights), and has created the 19th century shipwrights workshop and tool display that were in the Museum.

The mast was constructed as a voluntary project by Arthur from spars he acquired from boats around Westernport. Many of the mast fittings were donated free of charge, as was transport from Crib Point to Melbourne, but some fittings had to be bought. The rigging was made up by Tor Lindqvist, our late Foreman Rigger.

Due to Arthur Woodley's initiative, personal skills and effort we have acquired a mast worth many thousands of dollars at a cost to the project of only a few hundred..

Maritime Library & ships photo collection

The maritime library (including the photo collection) is now established at Seaworks in Williamstown where it will be housed in a new library for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, many of the books in storage have been water-damaged. There was an official opening on the 11th September at Seaworks.

Barrie Wood

Sadly, Ship Volunteer and PWVA Member Barrie Wood passed away on Sunday 8th September after a battle with cancer. Barrie was a regular attendee at the Tuesday working sessions at the Polly and brought some lively conversations to the lunch table. We extend our deepest condolences to Barrie's family and friends.

2013 PWVA SUBS ARE DUE

Only about 50% of Members have paid their subs this year, please forward your 2013 subscription of \$20 to John Wroe, 38 Addison Street, Elwood, 3184. Phone 9531 5626, 0407 530 940. Cheques should be made payable to PWVA.



A couple of pictures from the many taken at Ann's Farewell Party



And a couple of pictures from the Signal Mast raising.