AAMH

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FOR MARITIME HISTORY

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ROSS SHARDLOW MARINE ART

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AAMH
The Australian
Association for
Maritime History

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The Annual General Meeting of the Association was held in December with the following people elected or appointed into key positions:

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Cover image The brig *Emily Taylor* signals farewell, oil on linen, 60cm x 90cm, 2015. (Augusta Historical Museum Collection)

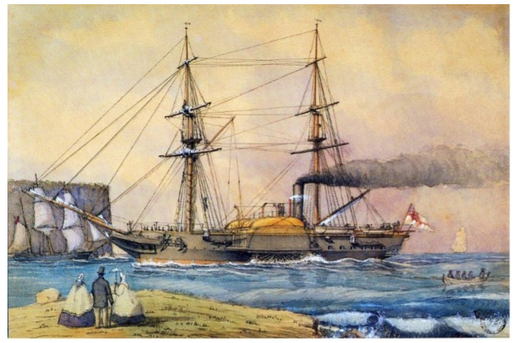
FREMANTLE'S FIRST STEAMER

By Heather Campbell

HMS *Driver*, a wooden paddle sloop, was launched in 1840 and was the first steam vessel to circumnavigate the world, the voyage commencing from Portsmouth in 1842 and taking five years.

Driver was the first steamer to arrive in Fremantle – an occasion that caused quite a commotion - as reported in the *Enquirer*, 10 December 1845, p.2.

> Since our last, our port has been visited by HM steam-sloop *Driver*, Captain Courtenay O Hayes, which put in principally to obtain a supply of coals, and to effect some repairs to her boilers. The *Driver* is from the Chinese station, and is now under orders for New Zealand, whither she has been sent to assist in quelling the late outbreak at the Bay of Islands. Her arrival forms quite an event in our little annals. She is the first steamer that has ever been seen here, and has thus become a matter of great curiosity, especially among the juveniles, to whom a steamer of any sort is a perfectly novel sight. She has been visited by several parties of curious colonists, all of whom have been most kindly received on board, and instructed in the mysteries of steam machinery.
>
> Her first appearance off Fremantle caused no small consternation to the worthy people of that town; the man on the look-out having given the alarm that there was a ship on fire in the roads! For the moment, the supposition was general that the *Unicorn* had by some accident taken fire, and everybody was rushing down to the beach in order to lend their assistance. A very few minutes sufficed, however, to explain the real nature of the case, and the alarm having subsided, every kind of curious conjecture was afloat as to the cause of so large a steamer coming here, and the nature of her errand. Some predicted a war with France, others with the United States, and the most moderate fully anticipated that she had been despatched from India with our new Governor. We need hardly now say that none of these things are true, the *Driver* having put in merely for the purposes we have mentioned above; and now that one has found her way, we hope that we shall see many visitants of the same sort, for although coals are not as yet obtainable here, steamers can be abundantly, and cheaply, supplied with wood, of an excellent quality for fuel. We believe that the *Driver* takes 150 cords of wood, at 15s., delivered on board.
>
> We are indebted to the kindness of some of the officers on board for a few English papers, which bring our home news down to the 8th of September. The principal topics are Her Majesty's visit to Germany, and the threatened rupture between Mexico and the United States, which, together with other points of general interest, will be found treated of in the extracts we have given in another part of our paper.
>
> The stay of the *Driver* is at present uncertain, depending in a great measure upon the celerity with which her supplies of fuel are obtained. It is not, however, expected that she will be delayed longer than Thursday or Friday.



Jan 1846: steam paddle sloop HMS *Driver* enters Port Jackson on an historic voyage. (Artist unknown Mitchell Library)

A wonder *Driver* may have been, but on board conditions may have been less than ideal – while in Fremantle the following deserters were reported:

> James Bell, Carpenter's Crew, age 24, born Liverpool, Lancashire; 5ft. 6in., hair, dark brown; eyes, hazel; complexion, dark. William McDonald, A.B. ; age 25 ; born at Devonport, Devon; 5ft. 3½in.; hair, dark brown; eyes, hazel; complexion, fresh.
>
> A reward of three pounds will be given for the apprehension of each of the above named men. C. O. Hayes, Commander. [HMS *Driver* (rootsweb.com) accessed 30/5/2023]

After a varied and extensive naval career *Driver* was wrecked on Mariguana Island in the Bahamas in 1861.

Ross Shardlow AM FASMA

Marine Artist

Ross was born in the Perth suburb of Bentley in Western Australia in 1950 and spent his childhood years on the Canning River. The family also had a weekender beach shack at Point Peron, near Rockingham, 50 kilometres south of Perth, and that's where Ross became immersed in the sea and maritime history.

Leeuwin Beating out of King George Sound, oil on panel, 24cm x 76cm, 1998. (Private collection NSW)

Ross recalled that the old Rockingham timber port was steeped in maritime and colonial history and as a kid it was all mine, and I just soaked it up. Art was about the only thing I was any good at in school so it was hardly surprising that I was soon drawing sailing ships, with some accuracy, even in primary school. It was through my art that I was given an opportunity to leave school at the age of sixteen to start a cadetship as a book illustrator with the Publications Branch of the WA Education Department. After attaining my qualifications as a Press Artist, I continued my studies at the Claremont School of Art and at Perth Technical College, but my real training came from the art-room-floor at Publications Branch.

After 13 years as a book illustrator, I left my government job on April Fool's Day 1980 to become a full-time freelance marine artist – it hasn't been all plain sailing but that's what I have been doing ever since.

How do you select the subjects of your works / what is the attraction of maritime themes?

Why marine art – I really do not know. There are no mariners in our family though my father, a barber by trade, was also a keen deep-sea fisherman. That's what the shack was for down at Pt Peron. Whatever I learnt about the sea and boats came from him. I am, however, hoping to adopt Chief Officer Fred J. Shardlow of the *Parramatta* as one of our own.

Working as a book illustrator meant I had to be able to draw everything and anything – and in good time. As most of the work was black & white line illustration with limited colour in gouache, I longed for the freedom and romance of going outdoors to paint in oils and watercolour. While still working at Publications Branch, I started exhibiting my work, mostly landscape, in my father's barber shop in Perth. I graduated from that to exhibiting in art shows and then galleries. The first gallery I exhibited at was in 1973, back in my old boating ground at Rockingham. My subject matter for that exhibition was based on the history of Rockingham – half colonial, half maritime.

A lot of my earlier works were landscapes, old buildings and mine sites. If something caught my eye it meant it was worth painting. The inspiration for maritime subjects came largely from my mind's eye, my imagination, most of which came from reading books. The maritime work requires a lot of RESEARCH – researching the historical setting, researching the right ship, researching the structure of the ship, researching the right weather, wind and waves and understanding the life on board and those who commanded the ship. I have thousands of books – did I tell you Barbara is a librarian? Marrying a librarian was one of the best decisions I ever made. My books are my teachers, my inspiration and my comfort.

Personal experience is another source of inspiration, either listening to other people's experiences or having experiences of my own – like standing a watch on the barquentine Leeuwin in a Force 8 gale, always a good source of inspiration.

Before long seascapes took over from landscapes, and commissioned work took over from exhibition work. Commissioned work is a two-edged sword and often takes me somewhere I haven't been that usually requires an inordinate amount of research. Many of my commissioned works come from people who have a family connection with a ship, as a passenger or crew, but I baulk at painting leisure craft. With the exception of Jon Sanders and his *Perie Banou*, I don't paint Tupperware yachts or stink boats.

The brig *Emily Taylor* signals farewell, oil on linen, 60cm x 90cm, 2015. (Augusta Historical Museum Collection)

Who are your biggest influences? (Are there other artists/family/others you look to for inspiration and guidance? Is there a particular artist that inspired you to pursue art and why?)

Family and Friends:

My Mum and Dad for giving me the halcyon days of Pt Peron.

My Art Master Norm Madigan, at Applecross Senior High School, an artist in his own right and a true Art Master in the old tradition, who recommended me for the appointment of cadet artist with the Education Department's Publication Branch.

My friend, author and neighbour Vic Fall, who sailed before the mast on the ship Monkbarns and plied me with books of the sea. Vic also wrote *The Sea and the Forest: a History of the Port of Rockingham*, the book I took inspiration from for my first exhibition at the Colonial Art Centre in Rockingham.

My art agent Poppy Meyers, director of the Colonial Art Centre in Rockingham, advisor, mentor and friend since 1973. At 101 years of age Poppy is still my art agent, mentor and friend.

My dear wife and partner in time, Barbara, who I fell for (also in 1973) when she came to my muzzle loading gun club and with my Colt 1851 Navy Revolver fired a bulls-eye with her first shot. We were married soon after. Barbara plays a huge role in my work. Though Poppy Meyers still acts as my art agent, Barbara took over the more difficult job of managing me.

To what extent are your works historically accurate? Do they need to be?

Marine Art takes many forms and genres but they do not all have to be historically accurate to be marine art. Traditional Marine Art (Sea and Ships), does require historical and technical accuracy to set it in its time and place, even if done in an impressionistic style. Traditional Marine Art (Sea Painting), still requires accuracy but not historical accuracy, so long as the sea and sky look right. I am a Traditional Marine Artist – with an enthusiasm for traditional rig. Since primary school days I have studied the structure, form and function of sailing ships so that my artwork might be relied on to create a plausible image. If anyone questions me on my accuracy I tell them, 'I was there', and show them the miniature portrait of myself and the ship's cat hidden in the detail of the painting to prove it.

It is not only the historical accuracy to consider, the structural and technical accuracy should be convincing as well, along with the life of wind and water, light and reflection, wear and tear – and flags that fly in the right direction. There is a certain responsibility to 'get it right' in my line of work, and once I get the technical and historical stuff in place I then have the fun of trying to make it a painting as well.

Narcissus - Foaming to the Southward, oil on panel, 42cm x 81cm, 1998. (Private collection WA)

HMS *Beagle* off Breaksea Island, oil on canvas, 60cm x 90 cm, 2001. (Private collection WA)

Is there a painting or body of work that has given you the most satisfaction?

I was pleased with my painting of '*Narcissus* Foaming to the Southward' (inspired by the writing of Joseph Conrad) because I finally got the colour of the sea right. I also like the *Beagle* painting for the research that went into it. Another painting that I am happy with is '*Leeuwin* Beating out of King George Sound', not just because of the painting itself, but for what the painting meant to me emotionally. After completing this painting in 1998 I was determined to move to Albany.

As for a body of work I would have to draw on the *Leeuwin* again, only in this case the actual body of work is the vessel itself. What started off as an artist's impression for a proposed sail training ship, ended up as 180 construction drawings for the sail-plan, masting and rigging of a barquentine.

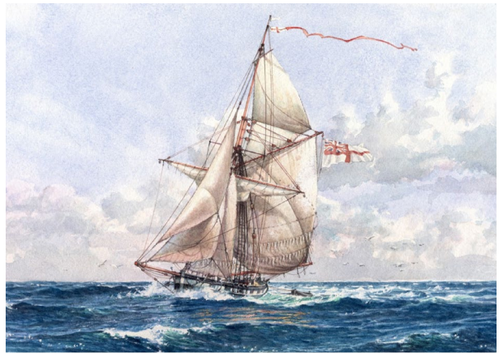
To what extent has living and working in Albany this influenced your work?

Albany is a colonial 'first settlement' town with a rich maritime heritage, rugged landmark coastlines, and a vibrant art community. Albany has no traffic lights and no parking meters, and you can still hear the chooks and church-bells. My first attempt to get to Albany in 1968 resulted in me being run out of town by the police. Since then I have been going back to Albany and the South Coast pretty well every year. Most of my paintings are set on the South Coast.

After completing a course in Estonian Lace Knitting at the Albany Summer School in 2016, my dear wife Barbara was standing on the slopes of Mt Adelaide gazing out over the waters of King George Sound and asked, "tell me again why we aren't we living here?" As our 40th Wedding Anniversary was only a couple of weeks away, Barbara suggested we celebrate our occasion in Albany. Walking hand-in-hand through the streets we spotted a house for sale that had sweeping views over Princess Royal Harbour. The house was advertised as 'The Harbour Master's House c. 1910' – so we bought it.

As to what influence living in Albany has had on my work – it has pretty well stopped it! From my studio window I can see the replica of the brig *Amity* commemorating the founding of this colony when the *Amity* arrived Christmas Day 1826. I can also see the topmasts of George Vancouver's HMS *Discovery* when he examined Princess Royal Harbour in 1791 and named King George the Third's Sound, I can see where Matthew Flinders anchored HMS *Investigator* in 1801, I can see where Louis de Freycinet careened the schooner *Casuarina* in 1803, and where HMS *Beagle* anchored with Charles Darwin on board in 1836; and I can see the weather, the tides and the wind, and the clouds heaping up over the Southern Ocean. It is little wonder I don't get any work done – there is too much going on out there.

The snow brig *Friendship*, 25 December 1787, SSW of Cape Leeuwin, watercolour, 24cm x 37cm, 2012. (Barbara's collection) Assistant Surgeon Thomas Arndell of the First Fleet brig *Friendship*, is Barbara's ancestor.



HM Colonial Cutter *Mermaid*, watercolour, 21cm x 37cm, 2002. (Private collection WA)

Ross and Barbara in their picnic dinghy *Katuprian* at the Jazz & Wooden Boat Festival, Claisebrook Cove, Perth (David Nicolson).

What other interests do you have?

Through 1985-1986 I was engaged as ship's artist, assistant draughtsman, and member of the Leeuwin Rigging Team to build the sail training barquentine *Leeuwin II*. Through 1988-1993 I was engaged as ship's artist, assistant draughtsman and researcher for the *Endeavour* Replica Project. Barbara and I went overseas to do a 'Cook's Tour' through the Museums and Art Galleries of the United Kingdom collecting research material for the *Endeavour* before flying over to Mystic Seaport in Connecticut, USA, where we were put up as Artist in Residence to paint the four principal museum vessels on display at the Seaport. Back at Fremantle, plans were already underway for the next replica project, HM Colonial Cutter *Mermaid*.

Working with legends like Len Randell, Bill Leonard and David White and working with the genius of traditional shipwrights, boat builders, riggers, sailmakers, spar makers and blacksmiths – the time had come to form a Maritime Heritage Association to preserve and promote the traditional maritime trades, skills and places. Late in 1989, with Graeme Henderson and Sally May from the WA Maritime Museum, we formed the MHA, which was officially launched on the barquentine *Leeuwin* on 30 March 1990. Over the years Barbara and I have held various posts as President, Vice President and Secretary. In 2013 we were made Honorary Life Members and I am still active as the Albany Outport Representative and regularly write articles for the MHA Journal on Marine Art and Maritime Heritage – particularly of the Albany and South Coast Region.

We never did get to build the *Mermaid*, other events took over, like saving Victoria Quay from imminent destruction. The *Duyfken* Replica Project took over from the *Mermaid*, we had festivals to organise, a boat building school to run, wharf sheds to repurpose, a new Maritime Museum to support, and I wanted to get back to the drawing board.

In 1998 I joined the newly formed Australian Society of Marine Artists and entered my first painting in ASMA's National Marine Art Exhibition in Sydney. The painting I entered was (you guessed it), '*Leeuwin* Beating out of King George Sound'. The painting won the inaugural President's Medal (1998), I was made WA State Vice President of ASMA in 2001 (a post I held 20 years) and in 2003 I had the privilege of being elevated to Fellow of the ASMA.

Conclusion

In 2020 Ross was awarded the Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for 'significant service to the visual arts as a painter, and to maritime history' – an honour Ross very quickly and publicly dedicated to his wife Barbara 'who put up with so much and went without for so long.'

THE OFFSHORE SPECIALIST SHIPS ASSOCIATION

Origins of the OSSA

The AAMH recently interviewed Ross Brewer, chairman and director of the Offshore Specialist Ships Association. Ross was asked about the origins of the Association and responded that with the demise of the offshore Oil & Gas Industry around 2015 many of the ship owners were forced into laying their ships up due to lack of business. This hit Australia hard and consequently these owners withdrew from Australia.

Offshore support vessel at work. (OSSA)

A small group of ex-industry people decided to try and rescue some of the memorabilia before it was either sent overseas or destroyed. This proved to be more successful than originally thought and soon the dining room table where the "collection" was stored became overloaded. Ross's wife was very clear that the growing collection was to be stored elsewhere! In a search for a suitable premise to base themselves, the Melbourne Mission to Seafarers came to their rescue just as they have for so many seafarers over the years. This was to be - and still is- the OSSA headquarters. The collection continued to grow as did their ambitions. Ross said that "we widened the scope to include all Australian specialist ships as we believed they were undervalued in the public's eye and we believed they and their crews should gain greater recognition. We had to form a company and so Offshore and Specialist Ships Ltd was registered in 2017. We successfully applied for registration as a Charitable Organisation and were granted a Deductible Gift Recipient status with the Australian Tax Office."

What are "Offshore Specialist Ships"?

It is almost easier to describe what they are not. They are not container ships, they are not cruise liners, they are not oil and gas tankers (but does include FPSOs) and they are not ships of war (although the RAN operates many specialist ships just to confuse things). They are the work horses of the maritime industry, such as offshore oil and gas anchor handlers and platform supply vessels, science vessels such as service our Antarctic bases. We also include, harbour towage vessels, ferries and small passenger ships, survey vessels (the RAN hydrographic ships would naturally fit in), specialised cargo vessels operating around the Australian coast.

THE OFFSHORE SPECIALIST SHIPS ASSOCIATION

What are the objectives of the Association?

The OSSA's Vision is "Promoting recognition and significance of Australia's Offshore and Specialist Ships." We do this through:

- Collection, preservation and publicly display of memorabilia associated with the specialist ships and seafarers of Australia.
- Promoting the career opportunities within the maritime industry with schools throughout Australia.
- Raising awareness with governments regarding Australia's Maritime Resilience and the need to incentivise the growth of Australian flag shipping and seagoing training.

What were the early successes of the Association?

The best and nicest part was the interest shown by so many people and the support received. Our collection continued to grow and we had our first public exhibition at the Docklands public Library in 2019 which was a great success. Since then we have continued to exhibit either by ourselves and in collaboration with others. In the past 12 months we have exhibited in Melbourne, Hobart, Queenscliffe, Brisbane, Fremantle. We learnt how to apply for grants and secure funding which is always really hard.

We were delighted to receive a grant from the Maritime Museum of Australia to renovate the tank test model for the *Aurora Australis*. This was a huge undertaking and took over 12 months to complete not made easier by Covid. Thankfully we had what I would describe as a wooden boatbuilding artisan, Blunts Boatyards in Williamstown. This finished model is now on permanent display at Seaworks Maritime Museum in Williamstown. We have formed an excellent relationship with Seaworks and now have two permanent displays with them. One features the Antarctic ships which have served the Australian research programs (which we believe is the best in Australia) and the other is on offshore oil and gas. Together with Seaworks we will continue to build on these. Another early success was the development of our website (ossa.org.au) and social media platforms. Living on a shoestring so to speak these are not cheap so we are very lucky to have some members who have helped tremendously on these projects.

What activities is the Association currently involved in?

We are very involved with several maritime heritage projects. We are just now working with Seaworks and have been fortunate to have gifted from AMSA the original propeller from the Lady Loch (built 1886) which was the first light house tender for the Commonwealth of Australia. This will go on permanent public display.

We are also working on a commemorative plaque recognising the early Antarctic ships that sailed from Melbourne to support the Australian Antarctic Research. The "Dan" vessels owned by the J Lauritzen Shipping Line of Denmark (and in particular *Nella Dan*) are icons in the Australian Antarctic history. We are currently applying for a grant to help us with funds for this project. We continue to be active with our schools program where we (our members) visit schools (at their invitation) to talk with students on the many and varied careers opportunities available in the maritime industry. We also continue to talk with government and others about the lack of maritime resilience in Australia and the need to have our merchant fleet expanded.

How Ross got involved in the Association

Ross went to sea as a cadet with the Eastern & Australian SS Coy. He resigned after two years to go ashore and was offered a job with P&O in Melbourne. Ross then went to London to study shipping and became a shipbroker with Anderson Green & Co which was part of the P&O Group. Ross then went to New York with the P&O Bulk division before returning to Australia to develop the ship broking business in Australia. He was then made managing director of the newly formed P&O Maritime Services which brought together all the non liner shipping businesses of P&O in Australia. This encompassed the offshore, Antarctic, harbour towage and specialist bulk ships in addition to the ship broking and agency businesses. By the time Ross retired, the business was operating over 50 ships from the Melbourne office. Ross then joined the board of AMSA, retiring after 9 years as Deputy Chairman. After a short while, Ross with two others set about managing the collection of memorabilia associated with the specialist ships that they had been involved. The team wanted to capture and retain the history and to promote the industry and opportunities for careers. This was formalised with the registration of OSSA in 2017, an achievement the team are justly proud.

Who can join the Association?

Anyone can join OSSA with memberships starting from $50.00 annually. The Association has around 270 members from all over Australia and overseas. The majority of members have either been involved or are enthusiastic about ships and the industry. They bring with them their own history and help OSSA broaden their activities.

How can members contribute to the Association?

Ross said member contribution is actively encouraged and when joining we ask for ideas on how a member can contribute. We need people with passion that wish to belong and be involved with an association to promote the industry. We are particularly interested in the various skills to support our base such as IT skills particularly with experience in website and social media. We need members to help with our schools' programs by going to schools to speak to students. We need help with arranging events and exhibitions. Most of all we need members to join in the fun and excitement of being with others who want to share the past and be involved with the future.

What do members get out of the Association?

Members can immediately be involved with fortnightly meetings either by attendance at the Mission to Seafarers in Melbourne or by Zoom and can get the minutes of each meeting. They can join in on Zoom for the very popular member chats each Friday night with the OSSA Bar-on-Line. This links members through Australia and overseas where they can catch up with friends, talk about anything they like. It is a lot of fun. The Association has an annual "Anchor Clankers" get together which has been going now for over 30 years and brings shipmates together for a wonderful catch up. This will rotate between Melbourne and Perth/Fremantle (the next one is in Melbourne on the 26th November). Ross said the Association also runs an event the day after for members and partners.

How to find out more about the Association

Ross recommends that those interested in finding out more go to the Association's website (ossa.org.au). The association can also be contacted by email (admin@ossa.org.au).

Model of an Offshore Vessel. (OSSA)

Australia II

40 years on, an inspiration in the sea and surf

Australia II, top, and *Liberty* at the 1983 America's Cup, Rhode Island, Newport, USA. (Roger Garwood, WA Museum)

Australia II winged keel on display at the WA Maritime Museum, 2023. (Ross Anderson, WA Museum)

Forty years ago on 26 September 1983, at Newport, Rhode Island USA, the twelve metre racing yacht *Australia II* won the prestigious America's Cup—the oldest sporting trophy in the world, held by the Americans for 132 years.

The 1983 America's Cup challenge was financed by a syndicate of Western Australians who, commencing in 1974, had unsuccessfully challenged for the Cup on three previous occasions. The team was headed by businessman Alan Bond, project managed by John Longley and captained by John Bertrand. The Australians embraced innovation from the outset as *Southern Cross* used in the 1974 challenge was the first aluminium 12 metre yacht ever built—all previous 12 metre America's Cup yachts had been constructed of wood. The 1983 challenge innovations included a new yacht designed by Ben Lexcen featuring a revolutionary hull with shortened waterline length and a winged keel, Kevlar running rigging, a carbon-fibre boom and vertical sail designs.

The Australian challengers got off to a slow start in their seven-race match with the US team in their yacht *Liberty*, with the Americans leading 3-1. However the *Australia II* team staged an incredible comeback to win 3-4. The sensational comeback and victory made global headlines and the crew, and yacht, were celebrated with jubilant scenes in Australia.

Fast forward to 1987 when Fremantle hosted the America's Cup defence, with substantial investment resulting in a new marina and makeover for the then somewhat down-at-heel, sunbaked port city. The Australian defence was unsuccessful though, and the Americans returned home with the Cup. In 1988 the Australian Government purchased *Australia II* and its associated fittings for $2 million, and it was displayed in the Australian National Maritime Museum between 1991 and 2000. In 1995, the Government offered the yacht and its collection to the people of Western Australia, given its strong connections to the state. Opened in 2002, the WA Maritime Museum was purpose-built to permanently exhibit the iconic vessel. *Australia II* is displayed in a significant moment of stasis in its soaring glass and metal gallery facing out to the Indian Ocean, re-enacting the moment of it having just passed *Liberty* and approaching the last marker buoy on the downwind leg, heading for the finish line.

Following the 1983 victory *Australia II*, its winged keel, and Ben Lexcen became household names, leading to further spin-offs in a heady celebration of hydrodynamic glory. While the dubious 'Skatewing' skateboard at least appeared revolutionary in form, the Toyota Lexcen—a rebadged Holden Commodore manufactured between 1989-97—hardly represented the pinnacle of original design. More significantly, the late 1970s and early 1980s saw an innovative period of surfboard and fin-based experimentation within Australia's elite professional surfing sphere, as the desire for ever more radical competition-winning moves demanded a combination of drive, looseness and stability to achieve fast, vertical direction changes. After decades of competition on single fin surfboards, a twin fin design proven by Newcastle professional surfer/ shaper Mark Richards (winning four world titles between 1979 and 1982), was quickly followed up with a triple fin 'thruster' design by Narrabeen surfer/ shaper Simon Anderson, who sensationally won in massive waves at the 1981 Rip Curl Pro at Bells Beach, and Pipeline Offshore Masters competition in Hawai'i.

After the 1983 *Australia II* victory, Bondi Beach professional surfer Cheyne Horan contacted Ben Lexcen, and after many conversations and hydrodynamic tank-testing sessions, developed the 'Starfin'. Horan and Lexcen moved away from the trend towards multiple fins to revert to a single fin concept, using a Spitfire wing-shaped foil with winglets protruding from the tip of the fin. Horan had immediate success after combining the Starfin with shaper Geoff McCoy's equally radical 'Lazor Zap' teardrop-shaped surfboard, beating Tom Carroll to win the 1984 Rip Curl Pro at Bells Beach. Though more outlier than mainstream, the Starfin is a viable piece of performance surfing equipment that remains on the market, and is a lesser-known example of Lexcen's technical creativity contributing to elite-level sporting competition success.

As well as its permanent *Australia II* Gallery exhibit, the WA Maritime Museum has a temporary exhibition commemorating the 40th anniversary of *Australia II*'s America's Cup victory, on display between 9 September 2023 and 4 February 2024. The Australian National Maritime Museum also has *Australia II* items on permanent display in its Wharf 7 foyer, so for a bit of a time travel experience back to the 80s be sure to visit your nearest venue!

Professional surfer Cheyne Horan with Lazor Zap surfboard and Starfin, around 1984. (Swellnet)

New Resource for Maritime Historians

Scandinavian ships did a brisk trade with Australia in 19th and 20th centuries. Therefore, the acceptance of Gustaf Erikson's archive into UNESCO's Memory of the World register is most welcome.

The port of Åland's capital Mariehamn is dominated by the large, four-masted sailing vessel *Pommern*. It is almost a hundred metres long and its main mast reaches a height of up to 50 metres. It reminds Ålanders when Åland was the home port of the world's last commercial sailing fleet from 1913 to 1949 and Gustaf Erikson had sovereign control over the cargo traffic of these ships on the world's seas.

Erikson's ships sailed the world's seas, but the business was managed from Erikson's office in Mariehamn. Interest in the ships was boosted by success in The Great Grain Race. Ships carrying wheat from Australia to England competed to see which vessel delivered its cargo in the shortest time from the port of departure to the port of destination. Gustaf Erikson's vessels won the unofficial competition more times than those of any other shipping company. Gustaf Erikson was named King of Windjammers in the British press.

Large sailing ships created jobs and increased prosperity in Åland. In almost every family, a family member or close relative had sailed on Erikson's ships.

Gustaf Erikson carefully archived all information about the vessels, such as financial materials related to their acquisition and equipping, logbooks and incredibly extensive correspondence with customers, captains, insurance companies, shipyards and many other operators. The preservation of materials from the Åland sailing ship era is the responsibility of the Åland Maritime Museum and the Provincial Archives under the Provincial Government of Åland. Their collections are extensive, coherent in terms of content and internationally unique. The Maritime Museum's collections of objects complement this ensemble in an impressive way. These materials are a superior source of information for international researchers. In addition to the history of merchant shipping, they are also an important source for climate researchers, as carefully kept logbooks contain weather data from the Southern Oceans, an area where few other ships operated between the World Wars.

After a two-year evaluation process, UNESCO's Executive Board and Director-General confirmed that Gustaf Erikson's archive shall be one of the new items to be included in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register.

Source: https://kansallisarkisto.fi/en/-/gustaf-erikson-s-archive-was-accepted-into-unesco-s-memory-of-the-world-register

Can you help?

A reader is seeking a copy of "NSW Marine Board Master (Coast Trade ship, within Jurisdiction), certificate 521 of 4 October 1882 and/or Pilotage Exemption certificate 1035 of 4 October 1882."

The reader has already tried the NSW Archives. The certificate belonged to Michael McCannes (M'Cannes) who primarily captained coastal schooners and ketches between Sydney and northern NSW. Michael was French Canadian and ran away to sea at about the age of 14. He gained a Master Mariner certificate (Coast trade ship, within jurisdiction) and a pilotage exemption in October 1882 from the NSW Marine Board.

Michael was Master of the schooner *Tottie* when it ran aground at Camden Haven on 23 November 1896 (it was carrying a load of timber for Sydney) - the London Board of Trade inquiry determined that he was not to blame for the wreck.

Contact the Newsletter Editor Peter Ridgway at info@aamh.asn.au if you can help.

Pommern (National Archives of Finland)

Indian Ocean Studies Conference

The AAMH is once again sponsoring the Sheridan Institute of Higher Education's biennial Indian Ocean Studies Conference. This is the third conference in the series and this year it has the theme of 'Pathways and Passages: Faith and Migration in the Indian Ocean Region' . The conference is to be held in Perth, Western Australia at the WA Maritime Museum on November 17-18, 2023.

The Indian Ocean Region is the birthplace of three of the world's major religions – Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism – and the avenue for propelling the two other major religions born nearby – Judaism and Christianity – to the East. Many other lesser known religions such as Zoroastrianism and Jainism also originated in and spread throughout this region, carried across its waters in trading ships or across its land formations in trading caravans. These religions were propagated by both traders and scholars, missionaries and migrants. The conference will be focusing on the movements of people across the Indian Ocean Region – broadly defined as 'migration' – and how this has and continues to impact the spread, reception, and adaptation of faith in various contexts throughout the region. The conference will explore how faith may also impact the movements of people, including the destinations they move towards, the livelihoods they engage in, and the social connections they retain, reshape, and develop.

For further information and registration: https://sheridanicon.weebly.com

Indian Ocean Studies Conference 2023 'Pathways and Passages: Faith and Migration in the Indian Ocean Region'. (sheridanicon.weebly.com)

AAMH Lunch

WA members met up with Sally May (now a resident of sunny Brisbane) at a popular riverside restaurant in East Fremantle just after the annual Maritime Union Australia (MUA) – May Day March in Fremantle on 30 April. It was a highly colourful affair with many banners and flags flying in perfect sunny weather.

The MUA came about as an amalgamation of the Seamen's Union of Australia and the Waterside Workers' Federation in 1993. The union has a long history in Australia with the formation of the first maritime union in the world - the Seamen's Union of Australia in 1872.

The Union's web page notes that the Sydney Wharf Labourers Union was established in 1872, eventually leading to formation of the Waterside Workers Federation in 1902. In 1906, several unions came together to form the Seamen's Union of Australia. During this period, the world witnessed great maritime strikes, especially in England and Australia, which would set the stage for internationalism and class struggle.

The Seaman's Union of Australia and Waterside Workers Federation merged to create the Maritime Union of Australia in 1993. The lead-up to the merger saw the Marine Cooks Bakers and Butchers Association (formed in 1908) amalgamated with the SUA in 1983, and the Federated Marine Stewards and Pantrymen's Association merged in 1988. In 1991 the Professional Divers Association also amalgamated with the SUA.

May Day March, Fremantle (Heather Campbell)

AAMH lunch spot (Peter Ridgway)

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Find out more at: aamh.asn.au/membership/membership-options

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