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Quarterly Newsletter

⚓ **The Australian Association for
Maritime History**
Publisher of *The Great Circle*

Special edition - "Insects and the mariner"

AAMH praised for contribution to de Vlamingh tercentenary

To the Australian Association for Maritime History

On behalf of the de Vlamingh Tricentennial Committee, I would like to thank you for your generous support of and participation in the celebrations of the 300th anniversary of the epic voyage of exploration by Willem de Vlamingh to our State.

The celebrations were a great success providing a tremendous opportunity for all Western Australians to come together in celebration and acknowledgment of our rich and important maritime heritage and unique history. The scope of the activities was far reaching, ensuring rewarding involvement and contributions from many sectors of the community. Events included the International Colloquium; the Aboriginal Map Project; the WA Maritime Museum Exhibition; various tours and dives to shipwreck sites; the Rottneest Island, Swan River and Dirk Hartog Island Commemorations; the Dutch Community Festival and unveiling of a de Vlamingh Statue; the laying of the Duyfken keel; and the redesign of the de Vlamingh Memorial and Park. A special commemorative stamp and a silver bullion coin was also released in honour of the occasion. All events reflected the significance of the tercentenary and enjoyed wide community support and interest.

The committee was particularly honoured and pleased with the success of the visit to Western Australia by His Royal Highness the Prince of Orange, whose visit brought much excitement and further fostered the high level of relations enjoyed between the people of the Netherlands and those of Australia. We were equally delighted with the enthusiasm and willingness of the Netherlands Community of Western Australia to support the visit by the Prince of Orange and to come together with all Western Australians to acknowledge and celebrate the spirit and events of exploration which brought Willem de Vlamingh to our shores.

I enclose a Certificate of Achievement in recognition of the valued contribution made by the AAMH to the celebration of this important historical event and once again thank you for your support and achievements in ensuring the success of this unique occasion.

Thomas Dercksen (Chairperson, de Vlamingh Tricentennial Committee)



New members

The President and committee welcome the following new members:

Mrs Gillian Lord, Tasmania

Mr Ted Stevens, Victoria.

AAMH publications still available

A few copies of our bibliography of Australian maritime theses are still available for \$5 posted. Send cheque made out to AAMH to Dr Malcolm Tull, Department of Economics, Murdoch University. Similarly a few illustrated copies of Stuart Frank's 1996 Vaughan Evans memorial Lecture about the ballads and naughty shoreside activities of nineteenth century sailors are still available for \$10 posted.

Vaughan Evans Memorial Lecture

The Vaughan Evans Memorial Lecture was delivered by Professor Gaastra at the Alexander Library Lecture Theatre on 15 January. His talk *The Dutch East India Company: A Reluctant Discoverer* attracted a capacity audience of more than two hundred persons. Refreshments were served afterwards while AAMH treasurer Peter Ridgway, and VP/ newsletter editor Paul Weaver set up a table to sell AAMH publications and membership subscriptions. It is anticipated Professor Gaastra's paper will appear in a future edition of *The Great Circle*.

Frank Broeze appointed as Professor

Congratulations are extended to one of our founding members Frank Broeze on his recent promotion to Professor at The University of Western Australia. Frank was born and educated in the Netherlands, taking up Australian residency in 1970. He developed Australia's first course in maritime history and was a driving force in making Australians aware that the maritime aspects of their history and heritage were integral parts of their nation's life and identity. In 1978 he helped found the Australian Association for Maritime History and until 1985 was editor of *The Great Circle*. In 1980 he became the first Australian representative on the Executive Council of the International Commission for Maritime History; from 1990 to 1995 he was the President of the Commission. He is Vice-President of the International Maritime Economic History Association and Deputy Chair of the Western Australian Maritime Museum. Frank has researched and published widely. His work has appeared in several languages. In 1989 he edited the volume *Brides of the Sea* which presented a multidisciplinary collection of essays on the development of Asian port cities. A successor volume, *Gateways of Asia*, has just appeared. In 1993 he published *Mr Brooks and the Australian Trade. Imperial Business in the Nineteenth Century*. He is now finalising the text of *Island Nation. A History of the Australian People and the Sea*.

Malcolm Tull.

***Great Circle* news**

Publication of our internationally respected journal *The Great Circle* was delayed earlier this year due to some computing problems. Many thanks to its honorary editor G.R. Henning at The University of New England in NSW for overcoming these, and for his ongoing effort in producing the journal. It is expected members should have received the latest issue by about now. It is anticipated a new index for *Great Circle* will be produced following the publication of Volume 20/2.

BLOWFLIES, BUTTERFLIES, BOTANICAL BOTTOMS, BIRDS and BUSHES

by
K.R. Norris

An interesting interface occurs between entomology and the early global explorations of the European nations. Many of the naval vessels involved carried biologists and other scholars whose activities extended the field of human knowledge but had little bearing on imperial ambitions, which, to varying degrees, motivated many of the ventures. The doyen of such scientific pioneers, so far as Australia is concerned, was, of course, Joseph Banks, travelling with Cook in the *Endeavour* in the unusual role of a paying guest of the British Navy. Banks was the first person to collect insects in Australia, when the vessel touched successively at Botany Bay, Bustard Bay, Thirsty Sound and the Endeavour River. At these points (not all viewed with other than a jaundiced eye by modern insect collectors) he presumably used his armamentarium of "all sorts of machines for catching and preserving insects" to assemble specimens of 212 different species, which still grace the shelves of The Natural History Museum at South Kensington. Such early collections contribute to a mosaic of information on the place of origin of insects which is of great value to zoogeographers, economic entomologists and biologists seeking to bring about pest control by the manipulation of natural enemy populations.

My particular interest lies in the blowflies of the family *Calliphoridae* which contains a number of forms injurious to man and his domesticated animals. Happily, their abundance and moderately large size resulted in a fair incidental representation in early collections, partly overriding the collectors' tendency to concentrate on showy butterflies and beetles. Human factors, indeed, influenced the value of the pioneering activities of the cruising biologists. Banks virtually dismissed the New Zealand blowfly fauna as of little interest to science by noting in his journal that "the fleshflies (were) very like those of Europe", being unduly influenced by the preponderance of dark or bluish flies. How wrong he was. Dumont d'Urville, writing in the 'Voyage de Découvertes de l'*Astrolabe*' frankly admitted that he preferred collecting in areas not previously visited by entomologists, so that he could be sure of a rich harvest of insect novelties, the showier the better, it seems. Selective collecting of this sort was, of course, better than nothing, but it afforded a poor basis for pioneering knowledge of an insect fauna as rich and diverse as that of the Papua New Guinea area, about which Dumont d'Urville expounded the above inelegant philosophy.

To get the biological treasures safely to the imperial museums of Europe involved their exposure to hazards, ranging from mildew to maelstrom, which they encountered as the expeditions picked their way homeward through poorly charted seas. At the Endeavour River on 26 June 1770, Banks grumbled to his journal "Since the ship has been hauld ashore the water that has come into her has of course all gone backwards and my plants which were for safety stord in the bread room were this day found under water; nobody had warnd me of this danger, which had never once entered into my head; the mischeif was however now done so I set to work to remedy it to the best of my power." His efforts were largely successful, but it was a long day's work and by no means the enjoyable "winding up of Botanical Bottoms" (i.e. tidying up the day's botany) that he was wont to share with the botanist Solander in the evenings in the Great Cabin overlying the bread room. Perhaps he should have thanked his stars that the invasive tropical waters and energetic pumping by the entire ship's complement after the ship had struck had diluted the bilge, whose origins and nauseous properties were so colorfully described by Barbara Tuchman in her book *The First Salute* (1989). Otherwise, following the beaching of the *Endeavour*, the bread room would have been unfit for bread and botanist alike. Entomologists, while loyally joining with botanists in a prayer of thanks that Banks lost so few plant specimens, may hug themselves with joy at the fact that he seems to have kept his insects elsewhere.

Dumont d'Urville complained at some length about an unusual threat to his insect collection as his ship (then named *La Coquille*) neared the Moluccas (now Maluku). Cockroaches, so unfamiliar to him that he referred to them by the Malay term "kakerlaks", pullulated throughout the ship, and those in the early life history stages were so thin that they squeezed into the insect boxes "... que l'on m'avait faites à l'arsenal". They damaged some of his most cherished specimens and, perhaps without his noticing, other insects about which he



Sir Joseph Banks

cared less. In fact, in 1965 I found clear evidence of the insidious operations of the "kakerlaks" on Dumont d'Urville's New Guinea blowfly specimens which are still preserved in the Paris Museum of Natural History. Large superficial chunks had been grazed off their bodies, leaving a quite different form of damage from that inflicted by the cosmopolitan museum beetles, pests which enter the specimens as minute hatchlings and hollow them out, eventually leaving only a flimsy remnant of cuticle adhering to the pin and an obviously contented beetle larva. The artisans at "l'arsenal" doubtless got a dressing down for their lack of attention to the standards required by this "lieutenant en premier", though none could have foreseen the nature or the very existence of this enemy.

A further threat to the value of insect collections brought back to Europe by travellers lay in wait at home, in the form of carelessness or profound geographical ignorance on the part of clerical employees at the museums. This problem seemed to afflict particularly the French, several expeditions being involved. The clerks in the Paris Museum managed to mislabel some of the insects collected by Dumont d'Urville in Chile as coming from Papua New Guinea. In 1965 I had noticed recent blowfly specimens from Chile in both the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, Honolulu, and the U.S. National Museum in Washington that were identical with a Dumont d'Urville specimen purporting to be from Papua New Guinea. The latter record was obviously in error, and this was confirmed by a review published in 1979 by a British Museum expert. It had taken more than a century and a half to straighten out this and other problems. Meanwhile, on paper, it seemed that blowflies with possible malevolent qualities were poised just north of Australia, ready to invade the continent as opportunity offered, when, all that time, they were safely at home in South America, going about their own Chilean business.

Banks, who was really far more interested in botanical matters, may have been superficial in his remarks on New Zealand "fleshflies", but he saved the day by taking the time to pin a few of them. Thus, unwittingly, he confirmed the validity of the old saw that a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush for, in 1787, N.S. Swederus published a formal description of *Calliphora quadrimaculata*, a large black blowfly that was collected by Banks in New Zealand and is still common there and in nearby islands. It is so distinctive in structure as to make Banks' generalisation appear rather forlorn. In later years, as European settlement progressed, a brown blowfly also became common throughout both North and South islands, and over many years there was argument as to whether or not it too was native. In fact, it was identical with a common eastern Australian blowfly first collected by Banks at Botany Bay and formally named *Calliphora stygia* by J.C. Fabricius in 1781. Had this distinctive-looking blowfly been present in New Zealand when the *Endeavour* visited there, Banks could not have failed to notice it on dead Maoris, whether trophies of *Endeavour* marksmen or oven-bound casualties of internecine tribal strife. Thus, there is no doubt that it was transported by sailing ships from Australia to New Zealand in the early years of European settlement, and insinuated itself into a long-established carrion guild. Australia's all-browns managed to hang on and carve out a permanent niche in New Zealand against a century and a half of cold-shouldering by the indigenous all-blacks. If there is room for national pride in such matters the problem of primal ownership can now be laid to rest: *Calliphora stygia* is "offensively Australian".

[Born in Geraldton during 1914, Dr Norris is a graduate of the University of Western Australia. He was employed in the former Division of Entomology of CSIRO from 1937 until his retirement in 1979. His fields of study have included pasture-pests, buffalo-fly, cattle tick, wool-moths and blowflies. Now working as an Honorary Research Fellow in Canberra, he continues his interests in blowflies (*Calliphoridae: Diptera*), especially from the taxonomic aspect. Ed.]

This issue's historical maritime recipe

In the annals of folk-myth Captain Cook acquired a certain degree of fame for jamming sauerkraut and lime juice down the throats of an ungrateful crew to prevent scurvy developing. Perhaps understandably like anything administered under threat, sauerkraut never really became popular and for the Royal Navy, like the daily tot of rum, the vegetable is now a distant memory. This is a pity because sauerkraut is a very pleasant dainty, especially when served with fresh boiled potatoes and unless one's religion prevents, a haunch of crispy roast pork. The canned Edgel variety of sauerkraut available in Australian supermarkets is excellent, however maritime historians with an experimental culinary bent may care to try making their own.

To do so take one cabbage, about 5kg (a biggun) and shred finely. A kitchen grater is ideal for this. 100g of salt is then kneaded evenly through the cabbage and the lot packed into a non-metallic container, wood casks were once used, but glazed earthenware or glass is ideal. The salt stimulates the release of the juices, so the

cabbage must be kept pressed down below these to enable a complete fermentation process to occur. A plain china saucer with a weight works well. I used a glass bottle of water for the weight. Do not use lead fishing-sinkers, or strange-coloured stones from the garden. Cover with a cloth and allow nature to do its work for about 6-8 weeks. On the point of keeping it covered do it well because I discovered when I sampled my first batch that a fly had entered and a small colony of maggots was having a great time in one corner. Refrigeration is not necessary during the fermentation process, however I prefer to keep the sauerkraut in the refrigerator once the process is complete. Now this recipe makes a lot of the stuff, so you might need to organise a Captain Cook style south sea islands barbecue party for about 50 persons to use it up. Make sure you invite me; pick out the insects, and now pass the lime juice. Paul Weaver.

The insect wildlife of *HMAS Sydney*

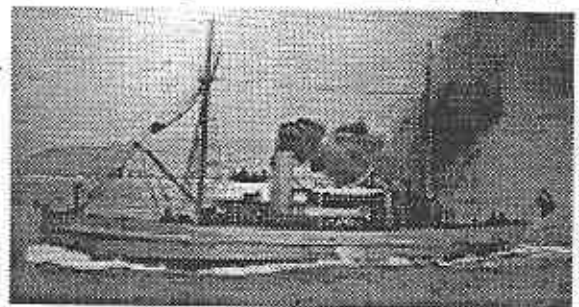
Prior to its final battle with a German raider off the coast of Western Australia in November 1941, the Australian cruiser *HMAS Sydney* had acquired a formidable reputation in the Mediterranean. During an interview with former crewman the editor discovered some little known aspects relating to insect life on the vessel. At Malta when the ship went into dry dock for repairs following one of its battles the crew were obliged to use the shoreside facilities, including some toilets which were hewn into a limestone cliff. Pretty soon the following rhyme was doing the rounds amongst the crew: "It will do you no good to stand on the seat, 'cos a Maltese crab can jump ten feet." Pubic lice, or "crabs," are so called because under close scrutiny the tiny creatures are reddish and to the non-entomologist appear crab-like. The embarrassing initial symptoms were persistent itching, and in the confined crew quarters of a ship there was a real risk of the creatures spreading to shipmates. The first round of treatment was an insecticide known as "precipitant powder", but for worse cases came the "blue ointment job" which involved shaving the troublesome parts and liberally applying the ultimate solution.

Cockroaches were a constant problem on *Sydney* and occasionally the ship was fumigated when in port, however they soon reappeared. When the vessel was ordered to the Indian Ocean it briefly called in to Alexandria where many crew purchased chameleons from the local traders. Reportedly these swivel-eyed reptiles quite enjoyed a roach or two and it seemed for a while that the problem was solved, however as the ship entered the Red Sea the weather became so hot that the cockroaches died, and eventually with no food, so did the chameleons. Paul Weaver.

NZ fishing history book sighted

As most Australians know our New Zealand friends with good reason can be pretty fond of "fush and chups." Kiwi author Emmanuel Makarios has set out to document the origins of the New Zealand fishing industry with *Nets, lines and pots, a history of New Zealand fishing vessels*. At the outset of colonisation fishing was a subsistence activity, but the commercial exploitation accelerated towards the end of the nineteenth century in association with technological developments. This was heavily influenced by the Scottish fishing industry and its methods, with many North Sea steam trawlers making the enormous voyage to end out their days in the southwest Pacific. Italian fishers also arrived in NZ towards the end of the nineteenth century, and according to the author relationships between them and the Scots were reasonably amicable, however WW2 meant many Italians were interred. Several of the larger fishing trawlers were converted to a war time role and saw service as patrol vessels and mine sweepers.

The book is richly illustrated with extremely interesting photographs, and the text written in a lucid style, however in-text referencing is deficient and there is no index. Neither are there any maps by which the reader can identify the many NZ locations mentioned. *Nets, lines and pots* is available from the Wellington Maritime Museum. PO box 893. Wellington. New Zealand. - NZ\$36.50 including economy air mail. 112 pp.



Trawler *Janie Seddon* in Scotland, prior to steaming to New Zealand via Suez and Western Australia in 1901.

Australian Archives files

The following files have recently been transferred to Australian Archives and may be of interest to maritime historians:

Department of Defence photograph albums relating to Cockatoo Island Dockyard, containing ship launchings, repairs and construction – 1913-1971. (NSW. – C3259).

Documents of the Far Eastern Commission, which formulated policies to ensure Japan fulfilled its obligations under the Terms of Surrender –1945-1952. (ACT. – A10468).

Funding available for preservation of historical records

Australian Archival Support Programme provides cash grants of up to \$500 and acid free archive boxes to assist community organisations to protect significant historical collections. Support can also be attracted purchase of appropriate software, mounting of exhibitions or conducting oral history projects. An application kit is available by phoning (03) 9890 3530.

Prison ship for hire

The burgeoning crime rate in Britain and overflowing prisons has resulted in the arrival of an American prison ship *Resolution* in Portland Harbour (UK). Looking something like a vessel which transports Australian sheep to the Persian Gulf, the ship can hold 500 inmates who will have all the comforts of a shore prison, including gymnasiums and a swimming pool. As many maritime historians would know, Britain has utilised ships or hulks as prisons in the distant past, and more than a few early Australian immigrants spent time in them before being dispatched to NSW to crack rocks. *Resolution* is expected to be used by Britain for three years while more land prisons are being constructed. Hmm! Might be available for the Sydney Olympics.

Auld mug given panel job

In mid-March The Americas Cup was vandalised at the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron by a Maori political activist while it was on display in New Zealand. With the aid of a sledge hammer the nineteenth century silver artifact was mashed almost beyond recognition. Yachting officials in NZ were reportedly quite pale after the incident and arrangements were hastily made to send it to its English makers for repairs.

Maritime boundary between Indonesia and Australia formalised

On 14 March 1997 a treaty between Indonesia and Australia was signed in Perth to define the boundary rights for oil exploration.

Upcoming conferences

The Spanish Navy's Institute of Naval History is sponsoring the fourth Symposium of Maritime and Naval Iberian-American History commencing Nov 24, 1997. For further information contact Jose Cevera Pery, Secretario Coodinador, IV Simposio de Historia Maritima y Naval Iberoamericana, Juan de Mena, 1, 28071 Madrid, Spain. Fax 3795250.

The following events are scheduled for Fremantle in September.

Workshop - Indian Ocean region coastal zone 1 Sept.

Culture, tourism and commerce in the Indian Ocean Region. 2 Sept.

International congress of Maritime Museums 3-5 Sept.

International colloquium - Underwater cultural heritage. 6-7 Sept.

International conference - Aust. Inst. for Maritime Archaeology 6-11 Sept.

For further information contact Indian Ocean Week Coordinator at Fremantle Maritime Museum, Cliff St. Fremantle. Western Australia. Fax (619) 336 6332.

“Morphometric analysis of iconography” further clarified

A representative from the *Duyfken* 1606 Replica Foundation has written to say there is agreement the convoluted expression mentioned in the march issue is “somewhat high-flown” but says it has always been used with irony and humorous intent. The writer says the assertion that deceased artist Peter de Witt may have used a similar process is probably wrong, “though his (de Witt’s) design is more similar to our conclusions than many others.” It was considered the editor’s remark that the modern *Duyfken* design was something of a hybridised interpretation of various images from the past did less than justice to the process. The writer states the design arrived at is based on several types of historical and archaeological data: “The iconography, contracts for ships’ construction, the remains of contemporary Dutch-built ships discovered by archaeology, later 17th century descriptions of ship building, evidence about the performance of *Duyfken* and similar ships, and computer modelling of the performance of the proposed design.” Nevertheless the foundation is still keen to hear from persons who have expert knowledge on any aspect of Dutch ship design or decoration from the period. The contact address is 47 Cliff St, Fremantle, 6160.

True cost of Vlamingh painting revealed

In our previous newsletter mention was made of a 17th century painting of Willem de Vlamingh being acquired by Sydney’s National Maritime Museum for A\$72,000. Jeffrey Mellefont, public affairs manager of that taxpayer backed organisation writes, “Normally we don’t discuss the cost of acquisitions – what price do you put on heritage? But if you must, please give correct figures. In this case, \$58,000.” The writer has also requested mention that his employer’s correct name is Australian National Maritime Museum.

Calling all log lovers

Ian Nicholson is putting together *Log of Logs Vol. 3*. If you are aware of any log, shipboard diary, journal, narrative or letters not mentioned in Vols. 1 & 2 please drop him a line. The type of information requested is the name of the vessel, year or actual dates of voyage, ports of origin and destination, type of narrative, by whom, and the location of the document, with its call number if it is in a library. A copy of the original document is not required. If informants are uncertain if the data is contained in previous editions, send it along anyway. Ian will sort it out. Do not worry if you cannot provide all the details, as Ian says, some information is better than none. The author’s address is 18 Wunnunga Cres., Yaroomba, Qld. 4573.

Lots o’ logs relating to Australia’s Heard Island

Many Australians are probably vaguely aware that volcanic Heard Island (53° 05’S. 73° 30’E.) is an Australian territory somewhere southwest of the continent in the Southern Ocean. Few would know the chilly place has a rich history of maritime exploitation dating from the 1850s. Max Downes has explored the known logbooks relating to the island and developed a computerised data-base which he has described in ANARE Research Notes 97 (Dec. 1996). For the uninitiated Heard Island became a busy place soon after its discovery in 1853, with at least 79 voyages to the island by some 40 vessels taking place between 1856 and 1859. A major target of the hunters was the oil from the huge elephant seal. This intensive exploitation meant



Heard Island

the seal population declined substantially by the late 1850s however a small but steady output continued over the following two decades before production ceased entirely in 1877. 27 logbooks of the total 104 voyages thought to relate to the Heard Island activities have been identified by Downes. Most of the expeditions originated from America, but at least one came from Hobart. Gangs sometimes totalling a hundred men operated ashore seasonally under difficult conditions and the author has reproduced several delightful nineteenth century drawings of these activities. “Indexing sealer’s logbooks from Heard Island” is an important contribution to exposing some of the little recognised history of one of Australia’s maritime territories.

Fremantle Harbour Centenary

The port city of Fremantle is sited at the mouth of the Swan River and not infrequently is described by proud civic officials as "Australia's western gateway." Indeed many new Australians arrived there from Britain and Europe to disperse throughout the continent. For much of the nineteenth century a limestone bar across the river mouth necessitated visiting shipping to either anchor in Guages Roads or utilise a wooden jetty slightly south of the river mouth. Both became unsatisfactory arrangements following the opening of the inland Kalgoorlie/Coolgardie goldfields and the resultant dramatic boost to the state's economy. A major civil engineering project under the guidance of C.Y O'Connor was undertaken to blast away the bar, deepen and widen the river at its mouth and build wharves on either side. The entrance to the river was extended by building two moles, quarried from coastal "Tamala" limestone and armoured on their most exposed sides with granite quarried from the adjacent Darling escarpment. The initial project was completed in 1897, and on May 4 the wife of State Premier Sir John Forrest steered the steamer *Sultan* into the new inner harbour.

Much has changed in the past hundred years. The old jetty has long gone and the site is now dominated by a hamburger manufacturer's golden arches. The inner harbour which opened in 1897 has undergone continuing and extensive modification in order to keep pace with the demands of the shipping industry. During WW2 the harbour became an important allied submarine base and is still a favoured R&R destination for the US Navy. It is also one of Australia's leading container ports, with more than 20 million tons passing through during the last financial year. Live sheep imports to the Middle East have also been important earners, albeit with some public concern over animal rights. In cooperation with the relevant authorities AAMH president, Dr Malcolm Tull has been working on a timely history of Fremantle Harbour and publication of what promises to be an important regional work is imminent.

The Fremantle Port Authority ran a historic photographic exhibition in their foyer from the end of April, but in their wisdom only let it stay there for one month, so it will all be over by the time you read this. Maybe in 2097. On Sunday 4 May there were a series of events which included the start of a yacht race to Lombok, "dragon boat" racing, and of course an inevitable reenactment of the entry of *Sultan* on a disguised RAN patrol boat, manned by people in period costume. For many the highlight of the day was a tug o' war between the Freo' Dockers footy team and a gang of local lumpers. Who won? Well really it was a foregone conclusion. Paul Weaver.

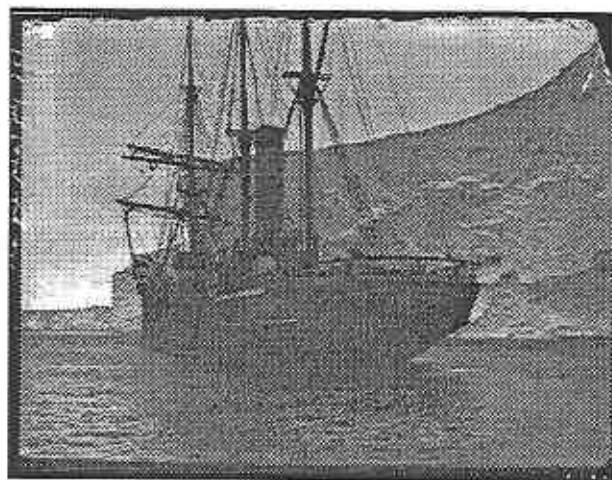


Fremantle in the bad old days

Mawson *et al* on CD

There is much potential for raising interest in Australian maritime history through multi-media, particularly with CDs. A selection of some 300 of Frank Hurley's photographs, maps and other images relating to the Australian Antarctic Expedition (1911-1914) led by Douglas Mawson have been compiled under the guidance of The University of Adelaide, which maintains the collection.

The disk runs on either PC or Macintosh and using the latter I discovered no technical glitches, nor was there any difficulty in immediately grasping the sequence of operation. The screen layout is one of the best I have seen in CD format and allows the non-publishing educational user or student to copy and print any of the images as required. It is a credit to the University that they have allowed this, but of course commercial users must come to some other arrangement. Having a gigabyte of



Aurora in 1912, downloaded from the Mawson CD.

room on my computer I uploaded the entire disk which saved the CD disk drive some work. No problems experienced. Generally the images are superb and lend themselves admirably to this format, and they appear instantly on the screen when triggered. Some are accompanied by sound effects and commentary, and this is well done, however most images have neither and the viewer is left to read the somewhat meagre script accompanying each picture, and which can be brought onto the screen with the click of the mouse. Further on the down side the fine detail on several maps included do not reproduce very well. While I moved patiently through the disk I found the long stretches of silence a bit boring, and indeed this inadequacy was also remarked upon by two of my teenage children. Nevertheless as a teaching resource *Sir Douglas Mawson, the story of the Australian Antarctic Expedition (1911-1914)* is invaluable because of the many images and their immediate accessibility. An imaginative teacher would still need to use it in association with some of the excellent previously published material, such as Fred and Eleanor Jackas' 1988 transcription of the Mawson Diaries. The disk can be ordered from The South Australian Museum Shop, North Terrace, Adelaide, SA. 5000 for A\$59.95 plus A\$3.00 postage. A gold plated collector's edition in a crafted wooden case is available for A\$195 plus \$3.00 p&p. •

Paul Weaver.

Help requested

Lake Macquarie City Council seeks information on the 30.5 ton schooner *Martha*, built by Boston and Co. at Bennelong Point NSW in 1799. Under command of William Reid (Read) the vessel was involved in the accidental European discovery of Lake Macquarie in August, 1800. A bicentenary commemoration is being planned. Persons able to assist with any information are requested to please contact Mr R. Gray, general Manager LMCC, Box 1906, Hunter Region Mail Centre, NSW. 2310. Ph (049) 21 0333.

In memorium, Charles Staples (1910-1997)

On 10 May 1997 Charles Staples, one of the founders of the AAMH passed away. Charles was a man with a great passion for all matters historical. He was one of the first after World War II to realise the importance of the Indian Ocean for Australia and to appreciate how much of our national history was shaped by maritime developments and connections. His Masters thesis at the University of London concerned a detailed study of Indian shipping and commerce in the early nineteenth century as it related to the Indian Ocean and Australia.

After his retirement in the early 1970s, as Deputy-Principal of Mount Lawley Teacher's College (now part of Edith Cowan University), Charles engaged himself vigorously in propagating his ideas. He was the Australian delegate to one of the first Indian Ocean studies conferences, on Mauritius, and after his return convinced a number of colleagues that Perth had an important role to play in the development of Indian Ocean history. Ultimately, this led to the first International Conference of Indian Ocean Studies, held in 1979. The permanent legacy of that conference, in the shape of the Indian Ocean Centre at Curtin University and the Indian Ocean Review still lives strongly. Charles was convinced of the importance of maritime history and the need to bring maritime history to the Australian community. In 1978 he was the secretary of the provisional committee that in that year founded the AAMH. For some time his address was that of the Association. His contribution was particularly important because his perspectives on Asia and the Indian Ocean from the very beginning gave the AAMH its commitment that Australia's maritime history comprised the full 360 degrees of sea space surrounding the nation.

Charles was an inspiring man. Always generous and energetic, he shared his knowledge and enthusiasm with anyone who came within reach. He had many passions and interests, including the National Trust and politics. He was a tolerant and honest man who was an example for all. He will be deeply missed by those who knew him. Our sympathy goes out to his widow Joy and sons Charles and Roger, Frank Broeze

Quarterly Newsletter - The Australian Association for Maritime History is compiled and edited by Paul R. Weaver, 23 Waddell Road, Palmyra, Western Australia 6157. Future 1997 issues are expected to be sent to the printer on 30th days of August and November. Material for inclusion should be sent direct to the editor prior to these dates. Enclose stamped addressed envelope for return of material if required.