Perth to Host International Congress of Maritime History in 2016

At the recent 6th International Congress of Maritime History in Ghent, Belgium, a bid to host the next Congress in Western Australia in 2016 was accepted by the International Maritime Economic History Association (IMEHA), which organises the Congress. The bid was presented on behalf of the Australian Association for Maritime History and Murdoch University by Prof. Malcolm Tull and Dr Joseph Christensen.

The seventh Congress will be the first to be held outside of Europe. Past Congresses have been held in Liverpool (1992), Amsterdam (1996), Esbjerg (2000), Corfu (2004), and London (2008). The IMEHA is a society devoted to the study of maritime history in all its forms, which encompasses every aspect of the historical interaction of human societies and the sea. It publishes the International Journal of Maritime History and the monograph series Research in Maritime History, and is currently headquartered at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. Johns, Newfoundland, Canada.

VON TRAPP IN AUSTRALIA

Members would be familiar with the von Trapp family portrayed in The Sound of Music but few may be aware that Baron Georg von Trapp (played by Christopher Plummer in the film) visited Fremantle in March 1899 as an officer on the Hungarian ship, Saida. 'The commander and officers of the Austrian man-of-war Saida ... were the recipients of a civic entertainment on Friday, March 10, at which a number of prominent citizens were present. The Mayor of Perth (Mr A Forrest), MLA occupied the chair... The officers of the vessel present were Commandant Guido Couarde, Second-Captain Leonidae Pichl, Lieutenant Franz Losler, ... Ritter von Trapp, Ernst Wallner, Franz Linhardt, Ritter von Brasseur, and Josef von Hild.' (The Inquirer & Commercial News, Friday 17 March 1899). The paper reported that it was the first time an Austrian man-of-war had visited the colony. Georg von Trapp received the title of Ritter (the equivalent of a Baron) and became a national hero as a captain in the Austrian navy during World War I when he commanded submarines. After the war and Austria had lost control over its seaports Georg retired from the navy. After his first wife, the granddaughter of Robert Whitehead who invented the torpedo, died he and their seven children moved to Salzburg.
Winter Special: Antarctic News

Still no Mawson: Frank Stillwell's Antarctic Diaries 1911–1913 (Australian Academy of Science, May 2012) is a new book by Dr Bernadette Hince, a Visiting Fellow at the Australian National Dictionary Centre. Frank Stillwell was a young geologist on Douglas Mawson's 1911-1913 Antarctic expedition. He kept a diary and wrote about the difficulty of surviving on the frozen continent and the stress of waiting for Mawson to return from his epic trek. Mawson and two companions were due back in December 1912. But by mid-January they still hadn't returned and Frank Stillwell started writing at the beginning of his entries, "No Mawson," and then the next day, "No Mawson." Then, "Still no Mawson."

Traversing Antarctica: the Australian experience is an exhibition at the National Archives of Australia from 23 March 2012 to 9 September 2012. A rare collection of original equipment and diaries from early expeditions is displayed together for the first time as well as inspiring interactive displays and imagery. The exhibition is a joint project by the National Archives of Australia, the Australian Antarctic Division and the Western Australian Museum.

Stamps: Australia Post celebrated the centenary of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) with the release of five stamps depicting key moments in the departure of the AAE from Hobart and the journey to the Antarctic. They include the SY Aurora which carried the AAE to and from Hobart, the SY Aurora’s Captain, John King Davis, who was second-in-command of the expedition, the landing at Macquarie Island and birdlife on Macquarie Island. The AAE stamp series will be issued every year until 2014, celebrating key moments in the AAE's experience.

The SY Aurora was purchased by Douglas Mawson in 1910 and was originally built as a sealer for the Dundee fleet. The hull was made of oak, sheathed with greenheart and lined with fir. The bow was a mass of solid wood re-enforced with steel-plate armour. The heavy side frames were braced by two levels of horizontal oak beams. Source: Cool Antarctica

Navy Helicopter lands at Nowra

The Fleet Air Arm Museum took deliver in April of a Sea King helicopter. The Sea King is the latest addition to the Museum’s collection. Manufactured by Westland Aircraft Ltd in Somerset, UK, the Sea Kings were delivered between 1974 and 183. Sea Kings were the workhorses of the RAN's fleet.


Maritime Theme for National Archaeology Week Seminar

The programme for the seminar held on Saturday 19 May 2012 at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory had a distinctly maritime theme. Daryl Wesley’s (Australian National University) presentation discussed the timing of cultural contact between Aboriginal society and Indonesian seafarers. The talk looked at the relationship between the Anuru Bay Macassan trepang processing site and the nearby Wellington Range Indigenous archaeological sites located in northwestern Arnhem Land.

Paul Clark (Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory) reviewed the evidence that watercraft from indigenous rock art depicts a European ship dating from approximately 1700–1813. This talk looks at whether the vessel is not an early Dutch vessel, but a European steamship from a much later time and that it dates from the mid to late 19th century or possibly the early 20th century.

Talks by Richard Woolfe, Earthsea Heritage Surveys and Stephen Sutton focussed on the uses of colonial sites at Fort Wellington (Raffles Bay, 1827) and the Victoria Settlement (Port Essington) respectively.

Zuytdorp Lecture and Exhibition: Adjunct Professor Dr Michael McCarthy, Curator, Maritime Archaeology WA Museum will give a lecture on the loss, discovery and subsequent archaeological research on the Dutch East India Company trading ship Zuytdorp in October. Material relating to the ship and other shipwrecks can be viewed in the Shipwrecks Gallery.
Finding the Future: AMMH Membership Survey 2012

We are fascinated by maritime discovery and exploration it seems. This was the top ranked interest of the members responding to our survey. In order, the next top four were maritime and ship wreck archaeology, ships and ship building, naval history, and whaling and sealing. Some 30 other topics were also nominated by the 60 members that responded.

44% of members that responded have been members for 20 years or more and a further 20% have been members for 15 to 20 years. Our members work or have worked in academia, the maritime industries, museums, and in other professions. Members highly value our journal *The Great Circle*, our Quarterly newsletter, and the Frank Broeze Book Prize. Members also appreciate our other activities and are looking for new opportunities in which to participate. One such opportunity is the ‘places of maritime interest’ initiative. Have you been to an interesting place recently? Let others know by forwarding a short item for publication (details on our website). Other suggestions for improving the AMMH include placing newsletters and journals online (we are commencing a project to do this) and updating the website. Let the President know if you can assist with updating the website. Members are also encouraged to contribute to the newsletter and the Great Circle. Without your support these highly valued activities cannot continue.

**Ship Restorations Around Australia**

*The City of Adelaide* project has reached another milestone. A 100-tonne lifting cradle built in Adelaide to recover the historic City of Adelaide vessel was certified by Scottish authorities in March. The cradle will be placed around the timber hull of the 1864-built ship, the world’s oldest clipper, to transport it to Adelaide for restoration. For more visit [http://cityofadelaide.org.au/](http://cityofadelaide.org.au/)

Meanwhile, the *Alma Doepel* restoration project in Melbourne has seen the completion of a deck cover. The *Alma Doepel* is a threemasted topsail schooner and is one of the oldest such ships surviving. *Alma Doepel* was built in 1903 in Bellingen, NSW, by Frederik Doepel, an immigrant from Finland. A coastal trader, the ship carried timber, wheat and jam having been sold in 1916 Alma to Henry Jones & Co. She was also used in World War II as a supply vessel in Papua New Guinea, before returning to commercial service until the 1960’s. After that, she was stripped of her rigging and used to carry limestone, before being sold, for the scrap value of her engines, to the Melbourne company Sail & Adventure in 1976. From 1976 to 1987, *Alma Doepel* was comprehensively restored and led the Parade of Sail in Sydney Harbour in January 1988. After that, she was used as a sail training ship until 1999 when the need for work on the hull and lack of funds put a stop to this activity. In January 2009 the *Alma Doepel* returned to Melbourne and is undergoing an extensive refit to return her to survey so she can recommence sail training. Visit: [http://www.almadoepel.com.au/prod02.htm](http://www.almadoepel.com.au/prod02.htm).

*Other restorations around Australia* include: the light house tender MV Cape Don at Balls Head Reserve, Sydney (MV Cape Don Society Inc), the 1927 Australian steamship *John Oxley* (Sydney Heritage Fleet); the *Julie Burgess* at Devonport (reported in the March newsletter); and *HMAS Oven* (WA Museum).
From the President: Finding the Future Workshop Report

Eleven members and invited guests attended the Finding the Future seminar workshop held on 27 July at Murdoch University. Over 60 members contributed to the workshop by returning the questionnaire. I thank everyone for participating in what was a most successful event. In the seminar phase, Tom Perigo (CEO National Trust of WA) provided an insightful appreciation of what a volunteer-based organisation needs to do to grow and thrive, and our secretary, Dr Joseph Christensen, reported on the results of the survey of members. The workshop phase of the afternoon included a SWOT analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and strategies for the future. Key strengths of the AAMH are considered to be our journal, The Great Circle, our quarterly newsletter, the Broze Book Prize that we co-sponsor with the Australian National Maritime Museum, and our commitment to further the appreciation of maritime history. Key weaknesses include business planning for ensuring the activities of the AAMH are sustainable. Opportunities include (but not limited to) leveraging off our valued role in maritime history, partnering with like organisations and co-hosting the 2016 International Congress of Maritime History. A key outcome of the workshop was a decision to prepare a business plan. The plan will need to address a range of issues including the resourcing of our activities, succession planning for the editorial teams for The Great Circle, Quarterly Newsletter and website, and providing more opportunities for members to participate in maritime history. Following the seminar workshop, many of us attended the AAMH’s Kenneth McPherson Memorial Lecture at the Maritime Museum. Over 70 people enjoyed a illustrated talk by internationally acclaimed maritime archaeologist Jeremy Green. Jeremy spoke of Dr Kenneth McPherson’s role in stimulating Australia’s role in developing Sri Lankan maritime archaeology. Look out for details soon about our Vaughan Evan’s Memorial Lecture in November. See you there! In conclusion, I thank Dr Lenore Layman for facilitating the seminar workshop and everyone for attending the workshop as well as the Kenneth McPherson Memorial Lecture.

Call for Papers- Sea Stories: Maritime Landscapes, Cultures and Histories.
School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry (SOPHI), The University of Sydney, Australia, 12-14 June 2013

Maritime landscapes and communities are essential to understanding the historical, cultural and environmental trajectories that have configured the Asia-Pacific world. Oceans, seas and coastlines shaped, and were in turn shaped by, peoples and cultures. Indigenous/European engagements created sites of conflict, negotiation and compromise, and facilitated networks of trade and exchange, producing stories, objects and memories. How does attention to the maritime dimension help us to understand these relationships? The conference ‘Sea Stories: Maritime Landscapes, Cultures and Histories’ will provide a forum for examining the complex interactions of peoples, places, environments and cultures across the maritime landscapes of Australasia and the Pacific. The conference will bring together scholars from a range of disciplines (e.g. Archaeology, Anthropology, Heritage, History, Literature, Environmental Studies) who work on the landscapes and cultures of the sea. The conference aims to highlight the important interdisciplinary work being carried out on maritime cultures, societies, histories and landscapes across the region. As a key maritime centre for Indigenous peoples, settlers and visitors, and home to several major Australian institutions for maritime research (e.g. the Australian National Maritime Museum, the University of Sydney) Sydney is an ideal venue for this conference. The Organising Committee invites papers which address the following themes: Indigenous and European histories; intersections and engagements; The European imaginary: coasts, coastal landscapes and landforms; Communities, cultures and maritime materialities; Maritime objects, maritime memories; Networks of trade and exchange; Narratives, folk traditions, performances. Please send 250-word abstracts to annie.clarke@sydney.edu.au by 1 October 2012.