

Greetings All

MMHN August 2020 Update

The July MMHN Update referred to ominous signs of a second wave of COVID-19. In nautical terms this anticipated wave broke over our bows, swamping us. Decks awash, we 'battened down the hatches' in Lockdown Mark 2 – but kept on enthusiastically 'bailing' so to speak, and engaging with stakeholders though 'zoom'. Despite all the challenges, we continue to make significant 'headway' this month on progress with Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network's (MMHN) objectives. Useful connections continue apace as we bring together our diverse maritime stakeholders - heritage, industry, educators, and 'sailors' of all types. MMHN is gaining recognition as a unifying force among maritime stakeholders.

Shipping and Freight - COVID-19 inquiry to examine ports

It is reassuring to those of us who are seriously concerned about sustaining national shipping capability to note that the Federal Government's Parliamentary Inquiry into the impact of the pandemic on Australia's freight and shipping industries has just concluded. The Chair of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee, Senator David Fawcett accurately stated that an effective and trusted maritime freight system is critical to Australia's economy. Senator Fawcett said, ***Australia's import and export supply chains, including our ports, have underpinned our economy to date and have kept many goods that we depend on moving during the pandemic. Our ongoing prosperity depends on an efficient shipping and freight system.*** Contributors to the public hearings included the Freight and Trade Alliance, the Australian Peak Shippers Association, and Ports Australia, who gave evidence on the freight, shipping and logistics sector's response to the pandemic. The results will be available later in 2020 on the APH website: <https://www.aph.gov.au/jfadthearing>

Port of Melbourne - Marvellous nostalgic footage

We encourage you to access this great 1950s-early 1960s footage of the Port of Melbourne and its operations - ships, tugs and wharves at work. Life was a lot slower then. MMHN thanks Rob Newland of Bay Steamers Maritime Museum for alerting us to this '***Blast from the Past***' for many MMHN members. And we acknowledge the work of ACMI of course. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EFWIGFCSZo>

Maritime Museum Trends

For those MMHN member organisations who may be presenting their heritage collections in static 'virtual' tours, it seems that technology has progressed and in the world of exhibits, interactivity is becoming ever more popular - particularly regarding children's exhibits. See <https://culturalpractice.org/digital-responses-from-locked-down-museums/>

The Aurora Australia Update

MMHN notes that many people are very keen to have the iconic vessel **Aurora Australia** kept in Australia. Advocacy is strong but it will come as no surprise that the eternal question of capturing and retaining our maritime heritage is the question - ***Where will the money come from?*** OSSA advises, for example, that to retain the ship as an 'emergency' vessel, it must first undertake a Special Survey costing in the vicinity of \$8-10 million. These Surveys are complex matters. The Survey is due at five-year intervals from the date-of-build, or the date-of-Special Survey for Classification as recorded in the Register Book. Consideration may be given to any exceptional circumstances justifying an extension of the hull classification to a maximum of three months beyond the fifth year. If an extension is agreed, the next period of hull classification will start from the due date of the Special Survey before the extension was granted. In this context 'exceptional circumstances' means unavailability of dry-docking facilities, repair facilities, essential materials, equipment or spare parts or delays incurred by action taken to avoid severe weather conditions. See <https://marineengineeringonline.com/tag/special-surveys/> Returning now to the **Aurora Australis** itself, added to the cost of Surveys will be annual maintenance at a minimal cost of around \$1-2 million. Plus, of course, on-going crew or management costs and berthage. Then, if the public were to come aboard the vessel, there are numerous costs associated with safety public liability insurance etc. Given the COVID19 economic catastrophe we are experiencing, it is hard to envisage Federal or any State government engagement with this funding. A poor substitute for the real thing – but splendid in their own right, we encourage you enjoy the splendid array of commemorative stamps featuring this iconic vessel.

https://www.google.com/search?q=aurora+australis+ship+stamp&rlz=1C5CHFA_enAU885AU885&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&fir=V16ACp-H8xG6wM%252CHsNp_1QjqXGLbM%252C_&vet=1&usg=AI4_kS9j5Rhh7bIBwFJR_XAr0LrGaf86Q&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwib9vKd-f_qAhUfyzgGHWWrDFIQ9QEwAnoECAoQGw&biw=1366&bih=657#imgsrc=V16ACp-H8xG6wM



The Amazon Wreck Project

Congratulations to those staunch maritime heritage enthusiasts Amazon 1863 Project Inc. around Inverloch for their wonderful and successful advocacy for the **Amazon**. Project Secretary Karyn Bugeja kindly sent MMHN the very first Amazon Project newsletter. (If you wish to become involved with the project, see amazon1863.org.au. A warning, though, to those wreck enthusiasts anticipating bouts of frenzied digging as the coastal erosion reveals ever more of this marvellous wreck, to quote the newsletter **'the only people who will ever do any digging at the Amazon site will be Heritage Victoria maritime archaeologists'**. The site is protected under Heritage Legislation. Heritage Victoria has introduced a conservator experienced in the preservation of wooden ships to work with the Project Committee to develop a conservation plan. In a practical conservation sense – volunteers are on the beach ensuring that the tantalising fragments emerging from the sands don't become 'souvenirs' !



On 3 May, about 30cm of sand was eroded revealing what was initially thought to be the Keel but was actually the Stem. And what is the Stem? According to Wikipedia, ***the stem is the curved edge stretching from the keel below, up to the gunwale of the boat. It is part of the physical structure of a wooden boat or ship that gives it strength at the critical section of the structure, bringing together the port and starboard side planks of the hull. There are two styles of stems: plumb and raked. When the stem comes up from the water, if it is perpendicular to the waterline it is 'plumb'. If it is inclined at an angle to the waterline it is 'raked'.***

THE STEM

The big timber of wood at the forward end of the ship, called the *stem* or forward perpendicular (F. P.), is shaped and then notched or *rabbetted* to receive the ends of the planking. Two other pieces called the *stemson* and the *apron* are clinch-bolted up back of the stem to make it stronger, and pieces on either side called *knightheads* are clinch-bolted to the stemson and tapered off so that the outside ends of the planking may lie flat against it and thus give a larger surface to support, and to which to fasten the ends of the planking.

The corner formed by the stem and the front end of the keel is reinforced on the outside by an oak *gripe piece* and on the inside by a large knee or natural crook. These pieces are held firmly together by metal through fastenings or iron bolts clinch-riveted.

The stem is braced on either side and ahead by shores which are so adjusted that it stands plumb athwartship and with the proper amount of forward *rake*, as anything not perfectly vertical fore and aft is called.

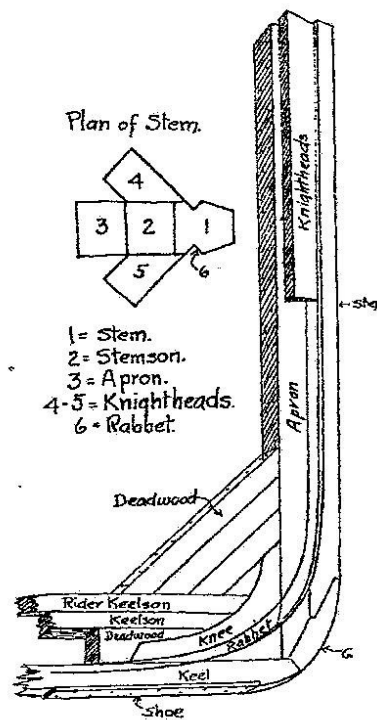


Fig. 29—Stem construction.

The MMHN Series on Maritime Museums

The physical distance and cultural disparity between the **Vasa** Wreck in **VASA MUZEET** in Stockholm to the **Amazon wreck** in the sands at Inverloch, is obviously great. That said, the enthusiasm for maritime archaeology in relation to both Wrecks is comparable. Funding to develop Wreck exhibitions is, of course, a key factor. Hopefully the VASA Museet will inspire the Amazon Project to aim high.

The **VASA** capsized and sank near Stockholm in 1628. After 333 years on the sea bed, the mighty warship was salvaged and the voyage could continue. Today VASA is the world's best-preserved 17th century ship and the most visited museum in Scandinavia. The museum has been rated as one of the world's best. Vasa, the most powerful warship in the Baltic, foundered in Stockholm harbour before the eyes of a large audience, just minutes after setting sail for the first time. As the ship cast-off and found the current, fourteen sails were set, and a salute was fired. A strong gust of wind pushed the ship so far over on its port side that water poured in through the open gunports on the lower gundeck. Vasa began to sink. Pandemonium reigned on deck. The captain ordered the sheets cast off to spill the wind from the sails and the gunports closed. Within minutes, the ship was on the seabed at a depth of 32 metres. The masts stuck up above the surface and many grabbed hold of them; most of the dead were trapped inside the ship. The website is fascinating. See <https://www.vasamuseet.se/en>



Trick Question:

What do Melbourne's replica heritage tall ship **Enterprize** and the **VASA** have in common?

Mid-winter maintenance practices on wooden ships have changed little for seafarers. Currently, the **Enterprize** on Collins Wharf in Docklands looks bare. The running rigging, sails, booms, spars and yards, have all been removed for winter checking and maintenance. Maritime heritage enthusiasts enjoy the fact that **Enterprize** today conscientiously uses traditional materials and adopts traditional practises, e.g. hemp rope rigging, flax canvas sails and tallow lubrication. Traditionally, hemp and other natural fibres were the norm for rope production, but it would quickly rot when exposed to rain, so was tarred to preserve it. This tar, as you can imagine, stained the hands of ships' crews. Thus, British Navy seamen became known as 'tars'. It is fascinating to note that the market forces at play to control this valuable commodity were held by a single Swedish company holding a royal monopoly on its export from Stockholm. **(YES! Stockholm)** Hence the name Stockholm Tar (pine tar). It is the basis of many maritime preservative products, such as spar tar for the timbers, and rope tar for the rigging. Rigging is dipped through heated Stockholm Tar, all timbers are scraped or sanded, and spar tar applied.

Traditional ship materials and skills are maintaining the replica **Enterprize** today. Note that the **Enterprize** successfully completed the annual survey inspection of the entire the ship and **equipment** to comply with the stringent Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) standards. (Note terminology below). See

<https://www.enterprize.org.au/aboutenterprize>



World Shipping Society

This remarkable organisation was founded in 1947 has a worldwide membership of those who are interested in ships, past and present. The ship spotters? The active **Victorian Branch** produces a visually enthralling and informative monthly newsletter which carries both stunning images and in-depth information about so many of the great ships. MMHN thanks WSS Member Mike Carolin, former Master Mariner and Sea Pilot, for unpacking merchant shipping terminology which will be of interest to many maritime enthusiasts:

- **Registry** Where a ship is registered determines which country's flag flies on her stern. This may be the country of the owner: registered or beneficial. It may be the management company's homeport or it is often tied in with the classification society. Or none of the above. Some of the newer registries are only after the fees, have few rules, and are quite slack.
- **Registered Owner** For the purpose of many certificates, documents, and dealings with others, e.g. Port Authorities, a ship must have a Registered Owner. Fifty years ago this may have been simply the Company name e.g. Port Line Ltd. Nowadays, a Registered Owner may also be Registered Company in places such as Monrovia or Panama for that ship, or for a group of ships. As compared to the
- **Beneficial Owner** who is ultimate owner of all these shipping companies to whom the profit flows, e.g. the US Oil Company of New York. If the Beneficial Owner' does not use the ship themselves, it may be hired out or 'chartered out to a
- **Charterer**. There are a number of forms of chartering: the most common being 'bare boat charter', whereby the charterer gets the use of the 'bare' ship, without crew, provisions fuel, cargoes etc. and the charterer covers all bills. Or the ship may be chartered crewed with and operated by the owner whereby the charterer is only concerned with getting the cargo carried.
- **Agents** are appointed to handle day-to-day ships operations in each port, especially in foreign ports. Agents may be considered branches of the owners, charterers, management companies, or

independent. They handle all the required arrivals/departures tasks, including documentation, ordering tugs, pilots, cargo, bunkers, stores etc. and bill the owners/ charterers for these expenses and their time. Agents may specialize as owner's agents, charterers' agents, and cargo agents.

- **Classification Societies** For a vessel to operate, and be acceptable to charterers, insurers, port authorities, etc., the ship must be 'in class'. Classification societies have strict rules on maintenance, inspection, wear & tear, surveys, replacing parts, faults and failures of parts, etc. In effect a 'road-worthy' for ships.
- **P&I Clubs** In effect, merchant ships mutual self-insurance clubs. A group of shipping companies agrees to mutually insure each other's ships and pay a prescribed fee each year. If they have a large claim the fee will go up. If there is a disastrous event requiring many millions of dollars, there will be a 'call' on all the companies to meet the amount.
- **Port State Safety Inspectors.** Most modern countries now have safety organisations that, in addition to regulation of domestic shipping, also look at all foreign shipping calling at that country's ports. In Australia it is AMSA (Australia Maritime Safety Authority). AMSA controls almost every Australian Government regulation and documentation connected with Australian registered ships. In addition, by international convention, they have the right to board foreign vessels and inspect their certification and all safety aspects.

For a full account of these terms see their website at wss-vic.org.au - and perhaps join WSS at the same time.



Docklands Dual Disaster - Activation

Members of the MMHN were invited recently to discuss ideas with Alto Cibus Consultancy to ameliorate the dual disasters at Docklands: Development Victoria closing Central Pier and COVID19. Alto Cibus Consultancy was commissioned by Development Victoria and the City of Melbourne to prepare a draft Activation Strategy. It is gratifying to note that Alto Cibus cited maritime heritage as an asset which was raised by many stakeholders, recognition that heritage is indeed a valuable asset. Anticipating the inevitably adverse impact on all types of marine activity of this dire situation in Docklands, the MMHN Board had already been working on an activation proposal to generate employment, education and entertainment. In essence it involves a waterfront, multi-level installation involving THE most appropriate building material for Docklands.ie. shipping containers which will enable maritime exhibitions and large external projections to 'illuminate' in more ways than one – education and entertainment. Most importantly they will attract attention and interest around maritime heritage. See the MMHN website for details of this MMHN Installation Proposal. www.mmhn.org.au

Merchant Navy in Victoria

Many members of the MMHN are united in acknowledging the invaluable service of merchant seafarers in times of War and in peace. Some might not be aware of the memorial in the CBD at Southbank near the Polly Woodside.



Nor perhaps recall the forthcoming annual **Merchant Navy Day** commemorative ceremony on 3 September at the Shrine of Remembrance. There is renewed interest from MMHN members to enhance this Merchant Navy memorial on Southbank - perhaps with a flag pole in the form of a ships' mast. MMHN Member Michael Taman explains that ***"The Red Ensign was made the official flag of the Merchant Navy our National Flag before the Blue Ensign. The Red Ensign flag goes back many 100's of years. Some 26,000 Merchant Navy Seafarers lost their lives in both World Wars in WW2 including Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders and Australians. Flying the Red Ensign has significance not only in Victoria but all over the World, The Red Ensign can only be flown from public building on the 3rd of September marking the day that the WW2 commenced and the first person to lose their life on that day was a Merchant navy Seaman who died when his ship got torpedoed"***. The Australian Red Ensign resulted from the Commonwealth Government's 1901 Federal Flag Design Competition which required two entries: a flag for official Commonwealth Government use and another for the merchant navy. [Wikipedia](https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/commemoration/commemoration-days/merchant-navy-day) See <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/commemoration/commemoration-days/merchant-navy-day> For further information on the Merchant Navy, we recommend that you read the Commemoration Day Addresses. See <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/commemoration/commemoration-days/merchant-navy-day> Or the recent Occasional Paper 'Call the Hands' April 2020 Issue No,40 See https://www.navyhistory.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Occasional-Paper-76_The-Navy-and-the-1918-19-Influence-Pandemic.pdf

US Navy historic visit to Melbourne

An anniversary to note: Probably the largest naval visit to Melbourne by the US Navy, occurred between **26 July and 6 August 1925**, when 57 vessels of the US Navy, carrying some 25,000 officers and crew arrived in Melbourne. Under the command of Admiral Robert E. Coontz, they left San Francisco in early June 1925, sailing first to Hawaii where the fleet was engaged for several weeks in exercises before proceeding to Australia on 1 July, via Pago Pago in American Samoa. Rendezvousing off Gabo Island on 21 July, the fleet divided into two contingents that headed simultaneously to Melbourne and Sydney. Melbourne, as the official capital of Australia and temporary seat of Federal Parliament, received the larger contingent of 43 vessels, including the flagship USS **Seattle**, 3 battleships (USS **Pennsylvania**, USS **Nevada** & USS **Oklahoma**), 4 light cruisers (USS **Richmond**, USS **Trenton**, USS **Marblehead** & USS **Memphis**), 29 destroyers and 6 support ships. Meanwhile, Sydney with its deep-water harbour hosted the eight largest battleships and remaining support vessels. See Royal United Services Institute of Victoria, Vol.1 Issue 10,20 July 2020.



The destroyers (and others) at Victoria Dock - larger vessels docked at Station Pier

Drama and death off Williamstown

Another Anniversary to note – and one that some MMHN members may even remember! Wednesday August 9th 1972, **The Herald** newspaper carried huge banner headlines reading **"5 TRAPPED AS TUG SINKS"**. At 6.50 am in heavy seas and 45 mph winds half a mile off Gellibrand pier **"The tug 'Melbourne' went down while sailing under the bow of the** 13568-ton passenger ship **'Nieuw Holland'.** Eye witnesses described the scene: **"One minute the tug was towing the 'Nieuw Holland', and the next minute I looked up, and it was upside down". "It turned right over, not just on its side, but right upside down with its bottom up."** The tug sank within 3 minutes. **"Five tugs and the Harbour Trust boat 'Versatile' were out search for survivors 10 minutes later. Five of the tug crew, including the Captain, were thrown clear at the collision."** The rescuers struggled quickly to partially re-float the tug which settled about just below the water line, raising hopes that five missing crew were alive trapped in air pocket. r. Eight divers attempted to enter the vessel without success. MMHN is grateful to the Jenkins Family of Werribee for drawing this tragedy to our attention. They contacted MMHN to donate a wonderful painting of the Tug **Melbourne** (formerly named the **Howard Smith**) together with a collection of newspaper clippings. Given that tugs are, of course 'specialist ships', these items are now in safekeeping with OSSA.



Mission to Seafarers – exciting news

An earlier MMHN Update made reference to short film **'Harbour Lights - Women with a Mission 1914-18'** produced in late 2019 and launched in March 2020. The film has now been entered into multiple film festivals including the Victorian Community History Awards, Melbourne Women in Film Festival, Human Rights Arts & Film Festival (Vic), North Bellarine Film Festival (Vic), Geelong Independent Film Festival (Vic), Melbourne Short Film Festival, Veterans Film Festival (Australia), Sydney Women's International Film Festival, International Maritime Film Festival, International Films Festival, JachtFilm (Poland) London Short Film Festival, Glasgow Short Film Festival, Close Up Edinburgh DocuFest, and the Annual Copenhagen Film Festival. All of this invaluable 'exposure' will, of course, enhance the careers of all concerned but – importantly will also serve to raise the profile of the Mission to Seafarers and Melbourne's rich maritime heritage. It features Melbourne historians, commentators, archivists and architects and rare footage and images of sailing and social life in and around the ports of Melbourne. **MMHN congratulates all concerned and wishes them great success.**

We encourage you to see this film if you have not already done so. See <https://windsky.com.au/harbour-lights/> or <https://youtu.be/RDU9xvImxns>

Cruise Shipping during the Pandemic

Since mid-March, most of the world's 400-or-so cruise ships have been idle - save a few repatriating crew members from every corner of the globe. The rest are sitting idle in cruise ship purgatory, unable to sail commercially for the foreseeable future. The global pandemic isn't just about cancelled voyages. The ships themselves are at serious risk - mechanical issues, hurricanes, regulatory hurdles, surveys etc. The scale is catastrophic for the entire industry. Demolition is one solution in staggering numbers - 98 ships were broken up in the second quarter of 2020. Sixty ships were sold to the beaches of South Asia, where, despite the majority of yards being closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, shipbreaking continued, putting workers' lives at risk. A fascinating account of precisely what faces cruise shipping during this protracted lay-off is presented in **The Pulse**, MNA Circular #14, 29 July 2020. See https://gcaptain.com/the-worlds-cruise-ships-cant-sail-now-what-to-do-with-them/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Gcaptain+%28gCaptain.com%29&goal=0_f50174ef03-26e150c929-139894965&mc_cid=26e150c929&mc_eid=4c72dd368

MMHN Advocacy this month

The MMHN Board and various MMHN Special Advisory Groups (SAGs) connections this past month included:

- Melbourne Water
- City of Melbourne
- National Trust
- International Congress of Maritime Museums (ICMM)
- Immigration Museum
- Merchant Navy
- Royal Australian Navy
- Navy Victoria Network
- Kangan TAFE
- World Skills
- Victoria University
- Alto Cibus Consultancy
- Docklands News
- Mission to Seafarers

In conclusion - As this second Lockdown grinds on, we trust that you enjoy this Update – and we encourage you to continue share your knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm in relation to maritime heritage – and maritime matters in general!

Do keep well

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The logo consists of a teal square with the words "MELBOURNE MARITIME HERITAGE NETWORK" in white, stacked, sans-serif capital letters.

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We invite you to join now

Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network

The membership form is available on <https://www.mmhn.org.au/>