

# MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL

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*A quarterly publication of the  
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*The Polish brig Fryderyk Chopin, October 2010  
(Some days you should just stay in bed!)*

*See article page 3*



The Maritime Heritage Association Journal is the official newsletter of the Maritime Heritage Association of Western Australia, Incorporated.

All of the Association's incoming journals, newsletters, etc. are now archived with Ross Shardlow who may be contacted on 9361 0170, and are available to members on loan. Please note that to access the videos, journals, library books, etc. it is necessary to phone ahead.

(If you have an unwanted collection of magazines of a maritime nature, then perhaps its time to let others enjoy reading it. Contact the Association; we may be interested in archiving the collection.)

Material for publishing or advertising should be directed, preferably typed or on disk, to:  
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# Annual General Meeting

**Where: 12 Cleopatra Drive, Mandurah**

**When: 10am, Sunday 29 March 2015**

**Come for morning tea and stay for lunch  
(for catering purposes please let us know if you are coming )**

**Those friends who do not want to attend the AGM meeting might like to take part in making ANZAC poppies for display at the coming Centenary Celebration.**



**We can cut felt, knit or crochet our poppies.  
Patterns and wool, etc. will be supplied.**



# Ships of the State Shipping Service

By Jeff Thompson.

## No. 35 *Angela Smits* Official No: 7712066

On the 26<sup>th</sup> November 1981 the *Pilbara* on its second voyage to Darwin became grounded off Derby and severely damaged her hull. Temporary repairs were made to the hull to enable the ship to continue her voyage to Darwin to unload the cargo including bulk cement. Permanent repairs were arranged to be carried out in Hong Kong. The Dutch ship *Angela Smits* was then chartered to operate as a replacement vessel from January to April 1982, retaining a Dutch crew. However the hull was not strengthened to allow for the sitting on mud at low tide at some northern ports.

The *Angela Smits* was built by De Groot Van Viet Scheepswerf and Machinefabriek B. V., Holland (Yard No 401) in November 1980 for Mr Marinus Smits, Rotterdam, being one of a series of generally similar vessels. She was 3,970 gross regis-

tered tons, 7,800 deadweight tons with a length of 98.18 metres overall, 17 metres breadth, 5.74metres breadth. One 8-cylinder MAK diesel of 2,850 bhp was geared to a single screw giving a service speed of 12 knots.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> January 1982 the *Angela Smits* arrived in Gage Roads on her delivery voyage. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1982 departed Fremantle on her last voyage to Darwin. Being returned to her owners at Darwin on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1982.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> February 1986 *Angela Smits* developed a severe list in the Bay of Biscay on a voyage Norway to Queensland with a cargo of ammonium nitrate, after a cargo shift in heavy seas. It was last sighted on 27<sup>th</sup> February 1986 in position 47.38N, 07.36W in a semi submerged state and is presumed to have sunk soon after, the crew of 13 being saved.



## *Fryderyk Chopin* Cover photo

On 29 October 2010 the Polish brig *Fryderyk Chopin* lost both masts when hit by a gale and big seas 100 miles off the Isles of Scilly, south-west England. Because of the tangle of rigging and spars the master was reluctant to use the vessel's engine, and a Mayday call was made. A small trawler, the *Nova Spero*, Captain Shaun Edwards, was the nearest vessel. The trawler towed the *Fryderyk Chopin* to Falmouth, the tow

taking three days. The brig was on a voyage from the Netherlands to the Caribbean. On board were a crew of 47, of whom 36 were trainees aged just 14 years.

The 306-ton *Fryderyk Chopin* was launched at Gdansk, Poland, in 1992. It had a length of 181 ft, beam 28 ft and depth 13.1 ft. The sail area was 12,900 square feet, and it was fitted with a 520 hp diesel motor.



# The Ditty Bag

An occasional collection of nautical trivia to inform, astound, amuse and inspire.

*(The inspiration could take the form of contributions to this page!)*



*Australia II* which won the America Cup in 1983 was 64.7ft long, 44.2ft waterline length and had a displacement of 23 tons. The American yacht *Reliance* which won the cup 80 years earlier in 1903 had a length of 143.8ft, waterline length of 89.8ft and a displacement of 140 tons. Their sail areas were, respectively, 1,820 and 16, 159 sq. ft.

**Devil's claw:** A very strong kind of split hook made to grasp a link of a chain cable, and used as a stopper.

*The Word Port is frequently substituted for the word Larboard and as...the distinction between Starboard and Port is so much more marked than between Starboard and Larboard, it is their Lordships' direction that the word Larboard be no more used.*

Admiralty Order, 22 November 1844

Matthew Flinders sights Cape Leeuwin again! Professor Matthew Flinders of Murdoch University has recently become Patron of the Augusta Historical Society.

Three ships of the Honourable East India Company are stated to have sighted Point Cloates in the year 1620. These were the *Royal Exchange*, *Unitive* and *Beare*. Are there any earlier sightings?

A naval barge has at least 10 oars, while a pinnace has only eight.

The 40-ton Thames barge *Defiance* was built at Maidstone in 1789 and continued trading until 1928—139 years of service!

The turnbuckle was invented in 1470 by an Italian Renaissance artist named Francesco di Giorgio as a dental instrument to straighten teeth. It was re-invented in the 1870s as a device for tensioning telegraph wires.

When the Orient Line wished to name a new liner *Orion* the company found that there was a Thames barge already registered with that name. As the company really wanted the name for their new

ship they had to make a considerable payment to the barge's owner for him to change his barge's name. The barge's new name was, appropriately, *Gold Belt*.

In late 1931 the Yanchep Inn was rebuilt. During the rebuild the framework and rafters were constructed from the deck timber of the Stateship *Eucly* prior to its scuttling off Rottnest. The ship's galley stove was fitted to the inn's kitchen.

Anna Leonowens, the main character in the musical *The King and I*, lived in Western Australia for four years from 1853 to 1857. She and her husband, Thomas, were on the barque *Alibi* which stranded near the Moore River en route to Melbourne. For part of that time the family lived at the Convict Depot at Lynton, Port Gregory, where Thomas was the Commissariat Storekeeper.

Once an offer for a ship has been made subject to survey the surveyor must confine his remarks to the condition and strength of the hull, spars, sails and gear. He cannot comment on the shape of the craft nor whether she is suitable or not for the purpose for which she is being bought.

World-wide acceptance of Greenwich as the datum point for the measurement of longitude did not occur until 1884.

In England an Act of Parliament was passed in 1808 requiring bodies cast ashore from shipwrecks be given Christian burial in consecrated ground. There were rewards for this—5/- for reporting the finding of a body, 1/6 for transporting the body to the graveyard and a further payment of "beer money" if the body was in an advanced state of decomposition. Failure to report a body resulted in a £5 fine.

In 1837 a contract was placed by the Admiralty for 200 tons of "native mahogany". The wood was cut from Sir James Stirling's property at the Vasse by Henry Trigg.

The Colonial schooner *Champion* cost £1,500.



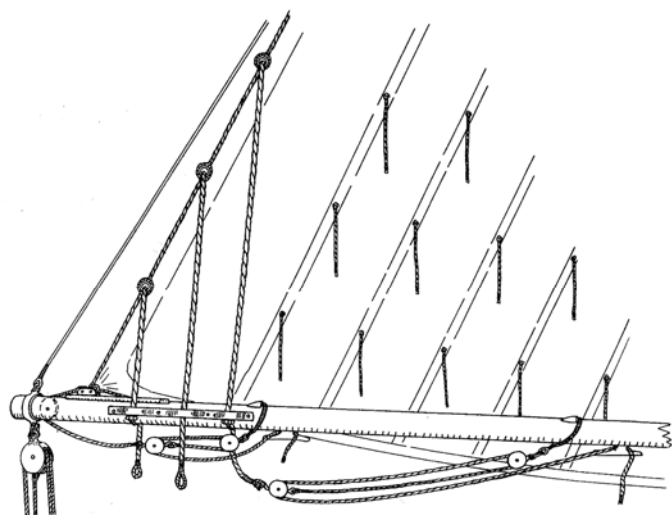
# QUIZ

## Answers to December

1. A fore-and-aft sail is reefed at the bottom. A square sail is reefed at the top.
2. Lieutenant James Nias Croke was the Harbour Master at Fremantle.
3. At 39 m, the lighthouse at Cape Leeuwin is the tallest lighthouse on the mainland of Australia. From completion in 1896 until 1932 it was also the tallest building in Western Australia. Cape Wickham lighthouse on King Island, Bass Strait, is the tallest in Australia (48 m).

## Quiz

1. Where is the highest lighthouse in Australia?
2. What does the symbol P.D. on a chart stand for?
3. The town of Cervantes north of Perth is named after an American whaling barque wrecked near there. In what year was the *Cervantes* wrecked?



## NOTICE.

**T**HE Steamer "LADY STIRLING" will, until further notice, make her departure from Perth and Fremantle as hereunder specified:—

### From Perth

Monday	...	8 a.m.
Tuesday	...	8 a.m. and 3 p.m.
Wednesday	..	2 p.m.
Thursday	...	8 a.m.
Friday	...	8 a.m.
Saturday	...	8 a.m.

### From Fremantle

Monday	...	3 p.m.
Tuesday	...	12 a.m.
Wednesday	...	7½ a.m. and 4 p.m.
Thursday	..	3 p.m.
Friday	...	3 p.m.
Saturday	...	3 p.m.

**CARGO** taken from Jetty to Jetty at the rate of 10s per Ton.

Goods to be placed on the Jetty or booked in Perth at Mr C. Clinch's, at Fremantle at Mr King's, one hour previous to the departure of the steamer.

### Fares:—

Fore Cabin	..	1s d
Aft Ditto	.....	2s 6d

ROSS RICHARDS HORNFRAY.  
Perth, May 21, 1857.

## Notice

**MHA member Peter Board has sent me an email with the following information:**

I have a comprehensive library of Naval and Maritime interest including ship prints and paintings, original archaeological reports on whaling and pearling in W.A. as well as government annual reports on the Pearl Fishery dating from 1876. I was personally involved in W.A. Museum archaeological studies of the pearling and whaling sites around the Dampier Archipelago and at Cossack during the 1970s and 80s. These reports and the library in general are available for study purposes by any of our members by arrangement.

Peter's email address is: loub@iinet.net.au



# My time on the *SINGA BETINA*

## Part 2 of Ted Whiteaker's article.

We finally set off on our voyage to Indonesia on 06 August 1981 with seven persons on board, heading for our first port of call, Kupang, in West Timor. The month of August has a mythological reputation for gusty winds, but apart from a reasonable breeze that blew us out of Darwin Harbour, we had only miserable zephyrs and calm seas until we reached the Timor coast. The boat's propeller shaft was only an inch-and-a-quarter in diameter and vibrated just enough to make me uncomfortable about using the engine unnecessarily, but we still motored most of the way. Most nights were flat calm with a gentle swell, so we would heave-to and drift for the duration. If a breeze appeared at any time we would pull the sails up, but generally there was no wind and we would start the engine after an early breakfast, and a quick swim if there were no sharks around. The deep ocean visibility was a pleasant change from the rather drab green and opaque waters of Darwin Harbour, and the sharks could be spotted by a lookout on deck while far enough away to allow for motivated swimmers to exit the water. *Singa Betina* dawdled on through the doldrums, and it took nine days to reach Kupang.

We arrived in Kupang at 10.30 am and dropped the pick off the beach at Namosain. We were immediately surrounded by dozens of sampans, and invaded by scores of kids running amok all over us. When we eventually saw them off, the loss of a few small items was noticed, as well as the damage to the Hydroseal paintwork on the hull. Hydroseal was a fibrous bituminous coating that was cheap, a dull black in colour, and stuck fairly well to the hull, although sometimes air pockets would exist where the seal had failed to stick for some reason, and these could flake off if provoked. The sampans bumping against the hull, and the thoughtless exuberance of youth as they clambered in and out of them, produced a set of pockmarks around the hull showing the underlying original white enamel paintwork. We quickly learned to tell the kids to "come back tomorrow", and always had our eyes peeled for theft.

One benefit that came from dealing with the kids was the enforced language lessons. Some of them had a word or two of English, but not much. I had a small English-Malay pocket dictionary, and I would look up the words they spoke, and work out a reply using a notebook. It was

laborious and slow at first, but the kids tended to ask the same old questions (where you from? where you going? when you leaving? etc.) and it did not take long to become reasonably proficient with basic conversations along those lines.

We checked in with the Harbourmaster, Customs, Immigration, the Police Chief, the Army, and the Navy. It took three days to do the rounds due to a public holiday and a weekend occurring. We left on the fourth day and sailed down to Baa, on Pulau Rote. I was not one hundred percent happy with the bend of *SINGA BETINA*'s mast, and was on the lookout for a tall, straight tree for a replacement, and it was said that there were boatbuilding villages on the island. Baa is the main town, a small place with only a police officer to attend to arrival formalities. Unfortunately, I had not realised that we were supposed to backtrack through the officials in Kupang before departure to get a harbour clearance, but after a bit of tut-tutting and explanation of the rules, the friendly Baa policeman went on with the paperwork. He asked about firearms, and whether we had any flares. I told him we had no firearms, but we did have eight flares. This put a cat amongst the pigeons.

He regretfully informed me that I had to hand the flares over to him, as they were prohibited items in Indonesia. I asked if I could get them back when we left Baa, but this was not possible. The flares would be sent to Naval HQ in Bali, and when I got there, I could apply to get them back. The discussion became quite intense as I grappled with the lack of logic in the rules, and a Portuguese resident called John, who spoke excellent English, was called in to interpret. I eventually realised there was nothing I could do to influence the procedures, and reluctantly accepted the status quo. John said the policeman was sorry, but these were the rules, and he hoped I was not unhappy. I said I was indeed unhappy, but I was unhappy with the rules, not with the policeman. This pleased the policeman, and we parted amicably, although I remained disgruntled by the loss of the flares.

A couple of days later we were about to leave for Kampung Oelaba, a boat-building village a bit further round the coast of Rote. Mindful of the need for a departure document from Baa, I went to see the policeman. We chatted while completing the formalities, and shook hands. As I



was about to leave, he quickly opened his desk drawer, and thrust the flares into my hands as a goodbye present.

Oelaba was a disappointment, a shallow and exposed anchorage with little evidence of boatbuilding and no tall trees in sight. The villagers were friendly, but there was no point in being there and we left the following morning for Ende, on Pulau Flores. We were finally getting some decent intermittent winds, and *SINGA BETINA* was proving to be very sea-kindly and well behaved. At Ende, we found some straight lengths of excellent and cheap bamboo, and lashed a piece either side of the boat from the shrouds to the poop rail, which gave a remarkable psychological lift to our sense of security when getting about on deck while under way. We wended our way westwards to the spectacular bay at the south of Pulau Rinja, where we saw Komodo dragons stalking the beach and enjoyed a day of skin-diving in pristine waters. We were now truly in the realm of tropical islands and swaying palm trees.

While it was pleasant dallying, the season was advancing. We had decided on Kuala Terengganu, the Malaysian east coast port where *SINGA BETINA* was built, as our ultimate destination and we needed to get there before the onset of the northeast monsoon in the South China Sea. It was now September, and there was an increasing imperative to make some miles.

Leaving Rinja, we crossed Sape Strait, separating the islands of Flores and Sumbawa. With a current estimated at eight knots pouring southward it was beyond our ability to make way up the strait, so we headed for a well-defined indent in the mountainous coastline at the southeastern end of Sumbawa, hoping for anchorage until the current changed. In the late afternoon, the southern horizon became alive with a massive pod of leaping dolphins in a band stretching over a kilometer, and at least a hundred meters wide, all travelling eastward, with some doing backflips in an amazingly synchronised pattern which could be seen throughout the whole school. It was an awesome sight as we sailed on into the sunset towards Sumbawa.

We closed in on the indented bay around dusk, and it was dark as we tentatively probed the shoreline with a spotlight and the depth sounder, looking for somewhere to lodge the pick. The mountains seemed to drop vertically into the sea, and go straight down – it was 150 feet deep 25 yards from the cliff in a reasonable swell, so

we idled around under motor for half an hour until a foray into the outer current revealed a considerable slackening. We shot out and caught the tide on the turn, riding it through the night up the strait, and anchored the following afternoon at Kampung Kawienda Toi on the northern coast of Sumbawa, at the foot of the 2,850 meters of Mount Tambora. Tambora erupted spectacularly in April 1815, with an explosion heard in parts of Sumatra 2000 kilometers away. It was the biggest known eruption in the world for many centuries, and lowered the height of the volcano from around 4,300 metres to 2,851 metres. The widespread atmospheric pollution led to 1816 becoming known as “the year without summer”, when lowered temperatures were experienced worldwide. Fortunately, all was quiet while we were there.

The village headman at Kawienda Toi was a sprightly 53-year-old who had nine wives (five of whom had passed away) and thirty-one children, and claimed the secret to eternal youth was contained in his daily morning ritual of an egg yolk in local honey. I could not help wondering why, if it was so good, so many of his wives had passed on. Arsyad proved quite friendly and he was a pleasure to deal with. The best dugout canoes I had ever seen were made here from local teak, or a timber only found on Mount Tambora, known as *kayu tambora*. Up to 18 feet long, beautifully hewn, and surprisingly light, they were priced around AUD\$100. We were skinning along on our knees financially, and fortunately there were no canoes available at that time, so we left with the understanding that Arsyad would get one ready for me to collect on the return journey





to Australia. This would give me time to get the money somehow. He said there were trees suitable for masts on the slopes of the volcano, but they were difficult to get, and directed us to his sister-village, Kuwinda Nae, 20 miles further west, where teak trees were far more accessible. He thought a 40 foot mast would cost around AUD\$75. I was delighted at the prospects – although we could not afford to get one then, this was an exploratory trip and I was gauging resources. It could be well worth a journey at another time.

We sailed on to Kuwinda Nae the next day. The contrast between the two villages could not have been more complete. Kawienda Toi presented as a black volcanic beach immediately backed by coconut palms and jungle, with a neat and well-ordered community of dignified and friendly people. There was a sweet, clear spring at the top of the beach where travelling perahus could replenish their water supplies, and the land was verdant. Kuwinda Nae, on the other hand, was a dry, dusty, barren kampong of unprepossessing appearance. Rubbish and plastic bags seemed to be blowing in the wind, and the housing looked somewhat makeshift. People stared, there weren't too many smiles, and they looked hungry. The mountain looming behind looked more promising; until the headman told me there was no teak. He arranged for three of the villagers to take me up the mountain to see some alternative timber. It was a hot, dry slog into the shade of the jungle and up a steep track, to find that there were some trees suitable for masts, although the best seemed to curve slightly at about 35 feet. My mind was fixed on a pencil-straight stick with no knotholes, so we thanked them and left. There were the same canoes here too, but the prices quoted were twice the price of those at Kawienda Toi.

Pressing onwards, we left Sumbawa astern en route to Benoa Harbour on the island of Bali. We crossed the northern end of Lombok and committed ourselves to the fabled terrors of Lombok Strait. I had read interesting accounts of the strait in the pilot books, and heard a few yarns from other sailors, including Indonesians on various perahus. It seemed that if the tides and winds were wrong, things could get pretty hairy, with strong currents, rough seas and whirlpools with which to contend. During the southeast monsoon, the waters of the seas to the north of the Indonesian archipelago course predominantly southward, constrained by the islands into the narrow straits where the currents can get very strong. At the southern end of the Lombok Strait

when the south easterlies blow up in opposition to the current, standing waves of considerable size can be experienced. We were not taking any chances, and we had everything going for us. We were coming in from the north, which was appropriate for the season. It was the peak of the neap tides, so the current would be at its least strength, and we timed our entry into the strait at the top of the tide, which would hopefully sweep us down the passage overnight for a morning arrival at the entrance to Benoa Harbour.

As dusk fell we could see, directly ahead on the other side of the strait, Gunung Agung in the central north of Bali with its 3000 metre height, floating just above the horizon and drawing our attention like a magnet with its ethereal presence as it slowly faded into the darkness. An hour or two later a faint white line appeared on the horizon off the port bow, which seemed to be heading towards us. The line became more defined and was accompanied by a roaring noise. I had no idea of the nature of this thing. We had plenty of depth beneath us, and there were no reefs marked on the chart. The crew were all up and manning the ropes as a precautionary measure as it approached. It was difficult to gauge the speed of the line in the dark, but eventually it came upon us – a jolt of sloppy, rough and broken water with a current shift that required some attention to the tiller. After only a few minutes the line passed away and receded into the distant darkness, and all was routine again. It seemed to be a rogue current line, probably from a wandering whirlpool making its way up the strait. It turned out to be only a minor event, but with my fertile imagination it was also a sobering indication of possibilities under more adverse conditions.

Our journey down and across the strait was a textbook exercise. We maintained the same heading across the passage for practically the whole night, and were swept sideways down the channel. At midnight, we reduced sail in the consistent ten-knot winds, slowing our speed to ensure our approach to Benoa after daybreak, and finally anchored in the harbour around 7am. It was a smooth arrival to mark the end of stage one of our voyage.

There were other wooden boats in Benoa with sailing friends on board from Darwin, and we spent an easy fortnight while we reprovisioned and geared up for the second leg of the journey onwards to Singapore. Two of the crew left as planned, and five of us continued, leaving Benoa on 22 September 1981. While all crew had behaved well and there had been no major





dramas, it was much nicer with fewer people on board, and mealtime logistics and sleeping arrangements were much simplified. The boat was sailing well, and our gear was in good nick.

Our first stop was at Pagerungan Besar, an island in the Kangean group about 130nm north of Benoa. This was the birthplace of another remarkable vessel of some notoriety in Darwin's waterfront tales. Back in the mid-1970s, Bob Hobman, who provided me with the mast for *Singa Betina*, had a 50 foot perahu built there called *Siola Tau*, and had a few adventures on the way back to Australia. The boat was wrecked in Darwin on Fannie Bay beach in a Wet Season storm, changed ownership and was rebuilt, to complete a voyage to Bali in 1977 (Nick Burningham wrote about this journey in MHA Journal December 2007). After returning to Darwin, she hung around for a few years, and had a reputation as a leaky old sieve with rather dubious integrity of construction. Before we left Darwin on our own voyage, a fellow called Alistair was the owner. Alistair was a romantic who fell for the dream of setting off into the sunset on a traditional wooden sailing boat, but eventually realised the true nature of the beast – *Siola Tau* was a liability. Charming to look at, and oozing character, she was a fragile shell, and leaked constantly.

Alistair had split with his partner after taking on the project, and felt a bit trapped in his situation with the boat. I could relate to his circumstances quite easily. In a conversation one day, he asked me what I would do if I were in his position. I asked him if the boat was insured – it was. I then

suggested, since he really wanted to go sailing, that he put in a bit of time in the outer harbour pushing the boat to see where her limits lay. If the boat fell apart, it wasn't a good idea to set off on a voyage. If, by some miracle, it held together under pressure, perhaps it would be worth the risk. One would want to be sure that the dinghy and outboard motor were in good working condition, just in case.

A few weeks later I noticed *Siola Tau* was frequently off her mooring near the wharf while Alistair took her through her paces. He was single-handed, and often stayed out, anchoring along the other side of the harbour. Then it happened. After a hard day's sailing, he anchored in the late afternoon off Micah Beach. There was a slight swell, and the boat bottomed on a submerged rock pinnacle that punched a hole in the hull. He pulled the anchor up and hauled up the sails, but as he got under way the boat filled with water, and he got into the dinghy as she sailed down to the bottom. He said it was an amazing sight, with the sun low on the horizon and the sails shining with the reflected sunset as they sliced forward into the deep.

There was reputed to be lots of teak at Pagerungan Besar, so I was keen to check it out. We anchored off the western end of the island and went ashore to meet the headman. The villagers were friendly, and remembered *Siola Tau*. One of the headman's wives had been sick for weeks with a fever, and the headman wanted us to look at her the next day and give her medicine. None of us were medicos, but after a lot of pleading from the headman, I went back to the boat and got the

British Admiralty Ship Captain's Medical Guide, and the Ship's Dispensary, consisting of a few headache tablets, diarrhoea pills, a little quinine, some antibiotics and *Detol*. I leafed past the Medical Guide instructions for the treatment of syphilis, charmingly illustrated with explicit colour photographs, and read up on anything to do with a fever. The headman took me to his wife, who was lying on a bed with a child at her breast. The villagers crowded the space, with others outside peering in through the windows at the





proceedings I suggested the child be removed until the mother was fit, and asked questions about the patient's temperature and other vital signs, the nature of any pain etc., using my pocket English-Malay dictionary and notepad to the maximum. I palpated her abdomen and felt around for anything that might be out of the ordinary, but apart from an elevated temperature and a listless demeanour, all else seemed normal. The Medical Guide was not much help. I figured it may have been a mosquito-borne virus, and gave them the last of our antibiotics with explicit instructions on dosage. There was only enough for about five days, but it was the best we could do. The headman was grateful, if a little disappointed with the lack of a definitive diagnosis. I can't say I enjoyed the responsibility, and only hope their faith in our healing possibilities was justified.

There were lateen-rigged fishing boats here, beautifully built 18 footers made of teak from Pulau Sepanjang, 10 miles to the south. Local opinion was that there was timber available from there for masts, but I was itching to move on, so we headed off on a day sail to Pulau Araan, an isolated sandy knoll 30nm to the nor'-nor' west which, on the chart, looked as if it might provide shelter for an overnight stay in the middle of nowhere. The weather was kind to us; Araan fulfilled our expectations admirably, and we had another day off, skin-diving and wandering around the small island, which was only around 250 meters across from one side to the other.

There were masses of cartilaginous skeletons of the Horseshoe Crab (*Tachypleus gigas*) littered in the shallows of the shoreline. The animals undergo twelve stages of moult before maturity.

Judging by the prolific cartilage, it seemed as if Araan was a centre for some ritual stage in their life cycle. It was slightly disturbing to observe so much skeletal material around, raising questions about the possible health of the environment, but on board and away from the beach, it was of little importance. Apart from the little island, and the fringing coral shelf where we anchored and spearfished, we were surrounded by deep blue sea. There was plenty of room to accommodate a few old bones.

Pulau Bawean was our next port of call. The 185nm passage took us four days in listless winds. The port at Sangkapura was a pleasant little town with a friendly and eccentric little harbourmaster, and after re-provisioning, we set off on October 1 to cover the 330nm leg northwest to Pulau Belitung. We caught a following wind that persisted and was strong enough to blow us over the course in three days; our best sailing passage to date; and anchored inside a small river mouth that constituted the harbour of Manggar. This was a tin mining district, with seventeen dredges operating around Pulau Belitung at the time. We tied up alongside a steel workboat at a quiet jetty. We were subjects of some interest to the police, who thought we might be spies, but they did not press the issue other than keeping an eye on us. We stayed for two days before heading off to Tanjung Pinang, another 330nm to the NW on Pulau Bintan. Tanjung Pinang was a major centre and a bustling transit point for local travelers on ferries plying between Singapore and other Indonesian ports. Singapore was only 40nm away. Here our journey was rudely halted by a paperwork problem.

To be continued...



## A weekend of pure 'Craic and Culture'

As part of our annual Australian/Irish heritage celebration weekend, John Boyle O'Reilly Association is proud to present the award winning play 'Under Any Old Gum Tree' written by award winning scriptwriter Noel O'Neill, at 'Waters Edge' restaurant/theatre (Cobblestone Drive) located on the beautiful Leschenault Inlet in Bunbury, on ANZAC Day, Saturday April 25<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.

The weekend event will also include a guided tour (free) on the JBO Heritage Trail on the picturesque Leschenault Peninsula (Buffalo Rd) at Australind the following Sunday morning (10am) followed by a gathering of the JBO faithful at the JBO Memorial Site (11am).

Tickets are \$60pp and include entry to play, finger food (tapas) and music by WA's top Irish band Sparrow featuring fiddle virtuoso Charlie McCarthy. Bar services are also available.

Tickets are limited, so don't miss out on what will be a grand weekend of pure 'Craic and Culture'.

For bookings contact Tom Dillon on 0417 986 298 or 97 214 202 or by email: [bdillon1@bigpond.com](mailto:bdillon1@bigpond.com)

For more information: [www.jboireilly.org.au](http://www.jboireilly.org.au) or [www.facebook.com/jboireilly](http://www.facebook.com/jboireilly)



## *Sirius*

### The first Australian-built yacht to complete a circumnavigation

The first Australian-built yacht to circumnavigate the world was the staysail schooner *Sirius*. It was built for Harold Nossiter, and his crew initially consisted of his two sons, Harold and Richard (Dick), and Clive Russell. Russell, however, left when the yacht reached Colombo just before Christmas 1935, and the yacht then sailed with only the three Nossiters as crew. The Nossiters were also the first Australians to circumnavigate in a yacht. In 2010 Richard Nossiter, DSC, the sole survivor of that circumnavigation, was awarded The Order of Australia in recognition of the feat. He died in December 2013, aged 103 years.

Departing Sydney on 14 July 1935 *Sirius* sailed north to New Britain, along the north coast of New Guinea and through Indonesia to Singapore. It then went via Sri Lanka to the Red Sea and from there through the Suez Canal and Mediterranean Sea to England. The return passage was across the Atlantic and through the Panama Canal and then the Pacific Ocean, arriving back in Sydney on 20 May 1937. *Sirius* sailed 28,145 miles during the voyage, 380 of which were under power. Harold Nossiter snr subsequently wrote two books about the voyage – *Northward Ho!* covers the passage to England, and *Southward Ho!* the return passage to Australia.

*Sirius* was designed by the naval architect J.D. Thistlewaite and built by J. Hayes & Sons at Ca-

reening Cove in Sydney. Launched on 6 February 1935 the schooner had an overall length of 53.5 feet, a waterline length of 44.58 feet and a beam of 13.5 feet. It had a displacement of 33.38 tons, a draught of 7.5 feet and a working sail area of 1,660 square feet. The sails were of flax, and set on a 59-foot foremast and a 64-foot mainmast, both of Norwegian spruce. The keel, timbers and deck beams were of spotted gum, the grown stem and floors of ti-tree, the planks above the waterline and of the deck were New Zealand kauri and the planking below the waterline was Western Australian jarrah. It was fitted with an 18 HP Jersey City Standard petrol engine with a 50-gallon fuel tank.

*Sirius* was later sold, and under new ownership took part in both the 1946 and 1947 Sydney–Hobart races, although it retired from the former. It is still afloat in Phuket, Thailand, (now named *Sirius 1935*, owned by Simon Morris and still Australian registered) despite many adventures including being sunk, raised, nearly wrecked a second time, and being stranded.

Peter Worsley

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Nossiter, H., 1937, *Northward Ho! Being the Log of a 35 Ton Schooner from Sydney to Plymouth*. H.F. & G. Witherby Ltd, London.

Nossiter, T., Farewell to A Veteran Sailor: Vale Richard Harwin Nossiter DSC OAM, 22.6.1910–28.12.2013. *Signals Quarterly*, No. 106 Autumn 2014.



*Sirius passing through Sydney Heads*



# Earthquakes and Shipwrecks

## The Buried Ships of Mission Bay

This is the first of what I hope will be a number of articles by MHA member Peter W. Board

Earthquakes under the ocean can cause destructive tsunamis that have wrecked not only ships but huge sections of shore infrastructure right up to recent times, but how often has an earthquake given archaeologists an opportunity to examine the remains of old sailing ships? That's what happened in the wake of the LOMA PRIETA earthquake and tsunami that hit San Francisco in 1989. Part of the damaged infrastructure was the Interstate Highway 480 terminal separation flyover, built on concrete piles sunk into land reclaimed from Mission Bay in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. O.K. what's that got to do with shipwrecks I hear you say! For the answer to that question we have to turn the clock back to the gold rush days of 1850!

When gold was discovered in California in the late 1840's it started a rush to the fields from all over the world by people of every class of society, even minor royalty.

They came to the infant town of San Francisco overland across the plains and Rocky mountains or via the fever ridden jungles of Panama, but mostly they came by sea from the eastern seaboard of America via notorious Cape Horn. Students of maritime history will know that some of these ships were abandoned by their entire crews upon reaching San Fran. Even officers and captains went AWOL in some cases. But few will be aware of the magnitude of this phenomenon, or of the fact that some of those ships are still there today, buried under metres of landfill during late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century waterfront development. In 1850 at the height of the gold rush the local newspaper, *Alta California*, reported 776 abandoned vessels along the shores of Mission Bay. Few would ever raise a sail again.

Ships could be purchased for as little as \$500–\$1,000, and with building materials at a premium ashore hundreds were cannibalised for their timber and fittings by opportunistic entrepreneurs. Others were purchased and used as store ships or accommodation by wily individuals who could see an easier way of getting their hands on some of the gold than digging for it. On several occasions fire swept through parts of the derelict fleet and the sunken hulls became the foundations of landfill jetties. Judges ruled that grounded vessels used as store ships constituted waterfront improvements, and many ships were towed into the shallow water and deliberately sunk to be used for this purpose.

The names of most of the abandoned ships are lost to history, but not all of them.

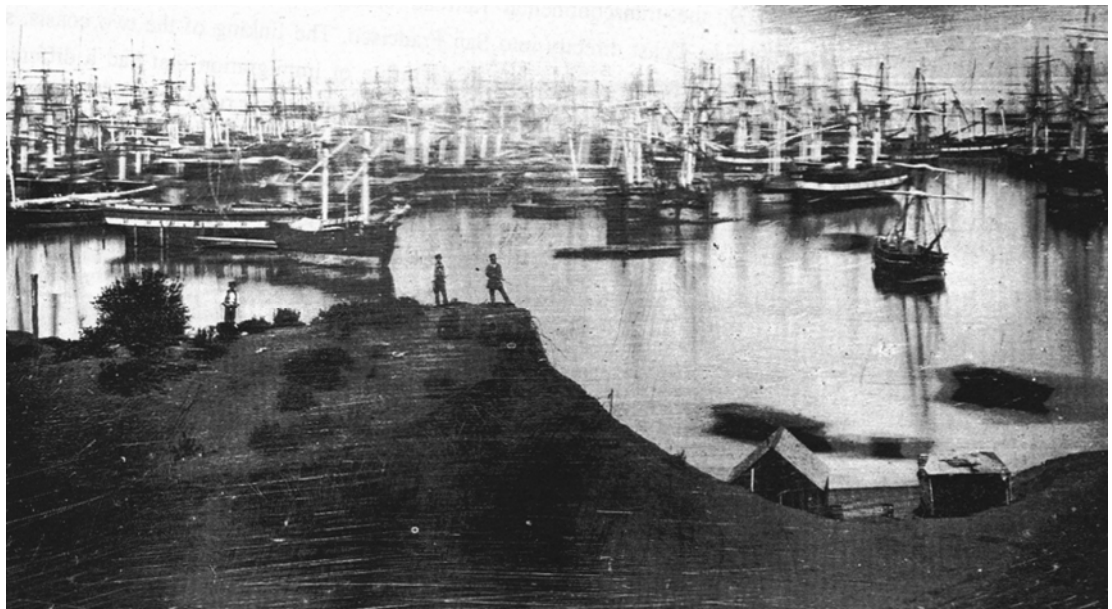
In July, 1852 a list of 31 ships names was published in the San Francisco Prices and Current Shipping List. Some of these vessels became the subject of archaeological interest during excavations for the rebuilding of concrete piles for the new highway terminal separation rebuild, following the Loma Prieta earthquake. Among the vessels in the 1852 list of names was one that had a connection with the birth of the United States of America after the war of independence. This was the *Cadmus*, the vessel that famously returned one of the heroes of the revolution to the U.S.A from France in 1825 to a tumultuous welcome. The hero was the Marquis de Lafayette, who had offered his services to American rebels as a 19 year old in 1777. A brilliant soldier, he had quickly earned the friendship of George Washington, and was instrumental in bringing about the surrender of Cornwallis and the British army at Yorktown, in 1781, ending the revolution in victory for the Americans in 1783. He returned to France and became a politician, but twice returned to the U.S.A to triumphant welcomes, and in 1805 was offered the governorship of Louisiana, but turned it down. The *Cadmus* brought him again in 1825 when he was feted as a national hero. The *Cadmus* herself must have been quite heroic: she was at least 30 years old by the time she was abandoned in 1852, and though it is not certain that she was one of the vessels examined in the archaeological survey she lies somewhere under the streets that now cover the former shores of Mission Bay. One surprising result of that survey was that none of the ships showed evidence of damage by the ship worn teredo navalis, the scourge of wooden vessels. Artefacts recovered during the survey included metal ship fittings such as chainplates, and ring bolts and unspecified stores.

Will the next earthquake give archaeologists another opportunity to study 19<sup>th</sup> century shipbuilding techniques? Only time will tell.

This article has been condensed from:

Archaeological Research Design and Treatment Plan for S.F. 480 Terminal Separation Rebuild, titled:

***Tar Flat, Rincon Hill and the Shore of Mission Bay***  
Prepared for the California Department of Transportation, in 2 volumes, edited by Mary and Adrian Praetzellis.



***Two Sections of a Panoramic View from First & Howard, Across Yerba Buena Cove, 1852/1853***

*Standing on the 60-ft sand ridge at the foot of Howard and First Streets, the daguerreotypist moved his camera to gain overlapping views of the cove, crowded with the ships that had brought the gold seekers to California and were then abandoned by their crews. The upper view looks across the cove, towards Block 1, with the mass of ships just south of Market and Mission streets. The Pacific and Vulcan foundries seen here were on First Street. In the lower view, the sharp dip in the sand hill marks the line of Howard Street. The men are standing near the site of the future San Francisco Gas Company Works.*

*Daguerreotype Panorama, California Historical Society*

**Q** At seven, we passed close on the south side of the Eclipse Isles; but Bald Head at the entrance of the sound had so different an appearance from what I had been led to expect, being a slope in this point of view, that the steep east end of Break-sea Island was at first taken for it. The error was fortunately perceived in time; and at eight o'clock we hauled up round the head, with the wind at west, and made a stretch into the sound. It was then dark; but the night being fine, I did not hesitate to work up by the guidance of Captain Vancouver's chart, and having reached nearly into a line between Seal Island and the first beach round Bald Head, we anchored at eleven o'clock, in 8 fathoms, sandy bottom.

Matthew Flinders' log on the *Investigator*, 8 December 1801.



## Messrs Lawrence – Boatbuilders and Shipwrights: Part III

The December 2014 Journal described how Messrs Lawrence, having been given notice to vacate premises, relocated to a new site near the corner of Bazaar Terrace and Mill Street. Trading as W & S Lawrence, the new boatyard commenced operations in 1891. Ross Shardlow continues with the Lawrence story and brings it to its conclusion.

WILLIAM LAWRENCE SENIOR died at his daughter's home in South Perth, 16 July 1898, at 76 years of age (*The West Australian* 21 July 1898). By William's expressed wish, his coffin was fashioned from plain jarrah and was covered by the stars and stripes of the United States (the flag was lent by the American Consul) to be borne on the shoulders of eight men in the employ of Mr Donald J. Chipper, the undertaker, and that neither hearse for the casket nor mourning coaches for the followers were to be used in the cortege (*The West Australian* 19 July 1898). Considering it was a two-mile walk from the start of the procession at Sam's house in Mill Street to the cemetery, by way of the Congregational Church in St Georges Terrace, it truly was an undertaking. William was interred in the East Perth (Pioneer) Cemetery with his wife Bessie who predeceased him by eight years.



On 29 September 1904, Frank Lawrence (William jnr and Sam's brother) died at the age of 59 years after a short illness (*The West Australian* 3 Oct 1904). Frank Lawrence, boatman and marine engineer, had for many years been in charge of the steamers owned by Messrs Randell, Knight and Co. He seemed to have had a troubled life being frequently charged with disorderly conduct and using obscene language, and was even sentenced to nine months imprisonment for resisting arrest and damaging a police constable's uniform (*The West Australian* 8 Aug 1893). When Frank's wife, 'whilst apparently in her usual health, fell back and expired', the police were again called, this time to question Frank on a suspicion of foul play. The *Southern Times* (10 Sept 1895) reported 'that the body was removed to the morgue where a careful inspection revealed no marks of violence, death being due to heart disease.' Frank lived at 267 James Street, West Perth.

### THE DROWNING OF WILLIAM JUNIOR

Soon after William senior's death, William junior moved with his wife Susannah from No.8 Mill Street to the Esplanade in South Perth, which required William to catch a ferry to and from work each day. Under the headline of 'A RIVER SENSATION', *The West Australian* (10 June 1907) reported:

The body of Mr. William Lawrence, boatbuilder of the Esplanade, Perth, was found floating in the river near the Perth Swimming Baths yesterday morning, by Water-police Constable Rewell. There were no signs of violence on the remains ... and it is thought that he must have accidentally fallen into the river when he went to catch the ferry-boat for South Perth.

The inquest found that William 'met his death by drowning, but that there was no evidence to show how he got into the water.' The inquest also noted that this was not the first time William had got into difficulties, stating: 'About August last deceased fell into the river and was rescued.' William was 57 years of age.

*Photograph of William Lawrence junior taken at James Manning's Studio, Perth, c.1880. "Bill Lawrence boat-builder Perth" is pencilled on the photo-mount.*

photo courtesy Judith Grace



### THE LAWRENCE ESTATE

One of the first things Sam had to do was to sort out the disbursement of the Lawrence estate. The administration of William senior's will had been left in the hands of William jnr but with his unexpected demise the responsibility now fell on Sam's shoulders. Sam not only inherited the administration of his father's estate, he inherited the debts and demands of creditors that went with it. Certain members of the Lawrence family were also anxious for a settlement, and the firm of W & S Lawrence was not entirely buoyant either; following their father's death, William and Sam had already filed a meeting with creditors at the Supreme Court (*The West Australian* 18 June 1901). To complicate matters, William senior's will was not straight forward; he had imposed a condition that the estate could not be sold until it acquired a value of £33,000 – as extensive as the estate was, it was not worth anything like £33,000. Very wisely, Sam placed the matter before the courts.

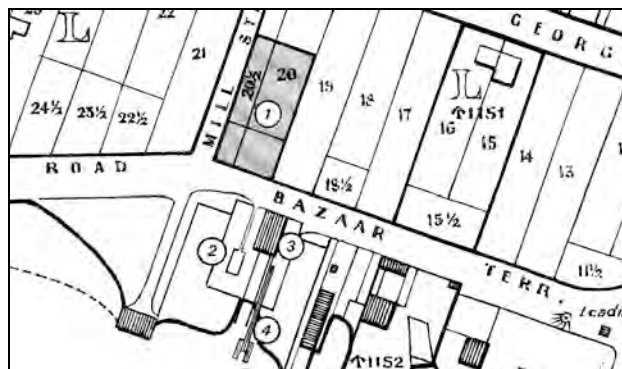
William snr had put the Lawrence estate up for sale as early as 1892; a notice in *The Daily News* (16 July 1892) described the extent of properties at that time:

TENDERS will be received up to the 16<sup>th</sup> INST., for the purchase of the whole of my Property in Mill-street and Bazaar Terrace, and known as Perth Town Lot L20 and 20½, on which stands one ten-roomed House, one six-roomed House, and three four-roomed Cottages. Also, one six-roomed House now being constructed. On this property is a large Fruit Garden, well stocked with choice fruit trees, vines, &c. The whole of this property is on rising ground, and has a magnificent view of the Swan River, and fronting the main entrance to Perth. Not bound to accept the highest or any tender.

William snr soon changed his mind; instead of selling the estate he placed another notice in *The Daily News* (18 Nov 1892) that read:

TAKE NOTICE that William Lawrence the elder, of Perth, steamboat proprietor, has made application to be registered as a proprietor of an estate in fee simple in possession in the following parcel of land situate in Perth aforesaid viz:– Portion of Town Lots L20 and L20½ ...'

By 7 February 1895 there was a notice in *The Daily News* calling for tenders 'for the erection and completion of Villas for W. Lawrence, Esq., in Bazaar Terrace.' At the time of William's death in 1898, the estate had increased to eight residences with the six-roomed house being extended into a handsome two-storey, three-unit terraced villa directly opposite the W & S Lawrence boatyard in Bazaar Terrace.



The Lawrence Estate shown as item 1 (shaded), item 2 is the site of the Swan River Rowing Club, item 3 the W & S Lawrence boatshed and slipway, and item 4 is Lawrence's jetty and wharf.

The Lawrence estate was put up as a mortgagee's sale in September 1908 and on 5 June 1909 *The Western Mail* announced: 'Sale of a City Property:– Another well-known city property has changed hands. The fine block at the corner of Mill-street and Bazaar-terrace, belonging to the Lawrence estate, has been purchased by Foy and Gibson Proprietary, Ltd.' After the payment of mortgages, loans, debts and costs the estate realised just £2,038-10s-10d, which was distributed within the family according to the direction of the court.



Kiewa after her relaunch in 2013

photo courtesy Ron Lindsay

With the sad passing of William jnr, Sam and his son Albert E. Lawrence took over the running of the boatyard, which they continued to do under the name of W & S Lawrence. It was in this yard that Sam and Albert laid the keel for the new motor cruiser *Kiewa*. Built in 1913 for the Commodore of the Royal Perth Yacht Club, *Kiewa* is now owned by MHA member Ron Lindsay, great great grandson of William Lawrence snr (see MHA Journal Sept. 2013). An article in *The West Australian* (29 Nov 1913) described *Kiewa* as:

a 'sea-going cruiser of 40ft. overall, 39ft. on the waterline, with a 9ft. 4in. beam and a 2ft. 10in. draught aft, on a displacement of 6.5 tons. Her frames, keel, etc., are of jarrah, with 1 1-8 kauri planking on 2in. x 1in. blackwood timbers, copper fastened throughout. Following the American practice, her stem has a rake of 12in., and the hull a pronounced sheer for'ard, which should produce a dry boat in a seaway.



Lawrence's yard with Valkyrie II on the slips prior to her launching, 25 September 1928. (They Kept This State Afloat, Dickson 1998, p.172)

As Lawrence's ventured from the 1920s into the 1930s, Albert E. Lawrence assumed more control of the firm, which was still building some sizeable craft. The first passenger boat to be built entirely out of jarrah, the 67ft *Valdana*, built to the order of Swan River Ferries Ltd, was the largest motor vessel on the river at the time of her launch in December 1919. The 65ft auxiliary ketch *Succeed*, built to the order of Messrs Collins and Boyd, was launched on 15 October 1924 for use as a Shark Bay wool lighter. *The Daily News* (17 Aug 1923) ran an article noting:

Messrs. W. and S. Lawrence, whose name as shipwrights is part of the history of Perth, are very busy, and have on their stocks two vessels. One is an auxiliary (sail and motor) craft, which is being built by Mr. E. Tomlinson, who intends using her outside for cruising. Her dimensions are 43ft. over all by 12ft. beam, and her draft will be about 6ft. ... The other craft is a motor launch cabin cruiser, which is being built for Mr. J. Winterbottom, who finds recreation on the river during the summer months. So far only the keel and stem and sternposts and moulds are in position, but judging from these the launch, when finished, should be a roomy and speedy craft. She will be 40ft. over all, with 9ft. beam, and a draft of about 3ft. 6in.

This proved to be the beautiful *Nokomis*, which still graces the Swan River, and has been housed in the Forrest Boathouse in Freshwater Bay since 1945. Like her other survivor *Kiewa*, *Nokomis* was also designed by Mr John Easton. On 25 September 1928 *The West Australian* recorded that another Val boat, the *Valkyrie II*, also built to the order of Swan River Ferries Ltd, 'was successfully launched from the slips of the builders, W. and S. Lawrence, at their shed in Bazaar-terrace, yesterday afternoon. A double-decker vessel, the Valkyrie was designed by Mr. T. Hill and is 61ft. long with a 13ft. beam and a 4ft. draught.'



Aerial photo of Lawrence's yard taken by Fred Flood in 1932. The large vessel on the slips in front of Lawrence's shed (centre left) is the *Silver Gull*. Detail from photo BA2186/1-35 courtesy SLWA

On 24 November 1932, Lawrence's launched the 174-ton motor yacht *Silver Gull*, built to the order of scientist-adventurers Captain and Mrs J. R. Grey. *The Daily News* (23 Jan 1932) proclaimed:

W. A. CREATES SHIPBUILDING HISTORY with the 85ft twin-diesel yacht being 'easily the largest motor-ship yet built in Western Australia and believed to be one of the biggest yet tackled in Australia.

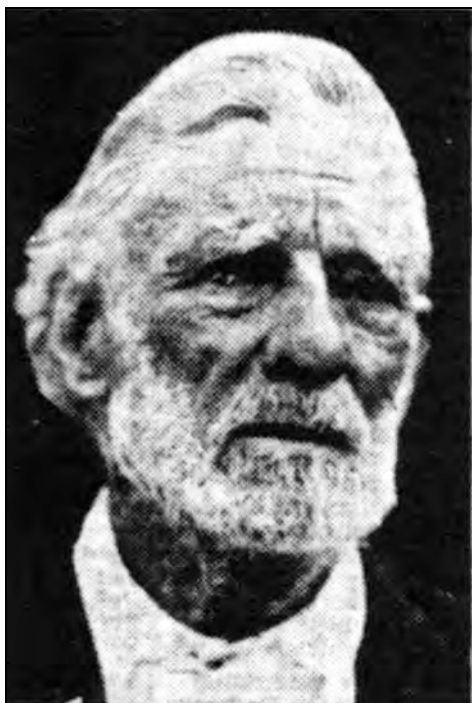
While the decks and deckhouses were made of teak, the keel, ribs, planking, stem and sternposts were made of jarrah, the heavy naturally shaped timbers coming from the University grounds at Crawley. Crewed by local sea scouts, *Silver Gull* made a scientific and pleasure cruise to the Kimberley coast collecting marine specimens for the British Museum. *Silver Gull's* second trip to the Kimberley was shrouded in mystery when she took a party of Japanese mining engineers, surveyors and business executives from the Nippon Mining Company to examine the rich iron ore deposits on Cockatoo Island. In 1935 Captain Grey sold the *Silver Gull* in Singapore where she was put into commercial work trading with passengers and cargo between Singapore and Lingga Island.





Photo by Frederick Flood of the auxiliary yacht Silver Gull making her departure from Fremantle 3 February 1934. The unsightly deckhouse was designed for easy removal after completion of the scientific cruises to allow the vessel to be turned into a South Sea island trader. The dummy funnel was actually a water tank.  
photo courtesy SLWA BA2186/96-115

#### SAM LAWRENCE – VETERAN BOATBUILDER



(The Western Mail, 8 August 1935, p.15)

Sam was still working at the yard in his 80th year when interviewed by Victor Riseley for *The Sunday Times* (22 Jan 1933), which favoured Sam as ‘An Eighty Years’ Swan River Idyll’ who was ‘born 300

yards from the spot where he still works at his trade – the Lawrence boat-building shed.’ Sam left his home at No.6 Mill Street in 1904 and moved to 274 Subiaco Road, Subiaco. He was still living in Subiaco when his beloved wife Betsy died 20 January 1935 but moved to West Leederville soon after. At the time of Betsy’s death Sam was still registered as a ‘Boat Builder of Bazaar-terrace, Perth.’ Sam, like his brother William, also went prospecting, had shares in mining ventures, and was a keen oarsman. His sporting passion, however, was cricket – a prominent cricketer throughout his life, he started at the age of 14 years at the Government Boys School and played his last match when he was 68 years old. A round-arm bowler, he was one of the founders of the WA Cricket Association and was also a foundation member and skipper of the old Austral Cricket Club that was formed in the 1890s. On 8 February 1940 *The West Australian* reported, ‘dear old Sam Lawrence, still on deck at 87, and a regular attendant and keen onlooker at the veterans’ annual matches’. Up to that time Sam had always been given the honour of bowling the first ball at the veterans’ matches.

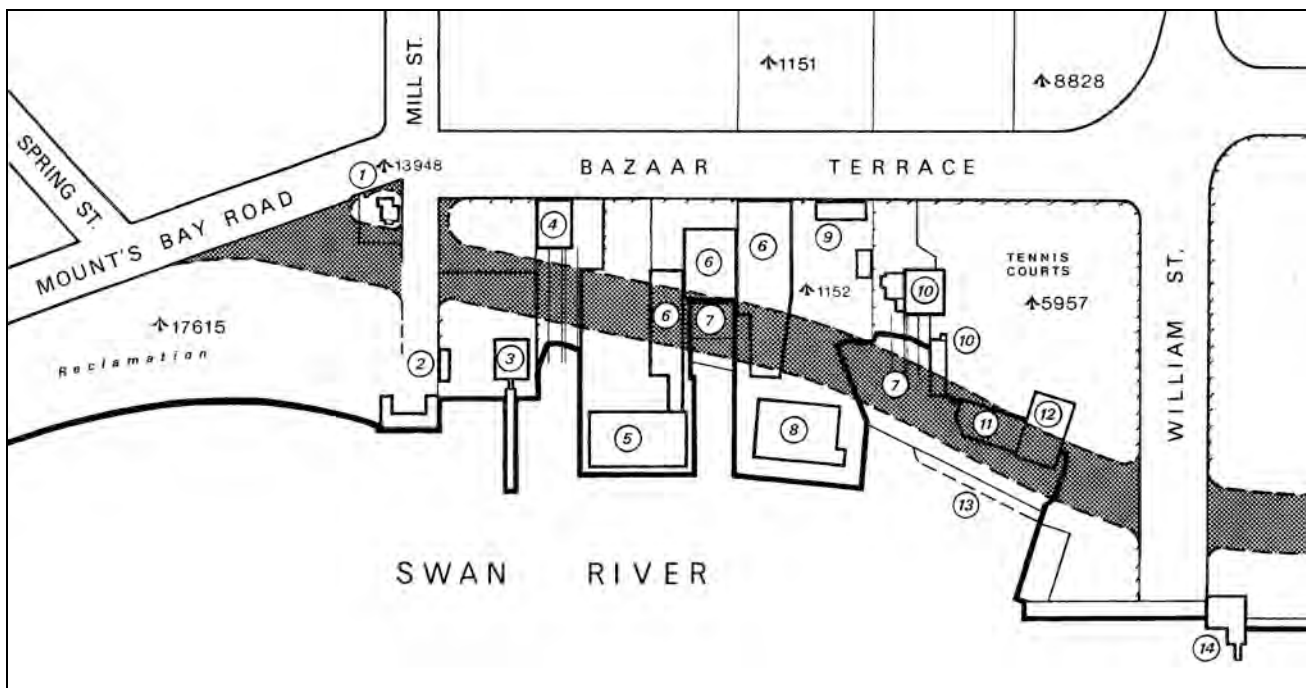
Sam Lawrence, retired boat builder of No.1 Joseph Street, West Leederville, died at Subiaco 17 March 1943 at the age of 89.



## RIVERSIDE DRIVE

The development of modern road transport sounded the knell for the river lighterage trade between Perth and Fremantle. Though in a state of steady decline from the competition with road freight, the lighterage business was still viable into the 1930s supplying trade goods direct to the warehouses and freight offices of Perth's biggest stores. Ironically, it was the insufferable congestion of the central city traffic that led to the closure of the Port of Perth and the shipping industry that served it. On 13 May 1937, Cabinet announced its decision to reclaim the river frontage between William Street and Mill Street to make possible the construction of a riverside-drive from the Causeway to Mounts Bay Road to alleviate the city's traffic problems. Acting Lord Mayor Cr Langley also saw this as an opportunity for the beautification of the foreshore, an aspiration of Council since the 1870s. The idea of cleaning up the Port of Perth itself had been around since 1930 when Cr Harold Boas, chairman of the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission, filed a

report that reasoned: 'Transferring of the Perth wharves would be a means of removing what is now an eyesore.' Acting Lord Mayor Langley was quick to act on Cabinet's decision with a declaration that Council was prepared to start at once. Under the heading 'Ugly Buildings Likely To Go From River', *The Daily News* (17 May 1937) echoed Council's sentiment from fifty years earlier to rid the waterfront of unsightly boatyards. *The West Australian* (18 June 1937) gave a rundown on the Government's part, the Director of Works (Mr E. Tindale) announcing the 'following buildings would be affected by the construction of the drive:—Hudson's boatsheds, the Perth Flying Squadron boatsheds, Hill's boatsheds (one of which would be cut off from the water), a portion of bulk stores attached to the premises of McIlwraith, McEacharn, Ltd., and W. and S. Lawrence's boatsheds.' Tindale's report went on to disclose: 'Under the scheme agreed to by the Perth City Council, however, the Government undertook to remove all buildings in the area within five years.'



Plan for the construction of the second stage of Riverside Drive, 18 June 1937 (shaded area represents Riverside Drive).

1. Sewerage Pumping Station.
2. T. R. Rann's Boatshed. Tommy Rann moved from Barrack Street to Mill Street in 1924.
3. Public Works Department Workshops and Jetty.
4. W & S Lawrence Boatshed and Slipway.
5. McIlwraith McEacharn Ltd and port used by the Customs.
6. Bulk Stores. The bulk store adjoining McIlwraith McEacharn Ltd was previously Melville Park Wharf.
7. Areas to be reclaimed.
8. Swan River Shipping Company. With the opening of Riverside Drive the lighterage service ceased in 1938.
9. Customs Office.
10. T. R. Hill's Boatsheds. Thomas Rowland Hill established in 1901.
11. Perth Flying Squadron Boatsheds.
12. Hudson's Boatshed.
13. Retaining wall and bank to hold back reclamation works.
14. Perth Flying Squadron Clubhouse.



The first section of the road, from the Causeway to William Street, began 25 May 1937 and was opened 3 August 1937 – a record for road making in Australia at the time. Reclamation work for the second section began in January 1938. The Acting City Engineer, Mr C. S. Patterson, commented in *The West Australian* (20 Jan 1938) that ‘A boat was still under construction in Lawrence’s boat-shed, but he expected that it would be completed and the land vacated before he was ready to take the road through.’ Frank Boan’s twin-screw *Winnilya* was launched from the W & S Lawrence yards 21 February 1938. The following day *The West Australian* recorded the event and speculated: ‘it will probably be the last vessel to be built in their present yards, which are being moved to make way for Riverside-drive.’ On 8 April 1938 *The West Australian* announced: ‘RIVERSIDE-DRIVE OPEN FOR FULL LENGTH. The whole of Riverside-drive, from the Causeway to Mount’s Bay-road, is now open for traffic.’ Despite the Acting City Engineer’s expectation, Lawrence’s boatshed had not been vacated and the shed was still extant. Riverside Drive, however, ran right across the slipway leaving the shed cut-off from the water.

#### END OF A DYNESTY

*Winnilya*, which is still very much admired at Freshwater Bay, certainly seems to be the last vessel actually launched down the ways at Lawrence’s yard. She was not, however, the last vessel to leave the shed, for on 22 August 1938 *The West Australian* announced: ‘Mr. J. D. Alexander ... now has on the stocks at Lawrence’s boat building yards, a 40ft. launch of which he expected to take delivery within a few weeks.’ By the time Mr Alexander’s boat was ready for launching the slipway had long gone. Through 1939 into 1940, W & S Lawrence continued to run regular advertisements for the sale of dinghies and small motorboats. Following the outbreak of World War II, *The Sunday Times* (7 April 1940) reported that some of the lighterage sheds were to be retained for defence purposes. If Albert Lawrence thought this might be a reprieve his hopes were soon dashed, for the report went on to state that the boatbuilders’ sheds, ‘too old and dilapidated to harmonise with a locality in the process of beautification, were to be removed.’ By September 1940 Albert E. Lawrence was winding things down and selling off the last of the timber, machinery and workbenches. On 1 October 1940 *The West Australian* ran an advertisement in the tenders column:

TENDERS are invited for PURCHASE and DEMOLITION of BOATSHED, secondhand Sleepers and Timber; also Iron Saw Bench. Particulars – W. and S. Lawrence, Mount’s Bay-rd., Perth.



*Winnilya – last vessel launched down Lawrence’s slipways.*  
photo courtesy SLWA 017021PD

The end came soon after when Gregson’s Auctioneers placed a notice in *The West Australian* (10 Oct 1940) that read:

**TODAY (THURSDAY), OCTOBER 10.**  
**At Eleven o’Clock.**  
**ON THE SITE OF LAWRENCE’S BOAT SHED**  
**BUILDING. FOOT OF MILL-ST.**  
**All Lawrence’s shed dismantled and sorted**  
**in lots to suit purchases.**

Albert Edward Lawrence of St Leonards Avenue, West Leederville, who kept the yard working to the end, died 18 November 1953 at Subiaco, aged 76.

It is with some irony that the very ‘golden age of development’ that William senior heralded with the discovery of the Eastern Goldfields, led to his own removal when the Government and Perth City Council acted on the Director of Public Works foreshore beautification plan and reclaimed the Lawrence and Son shipyard. The same happened for W & S Lawrence in 1937 when Cabinet and Acting Lord Mayor Langley acted on the Metropolitan Town Planning Commission report that read: ‘The view of the city of Perth from King’s Park and the river is marred only by the collection of unsightly, irregular galvanised iron buildings, which form practically the only blot on what is otherwise an ideal landscape.’ It is again with irony, therefore, that the very same view today is marred only by the collection of the unsightly Convention Centre, Busport and freeway interchange, which form practically the only blot on what is otherwise an ideal landscape.

Ross Shardlow



# A Gallipoli Veteran

in the centenary year of the Gallipoli landings



**P**ictured above is HMS *M.33*, the only remaining ship involved in the Gallipoli landing that is open to the public. *M.33* is a 568-ton monitor ship having a shallow draft and fitted with two 6-inch guns. The only armour plating on the ship is the 3-inch steel on the front of the gun turrets. The engine produced 400ihp, giving the ship a speed of 9 knots. It was manned by 72 officers and men.

After the war, in 1919, the *M.33* was refitted and returned to action in the Russian Civil War, where it covered the withdrawal of allied and White Russian troops from northern Russia dur-

ing the Dvina River campaign. Following its return from Russia, the *M.33* spent the rest of its active life in Portsmouth harbour.

The cost of restoration and display of the ship was £2.4 million (Aus\$4.4 million), paid for by British Lottery and the Hampshire County Council.

The *M.33* is owned by the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth, and sits in No. 1 Dock next to HMS *Victory*.

Photo courtesy National Museum of the Royal Navy.

## **Maritime Heritage Association Inc.**

PO Box 1080, Guilderton, Western Australia, 6041.

