

Melbourne – A Great Maritime City

February 2021 MMHN Update

These are clearly perplexing, unpredictable and unprecedented times. Just when we thought '*it safe to go back into the water*' so to speak and that the pandemic tide had ebbed enabling a return to near normality, yet another COVID variant mysteriously penetrated our quarantine strategies and we face Lockdown again. We are grappling with mysterious, invisible viral mutations. And of course, perplexing, unpredictable and, dare I say, unfathomable (!) maritime heritage mysteries also confound us at sea. For example:

BASS STRAIT TRIANGLE aka *The Great Ship Swallower*'

In his book *Mysteries of the Bass Strait Triangle* J.K. Loney describes the **terrible toll it [Bass Strait] has taken of ships, aircraft and men in less than 200 years**. Loney poses the question: **Do mysterious forces exert a power over this stretch of water to ruthlessly destroy with no logical explanation?** Noting **a century or so ago seafarers reported sighting more sea monsters in the waters around Australia than any other oceans of the globe. In modern times these tales have been replaced by stories of UFOs...** We are assured that **all incidents described here have been carefully researched and documented** some might say that it is quite easy (but less fun) to understand why sailing in Bass Strait was lethal. Squeezed between the northern coastline of Tasmania and Victoria's central to eastern coast, Bass Strait is studded with islands, leading to unpredictable sea conditions - Winds, tides and shallow waters result in tall, yet short, waves and the short swell often churns in conflicting directions. Recognition that Bass Strait was treacherous commenced in 1797 with the wreck of the vessel **Sydney Cove** off the Furneaux Islands. The **Eliza**, one of the vessels engaged in the salvage operation, went missing on the return voyage to Sydney. Between 1838 and 1840 at least seven vessels were lost with all hands on their way to Victoria from Tasmania. Numerous other vessels - small yachts, fishing vessels and bulk carriers - have come to grief in Bass Strait hitting reefs, running aground on the coastline or on river bars while entering port, or foundering due to stress of weather and some of these have indeed been lost being lost without a trace. Physical explanations vie with the fantastic in relation to the ocean. Although the mystique of the Bass Strait Triangle persists, geography, bad weather and poor charts probably account for the toll. Yet despite this rationality, the catalogue of vessels - not just sailing ships - literally 'lost' in this small area is intriguing. And perhaps there are actually 'monsters'; certainly there are monster waves? So make of it what you will.

See:

- <https://www.theage.com.au/education/making-monster-waves-way-beneath-the-surface-20150202-134414.html>
- <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-07-12/tasmania-west-coast-sea-monster-documented-in-national-archives/7585726>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bass_Strait_Triangle

By way of contrast: ABSOLUTELY BENIGN TALE OF BASS STRAIT

Seeking adventure amidst COVID Lockdown, in January 2021 three brothers from Ballarat, with no prior experience of ocean kayaking experience, set off from Tidal River, Wilsons Promontory to paddle three kayaks across Bass Strait, risking the feared 12 kph Bass Strait current which could easily cause a massive drift into disaster. **Aching, exhausted, triumphant and relieved - as no doubt, were their parents"** after 19 days, 340 km and 11 islands later, the brothers reached Little Musselroe Bay

on the northern tip of Tasmania. **Apart from cramps, aches, seasickness** and 40 kmh winds resulting in an enforced seven- day layover on Roydin Island, within 200 metres from their destination, a kayak udder broke. No serious mishaps (or mysteries) but much wonder at remote wild places to our south.

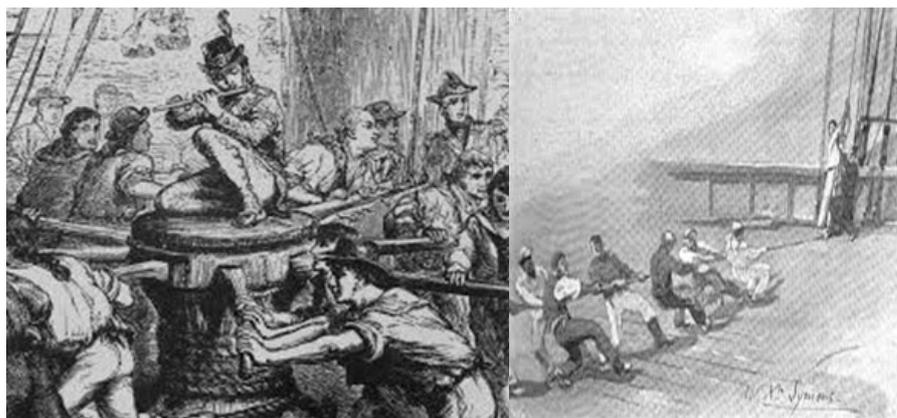
See <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-01-25/lambers-brothers-cross-bass-strait-in-kayaks/13082566>



MYSTERIOUS PANDEMIC PHENOMENON - Sea Shanty Popularity

Academic Thomas A. McKean (University of Aberdeen) writes, **when old sea shanties go viral, we know that tradition matters**. Maritime heritage enthusiasts would concur that sea shanties have lasting appeal – they have been around for 600 years and became popularised in the 18th century with the advent of very long sea voyages, such as to Australia. Shanty choruses created a sense of community aboard and the rhythm of the songs helped with tasks where seafarers needed to push or pull at the same time (e.g., lifting sails or cargo via rope). In a sense, pandemic lockdowns have a quality akin to a long 'voyage' and it has become clear that isolation heightens an appreciation of collective endeavour. Rhythmic, simple, largely 'open source' shanties have certainly stood the test of time. Many will recall from school days the song, **what shall we do with a drunken sailor?**. The lyrics of 19th century sea shanty **Soon May the Wellerman Come** which has gained so much media attention recently has Australian references. A 'wellerman' was an employee of the Weller Brothers' shipping company which was partly established in Sydney in the 1830s with an outpost in Otago, New Zealand. The song's lyrics, **Soon may the Wellerman come / to bring us sugar and tea and rum** – tell of chasing a whale for **forty days, or even more**. The famous Australian composer/folklorist Percy Grainger admired shanties and actually recorded some of the last surviving sailors that had sung shanties as part of their daily work. Sea shanties are suddenly all over social media, see

- <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2021/jan/13/not-just-for-drunken-sailors-how-sea-shanties-took-over-tiktok>
- <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/music/why-are-sea-shanties-suddenly-all-over-social-media-20210119-p56v7h.html>
- <https://www.theage.com.au/culture/music/why-are-sea-shanties-suddenly-all-over-social-media-20210119-p56v7h.html?btis>
- <https://www.smh.com.au/culture/music/why-are-sea-shanties-suddenly-all-over-social-media-20210119-p56v7h.html>



An early alert

Continuing this musical theme, Sunday, 18 April, in collaboration with the Navy Band, MMHN will host a performance on the stage at Federation Square. Hopefully, a sea shanty or two will feature!

MARITIME EDUCATION AND SKILLS

MMHN is committed to raising the profile of maritime education and skills training and is specifically concerned about the dire consequences should Australian deficiencies in maritime capability persist.

- **Australian Maritime College – Tertiary level**

The Australian Maritime College is Australia's national institute for maritime education, training and research. It operates as a tertiary educator under the aegis of the University of Tasmania. AMC is located on the banks of the Tamar River in Launceston, with a second campus in nearby Beauty Point with its small fleet of training and research vessels. Its impressive main campus includes a very capable (and recently upgraded) marine simulator, which incorporates a flexible full-mission bridge simulator. Students can manoeuvre, for example, a very large crude carrier with virtual reality. There is a 35-metre model test basin with a wave maker and wind generator that is capable modelling ship performance in any depth of water. AMC's cavitation research laboratory is at the cutting edge of propeller research, which optimises vessel efficiency and quietness. You can find more on AMC at its informative web site at www.amc.edu.au.



- **Maritime Training Package – Vocational Skills**

MMHN Skills, Education and Careers Special Advisory Group notes the recent endorsement by the federal government of the eagerly awaited Maritime Training Package which specifies the content and range of relevant courses. Hopefully this endorsement indicates a shift in government perceptions about maritime skill requirements and will result in greater engagement with the 'problem' of our declining national maritime skills capability. This perhaps illustrates the level of organisation and connection at the federal level on curriculum/training packages responding to needed skills. It may well trigger necessary action by state government authorities tasked with the responsibility for the TAFE system to promote and implement maritime training and maritime careers. See

<https://app.getresponse.com/view.html?x=a62b&m=4GXzm&mc=11&s=q3od3B&u=BLSEM&z=EVJjGiq&ov.au/Training/Details/MAR>

- **OSSA Schools Maritime Careers Project - Secondary level**

This project, the culmination of a great deal thought, practical expertise and effort, is now completed and signed off, ready to be launched in conjunction with our partners in the venture Careers Education Association Victoria (CEAV) The Program begin with two webinars for teachers (15 and 22 March 2020) followed by a students' webinar (25 March 25). OSSA members are volunteering as mentors to interested students (and teachers). The full programme will be posted on the OSSA website for interested maritime stakeholders.



- **Making Maritime Heritage Relevant to the Young**

Inspired by those working on the **Amazon** Wreck project at Inverloch, MMHN made a submission to Surf Coast Shire about a planned up-grade of an immensely popular playground at Anglesea known as both Coogoorah Park and Inverloch Park. A key but aging attraction in the park is a climbing construction which 'loosely' references the barque **Inverloch** wrecked on Ingoldesby Reef off the beach at Anglesea in 1902. MMHN took the view that it was important to continue to capture the imagination of the next generation of maritime heritage enthusiasts. Clambering around on the 'ship', children (and their parents) learn about the realities of the shipwreck coast. Council has a responsibility to acknowledge and optimize the value of maritime heritage by retaining the maritime theme of the park. Happily, the Surf Coast Shire appears to agree, acknowledging value in retaining a nautical theme, educational interpretative signage about the Aboriginal history of the location and the history of the **Inverloch** wreck. MMHN commends the Surf Coast Shire for its recognition that maritime heritage is important. For a thrilling contemporary newspaper account of the wreck of the **Inverloch**, which involved the tug **Albatross**, see <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/89512247/9168351>



The playground at Inverloch Park, Anglesea

HERITAGE FLEET

- **The vessel *Alma Doepel* – Progress on the hull restoration**

MMHN member Bill Reid reports, ***Despite Covid-19 restrictions, work continues on the hull restoration. Given the hardship and uncertainty amidst the pandemic, for a time donation funding literally dried-up – but fortunately along came a number of 'saviours' who understood the 'value' such a project and were able to assist. We sincerely thank them for their timely generosity. I am delighted to be able to report that the planking stage is complete. A total of 350 planks have been used. The final plank is about to be ceremoniously put in place at the time of writing. All the while the caulking phase has been underway – calculated at approximately 2.5 kms of caulk to seal the hull which should be completed in one month. By April or May (asap) the hull will 'Return to Water' but obviously this does not complete the project but is simply to prevent further drying out of the timbers. Restoration phases ahead include completion of the deck, rig, engineering and accommodation. The estimated cost: \$1.5m and will take two two years. Following the Christmas break, the shipwrights are back at work and, with COVID restrictions lifted, volunteers are re-emerging to resume work at a pace. Despite all the challenges of 2020, the Alma Doepel Project has continued and all is going well!*** Note: volunteer helpers are always welcome – and needed - on this project. Interested maritime enthusiasts are invited to register their interest by emailing info@mmhn.org.au



On North Wharf, Docklands

- The vessel **Enterprize**

Full of optimism, MMHN member Michael Womack writes, ***Tall Ship Enterprize is preparing to resume operations after 10 months of Covid-19 restrictions. In December, Enterprize spent three weeks out of the water at No 24 Slipway at Appleton Dock, Port of Melbourne being cleaned and checked. The Enterprize is unique in that she is the only ship in the Southern Hemisphere still using the traditional materials, methods and boat maintenance skills of the 1800s. Shipwright F.J. Darley of Williamstown along with Enterprize volunteer crewmembers used traditional methods for re-caulking a section of the port side of the ship, first raking out and then removal of old caulking between the planks of the hull. Fibres of cotton and oakum (hemp fibre soaked in pine tar) were then driven in using a caulking mallet and a broad chisel-like 'caulking iron' into the wedge-shaped seam between the planks, creating a watertight seal for the hull underwater. While in the slipway, the hull dried in preparation for the two coats of antifoul paint as protection against marine slater or Teredo worm infestation. As with all commercially operating vessels Enterprize is required to undergo periodic Survey Inspections, conducted on the slipway to comply with Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) requirements. The Survey inspection happily resulted in the declaration by the surveyor: complies with the standards that apply to the vessel to the extent that only minor non-conformities were identified that will not jeopardise the safety of the vessel or any person on board. With the resumption of sailing operation, work ahead includes tarring rigging and timbers, sails being bent back on, cleaning of all areas and servicing of mechanical equipment.*** Like all heritage ships, the **Enterprize** welcomes your engagement and support: become a volunteer crew member or support the work of the **Enterprize** in educating the young aboard the ship, booking a trip for yourself, or charter the ship for a group. Or purchase the collectible E-series number plates for your car, carrying the message 'Melbourne: City of Enterprize' (clearly the **Enterprize** Group are indeed enterprising). See www.enterprize.org.au or email sailing@enterprize.org.au .



The **Enterprize** on the slipway 2001

- **Cerberus Historic Anniversary News**

Friends of the Cerberus (FofC) anticipate 9 April 2021, which is 150 years since the arrival of **Cerberus** at Melbourne from Malta via the Suez Canal. An account of this voyage appears in the FofC newsletter informed by various diary entries of seafarers on board, a gale, 'dirty weather' and delayed departure followed by slow progress due to engine problems, but the sails enabled some progress: **the sails were used more than has been realised and apparently providing at least 3 knots alone and saving a lot of coal.** This capability was important as **Cerberus** was a coastal vessel and not able to carry the amount of coal needed for an extended ocean voyage. **Cerberus** became the first 'ironclad' vessel to pass through the recently opened Suez Canal and one diarist noted that **Cerberus** was white-washed, presumably to reduce the effect of the hot tropical sun on the iron hull. Three years later, when **Cerberus** was dry-docked, it emerged that **Cerberus** had **lost 20 to 30 feet of her port bilge board. Her sister ship Magdala attempting the same passage, broke both screws on the sides of the narrow Suez Canal.** Prior to entering the Suez Canal, **Cerberus** flew the British merchant flag 'the Australian flag' (which was the 1870 Victoria flag - the first Australian flag was not flown until 1901). The **Melbourne Punch** (13 April 1871) reported, **Lieutenant Panter having hoisted the Victorian flag before entering the Suez Canal, the Cerberus got through as a man-of-war at a reduced rate. This is encouraging, to be sure. The (union) flag, which has braved for innumerable years the battle and the breeze could not command any concession; but no sooner was the Southern Cross displayed than the Company caved in, and allowed a liberal discount. We had no idea that the terror of our name was so wide spread.**

- **Flags obviously mattered in the past – and still do !**

Flags as the means of information exchange (i.e. signaling) between ships and the shore obviously pre-dates modern technologies, yet flags retain considerable fascination among maritime heritage enthusiasts. Quoting ANFA: **in the first half of the 20th century, the Red Ensign had widespread use in Australia. The Red Ensign is the same as the Australian National Flag (the Blue Ensign). On 3 September 1901, following Federation, the Australian National Flag (Blue Ensign) became the official national flag of Australia, and has remained so ever since. At the same time, the Red Ensign became the flag of Merchant Naval Shipping, and has remained so ever since.** See <https://www.anfa-national.org.au/history-of-our-flag/anf-detailed-history/blue-and-red-ensigns/>



BLUE ENSIGN 1903



RED ENSIGN 1908

- **Pandemic Impact on Maritime Heritage in Sweden**

MMHN notes that Sweden, with charm and accuracy, describes its heritage fleet as the **floating cultural heritage of Sweden.**

Funding is a perennial struggle for heritage ships – and perhaps more so now than ever before. A report from the International Congress of Maritime Museums (ICMM) is interesting on several levels, and heading reading: **Pandemic threatens preservation of Sweden's k-marked ships.** The pandemic has hit hard the possibility of preserving Sweden's historic k-marked ships according to a recently-published report by the Swedish Maritime Museum in Stockholm. These historic vessels are an important part of the **floating cultural heritage** of Sweden, run and maintained by non-profit associations, shipping companies and private individuals. In autumn 2020, the museum sent out a survey to the owners of the country's 147 k-marked ships. It is clear from the responses received that the restrictions on travel have strongly and negatively affected the sector. Several vessels have been forced to cancel the entire sailing season, meaning zero revenue for the whole year, but there are continuing expenses for berths, maintenance, etc. Mats Djurberg, Director of the Swedish Maritime Museum, said: **Sweden has a rich cultural heritage with many k-marked historical ships, but when the revenue from the passengers is missing, the basis for long-term preservation is**

jeopardized and the report shows that we have reason to be worried about the future.



A Swedish 'K' Ship

YARRA RIVER HERITAGE

Stories of Melbourne's River – new Exhibition

Melbourne's evolution as a city, and much of its maritime heritage history is irrevocably tied to its river system. Celebrating this history is a new exhibition ***Yarra: Stories of Melbourne's River*** at Melbourne's Old Treasury Building, Spring Street. The exhibition presents a multi-layered history of the waterway known as ***Birrarung: River of Mist***. The generally tranquil Yarra River, meanders through Melbourne's urban reaches, belies its turbulent, teeming and often tragic past. The Birrarung and its swamps were not only central to sustaining the lives of the Woi Wurrung, Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung peoples but also; of course, the river both attracted and sustained European presence. Early cultural contact took place along the banks of the river. Early Europeans described the Birrarung as a 'sylvan stream'. As the colonial European population grew, the river's sweet water became degraded and its abundant swamplands were drastically re-configured to tame the periodic flooding, a swollen roaring torrent, breaking its banks, demolishing wharves, threatening factories and homes in low-lying areas. After the last 'great flood' disaster in 1891, the river was changed forever: its course was straightened, shortened and deepened into a channel when the Coode Canal and Victoria Port (now known as Victoria Harbour) were excavated. The economic prosperity of the colony relied upon the Birrarung and its estuary. During the massive influx of people in the gold-rush, observers described a sea of masts bristling beside the makeshift docks and wharves as an army of carters transported goods into Melbourne and diggers headed beyond to the goldfields and the hinterland. But in 2017 ground-breaking legislation determined right of the Wurundjeri peoples to have active involvement in the management of the waterways, ensuring that an earlier pre-European sense of Birrarung is sustained.



WILLIAMSTOWN MARITIME PRECINCT FRAMEWORK - Draft inviting comment

Williamstown is irrefutably a significant element in the early maritime heritage of this State. Given the importance of the Williamstown Precinct and the plethora of maritime heritage infrastructure assets in this precinct, MMHN eagerly awaited the GHD Draft Report investigating options for the future of the Williamstown Maritime Precinct. This Report is now out for comment.

From a maritime heritage perspective, the long and confusing Draft Report is underwhelming. Despite its wonderful photographs and diagrams, its purpose, content and outcomes are not aligned and it lacks a coherent strategy for long-term optimisation across this important precinct. The piecemeal framework proposed and the lack of a coherent strategy across the broader precinct will inevitably lead to the

destruction, either deliberate or by neglect, and subsequent loss of some of Victoria's, and for that matter Australia's, most important maritime heritage. On the one hand, there are plenty of references in the text to history, maritime heritage, cultural tourism, maritime movement, maritime infrastructure etc., but given what we all know about the marvellous maritime and, importantly, Naval history of Williamstown, it is alarming to read in the report lukewarm references such as ***The preliminary desktop assessment indicates that historic (non-Aboriginal) heritage is present within the Precinct. (!) Approvals are likely required under the Heritage Act 2017 and the Planning and Environment Act 1987 if the historic heritage places are impacted by the proposed works.*** (Indeed we would assume so!) The Draft Report also refers to the aspirations set out in the Seaworks Master Plan for long term re-development to create a '***Living maritime precinct***' confirming that ***Seaworks operations are constrained by the lease arrangements and partial use of the site by Victoria Police and Parks Victoria.*** Still? Is any of this new news?

Further, the Report lists the extraordinary number of relevant documents impacting on the precinct from a multiple responsible authorities and organisations, i.e. the perennial bureaucratic tangle which constitutes to entrap, inhibit, possibly impede, the progress of maritime planning in this State – let alone in this most significant Williamstown precinct. MMHN encourages all maritime enthusiasts to look closely at this draft report. MMHN certainly will do so. Williamstown deserves better. See:

<https://getinvolved.transport.vic.gov.au/williamstown-maritime-precinct>



Williamstown Maritime Precinct

WORLD SHIPPING SOCIETY (WSS) (Victorian Branch) News

MMHN member Steven Haby is the in-coming President of the World Shipping Society, taking over from John Bone (who remains as Acting Treasurer). MMHN congratulates John on his resilience and excellent work steering WSS during such challenging times. Maritime enthusiasts such as Steven and John fortunately continue to share their expertise within various organisations within the maritime sector. Steven manages the very fine **Prahran Mechanics' Institute Victorian History Library** (PMI), an invaluable repository for all Victorian local history since it was established in 1854. One of its primary interests is shipping and maritime history. Its collection includes the works of Jack Loney's research into shipwrecks, Peter Portman's books on shipping in Australia and more recently the history of ANL's fleet. The PMI is also a member of the Ferry Society of Australia based at Sydney. See <https://www.pmi.net.au> The PMI was also a founding member of the Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network. The WSS, PMI and MMHN look forward to much fruitful collaboration. Steven writes ***the society has a key role in recording and preserving maritime heritage for the benefit of future generations. This role can be supported through photographs, stories and ephemera (and in an ideal world a ship or two!). For example, I have a collection of photographs taken by me or obtained from others of ships and port infrastructure in Melbourne. I also have schedules for ferries and the Bass Strait shipping (from the former ANL's EMPRESS through to the current operations).*** The good news is that in February, before the lockdown, WSS managed to squeeze in a meeting at the Port Education Centre, Lorimer Street, Membership. Enquiries can be made through their Secretary at PO Box 5038, Middle Park Victoria 3206, or contact info@mmhn.rg.au

But taking a step back: what is Ship-Spotting exactly?

'Ship-Spotting' is an engrossing, rewarding hobby involving tracking, photographing and logging ship movements. Shipping is critical to the world and MMHN is convinced that it is crucial to capture the

imagination of the next generation of maritime enthusiasts - 'ship-spotting' may well be an effortless entry point to maritime matters with the young people in your world. 'Collecting' via 'spotting' is fun and images are stunning (see below). And why are container ships so fascinating? Because production is globalized, the vast bulk of all products are conveyed to us in containers by sea – and not just from point of production but global markets and trade deals result in many products making multiple journeys in containers. Shipping logistics and complex supply chains underpin the world economies and impact the environment. Should you be tempted to embark on an amazing, easy and compelling hobby, or persuade the young people in your life that ship-spotting is fun, there are instruction guides to assist identification. e.g. **Container Ship Spotting: a Beginner's Guide**, see: <https://www.instructables.com/Container-Ship-Spotting-a-Beginners-Guide>

GEELONG MARITIME MUSEUM AND OSBORNE HOUSE

MMHN remains deeply concerned about the future of Osborne House (Geelong Maritime Museum).

The City of Geelong, like Melbourne, has an extraordinarily rich maritime history. Osborne House is unique – it was Victoria's first Naval College and latterly the home of the Geelong Maritime Museum. Regrettably the City of Geelong, the responsible authority for preserving this unique maritime asset, has failed its duty. In August 2019 Geelong Council changed its approach to the Osborne Park Precinct Plan confining its scope to Osborne House and its immediate surrounds and in a new plan prioritised 'Sustainable Development', effectively downgrading heritage considerations in considering future use. It has allocated \$900,000-\$1.1million for maintenance and improvements to Osborne House, the stables, council depot and adjacent landscape. Both disappointing and alarming is the complete absence of any reference to the significance of Osborne House to our State's maritime heritage and the key maritime status of Osborne House as the First Naval College in Victoria, or of the collection and operations of the Geelong Maritime Museum which does not appear to resonate with Geelong Council Administration. Consultations with stakeholders on this project occurred, but the focus of Council appears to be sustainable community use and not due recognition or conservation of maritime heritage. Fortunately, elected Councillors saw things differently. In a meeting in September 2020, Clrs Kontelj and Aitken successfully moved an amendment which significantly shifted Council's approach towards greater acknowledgement of maritime heritage at Osborne House. Importantly, they described Osborne House as an enduring, creative, productive and protected heritage and community asset. Whereas the Administration proposed that Council merely **consider the sustainable development options for the future of Osborne House**, the councillors' amendments strengthened recognition of maritime heritage, requiring that the Project Reference Group include the National Trust Geelong branch, the Museums Association and Geelong Maritime Museum, and referred to a further report outlining options for the Maritime and Naval Collection housed in the Osborne House Stables. Clrs Kontelj and Aitken are Chair and Deputer Chair of newly established Portfolio at the City of Geelong Council dedicated to the Osborne House matters. MMHN commends the Council for incorporating these crucial changes. Also pleasing to note is reference in the amendment that: ***Any future development should consider the total restoration of the significant heritage buildings of Osborne House, as identified in the Lovell Chen Conservation Management Plan 2009, including giving consideration to its naval heritage. The heritage interpretation plan shall accompany any proposal for the future development and use of Osborne House.*** The apparent absence of engagement by the City of Geelong and the Royal Australian Navy until this point is regrettable – but moves are afoot to change this, with the Navy Heritage Branch taking an active interest in Osbourne House. See:

- <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/common/Public/Documents/8d85e17692d8276-minutes-communityfocuscouncilmeeting-8september2020.pdf>
- <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/news/item/8d7bac92a4e06e8.aspx>
- <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/news/item/8d854b4d0b7f735.aspx>



• Brief Background of Osborne House

Located in North Geelong and overlooking the city and Corio Bay, Osborne House was commissioned from leading Melbourne architects Webb and Taylor in 1858 by local squatter Robert Muirhead. Named after Queen Victoria's summer residence on the Isle of Wight, in 1900 the Victorian government purchased the property as the premier's country retreat. In 1905 the Geelong Harbour Trust was formed and in 1913 Osborne House became Australia's first officer training college. The college was opened on 1 March 1913 by the Governor General, Lord Thomas Denman who arrived by torpedo boat, and 200 invited guests arrived by train from Melbourne, including Prime Minister Andrew Fisher. During the First World War, Osborne House became a Naval Convalescent Hospital and between 1919 and 1924 was used as a base by the Royal Australian Navy Submarine Service for the J-class submarine. The Geelong Harbour Trust regained control in 1929 and for over fifty years, Osborne House was headquarters to the Shire of Corio. Regrettably, Geelong Maritime Museum formerly housed in the renovated stables of Osborne House cannot open to the public until restoration occurs.

MARITIME MUSEUM OF THE MONTH

Hong Kong Maritime Museum

MMHN notes with considerable chagrin that Hong Kong's Maritime Museum is located on its Central Pier – which is, unlike Melbourne's Central Pier, intact. We live in hope. Coincidentally this Museum also overlooks a Victoria Harbour and is adjacent to the Star ferry Terminal.

Incorporated in 2003 to showcase Hong Kong's extraordinary and fascinating maritime history, the museum, located at Central Pier 8, has backing to develop a Marine Science Centre and redevelop many of its existing exhibitions as part of the 25th Anniversary of the HKSAR in 2022. The museum is a non-profit educational institution and a registered charity founded by members of the Hong Kong Shipowners Association and the government. After a HK\$115 million redevelopment partly funded by the Hong Kong government, the museum reopened to the public in February 2013. It had formerly been located at Stanley Bay since opening in 2005, but the collection had outgrown its first building. The museum focuses on the development of boats, ships, maritime exploration, trade and naval warfare. While concentrating on the South China coast and its adjacent seas, it also covers global trends and provides an account of Hong Kong's maritime growth. It includes semi-permanent and special exhibitions, interactive displays, educational events, a café, and a museum shop. Exhibits include

- A model of a 2,000-year-old boat made of pottery from the Han Dynasty
- An early 19th century, 18-metre long, ink-painting scroll, ***Pacifying the South China Sea***, which relates how the Viceroy of the Two Guangs solved the problem of piracy on the Guangdong coast in 1809-1810
- A ship bridge simulator, a facility that provides a simulated experience to visitors to steer a variety of ships and learn the various roles of seafarers in a 'sea journey'.

Late in 2020 Museum Director Richard Wesley stepped down after ten years in the role to return to

Australia. The Museum is seeking a new Director to guide the institution over the next decade.



Finally, on behalf of MMHN, we trust this MMHN Update will entertain and inform you during this latest, very tedious Lockdown – may it be short and effective.

**Do keep well
Kind Regards
Jackie**

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Chair,
Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network
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