

BASS STRAIT MARITIME CENTRE

In the eye ...

As we put this newsletter together we have just finished celebrating National Volunteers Week. There are the amazing statistics, special celebratory activities and certificates but nothing means more than being able to say a heartfelt 'thankyou' for the volunteers who continue to contribute and are integral to the operations of many organisations such as ours. Regular positive comments are received from visitors to the Centre about the work of our volunteers.

"Very knowledgeable, helpful and friendly volunteers"

"Very Informative. Volunteer was excellent story teller"

"Well done; enthusiastic volunteers"

"So much interesting information. Enjoyed the volunteers stories"

"Really well run Centre, staffed by knowledgeable volunteers who are eager to share the maritime history of their port"

I am mindful of the history of the Centre and that its origins in the former Devonport Maritime Museum all stem from the work of volunteers. And there is a great feeling of satisfaction when former volunteers, who were somewhat apprehensive of the changes planned, come in and make a point of saying how wonderful the Centre is and they are happy with the present format.

It has been a hectic time both with public programs and exhibitions - very successful Tidal Festival activities in February, participation in "10 days on the Island" during March with Ann Morrison's exhibition "Beneath the Waterline" and currently hosting our first travelling exhibition - the "War at Sea" Panel exhibition from the Australian National Maritime Museum.

Volunteers have conducted two walks of southern Rooke Street earlier this year. Information and images have been compiled in an electronic presentation for scheduled outreach activities with the local aged care homes in June and for the Maritime and

History Talk in July.



Don River Trading Company Post 1926

From where the Centre sits we can easily monitor the activities of the river and port. Each day the rumble of engines from the *SeaRoad Mersey* and *Tamar* vessels alert us that one of the vessels is underway. Now a regular sight in the Mersey River is the new *SeaRoad Mersey II* and according to the fact sheet:

- it is the first ship in Australia to use clean, green LNG fuel-and-power technology.
- the first pure dry cargo ship in the world to use a roll on/roll off LNG supply system.
- all the ship's principal engines are dual-fuel, burning LNG as the primary source of energy to give significantly reduced emissions, minimal risk of oil pollution, greater operational efficiencies and sustainable future environmental benefits.

And of course, much quieter! The new vessel meant the loss of the *SeaRoad Mersey*. One of our regular followers reported on May 6 that "..... the SEAROAD, Nassau ex SEAROAD MERSEY, Devonport, cleared Port Dalrymple at 2335 last night heading to Auckland, NZ to refuel prior to heading to her new operation in the Gulf of Mexico by Baja Ferries." The end of an era!

For your diary

Tuesday May 23 at 7.30pm

"Having a Voice"

An evening with Peter Higgs, Assistant Research Officer, Australian National Maritime Museum. A love of historic wooden

Newsletter No. 13
Autumn/Winter 2017

Bass Strait Maritime Centre

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Opening hours:

7 days a week from 10am to
5pm (Christmas Day and Good
Friday excluded)

Entry:

Adult \$10.00

Child \$5.00

Student or

Concession \$8.00 and

Family (five) \$25.00

Simulator passes:

\$2.00 per 'Mission'
(three attempts).

*The Bass Strait Maritime Centre is
proudly owned and operated by the
Devonport City Council*

*The staff, management and volunteers of the
Bass Strait Maritime Centre look forward to welcoming you.*



boats and especially those at risk, drew a group of like-minded people together and saw the formation of the Association of Historic Boat Organisations. Hear the story and the evolution of Peter's subsequent role with the Register of Historic Vessels and what is happening in maritime circles today to identify those boats and endeavour to keep the history alive.

RSVP essential. Gold coin donation.

Tuesday July 25 at 7.30pm

"Second Glance at Rooke Street"

Our collection management team present information and images prepared for and derived from the earlier conducted walks of southern Rooke Street. Enjoy a trip down memory lane.

RSVP essential. Gold coin donation.

Friday July 28 6.00pm to 7.30pm

Devonport Jazz

Relax and enjoy the ambiance of the Bass Strait Maritime Centre and music inspired by the golden era of Jazz with the **Philéas Fogg Trio**. Andreana Micanova (Macedonia) on piano, Dan Seddon (UK) on bass and Philippe Castermane (France) on drums, will perform jazz standards from the 50s, 60s as well as more recent compositions.

Bookings essential. Entry \$15 (includes entry to exhibition area). Refreshments available for purchase.

Where is the *Julie Burgess*?

The "Australian Wooden Boat Festival Wash Up" was held for all crew and volunteers associated with the Centre recently. The photos and videos prompted stories and provided the opportunity to reflect and reminisce on the very successful venture south. See the back page for some snapshots of the event.

A highlight was former crew member Jimmy Dalton from French Island who surprised everyone with his first ever visit to the AWBF. It was the first time that Jim had seen the *Julie Burgess* since he crewed on her in the 1950s. His photos and stories of crayfishing Bass Strait kept the crew enthralled. Naturally he went on a sailing and thoroughly enjoyed being on board once more. There was also a surprise for Jim when we introduced him to Ted Plaister who stopped by the marquee. Ted was a crew member in 1946 and they both had stories to share about working aboard the ketch.

The *Julie Burgess* was featured on the Today Show weather segment in April in Ulverstone. Despite being all very last minute, the chance to take a leisurely trip to Ulverstone the day prior saw the *Julie Burgess* booked out with passengers and extras on a waiting list. Many Ulverstone residents took the opportunity to look over her before she returned to her home port the next day, some cheekily suggesting she should stay as she looked so good at the pontoon in the river.

The latest venture was a five-day nostalgic voyage to Three

Hummock Island, revisiting her former crayfishing grounds. Although the weather was a dampener at times, passengers and crew thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Managers of the island, John and Beverley O'Brien were very welcoming and in return were treated to "High Tea" aboard the *Julie Burgess*. The return trip was made via Stanley and one of the first to visit was retired fisherman, Max Hardy. The Hardy family history goes back a long way and is well known in maritime circles. Max, now in his 90s, still had plenty of stories to tell especially reminding everyone that the last time the *Julie Burgess* visited Stanley, she broke her bowsprit and had never returned. This story was a recurring theme from the local residents visiting the ketch. With such a warm reception, it is planned to visit Stanley again.



Julie Burgess moored in Stanley

A very successful season is drawing to a close but the *Julie Burgess* will continue through to the end of June with the regular public sailings as well as some special "Winter Warmers" – May 27, June 10 and June 24. A time to don the winter woollies, sit back and relax and enjoy a hot soup and savoury lunch to keep you warm! Contact the Centre for bookings 6424 7100 or bookings@bassstraitmc.com.au

The *Julie Burgess* will be laid up from July for annual maintenance and survey in preparation for a full calendar of sailings for the 2017/18 season. It will include a busy three weeks around the Masters Games which Devonport is hosting Oct 21 - 28 and is expected to bring a large influx of visitors to the region.

While she is laid up, the Open for Inspection will still continue on Saturday afternoons 1.30 - 3.30pm. Since the installation of the *Julie Burgess* story panel volunteers have seen an increase in visitors. The manufacture and installation of the panel shown below was funded through the Australian National Maritime Museum's MMAPSS program (Maritime Museums of Australia Project Support Scheme).





A Story From The Collection

The *Julie Burgess* to the rescue.....

In early 1939 the new telephone cable connecting Tasmania to the mainland across Bass Strait quickly deteriorated and a total breakdown had become imminent. The problem was how to locate the fault without replacing the entire cable.

Well-known diver, John Johnstone who was contracted for the job teamed up with his friend Harry Burgess to use his crayfish ketch the *Julie Burgess* to carry out the job. Built for the notorious conditions of Bass Strait the *Julie* was perfect for a dive boat.

Realising the old system of signalling by rope would be inadequate, the PMG Research laboratories designed a diving helmet incorporating two receivers allowing for separate transmission in each direction and a microphone enabling the diver to speak to the crew on the *Julie* via short wave 'telephone'. In an emergency, the diver could signal the ketch by a chin-operated buzzer. As the project progressed other equipment including Australia's first underwater camera was built by PMG engineers.

John Johnstone's 43 kilometre walk along the bed of Bass Strait to find the fault won him international fame.

Bargain In the Gift Shop...

50% off Skyhooks – originally \$90.00 now \$45.00

Skyhooks are a balancing figurine that were used by some people to set the night time signal in motion after dinner and stories. The rule was that everyone should be in their room and in bed by the time it stopped moving. Another rumour is that they were used in the sailors bars near the port to announce the last drink of the night.



Become a member of the Bass Strait Maritime Centre

And receive all these **membership benefits**:

- Four (4) FREE admissions to the Centre for the membership year
- Four (4) FREE passes to *Take the Helm on the SS Woniora*
- 10% discount on all merchandise at the Bass Strait Maritime Centre gift shop (sale items excluded)
- 10% discount on an annual members-only *Julie Burgess* sailing
- 10% discounted entry to special events and functions at the Centre
- Invitations to previews and openings
- Newsletter
- Annual renewal notice

And all of these come in a special Bass Strait Maritime Centre daypack.



The following membership categories and fees apply.

Category	Membership Fee	Benefits and Saving
Individual	\$50.00	Valued at \$100.00 - save \$50.00
Student/Concession	\$30.00	Valued at \$100 - save \$70.00
Family	\$120.00	Valued at \$400 - save \$280.00

The savings alone make it worthwhile being a member!

Become a member today by filling in the membership form online at: www.bassstraitmc.com.au or at the Centre or by phoning (03) 6424 7100.

Did You Know?

That Bass Strait is quite shallow? It has an average depth between 50 and 60 metres which means that if the "New Spirit of Tasmania" were to be upended, it would actually stick out of the water!



For more information

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