



# Bearings

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ANZAC CONVOY TO BRITAIN: 1940  
THE ART OF SIMON DENNISTOUN-WOOD  
SEA KING - THE INFLUENTIAL IMMIGRANT

WIRIHANA - A TRUE CLASSIC  
THE CREATION OF THE R. TUCKER THOMPSON  
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# Bearings

## EDITORIAL

Further on in this issue of *Bearings* we include a recent photograph of construction on the HOBSON WHARF site. As you can see, progress on this extensive museum, enshrining our national maritime heritage, is proceeding rapidly.

In previous issues we have alluded to the difficulties of working through the labyrinthian processes of planning approvals, political support etc. And we have indicated something of the problems of assembling the necessary funding. We have also begun to report the grants, sponsorships and other funding which have made HOBSON WHARF possible. In this issue we have listed all the governmental, charitable, corporate and family trust support received to date.

Others will be reported in the future.

I would like to reflect for a moment on the role of corporate sponsorship.

We live in an age where every hour of every day is dominated by a bewildering succession of messages; buy this, do this, decide that, support this and so on.

Companies, driven by the necessity to return profits which ensure survival, employ staff, and return dividends to their shareholders, have probably never more carefully considered how the promotional dollar should be spent, and how their marketing messages should be delivered than they do now.

Should they advertise at all? Should they spend on print media? And if so which outlets? Should they spend on the electronic media? If so which? Should they support community activities? If so, are they to be welfare, cultural or sporting? What is their market, how does it match the medium? What is the result of their marketing activity; how effective is it; does it increase profitability? Traditionally — probably driven by the commissions payable to advertising agencies — companies have been persuaded to favour conventional forms of print and electronic media advertising. Research is produced to demonstrate its efficacy. Campaigns are mounted, agencies are

paid, the media remain in business and hopefully the advertiser achieves the sales results he seeks.

Sponsorship has tended to be downplayed. It is said to be “soft sell”. And whilst some forms of sporting sponsorship are acknowledged as good marketing business; other sporting activity, cultural and welfare programmes, are often swept under a mat of “warm and fuzzy” by those who assert traditional advertising is the solution.

In recent times the efficacy of a lot of expensive media buying has begun to be questioned. And equally, research has shown that a high degree of positivism is attached by the general public to the activities of companies who market their products and services by supporting programmes of community activity. Sales are not necessarily generated by market awareness because awareness can be a mind-numbing non-response or, worse still, negative awareness — “I wouldn’t have that product in my house”. High levels of awareness are desirable, *but* awareness that translates into actual sales is a great deal more so.

Which all brings me to the point of this. Whether cultural activities are your cup of tea; whether you are a football fan, a motor racing enthusiast, a keen yachtsman, or whether you value important educational and welfare programmes supported by corporate sponsors, doesn’t matter really. What matters is that all people who value a society in which these things are available and made possible through sponsor support, should turn that appreciation into action.

Sponsor those who sponsor the things you enjoy and demonstrate to our corporate citizens that sponsorship is an effective marketing vehicle, more worthy of their marketing attentions than a great deal of other, rather nebulous advertising that is so often and so conventionally the alternative. Do this and more facilities like HOBSON WHARF will be possible.

Rodney Wilson

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Editor: T.L. Rodney Wilson  
Publication Manager: Gillian Chaplin  
Technical Editor: Peter McCurdy  
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COVER PICTURE:

*Summer in New Zealand c.1965 from the collection of the late Tim Farrelly.*

## LETTERS

*Bearings* readers are invited to write on any subject to do with HOBSON WHARF or maritime matters generally. We ask that letters be signed — no noms-de-plume please — and the address of the writer must be given, not necessarily for publication. To prevent confusion, letters must be legible, double-spaced and

preferably typed. Some editing may be necessary for reasons of space but every effort will be made to preserve the writer's intention. Photographs may be included; please identify subject and photographer.

Please have your say — your information, ideas, opinions and queries are awaited.

Congratulations on yet another excellent issue (Vol.4 No.2), with its wide variety of articles.

Of particular interest to me was the latest in Buster Bartlett's fascinating series on small craft from the shores of Cook Strait.

Let us hope that the "Bartlett Files" will enliven your pages for many issues to come.

What a pity that space precluded the printing of more than the profiles and bare essentials of the two designs. Ganley's work is always interesting and individual.

On the subject of design, there were several notable N.Z. designers practising in the middle part of this century — Col. Wilde, Bert Woollacott, Eric Cox and Athol Burns spring to mind.

What has happened to their designs? the collection and presentation of the works of these men would surely be an appropriate task for a maritime museum.

**John Wicks  
Whenuapai**

*Thank you for your kind words John. HOBSON WHARF has begun the assembly of a national small craft design archive and in time this will be an invaluable resource for researchers. Meanwhile articles are planned on our major naval architects. Bert Woollacott will be the first during 1993.*  
Ed.

### MEMORY OF THE FERRY LAUNCH WAITERE

I enjoyed the article on the ferry WAITERE, *Bearings* Vol.4. No.2, as this grand little boat was the means by which we went to school, did our Friday night shopping and a little later, transport for our courting escapades to the Friday night western movie or the Saturday night Rock

and Roll dance. I seem to remember it was a cuddly boat as we snuggled around the funnel to stay warm on the last ferry home.

Until the mid-1950s Mt Maunganui did not have a secondary school so each morning and afternoon about 80-plus pupils travelled each day on Faulkner's Ferries to school in Tauranga. I travelled to school by this means in the early 50s and I smiled when I read in the article "WAITERE continued to operate with no major incidents or alteration".

Well, no major incidents, but many many small ones in the conveying of school children. It must have cost parents a small fortune keeping the girls supplied with the regulation straw panama hats or the boys caps as they regularly flew overboard. The odd case or satchel with all its school books was to be seen floating down harbour.

One of the two photos on page 18 shows the WAITERE leaving Salisbury Wharf at the Mount in a fresh westerly blow. This brings back the memory of a few winter trips for once clear of the wharf the vessel would turn to port for the run up channel to Tauranga. This would place her broadside onto the waves that can be quite large as they race across the harbour, and when a rogue wave caught under the vessel's large beltings (mentioned) the WAITERE could roll to an alarming angle.

This would bring the rudder half out of the water, the propeller would race and the vessel rounded up in a frightening broach, with white-faced kids hanging on for dear life and lady passengers trying to hold their stockinged feet above the water rushing along the deck.

The WAITERE with its screaming G.M. diesel used to vibrate so badly that it was difficult to write and do our homework, and conversation was

held by yelling at each other.

I always think of the WAITERE as a fussing fat lady as she went through small white waves like an Auntie Flo in a floral chiffon dress drenching everyone who thought they would like to sit on the foredeck in the sun. This little lady was the most reliable and punctual of all the ferries and I can only remember a couple of times in five years that she was late, through breakdown or rough weather.

Just as there was the picture ferry there was also the pub ferry, for it wasn't until the mid 50's that the Mount had a licensed hotel and you either drove 18 miles around Welcome Bay to Tauranga or took the ferry. It was 6 o'clock closing then and the ferry departed Tauranga at 6.10 p.m. In the summer time holidays it was quite a sport to be at Salisbury Wharf at 6.30 to watch this high spirited ferry load step onto the wharf steps, loaded with supplies. The steps could be slippery and with a heaving boat in rough weather, there was many a curse and a laugh. I'll bet there are a few blokes in their 60s who can remember these escapades.

During the summer months, extra trips were run to cope with the large numbers of visitors and the ferries would also call at the Aerodrome Wharf (now demolished) and the Mt Pilot Bay Jetty.

Faulkner's Ferries were always well maintained and clean, their brown paint always in good repair. All the skippers were personalities and a close rein was always kept on us kids and as long as we threw our cigarette butts overboard nobody complained about us smoking down below.

George Faulkner was the personality I will always remember as the tough, rough skipper with a language just as colourful. Who could forget his favourite when all the boys would sit on one side to hear the report, "Trim the bloody ship". Ladies always seemed to adjust their stockings about that time.

George was all colour and a lamb at heart but I only learned that when I left school and often had to race to the ferry along with other apprentices to pick up parcels (often quite large), sent from Tauranga. This marvellous service meant that a Mount business could ring a warehouse in Tauranga and have it arrive at Mount Maunganui

thirty minutes later.

The ferries carried the mail across the harbour for many years, so R.M.M.U. WAITERE I think would have been quite in order for her address. For over 65 years this marvellous service was maintained by the Faulkner family and although many have tried since, it has never been the same — wrong place, wrong time.

An era has passed and I was lucky to catch its closing years to add to my experiences.

**Barry Dunwoody**  
**Traditional Small Craft Society**  
**Member — Tauranga**

### A WHALESHIP IN N.Z. WATERS

**M**r. Arthur G. Green, a gentleman with whom I have long corresponded, has recently sent me copies of *Bearings*, Vols No.4, Numbers 1 and 2.

Mr Hawkins article about the CHARLES W. MORGAN is fine. My office is right close by and I see the old girl every day. The newest thing is that they have arranged her 'tween decks as if an actual crew were living aboard. Although I sailed in a number of multi-masted schooners, in cargo trades, it would have been hard to drag me aboard a whaler but I'm glad we have her here and being so well taken care of.

For about thirty years Arthur Green, Jack Churchouse and I have sporadically corresponded. It all began while I was sailing as captain of the museum training schooner, BRILLIANT, and writing about the big schooners in which I sailed, as long as there was one to sail in.

I wonder if you have much interest in scows, beyond those who plyed your waters. In 1941, I was mate of the four-masted schooner, THEOLINE, when she loaded lumber off Alma, New Brunswick. Molly Kool was captain at the time. I didn't get to know about her at the Maine Maritime Museum, at Bath Maine. I didn't introduce her until the talk was over and she received a standing ovation.

Enclosed are some copies of material you might find of interest.



*Molly Kool aboard JEAN K. 1941 (Giles Tod)*

The scow is the JEAN K. The scow carried a gaff sail to help along in fair weather and a following wind.

I have Mr Hawkin's LOG OF THE HUIA and OUT OF AUCKLAND. I also have Eaddy's NEATH SWAYING SPARS. A few years ago, one of my pals sent along a book about the scows. I don't remember the name for I sent it along to Captain Molly.

The Bay-of-Fundy scows were no beauties but they worked winter and summer in huge tides, blinding fog and ice and snow. They earned their keep.

Wishing you all the best.

**Francis E Bowker**  
**Research Associate**  
**Preserving America's Maritime Heritage**

### PAMIR

**R**e my article on PAMIR in your *Bearings* Vol.4. No.3. I would appreciate two simple corrections therein which were my errors.

The first is the spelling of PRIWELL which should have read PRIWALL and the second is the photograph on page 17, whose caption was intended to read *Heavy weather conditions lee side towards the poop.*

I was interested in Cliff Hawkin's article on the same vessel in the same edition and would question his figures on tonnages and PAMIR's length.

My records indicate  
 Length 331 ft  
 Gross tonnage 2799  
 Net tonnage 2522

**Warwick Dunsford**  
**Auckland**

### SUB EDITORIAL

*Bearings* is a broad spectrum magazine devoted to a range of responsibilities parallel to HOBSON WHARF. Articles range over Maori and Pacific vessels and navigation; commercial shipping; small craft and work boats; the sociology of the waterfront; New Zealand coastal shipping; boat design; maritime arts, crafts and trades; personalities; sail training; the marine environment; restoration of historic craft; maritime books etc. etc.

Obviously no single issue can include such a range of content and therefore we do our best to achieve an appropriate mix of articles and news items over a number of issues. We have been heartened by the unsolicited manuscripts we have received and will do our best to publish most of these.

The one area in which we have not been inundated with copy is N.Z. Shipping in the post World War I period, and as a consequence it is an area which has received very little attention. So if this is your area of expertise and you have been waiting for a free hour to sit down and put fingers to keyboard — wait no longer! We would be delighted to hear from you.

**Rodney Wilson**

# ANZAC CONVOY TO BRITAIN: 1940

by Cliff Hawkins



*EMPRESS OF BRITAIN alongside at  
Wellington, 14 April 1940.*

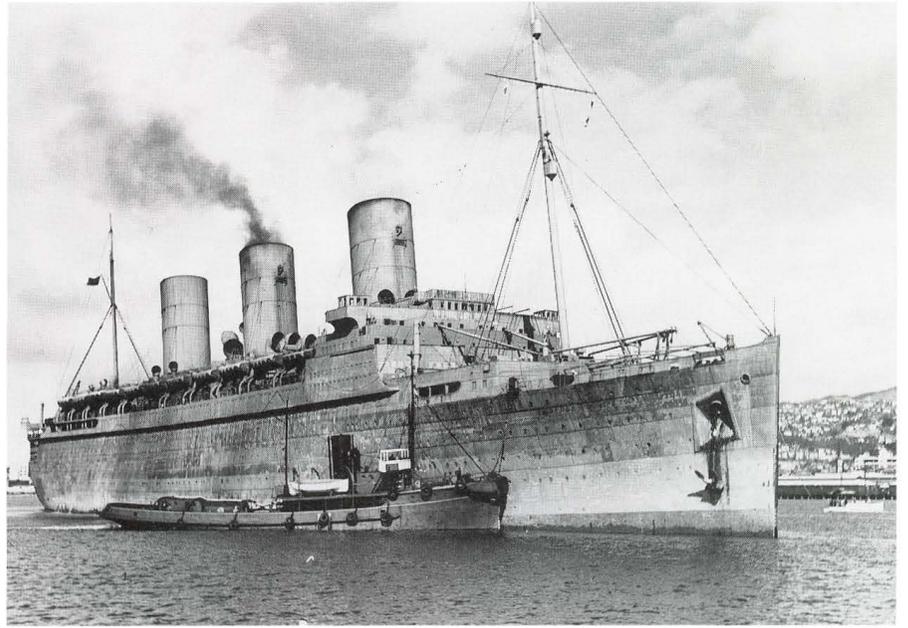


Over half a century has elapsed since New Zealand became involved in the Second World War and our commitment was made quite clear with the arrival of troopships at Wellington and Lyttelton to embark the 1st Echelon 2 NZEF. Those ships cleared port early in January and it was not long before they were followed by another assembly of ships to embark the 2nd Echelon which made their departure 2 May. It is that convoy of great ocean liners that is the subject of this article.

Although the dissemination of information regarding the movement of shipping was forbidden, it was well known in Wellington on 14 April 1940 that the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN would be arriving in port that day. Rumours had the habit of becoming fact, as was the case when HMS RAMILLIES entered Port Nicholson to escort the 1st Echelon ships on their voyage to Egypt.

But let us concentrate on the ships which formed the 2nd Echelon convoy. The EMPRESS OF BRITAIN was very soon joined by the Cunard-White Star liner AQUITANIA, Canadian Pacific's EMPRESS OF JAPAN, and the ANDES, pride of the Royal Mail line, which proceeded to Lyttelton to pick up the southern troops.

Embarkation in Wellington took place 1 May and under cover of



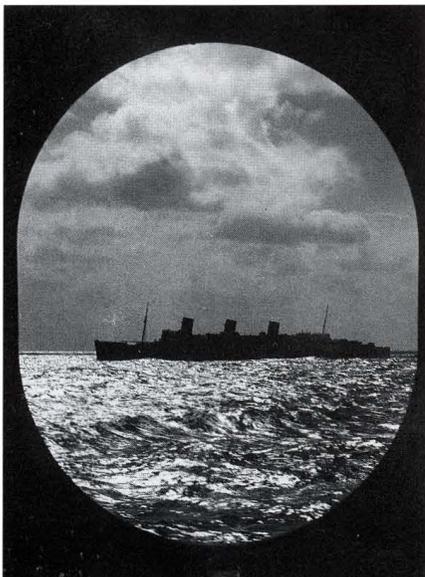
*The TOIA assists the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN to her berth at Wellington, 14 April 1940.*

darkness the author boarded the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN to be ushered to a spacious first class cabin with two large portholes. There was no traditional donkey's breakfast here and after a good night's sleep between sheets and being waited on for breakfast all were happy to be up on deck before the early morning mist had cleared. Despite the supposed secrecy regarding our movements there was a large crowd on the wharf

to cheer us on our way. Initially all the ships went to an anchorage and did not put to sea until noon. The departure was made all the more memorable with peals from the Capital's carillon.

It was almost unbelievable that here we were aboard one of the world's largest and most luxurious liners that only two years previously had visited New Zealand during the course of a world cruise. Our situation was well

*The QUEEN MARY seen through a cabin porthole of the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN, Indian Ocean, 16 May.*



*Farewell to troops aboard EMPRESS OF BRITAIN, 2 May 1940.*

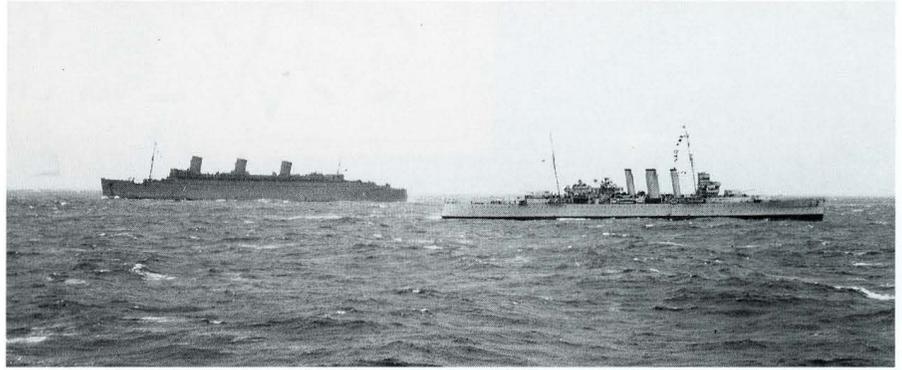


described by Brigadier Hargest, Officer Commanding the 2nd Echelon, when he said "... we all travel in great comfort in the finest super ships the British Merchant Navy has ever gathered in one convoy. And the comfort is not limited to officers. The most poorly-placed man of this echelon is infinitely better off for accommodation, food and attention than the most favoured of his predecessors in 1914-18." Aboard the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN we dined at tables, were served by waiters and paraded on decks previously reserved for none but the wealthy.

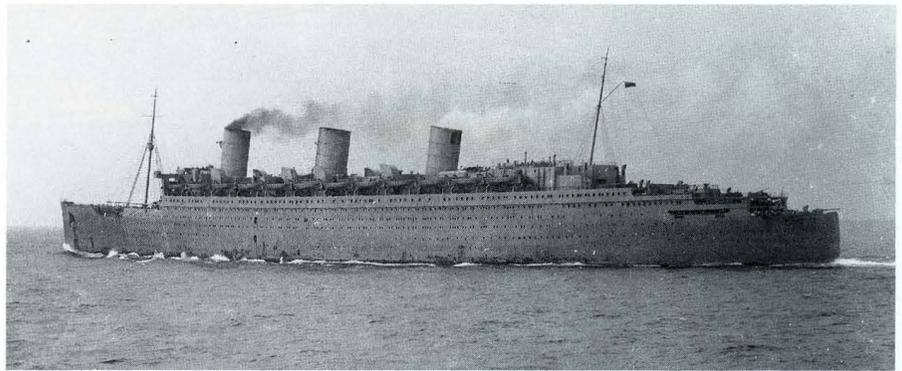
Our destination was no secret. We were to join the 1st Echelon in Egypt and our ships were to link up with those conveying units of the Australian 6th Division. So it was that on 5 May the QUEEN MARY and MAURETANIA joined the convoy to be followed the next day by the EMPRESS OF CANADA. The complete convoy, US3, now formed in two lines ahead; the QUEEN MARY, AQUITANIA, EMPRESS OF JAPAN AND EMPRESS OF CANADA in that order, and to port, the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN, MAURETANIA and ANDES. With the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN (HMT X3) as flagship, her master, Captain Waller, RN, was appointed Commodore of Convey. Our escort, HMNZS LEANDER, occasionally came close by and flashed semaphore signals to the flagship.

So far the convoy's progress had been uneventful but on clearing Fremantle, 12 May, the CANADA was observed performing a U-turn and the word spread that a man had been lost overboard. On another day the ensign of the QUEEN MARY was seen flying at half mast indicating that there had been a committal to the deep. Then, when nearing Colombo, rumours began to spread throughout the BRITAIN and in a letter to my parents I wrote "It seems as though something has taken place which we know nothing of — some development which immediately affects us. Being in the dark with no official reports, rumours are going around like wildfire ..."

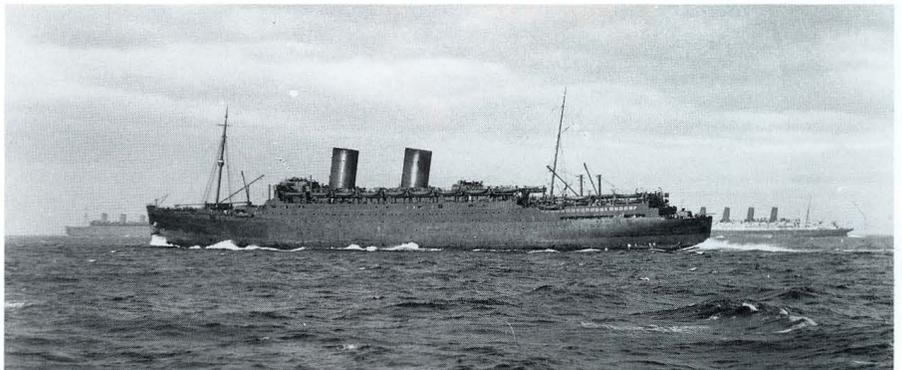
Actually, unknown to us, considerable anxiety was being felt by the hierarchy over the convoy's safety. It was believed that Italy might at any



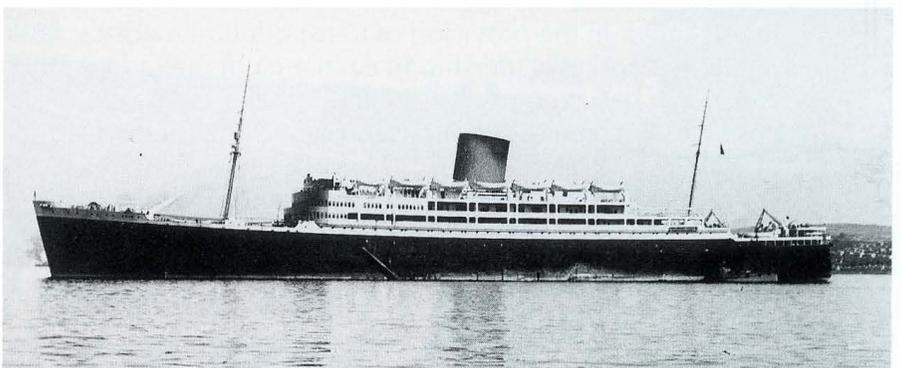
*HMAS CANBERRA leaves the convoy, Indian Ocean, 20 May.*



*The QUEEN MARY joined the convoy 5 May. The photograph shows her off Sierra Leone 7 June.*



*Approaching the Irish Sea. The MAURETANIA with the QUEEN MARY and AQUITANIA, 15 June.*



*The ANDES off Gourock, 19 June.*



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time become allied with Germany and should that occur our convoy would pass perilously close to enemy territory, namely Italian Somaliland.

Records reveal that on 15 May arrangements were being made to divert the convoy towards Cape Town and accordingly, on the 16th, the ships changed course. Although the troops were not immediately informed of what was happening they could see for themselves that the ships were now heading in a south-westerly direction. Their course, in relation to the sun, made that quite obvious. Another indication of the change was the abandonment of shore leave arrangements for the intended call at Colombo.

There is nothing like the lack of information for the promotion of rumours, and now, from their usual breeding ground, word was spread that mines had been laid off Good Hope and that we would have to pass well to the south of the Cape. There was also mis-information to



*From the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN. EMPRESS OF JAPAN and MAURETANIA following, Bass Strait, 6 May.*

contend with, more particularly from sources beyond our control. On 22 May the *Ship's News* stated that a

tremendous amount of distorted propaganda was being received from German, Italian, and American

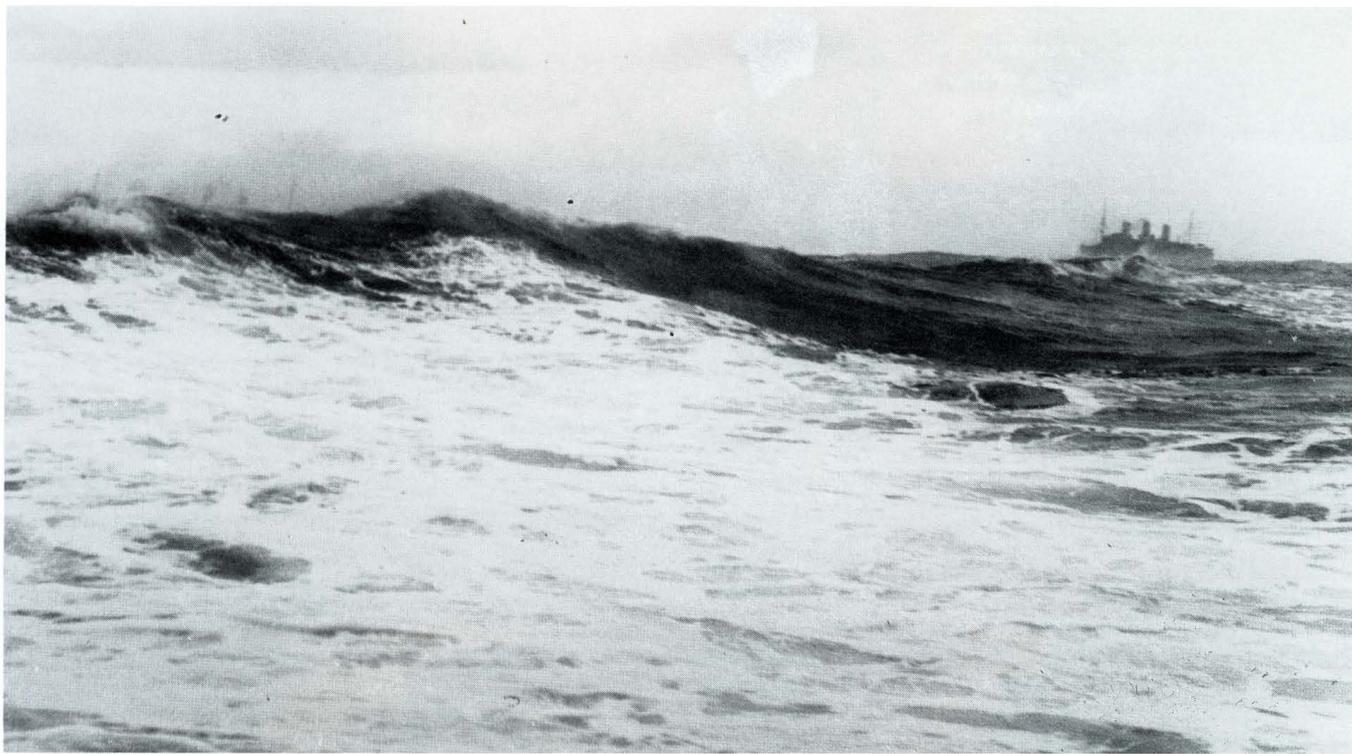
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*The EMPRESS OF JAPAN in line with the AQUITANIA partially hidden by the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN's bow wave, Indian Ocean, 19 May.*

sources, "issued with the object of upsetting our people. As an example the latest German broadcast regarding this convoy is 'that the remnants are heading for the nearest neutral port.' Taking into account previous reports this means the MAURETANIA and CANADA; the remainder of us have been sunk." Well! we could laugh that off although such news would be most distressing for the folk back home. It was not possible for us to assure them that the QUEEN MARY was still on station and that the rest of the convoy remained intact. The only problem, as far as we could see was the EMPRESS OF CANADA's inability to keep position through being slower than the other ships. It must have been most embarrassing to her master.

Early morning, 26 May, saw the convoy closing in on Table Bay although the AQUITANIA, with the Maori Battalion aboard, had changed course for Simonstown, the naval base in False Bay. While berthed in Cape Town a nasty swell coming in from the South Atlantic caused the MAURETANIA to range to such an extent that some of her mooring lines parted. The EMPRESS OF BRITAIN at an adjacent berth was not so seriously affected. But for the other EMPRESSES trouble of an entirely different nature

was brewing. The Asian crews of the JAPAN and CANADA refused to proceed any further into the Atlantic which they considered to be a war zone. This caused some frantic rearranging of personnel in all the ships and I was one of those transferred to the ANDES in order to make room on the BRITAIN for an intake from the JAPAN. Some of the men from the BRITAIN took a dim view of having to leave their luxurious

*The PRETORIA CASTLE as an armed merchantman with the EDINBURGH CASTLE beyond, Freetown, 7 June.*

accommodation but after a good lecturing everyone settled down and, passing through tropic seas, sleeping on deck was really appreciated. Fortunately the problem of relocating various units was eased somewhat by the CANADA's crew being replaced with Europeans so allowing that vessel to continue her voyage which meant that only the JAPAN remained behind.

I found the shipping in Table Bay particularly interesting, the powerful



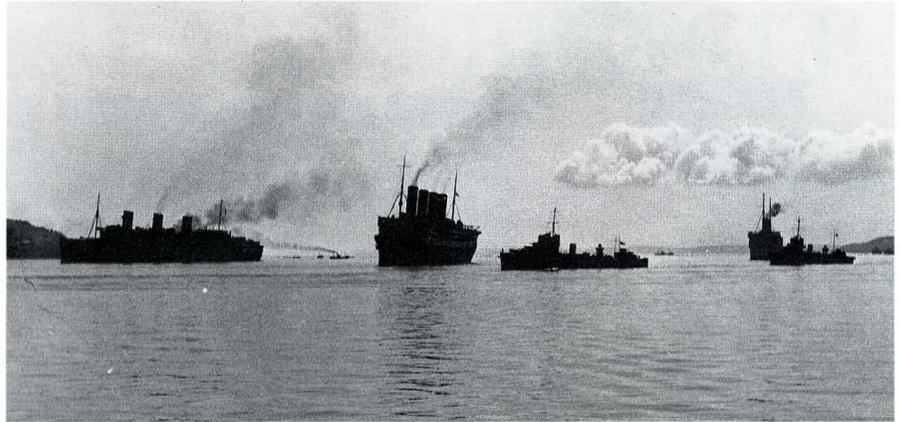
tugs contrasting with the diminutive whale chasers that had been converted into mine-sweepers. An Orient liner, either the ORION or ORCADES, could be recognised and, among the cargo ships, one of the New Zealand Shipping Company's motor ships and the Danish funnel-less four-masters, the PERU.

Back at sea we were to realise that the situation of the allies in Europe was worsening. The Germans already occupied Norway, Denmark, Holland and Belgium and were forcing Britain's withdrawal from France. In fact the evacuation from Dunkirk was already taking place.

On 5 June the convoy crossed the Equator and two days later arrived at Freetown. Here the Union Castle liner PRETORIA CASTLE could be recognised as an armed merchantman and further inshore there was the older EDINBURGH CASTLE with her two tall funnels set far apart. The 8th June saw much activity in the harbour with something like forty ships getting underway in convoy. The Aircraft carrier ARGUS had arrived and that evening our own ships put to sea with her as escort.

During our two days at anchor we had been entertained by the natives in their canoes although, after a while, the men, tired of bartering for curios, found amusement in overturning the canoes with a hooked rope. For the naturalist, however, there was pleasure in seeing the colourful butterflies, most awesome in size, flutter about the ship. But this was no place to linger. In a day or two Mussolini was to declare Italy an alien and then, on the 14th Paris fell. Our convoy was in an extremely vulnerable situation and the Battle of the Atlantic was hotting up. The United States liner WASHINGTON had been stopped by a German submarine and another U-boat was observed nearby. It was presumed that our convoy had more than the ARGUS as an escort and, in fact, the two 8-inch cruisers SHROPSHIRE and CUMBERLAND had been allocated to provide additional protection from Freetown and they later received support from DORSETSHIRE. Then, on the 14th that cruiser was replaced by the battle cruiser HOOD although we did not know of her presence at the time.

During the morning of 15 June the



*Arrival on the Clyde. The QUEEN MARY and AQUITANIA with destroyer escort, 16 June.*

convoy passed through the wreckage of what I believe to be the Blue Star Line's SULTAN STAR which had been torpedoed ( $48^{\circ} 54'N$   $10^{\circ} 03' W$ ) by a submarine the previous day. We also passed what was obviously a tanker ablaze with another vessel standing by. To the north-west of the Fastnet the steamer LANGLEEFORD had been torpedoed and on the 11th the tanker ATHELPRINCE attacked less than a day's sailing to the south.

As our convoy entered the St George's Channel there was a greater sense of security when HMS HOOD appeared on the horizon. Earlier there had been "three submarine alarms, all uneventful, and about 1600 hours those on board some of the troopships felt a heavy thud, later said to be due to a depth charge

accidentally dropped from one of the escort" (Army Archives).

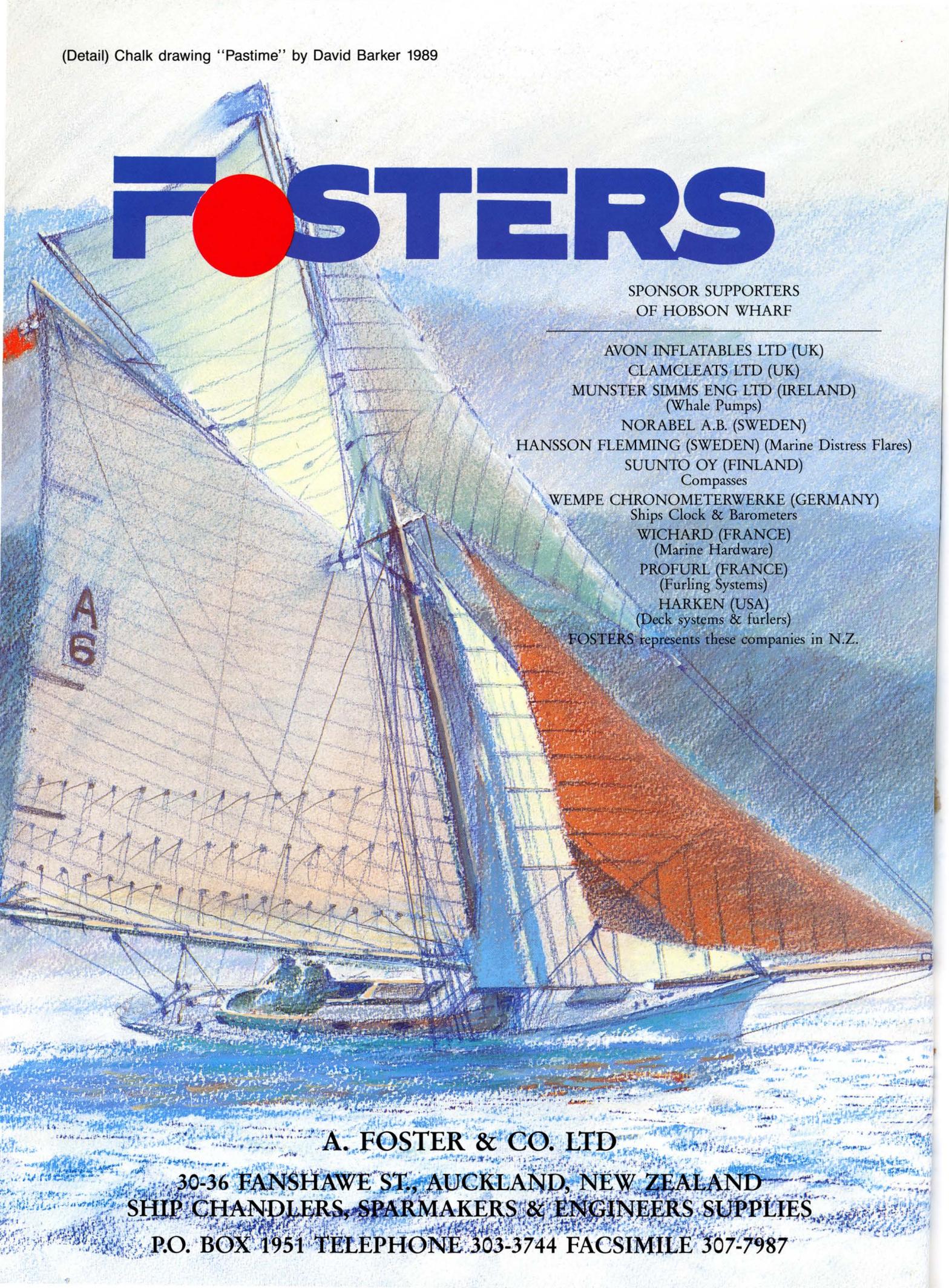
It was a beautiful evening as we approached the Irish Sea and what a heartening sight the convoy must have provided for the crew of a fishing trawler that passed close by. Next morning, 16 June, HOOD led the convoy off Ailsa Craig and we followed up the Clyde in line ahead; the Commodore's EMPRESS OF BRITAIN first and then the MAURETANIA, ANDES, QUEEN MARY, AQUITANIA and the other two EMPRESSES, ARGUS and SHROPSHIRE coming up astern with destroyers standing by. What a memorable sight for Clydesiders and how they welcomed the Anzacs when they landed at Gourock. ☼

*From the ANDES with the EMPRESS OF BRITAIN and MAURETANIA in the South Atlantic.*



(Detail) Chalk drawing "Pastime" by David Barker 1989

# FOSTERS



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# CANOE & EASEL, BICYCLE & BILLY

## The Art of Simon Dennistoun-Wood

by Peter McCurdy



*Simon Dennistoun-Wood and the inevitable billy, Puhoi River 1990. (Steve Fleming)*

Simon Dennistoun-Wood, drawer of boats, old buildings, old machinery and steam engines, always attracted the same epithet. “A gentleman” was the expression people used, whether they were friends of long standing or new acquaintances, meaning both a “gentle man” and a “gentleman” — one to whom a relaxed courtesy and an intelligent interest in the opinions of whomever he met came absolutely naturally, but without a hint of ‘side’ or snobbery.

The next epithet was usually “eccentric”, not because he looked or spoke oddly, but because of his quiet but profound lack of belief in the importance of status, wealth, conventional opinion and timetables. In his dress he looked the conservative man of an earlier generation. He was

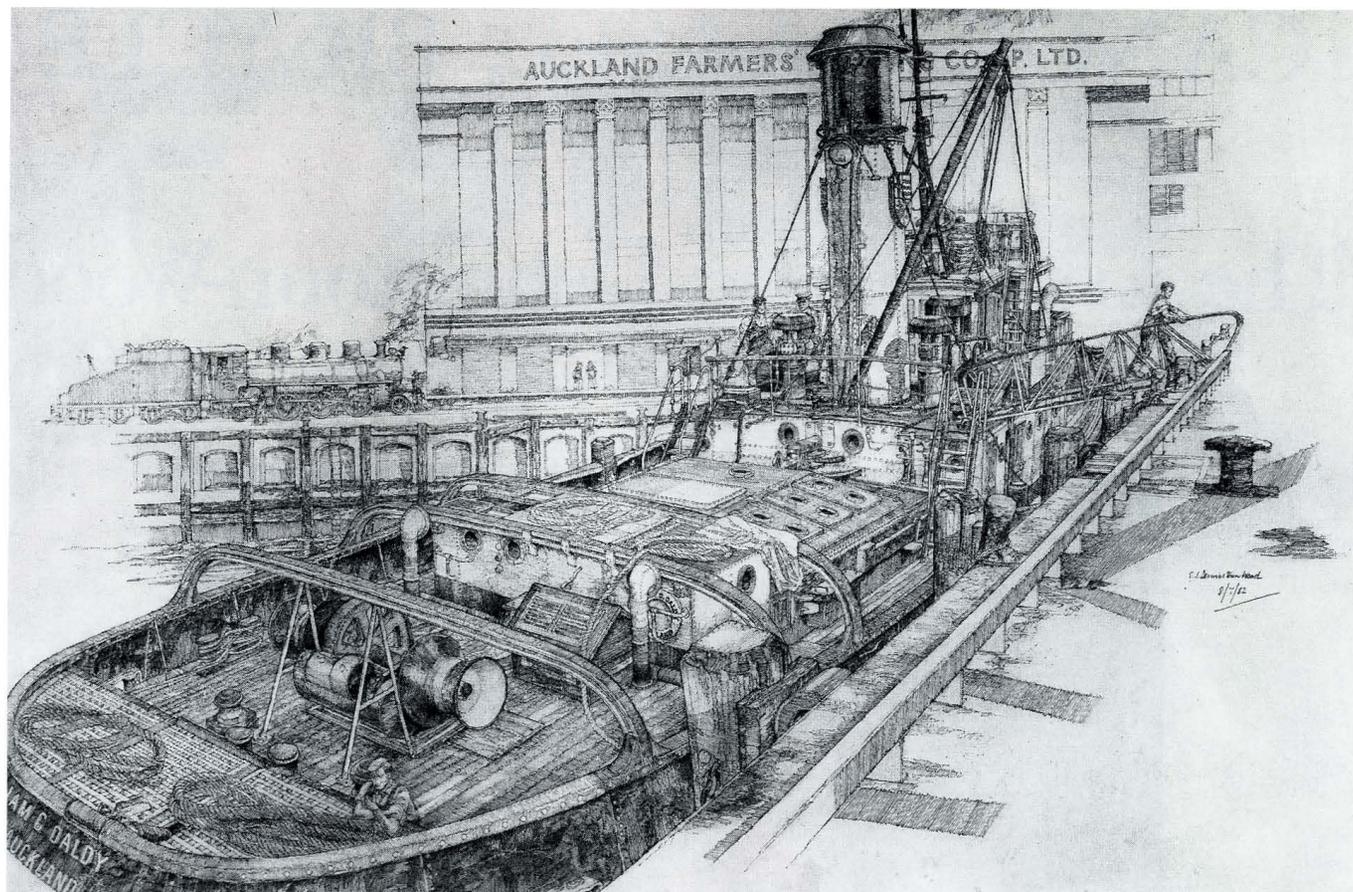
quietly spoken, sometimes to the point of self-effacement, liked his beer though not to excess, and spent most of his adult life travelling throughout New Zealand by bicycle, accompanied always by his folding easel, drawing paper and a stock of British Drawing BB pencils, and a billy. On the Waitemata and other harbours and rivers he travelled by canvas canoe, a twenty-foot Percy Blandford design rigged with a tiny standing lugsail and always with the billy aboard.

Simon was a stalwart of the Traditional Small Craft Society, his intermittent absences from meetings and events noticed only when he turned up again having in the meantime been cycling around New Zealand for the seventh or eighth time, or drawing boats on the River

Hamble, at Oslo, or a beach on the Greek island of Kythia, or drawing the Houses of Parliament (a three-month exercise, every day in rain or shine, fortified by broth brought to him by an MP’s wife) or the CUTTY SARK in London.

In the winter of 1991 he mentioned to museum staff that a sore back had prevented yet another bicycle tour; in September he died of bone-marrow cancer. He hadn’t been seen at the TSCS for a little while; those who noticed his absence assumed he was travelling again. Most of his friends still don’t really believe that he won’t pop up again with a new set of drawings.

Simon’s character and approach to the world was related to but not defined by his belief in Christianity



*The DALDY, Kings Wharf, Auckland 1982. Steam locomotives had disappeared from the wharves many years before.*

— of a rare tolerant and unproselytising kind — which usually went unnoticed. Familiarity with his work leads to the recognition that he was really an animist seeing his subjects as living, not mere assemblages of wood, stone or iron.

Simon left hundreds of drawings and rather fewer water-colours — nearly all of the subjects about which he was passionate: boats, old buildings, machinery and steam engines. He had also published *Here and There: Sketching around New Zealand* in 1978, but was not satisfied with the quality of reproduction of his drawings or the revisions made to his text. Another book was in the planning stage when he died. His work is not widely known — selling, and drawing to order, did not appeal to him, to the frustration of his agent — but much of it is very good.

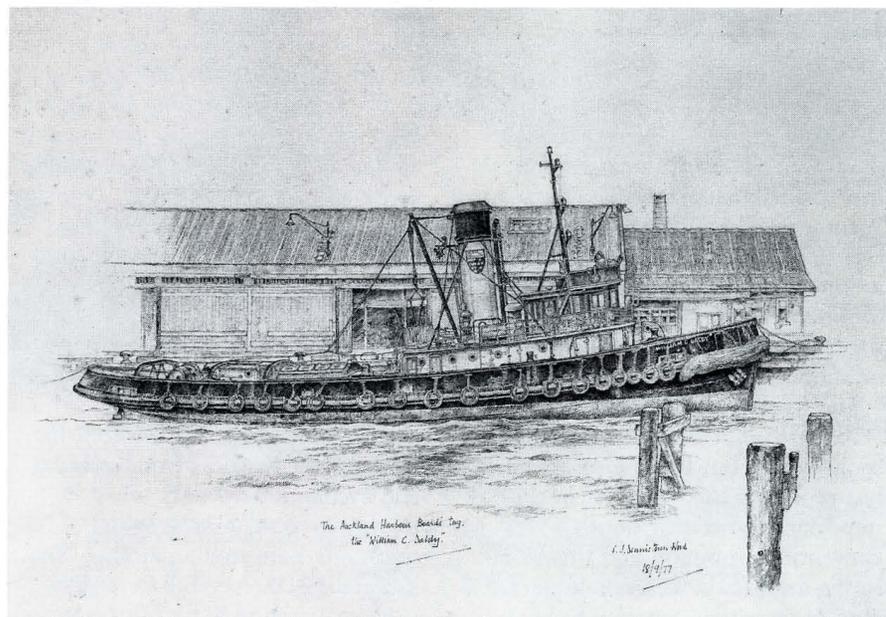
Simon James Dennistoun-Wood was born in Wellington in 1947; his father is Tasmanian and his mother a Wellingtonian. From his father he gained an obsession with steam engines — by his high school years he could draw any of the New Zealand

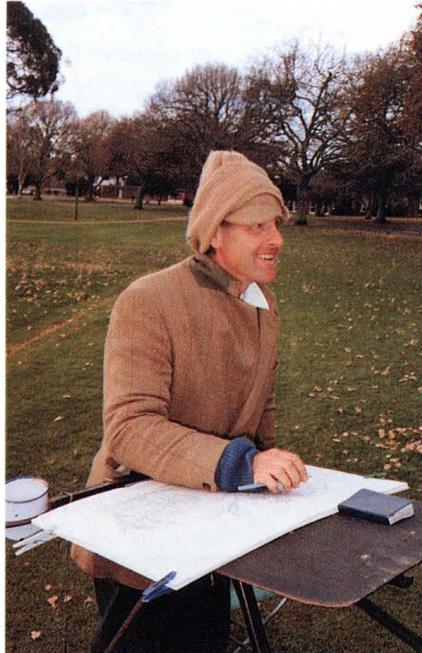
steam locomotive classes from memory in the finest detail. His concentration in the classroom at Kings College would lapse and soon the sound of a distant Ww or Ja whistle would emanate from him.

Such unacademic behaviour was tolerated because the headmaster himself was fanatical about steam engines.

According to his father, now living in Kerikeri, Simon's interest in boats

*The tug WILLIAM C. DALDY, Auckland, 1977.*





began at the age of ten in Waipu when the two of them built a Percy Blandford 20-foot two-seater canvas kayak in which Simon and his brother explored every nook and cranny of the Waipu River and its tributaries. In his last years at Kings he was in charge of the maintenance of the school's rowing shells, which experience assisted him in building his own javelin 14-footer which he raced on the Waitemata and Wellington harbours. In the 1960s Simon worked as a commercial artist in Wellington and joined the Naval Volunteer Reserve, serving in the RNZNVR there and at Auckland.

In 1972 he decided to become a free-lance artist, a decision that led to a life of subsistence, travel and, for most of the time, contentment.

Peter Rodwell, an old school friend, provided a base for Simon in

Auckland. Simon lived there whenever he was any length of time in Auckland, leading the Rodwells to claim they had five children — three of their own and Simon Dennistoun-Wood. The family now look after the drawings and water-colours not sold during Simon's lifetime. Preparation of the planned new book continues, an exhibition has been held; more are planned. The Rodwell family have too the bicycle, the easel and the canoe. The last, with the kind permission of Simon's parents, will come to HOBSON WHARF.

The much travelled collapsible easel is a wonderful work of repair and adaptation — dark-stained wood, brass hinges and catches all looking like the framework of a 1930s folding canvas canoe. Canoe technology brought economy to the process of drawing; inspired by the example of the two-

piece kayak double paddle Simon made a ferrule to join his precious BB pencil stubs butt-to-butt, so doubling their useful life.

In his travels, Simon was always ready to talk to anyone, standing at his easel under a tree, and every hour or two boiling the billy for tea over a pile of twigs or leaves, or if nothing else was available his alcohol stove. Travelling too, by bicycle, canoe or car, the regular stop to boil the billy was mandatory. Peter Rodwell recalls a trip up the South Island, an easy day's journey, which became a frustrating, gruelling marathon because of Simon's relaxed but unshakeable determination to boil the billy at intervals.

The billy even made the *New Zealand Herald*, pictured boiling over a pile of dry leaves in the gutter in Symonds Street while Simon sketched



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an old building.

The determination appeared too on the Waitemata when Simon's profound but erroneous belief that steam universally gives way to sail led him to try matters on with a harbour ferry in the channel off North Head. Only a last minute dash under paddle to the shelter of a channel buoy saved him from being run down; he remained indignant about this incident for the rest of his life.

In the mid-1980s, rejected by the woman he loved, Simon retreated to Brancepeth in the Wairarapa where he worked as a farmhand, living in an old whare and working hard at drawing the old farm buildings and machinery. By now his drawing was very accomplished, carried out in minute detail and with more and

more background detail filled in. Earlier drawings, particularly those in *Here and There*, show detail in the central subject with background absent or only sketched in. He would draw by filling in all the detail quite lightly and then continue lining in until the density and contrast satisfied him. Simon would usually work standing up at the easel, under a tree, with the billy boiling nearby, and some of his works show irregular stains from falling leaves and round ones from the tea mug.

While the drawings often seem to possess verisimilitude, Simon was happy to add, subtract and rearrange elements to suit his sense of what was proper. The drawing of the schooner R. TUCKER THOMPSON shows a clinker tender at the stern — on the

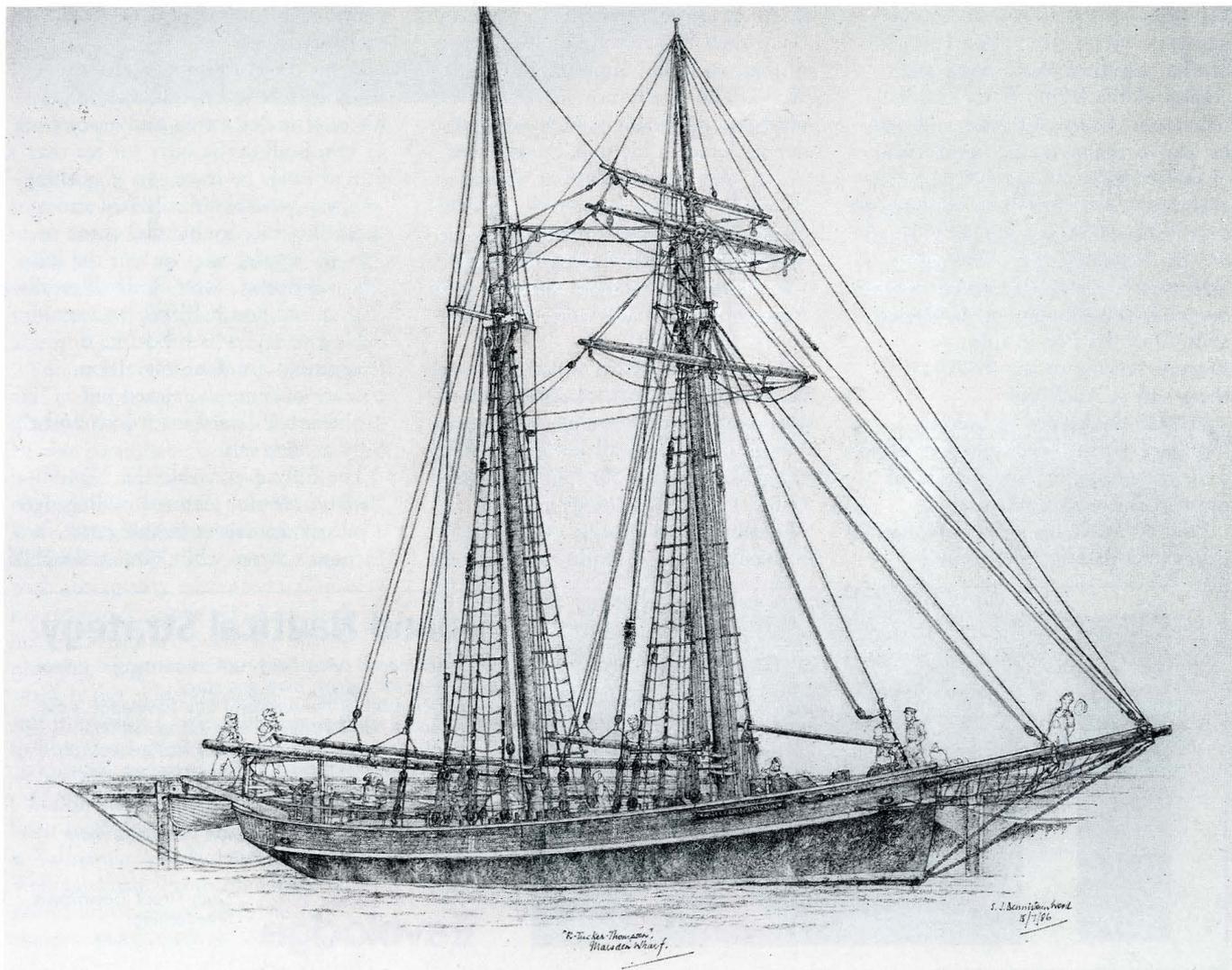
day a rubber duck hung in the davits. Behind the DALDY at Kings Wharf appears a steam engine, drawn long after steam had left New Zealand Railways and the railways had left the wharves. Modern elements — TV aerials and cars for example — were omitted.

Animals, especially dogs, were often added, but it would be fair to say that living creatures — especially humans, who hardly ever appear — were not Simon's strong suit.

His watercolours were really light pencil drawings, washed over. Some, especially those done in Greece, have an ethereal look, others such as his Tasmanian ketches are solid grey like a winter sea. But his drawings are really the mainstay of his work.

Simon Dennistoun-Wood's last

*Topsail Schooner R. TUCKER THOMPSON, 1986.*





*Aghia-Pelaghia, Kythia, Greece, 1988.*

project was a set of four drawings of the chapel at Kings College. Ill, in fact dying, he stood at his easel working more and more slowly but producing superb work. The drawings were just at the draught stage when Simon finally went to hospital and the cancer was diagnosed. On the 14th of September 1991 he died, at the age of 44 — a talent and spirit prematurely stilled. ☼



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# SEA KING —

## *The Influential Immigrant?*

by Robin Elliott and Harold Kidd

A story which has been doing the rounds for many years tells of a small centre-boarder which arrived on a visiting merchantman before the turn of the century. This centre-boarder, so the story goes, was of a type never before seen in Auckland. It apparently had a profound effect on local builders and designers, and from it, Arch Logan supposedly derived those boats we now know as 'patikis' (see Vintage Viewpoint — *Sea Spray*, March 1992).

Some credence for this tale was given in the *New Zealand Yachtsman* of 25th November 1911 when Bill 'Wilkie' Wilkinson wrote of Sea King's demise at Freemans Bay following a gale. He described her as '... the first patiki to make her appearance in Auckland having been brought here in the Norwegian barque SEA KING 14 years ago'.

Following this tantalising piece of information back in time has given some more information on this mystery centre-boarder, but in doing so, leaves just as many questions unanswered. Here then, is as much as we have been able to uncover (sources: *NZ Herald* and *Auckland Star* 1897).

In the afternoon of the 4th February 1897, the signals on Mount Victoria indicated that a barque of unknown origin was in sight outside Tiritiri. She was later identified as the American barque SEA

KING, 1361 tons register, built at Bwodinham, Maine in 1877 and owned by Messrs Miles and Theobald of San Francisco. She was bound from Sydney to San Francisco with a cargo of coal, but had been making for Auckland in distress and was considerably disabled.

A fortnight out from Sydney she had been hit by a strong north-easterly gale which drove her south towards the east coast of New Zealand. The gale moderated the next morning but then veered suddenly around to the SSW and '... it fairly howled (and) was so strong that it blew off the top of the waves, leaving them perfectly smooth, but with a very angry sea. So far as the eye could reach from the deck of the vessel, the water was a mass of foam.'

By late afternoon the wind abated slightly again, only to swing into the west, heading the vessel off and backing her into the heavy seas, which broke on board and made it very dangerous for the crew to move about the main deck.

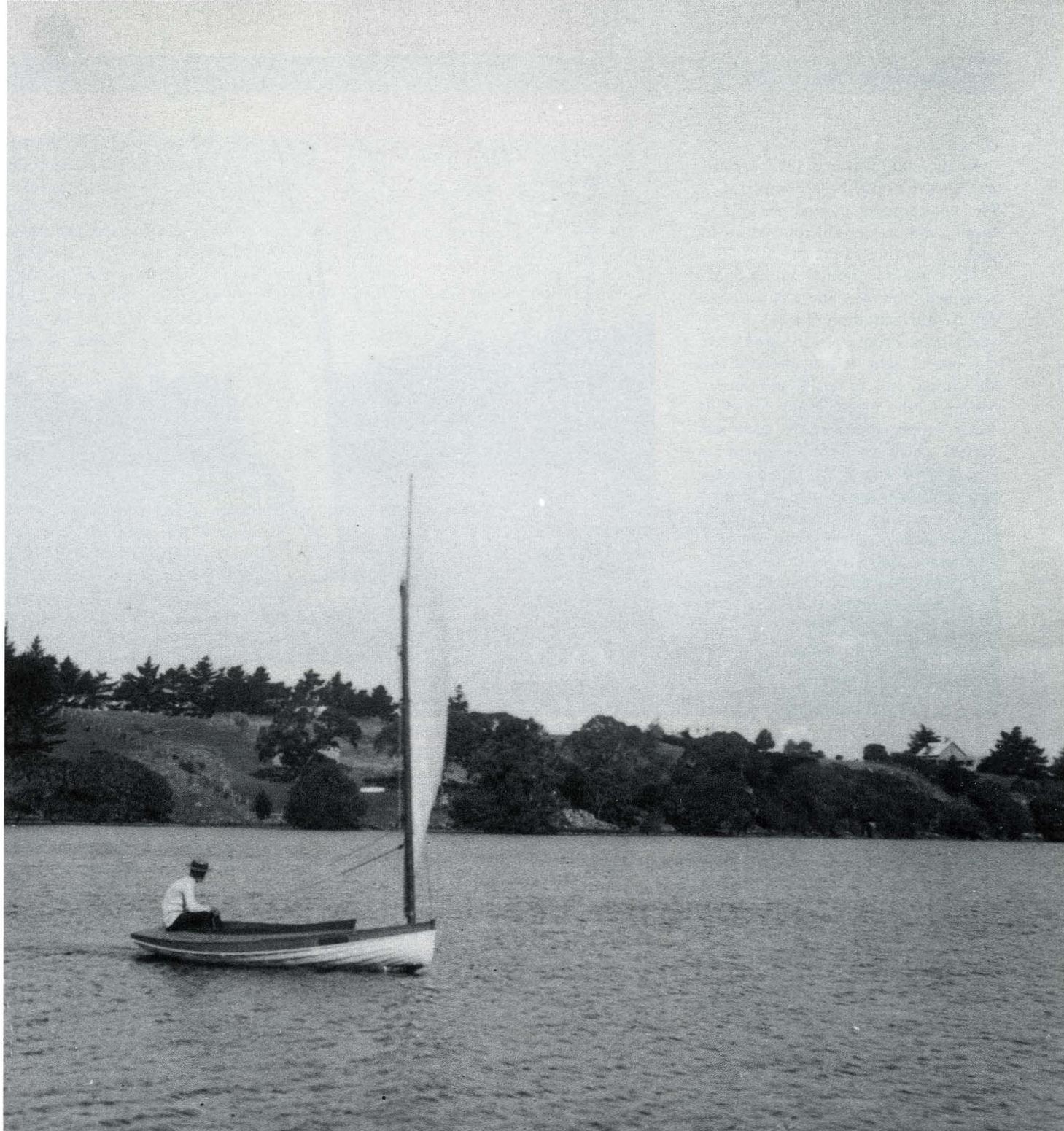
A wind change to ESE in the middle of the night made the seas only more mountainous. By now the SEA KING was straining badly and was making water. For two days they pumped her with the donkey engine and but for this, she would surely have gone down. As the *Auckland Star* related, 'An anxious night was passed by those on board. Several

times, as the heavy seas would break over the vessel and she laboured and plunged heavily in the water, they thought she must founder'.

When the gale finally abated the next day, the damage she had sustained became apparent. As well as leaking, she had sprung both the fore and main mast and the rudder was damaged. Under the circumstances it was decided to put into Auckland for repairs. 'In all the Captain's 26 years of his life, including 19 voyages around Cape Horn, he has never, he says, met with such a terrible sea as that experienced by the SEA KING in the Bay of Plenty during the gale, when the wind began to moderate, for that was when the fury of the waves was at its height.'

Thus was the SEA KING towed into Auckland, anchored in the stream and the ship's owners were cabled for instructions. She sat there for over three weeks awaiting a reply. Finally, the reply arrived and she was taken into Hobson Wharf for assessment. The damage was surveyed by Captain T. Clayton, Surveyor, Captain Robert Henderson of the barque CHILI and Mr. Charles Bailey, shipbuilder. They recommended that the cargo be discharged, the spars taken out and the vessel docked.

Repairs took almost a month. During this time, Captain Pearce was frequently seen about the harbour in his little clinker cat-boat which had



*SEA KING on Lake Pupuke 1902. This trim, low wooded little craft looks very light and easy to handle. From her gentle wake, there is plainly not very much of her beneath the water. (Frater Family collection)*

been stowed aboard the SEA KING. This craft had the name SEA KING on her, as is customary with a ship's boat. He does not appear to have raced her in the weeks he was here, but her potential was not lost on the local boatbuilders. They were reported as taking a keen interest in the little boat.

The *NZ Herald's* Aquatic correspondent 'Lynx' wrote, 'Captain

Pearce of the SEA KING had his little half-rater out for a spin. She is a great little traveller and turns quicker than any boat I have seen in the harbour. To give some idea of the little boat's sailing abilities it took only an hour and five minutes to beat from the Queen Street wharf to the Lake Wharf (Takapuna) against a strong ENE breeze and a nasty sea. The return home was accomplished in

under an hour.'

The *NZ Herald* correspondent was plainly very impressed with her. Certainly, the local centre-boarders of the time were of fairly heavy displacement. Many were ballasted and those which were not were often heavily built, deep draught, open boats with fairly high freeboard. Captain Pearce's little craft was obviously a much livelier creation

altogether.

By the end of March 1897, repairs to SEA KING had been completed. Her consignment of coal was sold locally and she set sail for Sydney to pick up another cargo.

The captain's unusual sailing boat remained, however. She was sold to Mr Arthur Schollum, a local yachtsman. From here she seems to slip out of sight. It was intended that she should race in the North Shore Sailing Club's new division for Half-Raters (approximately LWL 15-ft and under) which had been instituted for the 1897/98 season but this does not appear to have eventuated. It seems she was just used for knocking about in.

The last part of the paragraph devoted to SEA KING in the *NZ Yachtsman* of 1911 mentioned that, following her arrival she had been owned by '... J. Frater, present owner of NGATIRA, who sailed her on Lake Takapuna for a number of years.'

Arthur Schollum is remembered as a friend of the Frater family and, certainly, the Schollum's were involved in real estate and general shopkeeping on the North Shore at the time. It is not hard to see SEA KING gravitating to the yachting Frater family living on the nearby lake.

The Frater brothers, John and James, were founder members of the Devonport Yacht Club and were members of the stockbroking and land agency firm of Frater Bros., run by their father Robert and their uncles, James and John. James senior lived on Lake Pupuke, had no children and treated his nephews, John and James (later of the NGATIRA) as his own children, which included letting the boys have the use of SEA KING as their own boat.

Following a telephone call to Mrs Graeme Frater, daughter-in-law of James Frater junior, two glass plate negatives were produced which are most interesting. The photographs show James junior in SEA KING on Lake Pupuke in February 1902 when he was 17 years of age.

She does not appear to be very long, probably no more than fourteen feet. Sporting a cat-rig, with the mast stepped almost into the stem, she is very beamy for such a small hull, half-decked and very low wooded.

None of these were traits exhibited in



*For such a small yacht, her beam was considerable. It was emphasised by her wide side decks and profile low wooded. These unusual characteristics caused quite a stir when she first arrived in Auckland. (Frater Family collection)*

local dinghies of the time (in those days one sat IN a yacht not ON one).

She looks a lot like a small version of those Restricted Patiki Half-Raters, which were launched in 1898, less than twelve months after the departure of the barque SEA KING from Auckland.

Certainly, Logan Brothers' Restricted Half-Raters (named 'patikis') built to race with the Parnell Sailing Club, caused a great stir when they were launched during that Spring of 1898. As well as their speed and sailing abilities there was much comment on their appearance. They were flatter than usual in the floors, shallow draught, low wooded hulls, with minimal overhangs, half-decked, and carried a rig well forward with a small stem-headed jib. That they had no bowsprit was regarded as being most unusual.

These characteristics were currently visible in varying forms via the American magazines, *Rudder* and *Field and Stream* which were avidly read throughout the boating world, and all are embodied in James Frater's little clinker knockabout which we see in these photographs.

Thus, more difficult questions arise.

Who designed and built her, and when? Is she American? Looking at the photographs, it would seem likely, but then the barque SEA KING had come from Sydney. Could she possibly (heaven forbid!!) be Australian? Was she really the great influence it is claimed? Did this modest, but unusual, fourteen (sixteen?) footer really give rise to, not only the clinker 18 ft 6 in Restricted Patikis built to race with the Parnell Sailing Club, but such famous unballasted clinker 22-footers as MYRA and BELLBIRD (both 1898) and in direct line of descent, the M-class of 1922?

We think she was. And, we think she was a major factor in the divergence of Auckland and Sydney centreboard types which were at that point very similar. The heavier, slack bilged, open Sydney type stayed largely the same for another 55 years. The Auckland style of centre-boarder however, developed specifically for our unique harbour conditions, evolved from those early experiments with the 'patikis'. (It is also likely that all of our unballasted centre-boarders since, both round and square bilge, would have qualified for the term

'patiki' had they been built just after the turn of the century).

These differences came to a head in the 1939 World 18 ft Championship when the descendants of those older 'patikis', MANU and JEANETTE (Bill Couldrey and Jim Faire, forgive us), when given the conditions they were designed for, demolished the Sydney type of skiff in Auckland waters.

But that is the subject of quite another story. 🌀

Roy Wilson at the helm of EKA, the first of the 18 ft 6 in Restricted Half-Rater (Patiki) Class, photographed during the Parnell Sailing Club's Jagger Cup race 1900. She was launched in October 1898, less than a year after SEA KING's arrival. The Restricted Patikis, although measured under the old English Rating Rule, were really a reflection of local needs combined with the best of the imported ideas. (Winkelmann Collection Auckland Institute and Museum.)



**NAVY CHARTS**

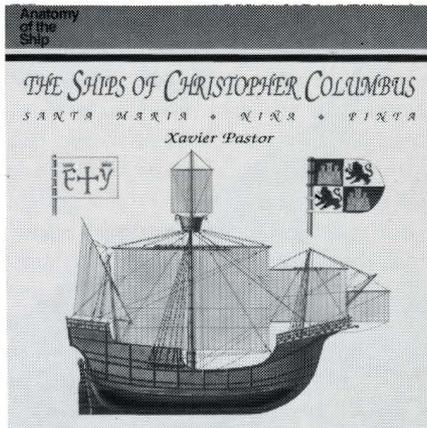
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# BOOKS



## THE SHIPS OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS By Xavier Pastor

Published by Conway Maritime Press Ltd, London, 1992. Hard cover, illustrated, 118 pages.

“In 1492, Columbus sailed the ‘Ocean blue’; primary school children were taught, but in exactly what he sailed has not been, and probably cannot be, exactly described. Five centuries on, the commemoration of the historic voyage west to the Indies has inspired yet another round of attempts to establish the form and construction of the SANTA MARIA; the PINTA and the NINA.

The difficulty with Columbus’s ships is that there were no contemporary plans or shipbuilding manuals, no reliable pictorial representations, and not even the overall dimensions were recorded.

Columbus himself gave the capacity of the SANTA MARIA in tons and described the rig, and also referred to the ship several times as a nao. Other evidence exists in the votive model from Mataro, in seals and drawings on charts and decorating books and churches but none of these is specifically the SANTA MARIA. For the caravels there was the *Livro Nautico*, a treatise published nearly a century after Columbus and incidental illustrations from several sources as for the nao. The NINA and the PINTA were rigged by

Columbus at the Canaries and the sails described.

Additional evidence has come from traditional Mediterranean building and rigging practice surviving until recent years.

Several attempts have been made to recreate the SANTA MARIA. The first was the Fernandez-Duro replica which sailed across the Atlantic in 1892. It established the ship as a nao but its overall size, ornamentation and detailing is now believed to be in error.

In 1927 Julio Guillen built a replica based on his book *La Carabella Santa Maria*, close in size at 84 feet long to current opinion, but a caravel, not a nao.

The Martinez-Hidalgo replica of 1964 was a 97-foot nao, based on ten years research which produced plans and models of all three vessels. Pastor’s work for the current replicas was based on Martinez-Hidalgo’s with some more research, especially into construction with the aid of the Mataro model of 1450. And so the 500th anniversary ships are the best approach so far to the form of the originals, and are based on the accumulated research of a century from a wide range of sources.

As in the other Anatomies, the major part of this book is a set of beautifully executed scale drawings showing all elements of the ships and their gear. In this case Pastor has not had the benefit of contemporary plans to work from — there were none — but these are the best representations to result from the search. As well as the general and detailed drawings of the Martinez-Hidalgo-based 1992 interpretations, the lines and general views of Fernandez-Duro and Guillen replicas are presented.

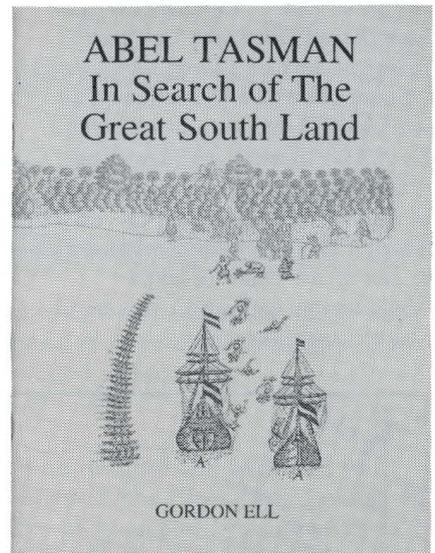
The drawings, on seventy-seven pages, are very clear and highly detailed — a thorough source for ship modellers and endless delight for anybody interested in shipbuilding, traditional craft and sailing.

Preceding the drawings are Pastor’s accounts of Columbus’s voyages, descriptions of the earlier replicas and the detective work and the justifications for the current thinking on the ships, with tabulated dimensions of the replicas and a bibliography. Twenty pages of

illustrations present photographs of the replicas and the various models. Also, a selection of the pictorial sources helps to justify the conclusions reached and demonstrates the difficulty of the task.

*The Ships of Christopher Columbus* will inspire many to dig further on the subject. It is also an immensely satisfying work in itself.

Peter McCurdy



## ABEL TASMAN: IN SEARCH OF THE GREAT SOUTH LAND by Gordon Ell.

Published by The Bush Press, 1992. Paperback, illustrated, 48 pages, \$17.95.

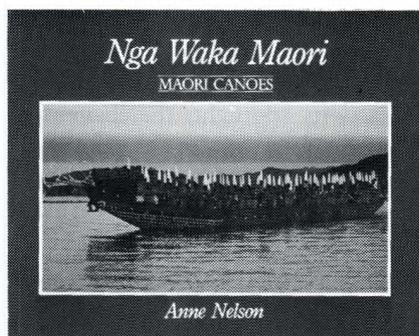
Quite what the significance of a 350th birthday is I’m not sure, but 1992 is one. It is 350 years since Abel Tasman sighted New Zealand and it has been deemed that we will celebrate the occasion.

‘Discovery’ it was not, because of course Tasman encountered New Zealand’s original ‘discoverers’ in an unfortunate confrontation in Golden Bay. But the first documented and demonstrable European contact it certainly was. Anne Salmond, in *Two Worlds* has added Maori tribal history evidence to tantalising suggestions of an earlier Portuguese or Spanish presence, but so far there is no concrete evidence to suggest earlier European contact with New Zealand than Tasman’s arrival on December 13, 1642.

Gordon Ell has marked the occasion of the 350th birthday with the publication of this small book recording Tasman's voyage. It is a good primer, backgrounding the reasons for his voyage and the events encountered along the way. It makes clear, for instance, that the Dutch were not seeking colonies or to acquire land, but that they were merchants seeking new trading possibilities. It adds nothing new to the sketchy details we have of this first European encounter however, and nor does it explain the nature of the Dutch presence in South-east Asia or the enormous strength of the Dutch merchant fleets, both of which form the background to Tasman and his voyage.

The book achieves what it sets out to do, and that is to trace the route and the events along the way of the HEEMSKERK's and the ZEEHAEN's 33,000 kilometre epic voyage through uncharted southern oceans in search of the Great South Land. A minor event in the history of the United Dutch East India Company (VOC) it might have been, but a major moment in the history of this country it certainly was.

Rodney Wilson



**NGA WAKA MAORI, MAORI CANOES**

By Anne Nelson.

Published by Macmillan New Zealand, soft cover, illustrated, 126 pages. \$39.95.

**N**ga Waka Maori translates as The Maori Canoes, and one cannot

help but wonder if this new book by Anne Nelson will render obsolete Elsdon Best's now aged bible on the subject under the singular English version of the same title. The glossy coffee table format quickly tell us that the answer is no. Nelson's opening discussion on origins, presenting abbreviated versions of the traditions of 'Maui who fished up the land', 'Rata the canoemaker', and 'Kupe who circumnavigated the land' are too economical considering the author's claim to give as much depth and information as possible to Aotearoa's traditions relating to waka.

Nelson sidesteps the often difficult field of migration waka traditions by simply listing the canoe names and the tribes affiliated to each. Such simplistic lists do little to further the public's already confused understanding of these traditions, and it is sad that for the sake of perhaps two or three further pages, such a book should miss the opportunity to start rectifying this.

The three quarters of a page discussion of Polynesian navigation and voyaging seems inadequate for such a volume, but there is a well illustrated passage on the modern voyaging waka, Hawaikinui, viewing navigation through the experience of this vessel and crew. Two pages of text allows little discussion of the 'Adaptions and Explorations' of how waka developed locally into those that we recognise as being distinctively Maori. However, the old adage of a picture being worth a thousand words holds true with a clean line drawing showing haumi kokomo (dove tailed) and Haumi tuporo (butted) — the two methods of joining hull sections. Unfortunately, not all the graphics are so clear, as a Tahitian waka with the outrigger directly attached to the booms illustrates a passage on waka Maori with the outriggers attached indirectly.

I am mystified as to why waka tete (fishing canoes), perhaps once the most common form of waka, get only a meagre nine line mention when describing the three main canoe types. Unlike waka tiwai (river canoes) and waka taua (war canoes), the 'work horse' of waka is not the focus of another part of the story, and so does not feature again in its own right. Its token recognition is a serious lack for

a volume which seeks to be widely encompassing.

Nelson's statement that the 'Maori lateen sail' "looked and was used very differently from a vertically rigged sail" contrasts Edward Doran Jr.'s credible argument that this form of Polynesian sail is, despite appearances, not a 'lateen' rig. Rather, it is an adaptation of the standard oceanic sprit rig where an additional pole is used to support the mast, and should not be confused with it! My nautical knowledge is not sufficient to pursue this point further, but it is surprising the Nelson does not even acknowledge it.

Ethnographic and historic accounts give the reader a good appreciation of the construction and use of more unusual Maori and Moriori reed and flax stalk craft, making this passage one of the more stimulating in the earlier half of the book. A brief narrative of the effect of Europeans on the Maori usage of waka illustrates the vessels' economic importance and partial replacement by the preferred clinker built whale boat, before broadening into a window on tangata whenua involvement in the early Western maritime activity in this country. This passage is marred only by a sometimes clumsy use of English, a fault that recurs at intervals throughout the book, distracting from the otherwise jargon free language well aimed at a wide audience.

But this book is about people, not just waka. The history of competitive waka racing does not forget this element. We read of the Waikato speciality race "Chase for a Bride" and the crew of Te Toki-a-tapiri rescuing those of the ill-fated waka taua Akarana, as it sank during the 1868 Auckland Regatta. The past skill of the Maori canoeists, both male and female, is evident as they are photographed hurdling their canoes over beams one foot out of the water, while what must be a good advertisement for the revived sport of waka tere racing rounds off the section, leaving what are perhaps the three most valuable chapters of the book.

Having read the chapter 'Waka of the Waikato, Ngatokimatawhaorua' I feel I am as informed as any member of the public can expect to be regarding the history of these

important waka taua. The construction and restoration of the Waikato waka, Te Puea's difficult but fruitful attempts to see this part of Tainui's cultural heritage resurrected and a deftly presented history of the notable Northern waka taua, are fittingly illustrated with historical photographs.

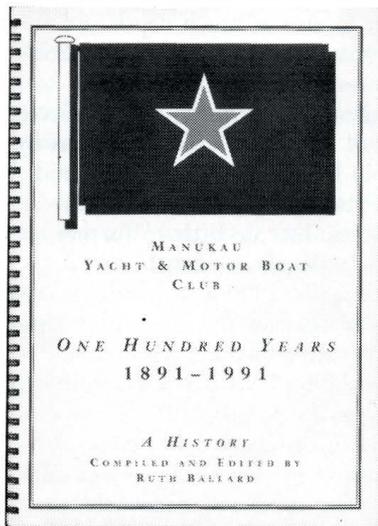
We are informed of the mountain-moving history of the Wanganui River, the economic importance of the river as a 'main road', the incredible skills of those navigating the course, of a particularly nasty taniwha that used to occupy the river and another who still does. Reading of how steamers impacted on the usage of waka on the Wanganui leaves one grieving a little for something lost. Nelson cheers us though, telling of waka being fitted with motors and that despite the wonders of new technology, in the early 1900's local Pakeha were commissioning their own waka to be made for a sum of twelve pounds.

Perhaps Nga Waka Maori's greatest attraction is its documentation of the 'renaissance' waka taua experience encouraged by Kaupapa Waka, a project of the New Zealand 1990 Commission. Nelson gives a useful account of the construction of the waka from the karakia over the trees from which some were hewn, to the vessels' return from the 1990 Waitangi celebrations. Although not exhaustive, the list includes canoes from different areas, and those made by different techniques. The dynamics of Maori culture are shown through the experiences of the various iwi as some opt to have waka of fibreglass while others go in a more traditional line, and yet others had their tapu lifted enabling them to carry women and children and in one case even to operate commercially.

Nga Waka Maori, Maori Canoes shows that waka are important not only in terms of their technical, artistic or 'cultural' significance, but also for what they mean to the people who own them, paddle them and treasure them. The liberal use of plates, both colour and black and white, show us the mana of the waka and the emotions of the kaihoe photographed with their taonga. Perhaps the most telling of these is the last, showing six kaihoe standing

guard around Te Ika Nui A Rauni during its homecoming ceremony in Gisborne. That these people feel so attached to, and obviously proud of, their fibreglass waka taua is indicative of the dynamics of our culture, which Anne Nelson has illustrated well and without fuss.

**Gerard O'Regan**  
**Museum of New Zealand**  
**Te Papa Tongarewa**



**MANUKAU YACHT AND  
 MOTOR BOAT CLUB ONE  
 HUNDRED YEARS 1891-1991**  
*A History Compiled and Edited by  
 Ruth Ballard.*

Soft cover, wire-bound, illustrated,  
 111 pages. \$25.

With its vast areas of mudflat at low tide, sudden weather changes and swift tidal currents, the Manukau has probably never had the mass pleasure-boat activity seen on the Waitemata and the Hauraki Gulf, and some east-coasters would be surprised that any yachting took place there at all. Nevertheless, yachting there was. In the early days of European settlement racing boats were working boats at leisure; towards the end of the century racing and cruising in craft built specifically for the purpose became popular and in 1891 the Manukau Yachting and Open sailing Boat Club was established at a meeting in the Manukau Hotel, Onehunga. Last year the club celebrated its centenary, under its present name, adopted in 1908, and the History was prepared to commemorate it.

Working from club records, personal recollections and contemporary publications, Ruth Ballard had compiled an interesting book, not a connected narrative, but a collection of topics, events, and reminiscences under fifty-five chapter headings. These range from a useful chronology (with the odd bizarre entry — in 1911 for example the yacht ORENA won a ton of coal and in 1928 283d was collected in three months in 1d "swear fines" for the piano fund) through the development of the club and its facilities, the boats from 1st and 2nd raters to Optimists, social events, racing patrol boats and anecdotes. Some of the Club were well known on the other side of the isthmus: Percy Cross was not so long ago a stalwart of the Anniversary Regatta Committee and here he recalls winning his first race in one of the Club's Zeddies then being sent away with a flea in his ear, not permitted to join until he had learnt to swim.

Among the boats described include the early fourteen footers — X, Y and T — the Idle Alongs and Zeddies, the development R and Q classes, the post-war lightweights, the trailer sailers and finally the Optimists. There is a short but evocative piece on reaching not entirely under control in a Paper Tiger, and diving aft to avoid the new phenomenon of cart wheeling over the lee bow.

The appeal of *100 Years* will be first of all to past and present members of the Manukau Yacht and Motor Boat Club, but Onehunga and other Manukau residents will find their local history; boaties of all ages will recognise people, boats and situations; and this history of one institution in one activity spotlights the changing social characteristics of the whole country.

**Peter McCurdy**

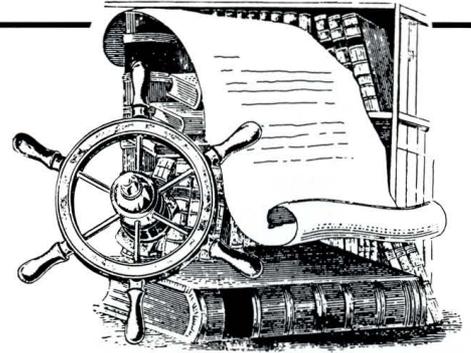


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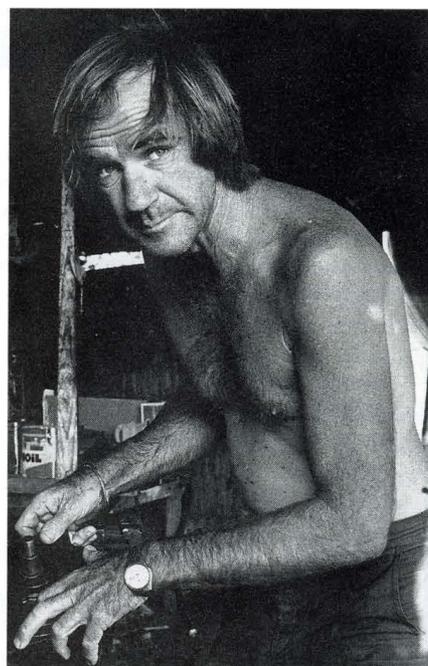
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*Tod Thompson*



*Russell Harris*

# THE CREATION OF THE

# R. TUCKER THOMPSON

In the early days of the creation of the topsail schooner R. TUCKER THOMPSON they were sometimes dismissed as hippie dreamers from the beach unlikely to complete anything. They did weave sailing fantasies in their tepee home on the beach. But it was the dreams and the long talks at smoko that gave them the drive to stay on the job until late at night welding or painting, and to find the people who would sponsor, lend money, and provide work for the ship once built.

The ship was started in 1977 by (Robert) Tucker Thompson, an American entrepreneur and sailor who immigrated to New Zealand in 1972 with his family. The ship was to be a family project, and something to keep 19-year old son Tod out of the pub. It was planned to use the ship as a deep-sea long-liner, with government fishing grants in mind. Tucker died during surgery for a medical condition six months after construction began.

Tod was left with a series of frames with rolled steel plates in place. He welded them together and painted this basic hull. He then went to work with the Spencer Thetis rigging team on BOUNTY in Whangarei. Among the salty spirits he met there was

Russell Harris, twenty years more experienced, recently widowed, recently divorced from a life as a dairy farmer, and a theatre director to boot.

It took a year to persuade Russell to throw money from his farm sale into the hull and become a 50/50 partner in the building of the R. TUCKER THOMPSON. That was in 1982 and they are still partners, despite warnings that partnerships were for the devil. In every way the partnership has been a wonderful balance of qualities and skills.

The hull was moved to Russell's backyard at Mangawhai Heads, thus creating a noisy, messy industrial site in the centre of this beautiful seaside village. There was never a complaint from the community, only support and absolute fascination.

Russell's home was next to the camping ground, and the backpacking travellers who camped there were a steady source of volunteer labour. Some of the work was done by young people on employment schemes. Skilled people were hired where necessary, an engineer and several woodworkers. Now it is easy to forget the cold grubby jobs, the frustration at the slow pace of work, the tiredness and constant concerns about money. It's better to remember the

delightful community that sprang up around the ship. Well before TUCKER was launched the ship attracted people. There was always noise, partying, hard work, and dramatic life change within the ship's magnetic field.

TUCKER is not a replica. She is styled on schooners that worked the Pacific in the 1880s as fishing vessels, perishable-cargo carriers, and pilot vessels. Above decks she is true to this era. The hull is taken from a design by American naval architect and author Pete Culler. He took the lines from halibut schooners which worked off the West coast of U.S.A. and drew them up for a wooden ship. Tucker Thompson took these lines, slightly increased the spacing between frames making the ship more sleek, and converted them for steel construction. He chose steel because he was building to MOT specifications.

From there on every other aspect was designed. Russell specialised in the design of engineering and systems, and Tod in the rig design. TUCKER has a steel deck with tiny lengths of threaded rod welded all over it to screw wooden planks into place. Below decks she was panelled entirely in demolition Oregon and cheap but precious New Guinea hardwoods. The masts and spars were created from

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demolition Oregon flooring beams laminated and shaped. The wheel was made by a friend from old puriri fence posts. She is often mistaken for a wooden ship.

The rig is absolutely true to tradition except for the use of synthetic rope. Nearly all standing rigging is served in the traditional manner; the rig is tightened and secured using deadeyes and lanyards.

The engine was a new 120 h.p. Ford diesel, but many of the pumps and windlasses were found covered in kikuyu and resurrected.

The team worked part time mowing lawns, waitressing and inserting semen to pay basic living expenses. Volunteer labour and dump pickings went a long way, but plenty of money was still needed.

The fishing grant days were over and tourism was the upcoming thing. A mailout with a sketch and rusty hull photograph got one reaction from Newmans Tours. They wrote a letter which committed them to using the ship once launched and was thus crucial in getting a loan from the Development Finance Corporation. Most of that loan was repaid at 27 per cent interest. Those were the days!

A mailout to the film industry found Television New Zealand and the "Adventurer" series. The ship was half built but they signed a contract to use the ship and paid two years in advance!

In between these wonderful connections there were hours of fruitless cold calling, and schemes that came to little or nothing.

The Bank of New Zealand had not been enthusiastic but offered a small overdraft to bridge the period to the launching.

About a week before launching the ship Hutchwilco Marine Safety came to the rescue as major sponsors. On launch day manager Bruce Duncan rolled up with a car loaded with all the necessary safety gear and a few other bits and pieces. They were marvellous sponsors, also helping with equipment to reach foreign going survey for our world voyage.

On October 12, 1985 the R. TUCKER THOMPSON was launched at Mangawhai Heads. About 4000 people turned up and a festival developed — people camping, people with picnics and sun umbrellas, the school selling sausages, and the surf



*The Launching — waiting for the tide at Mangawhai Heads, 12th October, 1985*

club selling boat rides. Neighbour Morrie Crawford launched the ship for no charge. He created a trailer under the hull using old truck axles. On launch day he gathered an assortment of bulldozers and tractors and trundled TUCKER down to the water's edge at low tide. The party continued while we waited until the tide came in.

Tai Tokerau kaumatua Mac and Ruby Taylor blessed the ship in a moving ceremony and presented her with 'Karewa' — a carved figure representing the ship's guardian spirit. They gave dignity to this special occasion.

So the ship was sailing. But it was the accountant who said, "now the real work begins".

Day sails in the Bay of Islands were run for a season and filming for the 'Adventurer' series. Then preparation to sail around the world and take part in the Australian Bi-centennial First Fleet Re-enactment Voyage. TUCKER returned to New Zealand at the end

of 1988 adventured-out.

She continues to operate day sails in the Bay of Islands in the summer season. Travel confirmed what a great place New Zealand is to sail in. In 1990 the ship won a tourism award for this operation.

In winter months a series of passages of exploration through remote Pacific islands is operated, carrying up to eight guests for about 14 days at a time. This business has been shaky until now, but is finally receiving necessary support from Europe, Australia and America. Marketing delivers results!

The philosophy on board TUCKER is to gently encourage involvement, according to individual ability. It has always been this way. From the start backpackers strolling past the construction site would find themselves with paintbrush in hand — after smoko. It seems the R. TUCKER THOMPSON has a thirst for people.



*Topsail schooner R. TUCKER THOMPSON under sail, setting all but the main topsail.*

*The R. TUCKER THOMPSON building at Mangawhai Heads. Based on a Culler design but with a steel hull*



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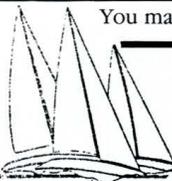
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Final enrolment date: 20 December 1992  
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# WIRIHANA — A TRUE CLASSIC

by Buster Bartlett

Viewing the WIRIHANA for the first time, it is hard to believe she is sixty years old. Kept in perfect condition and largely unaltered since her building in 1932 she exemplifies the workmanship of her builder, Col Wild of Northcote. Built for Mr. Martin Wilson, she is a big boat, 46-feet long overall, with a beam of 13 ft 10 in, and drawing 4 ft 9 in. Her original cost was £2,000 (\$4,000), which, it is assumed, was for the completed boat less the cost of the 80 h.p. Kelvin engine with which she was originally powered.

Her owner, 'Rusty' Gould, is Mr Wilson's grandson; he has known the

boat for most of his life. Having always been owned by one family, she has been consistently looked after, and for many years was kept in the family's boatshed in Ngapipi Road, Auckland. At the beginning of World War II she was commandeered by the Navy. Given a coat of drab grey paint with the identification Q01 painted on her bows, she became H.M.N.Z.S. WIRIHANA.

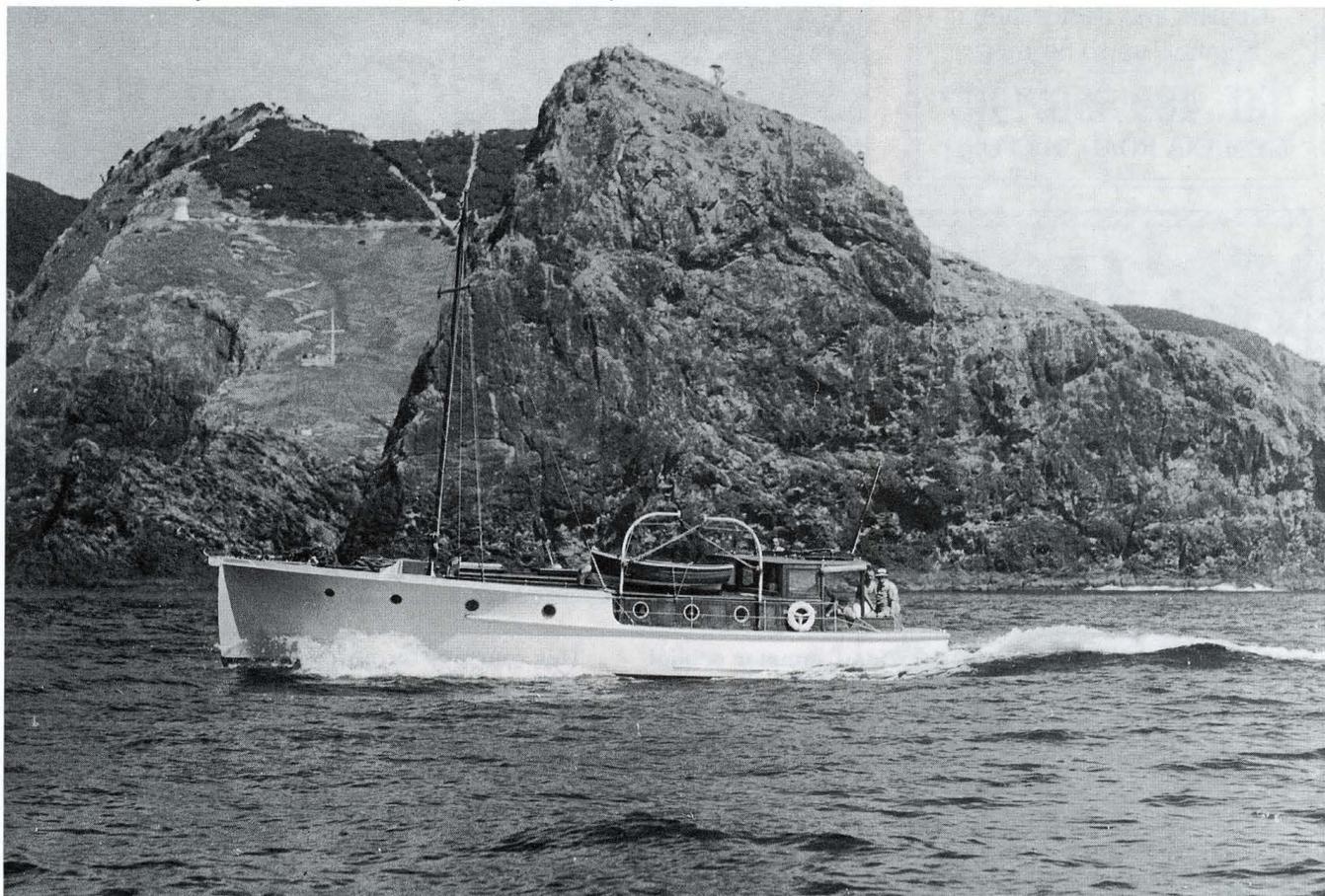
In this role, she operated as a patrol boat until the threat of war lessened, and she was handed back to her owner. As well as patrol work for the Navy, she served as a supply vessel to the former coastal ship CLAYMORE,

a salvage ship, and was a diving tender to the steamer NIAGARA which sank after striking a mine, while carrying £2½ million in gold ingots, off the Northland Coast in 1940.

WIRIHANA, was the second vessel to arrive at the scene of the disaster. Amongst the owner's collection of photographs, there is one of a mine close to the WIRIHANA. It is believed she actually hit this mine but that because she was relatively light and moving slowly, the only damage sustained was to the paint!

WIRIHANA was re-engined at the end of the war. By this time the old Kelvin had run for many

*The raised-deck 46-foot launch WIRIHANA (Tudor Collins)*





Col Wild's gang and the new launch, 1932 (Auckland Weekly News, Rusty Gould collection)

hours and it was replaced with a General Motors diesel of a type that had been introduced into New Zealand by the U.S. Navy during the

war, and was becoming commercially available.

On boarding WIRIHANA, her builder's workmanship becomes

apparent. The hull is planked with three skins of  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch kauri, the inner diagonals being on six substantial stringers, machined from 4 in x 2 in



Sugar lighter unloading, Auckland, 1952 (C.W. Hawkins)



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kauri, each side. The cockpit sole is lined with sheet lead, copper-fastened to the locker fronts and bulkheads. The steering position and controls are to starboard, and a modern freezer unit has been built into what was the ice box, retaining the original appearance. Forward of here, is the spacious main cabin, with a large folding table, complimented by a settee each side, outboard of which, beneath the side decks, are storage shelves and lockers. Across the bulkhead is a row of lockers and drawers. All the catches and handles on these are polished brass, giving an air of quality to the solid teak-panelled doors and drawers. No louvres or plywood here!

Forward of the saloon is a large galley to port with a full-sized, four-burner gas stove and oven, and a long stainless steel sink and bench. To starboard is the enclosed toilet and shower, a work bench, and space for a Stuart Turner generator set which at present is not fitted. Pride of place however, is taken by the General Motors 6/71 engine which is installed, devoid of any engine-box or casing, in the same fashion as the original Kelvin. This practice was common at that time. Forward of this area is the comfortable fore cabin with access to the chain locker via a door in the forward bulkhead.

The only real modification to her exterior is the laid teak deck that Rusty had fitted when he became WIRIHANA's owner. This deck enhances her appearance with its neat varnished skylights and hatches contrasting with the natural teak. When the decks were fitted WIRIHANA was over forty years old, and time had taken its toll on the original painted canvas.

There remains another story of WIRIHANA. During all the years she was in the Ngapipi Road boatshed it was necessary to raise and lower the mast each time she negotiated the bridge out into the harbour. After many years of this performance, and as by that time aluminium masts were available, the heavy old wooden one was replaced by a more easily managed alloy spar. Under Rusty's ownership the boat was moved north, with the alloy mast and after years of comments and hard looks from people who admired the boat he

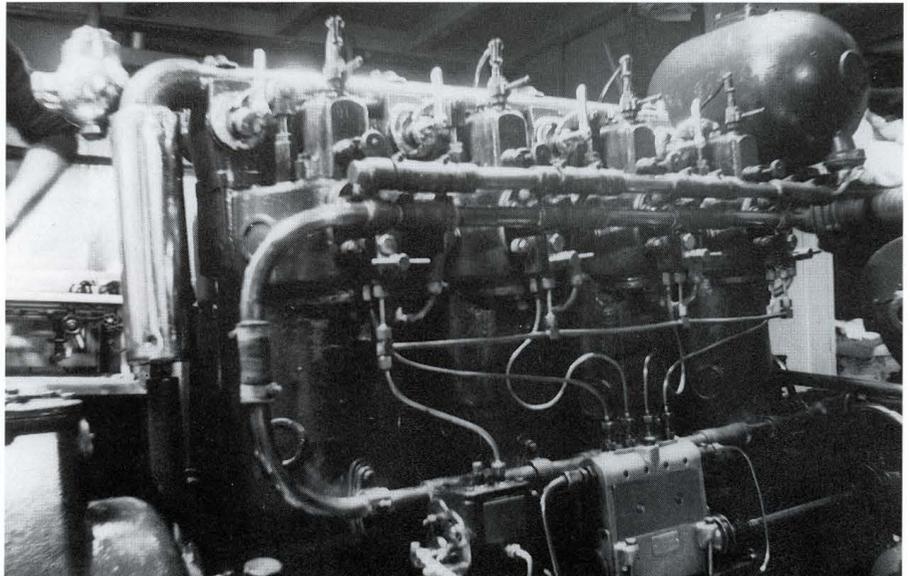


*WIRIHANA as patrol boat QO1 during World War II (Rusty Gould collection)*

removed it, and replaced it with a varnished wooden one. This shows the feeling that people have for WIRIHANA.

Today, Rusty Gould is adamant that she will remain in this condition, for he sees no reason to alter or "improve" her in any way. The WIRIHANA, at sixty years old, is a tribute not only to her builders, but also to a family who own a magnificent boat and have kept her that way. ♻️

*The original four-cylinder Kelvin engine installed in 1932 (Rusty Gould collection)*





## JOHN BALMAIN BROOKE, OBE 1907-1992

John Brooke joined the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron in 1949, served for 10 years on the General Committee as Commodore for two years, 1969-1971, and in 1981 was made a Life Member.

A Civil Engineer by discipline, he established the Auckland Industrial Development Laboratories, a branch of the D.S.I.R., and was its Director until his retirement in 1970.

John was Commodore when Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II granted our Flag Officers the unique privilege of flying the white ensign.

John Brooke had an abiding empathy with all things nautical. He designed the Sabot, Starling, Frostbite and on a much grander scale, the Spirit of Adventure. In his latter racing days he was a keen competitor in his 'K' class yacht KIARIKI.

John was a founding Trustee and Vice Patron of the Spirit of Adventure Trust and Yachtsman of the Year in 1973.

## MERVYN DAVID STERLING

The death of Merv Sterling of Matakoho in August was a surprise.

Mr Sterling has left two monuments to his vision and determination. The first arose from his acquisition and restoration of some of Auckland's discarded trains and two NZR steam locomotives which he restored at his farm at Matakoho on the Kaipara. That collection of vehicles became the foundation in 1965 of the Museum of Transport and Technology

at Western Springs in Auckland when Merv was the keeper of exhibits until 1980.

In 1962 a Pioneer museum was established at Matakoho. Merv became Curator Manager at his other institution which is now the highly regarded Otamatea Kauri and Pioneer Museum. After retiring three years ago, his work continued, concentrating on local history and giving talks to visitors. Merv Sterling's absence will be felt, especially in the Matakoho district but the results of his work at MOTAT and Matakoho will wonderfully preserve his memory.

## WELLINGTON MARITIME MUSEUM NEWS

The chilly Wellington winter has not dampened the spirits of the staff or visitors to the Museum, although some mornings the interior of the building felt like the saloon of the NIMROD or TERRA NOVA on their voyages south. Roll on the building refurbishment with the resulting climate controlled atmosphere!

'In Praise of Sail', the major exhibition mounted over the winter, featured sixteen works by Folke Sjögren, a Swedish maritime artist with an international reputation. The works depicted vessels of the NZ Shipping Company and Shaw Savill and Albion from the Vogel immigration period and also the PAMIR, a vessel fondly remembered by many New Zealanders. Folke generously donated a PAMIR painting to the Museum for our Pamir room.

Lieutenant Nobu Shirase, the

Japanese Antarctic explorer, called at Wellington twice during his quest for the South Pole in 1911-12. In July, thirty Japanese from the city where Shirase was born (and associated with the Shirase Museum) visited Wellington. A Cocktail party, lecture and exhibition on the expedition, and visit to sites associated with the 'Kainan Maru', were arranged for the visitors. Good media coverage was received including several newspaper articles and a half hour interview on National Radio. The Museum Director accompanied the group to Sydney and Christchurch as a guide to pursue other Shirase connections, and to visit a number of museums in both cities.

A small exhibition to commemorate the Americans in New Zealand from 1942 to 1945 was held in the Museum to coincide with the visit by a number of American veterans in June. This display, which concentrated on the maritime aspects of the American presence, complimented the large exhibition on the Americans held at the National Archives.

Currently the Museum is showing an exhibition of Dutch Cartography provided by the Netherlands Government to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the visit of Abel Tasman to New Zealand.

During the year ending 30 June 1992 the Museum staff curated three major and nine minor exhibitions.

Preparations are well under way for New Zealand's first dedicated national Maritime History Seminar which will be held on Labour Weekend, 24-26 October at the Museum and the BP Theatre. A full programme featuring many of New Zealand's leading maritime historians and several from Australia is planned,

punctuated with lots of socialising and swapping of salty yarns.

Recent visitors to the Museum have included: Hon Graham Lee, Minister of Internal Affairs, the Italian Ambassador Dr Mattei, the Japanese Ambassador Mr Iguchi, Robert Turner of the British Columbia Maritime Museum, Lt Commander Peter Dennerly of the RNZ Navy Museum, Stan Kirkpatrick of the Otago Maritime Society, and Ian Church of the Port Chalmers Museum.

Museum staff have continued to develop contacts with a variety of organisations so that in addition to the regular meetings of the New Zealand Company of Master Mariners (Wellington Branch) and the Maritime Archaeological Association of New Zealand (MAANZ), there have also recently been meetings of the Archives and Records Association (ARANZ) Wellington branch and the National Oral History Association of New Zealand (NOHANZ) held in the Museum.

Is there a doctor in the reading room? might have been the cry recently as we had research visits from Dr Brad Patterson, Dr Patricia Graham, Dr Gavin McLean and Dr Anna Green during a two month period. Christopher Napier, a senior lecturer in Accounting at the London School of Economics, also visited to undertake research in the Union Steam Ship Company archives. Other researchers have included representatives from the NZ Historical Atlas, NZ Dictionary of Biography, NZ Historic Places Trust, as well as the usual host of ship enthusiasts and genealogists.

The Wellington Maritime Museum is working on establishing a network of sister maritime museums through the world. The first of these has been with the San Diego Maritime Museum and others are in the pipeline.

A good friend of the Museum in Sydney, Mr E Neal, has constructed a marine astrolabe in brass for inclusion in our future navigation display.

Accessions continue to be received from throughout the country and even internationally. Items from the ship wrecks of the RANGITANE (1940), DEVON (1913), PORT KEMBLA (1917), CITY OF

AUCKLAND (1878), and FELIXSTOWE (1878) have recently been received.

An interesting wreck related item is the transcript of a voyage diary by a young woman passenger who perished in the wreck of the SS WAIRARAPA in 1894. The original diary was recovered from the wreck and is now in England with a descendant of the fiancée of the young woman who died.

Recently received works of art have included an ink and wash drawing of the four masted vessel PREUSSEN, and a Frank Barnes painting of SS WAHINE. The Port of Dundee presented the Port of Wellington (who in turn presented to the Museum) a print of the RRS DISCOVERY. This famous Antarctic exploration vessel was built and is now undergoing restoration in Dundee.

The Museum has been able to purchase at very modest prices through auction, several model Polynesian canoes, a number of maritime toys (early tin boats, model yachts etc. for future display in Kid's Cove), and a significant collection of early photographs of Wellington Harbour.

With the assistance of the NZ Ship and Marine Society the Museum purchased a collection of scrapbooks compiled by J.D. Wilkinson, Shipping Reporter for the Evening Post from 1949-1975, and author of *Early New Zealand Steamers*. It was felt by all concerned that this important collection should be kept together for use by future researchers.

A recent addition to the research facilities has been the purchase of a set of Lloyds Registers on microfilm 1776 to 1880. This collection is already receiving attention from researchers.

**Ken Scadden**

## PORTS OF AUCKLAND NEWS

Trade is going well through the Port of Auckland. Over the last quarter ending June 1992, imports were up 26% over last year's quarter and exports were up 37% over last year's quarter.

Shipping is very busy, as trade picks up. A new trade for us is the joint

service offered by NYK, Blue Star and P&O, to India and the Persian Gulf. Five ships on the trade: PROSPECT, PREMIER, MULBERA, AUSTRALIAN STAR and NEW ZEALAND STAR. This will mean approximately thirty ship calls per annum, giving Auckland an important direct line to the Persian Gulf and India.

Visitors — the Managing Director of Nedlloyd Lines of Holland, Mr. H. Rootliep, visited the port, accompanied by Nedlloyd's NZ Managing Director, Mr. P. Bloemendaal. The South Pacific Shipping Company has three ships on New Zealand/Australia trade — RANGITOTO, RANGITIKI AND HUNTE. The first two bring memories of famous ships operated by NZ Shipping Company, years ago.

Yachting — the Whitbread approaches. Chris Dickson is building two boats, each 20 metres long, and Grant Dalton one boat which is 26 metres long. They will use Princes Wharf while fitting out and trialling and will leave for Europe next May.

Dredging — the Australian dredger RESOLUTION has begun its programme of dredging at the Auckland wharves and in the shipping channels. The spoil is being dumped off the Noises — with strong public reaction from some groups. The RESOLUTION is a suction dredger built in 1971 and measures 116.5m x 18m x 8.6m. There are two 900mm suction pipes, capable of dredging to 25 metres, and the spoil is carried in a 4000 cubic metre hopper which discharges through twenty-eight doors in the bottom. Two crews work the ship around the clock in twelve-hour watches.

**Ron McKenzie**  
Harbour Master

## THE TRADITIONAL SMALL CRAFT SOCIETY

The traditional summer events for the northern Society members are the Wenderholm-Puhoi Christmas event on Sunday the 29th of November, (10.30 a.m. at Wenderholm), the Mahurangi Regatta on Saturday 30th January and the Anniversary Regatta the following Monday. At the Mahurangi Regatta

will be the largest gathering of steamboats seen for decades, organised by the Auckland Steam Engine Society. Other events are the Wade River Race from Stillwater to Silverdale, the Otamatea Regatta on the Kaipara and the Russell and Opuia events in the Bay of Islands. Watch local papers for details.

Monthly meetings and events on the water are held in several centres — see below for contacts. There are people interested in the lore of small craft in many other centres; contact Peter McCurdy, 15 Cowley St, Waterview, Auckland, ph.0-9-828 4680 for details and for back issues of the journal *Traditional Boats*.

**Auckland** — meetings the second Wednesday each month, 7.30 p.m. at the Ponsonby Cruising Club, Westhaven. Contact: Steve Fleming, ph. 0-9-528 3093.

**Hamilton** — meetings the fourth Wednesday each month. Contact: Jack Eason, ph. 0-7-856 4508.

**Tauranga** — meetings the fourth Thursday each month. Contact: Barry Dunwoody, ph. 0-7-576 5373.

**Whangarei** — meetings the last Thursday each month 7.30 p.m. at the Northland Regional Museum. Contact: Bruce Young, ph. 0-9-438 9630.

Anybody with an interest in the building, restoration or use of traditional and alternative craft is welcome to attend meetings and events on the water, and both “traditional” and “small” are broad in scope.

## HELP

The Tauranga Traditional Small Craft Society is in need of new blood, young or old. We have managed to reach the ripe old age of ten years and need a fresh intake to carry us into the next decade or rather the next century. Informal meetings are held monthly and the odd outing is arranged by members.

No fees — no obligations and all above the belt.

Contact: Barry Dunwoody  
36 Emily Place  
Tauranga  
Ph. 0-7-576 5373

## THE FIRST ANNUAL AUCKLAND STEAMBOAT RALLY

**A**uckland Anniversary Weekend, Saturday 30th January — Monday 1st February 1993. Open to any vessel, old or new, propelled by steam.

To be held in conjunction with the Annual Mahurangi Regatta which is scheduled for the Saturday of the Anniversary weekend. This is a Regatta for traditional and historic craft, both original and replicas; the perfect atmosphere for Steamboating.

Venue — the Mahurangi Harbour, one of the loveliest waterways of the Hauraki Gulf. Launching facilities at picturesque Wenderholm. (Tide 8.48)

Proposed activities will include: Three glorious days of informal steamboating

A grand parade of steam vessels  
A steamboat race and trophy for the winner

Evening social get-together at Warkworth with videos, films and discussion

For the more adventurous, the opportunity to steam down to the Waitemata Harbour on Monday to surprise the crowds at the Anniversary Day celebrations.

The following facilities are being planned:

Secure overnight berthage for visiting boats

Furnace ‘fodder’. (Supplies of firewood/coal)

Fresh water supplies

Overnight stopover in Warkworth  
Interested boat owners are invited to register their interest with:— Gary Summerhays, Hon.Secretary, P.O. Box 122, Huntly or John Hager, 34 Monteith Crescent, Meadowbank, Auckland 5.

Comments, suggestions and/or offers of assistance will be most welcome.

## A NEW SUMNER LIFEBOAT

**T**he Sumner Lifeboat Institution in August received an addition to its fleet, the ex-Sennen Cove lifeboat DIANA WHITE, a 37-foot Rother-type displacement, self-righting boat built in 1973. The hull is cold-moulded and the superstructure aluminium and she is powered by two Thornycroft-Ford 56 h.p. diesel engines driving 23-inch propellers in tunnels. The DIANA WHITE arrived at Lyttelton early in August aboard the NUOVA LLOYDIANA and crossed the Sumner bar for the first time on the 5th of August, accompanied by RESCUE III, now sold to New Plymouth.

The new boat is having new navigation and communication gear installed and will be renamed in November. At Sennen Cove in Cornwall she saved 63 lives. What will she do for the Sumner Lifeboat Institution.

*The Sumner Lifeboat Institution's Rother Class boat unloaded at Lyttelton*



# THE STEINLAGER PROP

by Lance Girling-Butcher



*The Steinlager prop recently accessioned into the HOBSON WHARF collection.*

**Y**ou have heard of Darcy Whiting and the "Tequila Propeller"; the hand carved wooden prop Darcy used to successfully rescue his yacht TEQUILA. Well this is the story of another — somewhat cruder — salvage propeller. New Plymouth yachtsman Lance Girling-Butcher tells the story of events leading up to the creation of the "Steinlager Propeller".

In August 1989 while cruising on the west coast of Durville Island in our 30 foot Chico, CHO CHO SAN, we had the misfortune to lose the blades of the folding prop while manoeuvring to anchor in a small bay off the entrance to the Mill Arm in Greville Harbour. The area is similar in many respects to the South Island's sounds with deep water close to shore. The blades, complete with their securing stainless steel pin, disappeared into some 30 metres of water. We completed the anchoring process and ran a stern line using our inflatable but did not have the diving equipment to look for the missing gear. On the trip were David Bruce, a friend with considerable practical ability, my daughter Catherine (19)

and son Tim (16) and myself.

Greville is a difficult harbour to get in and out of at the best of times with the entrance constricted by a boulder bank which generates strong tidal flows. Vessels are warned not to attempt the passage unless under power and as close as possible to slack high water. The nearest main centre likely to have a replacement prop was Nelson, which has a similar, although much deeper and wider entrance.

It was too late in the day to do anything about the predicament then but plot and plan. At that stage David had to catch a plane from Nelson in 32 hours to get to an urgent meeting in New Plymouth. We had two alternatives; attempt to get a tow out of Greville, where there were few other craft, and another tow into Nelson; or find some way of getting the boat going ourselves. We decided to try to build an improvised prop from raw material on the boat and head for Nelson under our own steam.

First light the next day, I went over the side in icy water with a bar of soap to measure the gap in what

remained of the propeller. From this measurement, we built up a central block of wood cut from a cedar plank with a hacksaw. We had plenty of tools for working on the engine but nothing for woodworking other than a small hand drill, with a limited selection of bits, some nails, tacks and screws. We cut two grooves at roughly 45 degrees into the end of the block and shaped two matching blades from marine three ply to sit in these. The whole structure was held together with araldite (the fibreglass kit had mysteriously been left at home) and was reinforced with strips of alloy cut Steinlager cans emptied during the planning phase the previous evening. A section of 12 gauge wire completed the job.

With only three hours to catch the tide at the boulder bank, it was then "cooked" over the gas stove to speed the curing process. The central stock was then wrapped with plastic cut from the lid of an empty ice-cream container to build it up to desired thickness. I returned to the water and fitted the object to the old propeller stock, lashing it in place with nylon line and, in the process, nearly losing some vital equipment of my own in the icy water. Sea trials in the total calm of the inner harbour produced a maximum speed of two knots going forward with the gearbox in reverse. We had pitched our new prop blades the wrong way round — but it worked.

Crossing the boulder bank was a breeze (excuse the pun). With a following wind and improvised mechanical propulsion, we raced through the entrance on the remains of the ebbing tide and set sail for Nelson 35 miles away.

Nelson was not so much fun at 2300 hours with a stiff southerly and nasty steep little sea. The wooden blades proved their worth. Just winning the fight against an outgoing tide we inched through the entrance and tied up in the marina about 0100 hours. The prop finally collapsed when a too heavy hand on the throttle over-did the reverse (forward) thrust manoeuvre into the marina.

First light next day, we used the inflatable to shift the yacht to dry out against some piles, and after getting advice from a friendly marine repair yard nearby, went shopping.

“But you will be lucky to find anything that fits”, we were warned. Two stores later, we found what we thought we were looking for. It was old stock, “we have had it for years”, at the original price. It fitted like a glove and while two degrees over-pitched, enabled us to finish the holiday free of trouble. David also caught his plane and made his meeting on time.

## ORCA

In August boaters on the Waitemata were startled by the sight of a pod of orcas making their way up the harbour. They stayed for a while, showing some interest in boats and other objects, disappeared and returned a week later. The orcas came very close to a tourist charter yacht skippered by John Hager to the delight and alarm of the Japanese tourists aboard and causing John to worry about the safety of his rudder. For every pleasure a price — there were no little blue penguins to be seen on the harbour in the days that followed.



*Orcas on the Waitemata (John Hager)*

*A corner of the Auckland waterfront, between the Kings Wharf approach and the Northern Wharf, 20 September, 1955. The scene is now rather different. The motor-barge ESME in the foreground, plying to Waiheke Island, was once a ketch-rigged scow. Behind is the Chelsea Sugar lighter MAKU; a second lighter lies against the Quay Street wall and a third lies outside a small coaster off the Northern Wharf. The tug is the MARO, one of two which brought the lighters carrying refined sugar, golden syrup and other delights from the refinery at Chelsea on the North Shore to Auckland for distribution. The lighters had steering and their own steam-driven winches for cargo handling. (C.W. Hawkins)*



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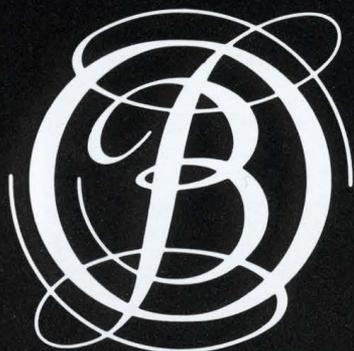
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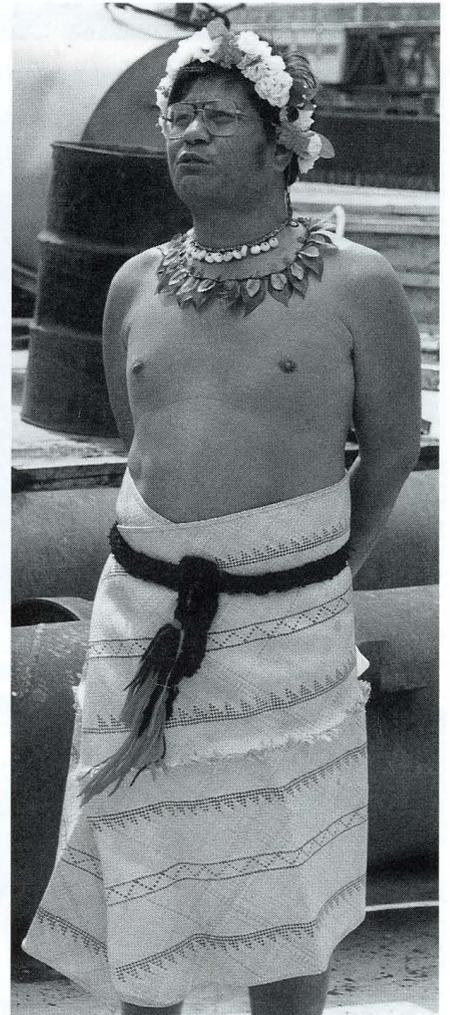
# THE FIRST COLLECTION PIECES ON HOBSON WHARF

*October 13, 1992 will be a memorable day in the history of HOBSON WHARF. With the practical assistance of OWENS Heavy-Haul, Central Cranes, Boat Haulage, Ministry of Transport, the warmth and support of the Kiribati Community of Auckland, Reverend Wikiriwhi of Ngati Whatua, Gerard O'Regan of MONZ, the Waters family and many more, two large boats, TARATAI and REWA were placed in position on the wharf. Because of their size it has been necessary to build the HOBSON WHARF buildings around them. The following photographs tell something of the events of the day.*

(Photographs Roger Reid and Gillian Chaplin)



*Reverend Wikiriwhi of Ngati Whatau blesses TARATAI*



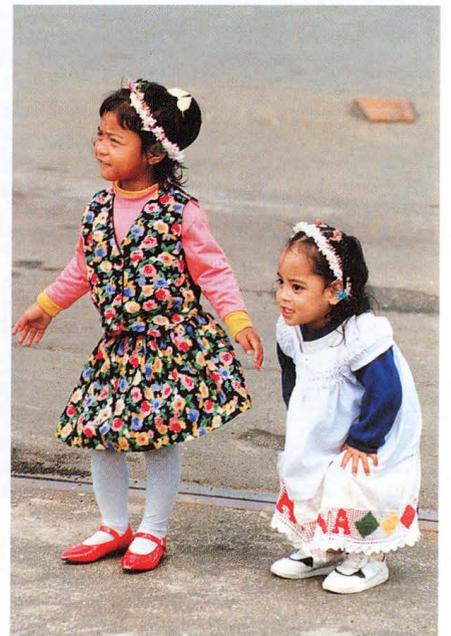
*Tatua Naboua of the Kiribati community greets TARATAI.*



*TARATAI is welcomed to HOBSON WHARF.*



TARATAI about to be lifted high above the HOBSON WHARF site



Teang Romano and Rina Levi echo their elders

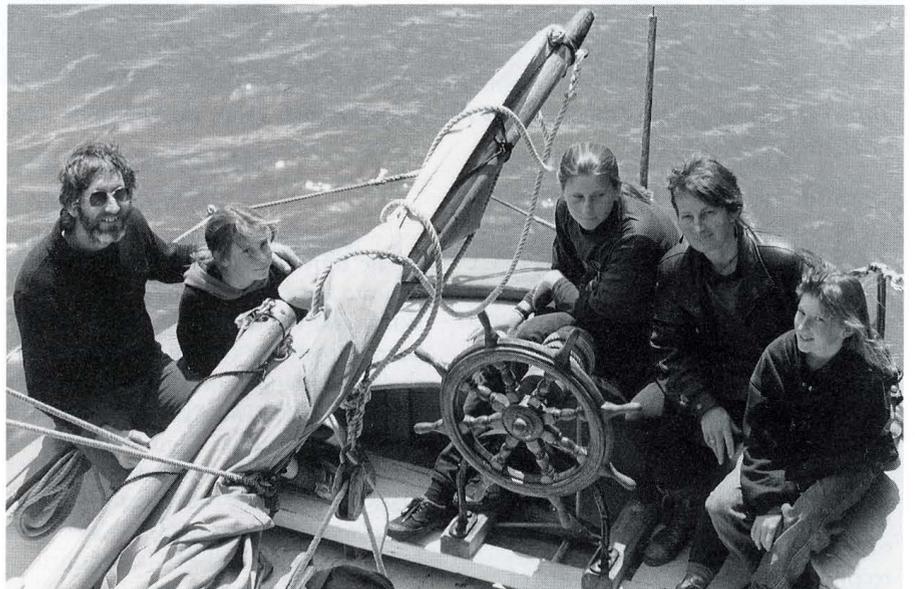


Left and above left  
Members of Auckland's Kiribati  
community greet TARATAI  
with song and dance on the  
HOBSON WHARF building site.

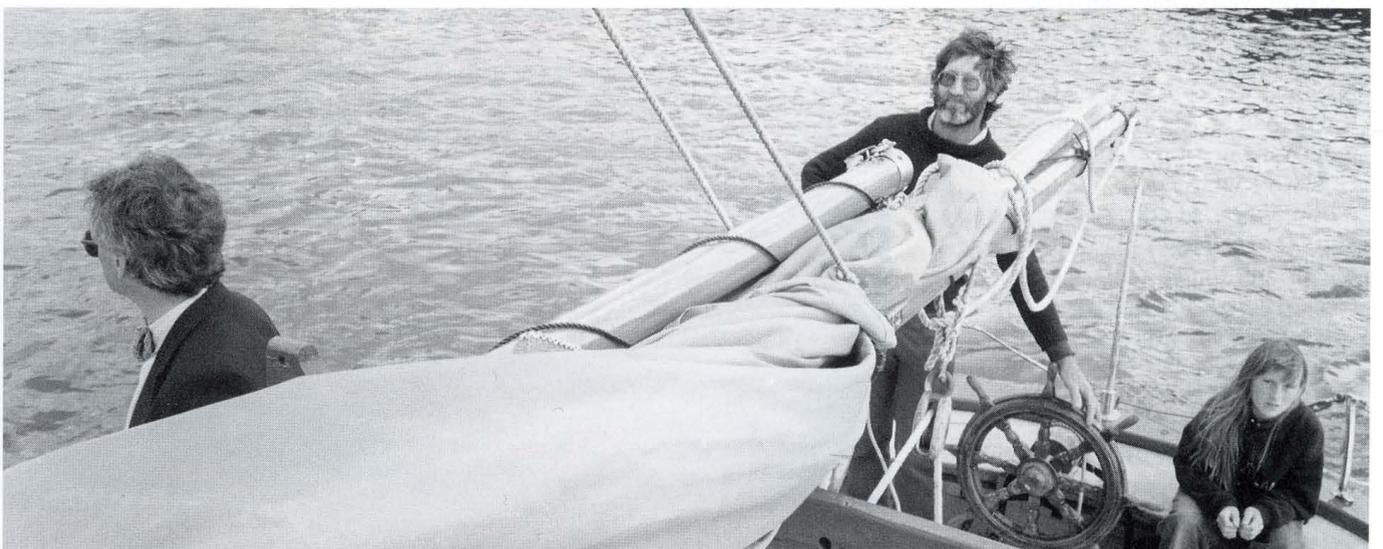


*One of REWA's last sails watched from the deck of BREEZE.*

*The Water's family farewell their REWA.*



*HOBSON WHARF Director Rodney Wilson, Dave Waters, Gianna Waters and REWA just before lift out.*



# MUSEUM NEWS



*TARATAI coming off the OWENS HEAVY-HAUL truck high above the HOBSON WHARF site about to be settled into place by CENTRAL CRANES.*

## TARATAI ARRIVES ON THE AUCKLAND WATERFRONT

In 1976, Wellington photographer Jim Siers and Islanders of Kiribati built a huge 23 metre outrigger voyaging canoe TARATAI and sailed her from Tarawa to Fiji. This was one of the earliest epic voyages reconstructing the achievements of prehistoric Pacific navigators.

Sixteen years later TARATAI is to make another epic voyage, this time from the gardens of Wellington's National Museum to the Maori and Pacific hall at Auckland's new waterfront maritime museum, HOBSON WHARF.

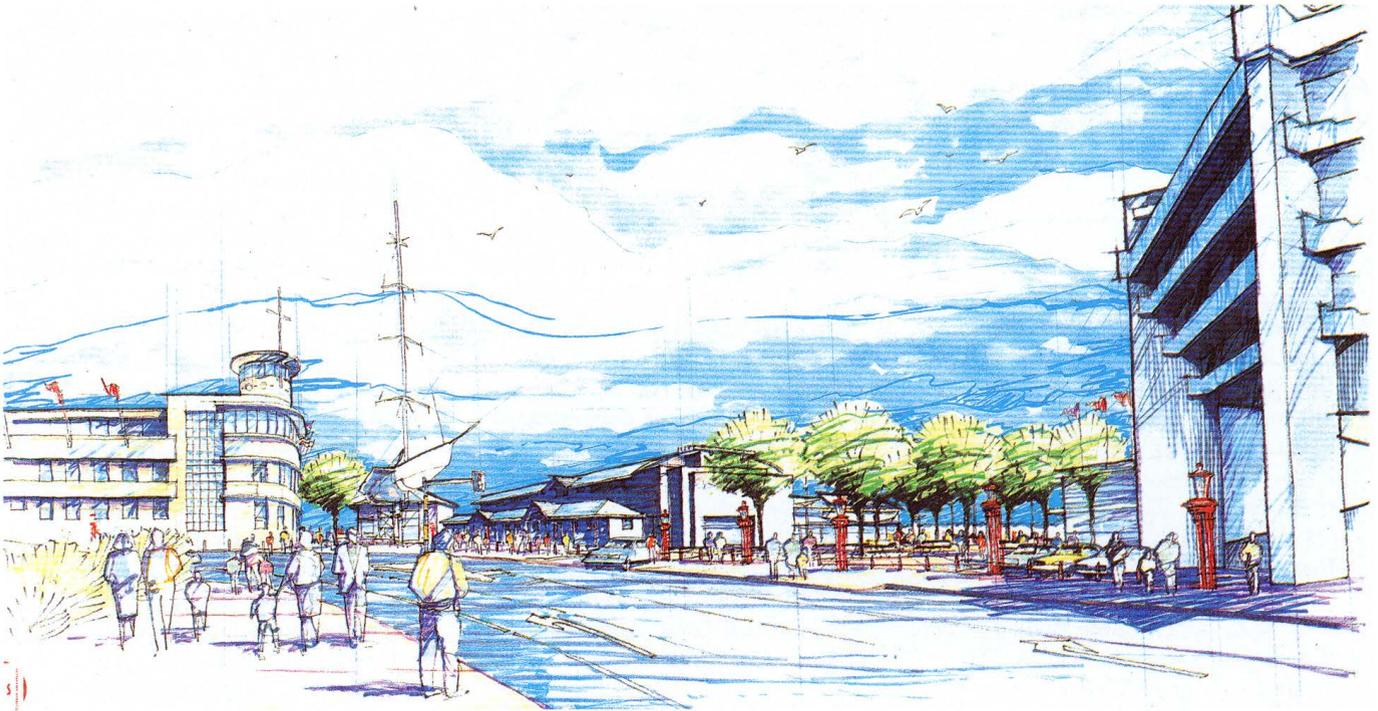
In a police led convoy comprising a huge Owens Heavy-Haul 'trombone' tractor and trailer and a separate truck to carry the outrigger, TARATAI will leave Wellington late at night Sunday 11 October to arrive in Auckland in the "wee hours" of Tuesday the 13th. She will be accompanied by Museum of New Zealand Maori Department Curator, Gerard O'Regan, and will be welcomed to her final home.

The movement of such a large and delicate structure requires specialist skills, and Owens Heavy-Haul have been chosen for the task because of their experience with difficult heavy consignments. TARATAI, and the 40 foot 1880s Hauraki Gulf trading cutter REWA, will be craned into place on HOBSON WHARF on the Tuesday morning, and will be positioned for exhibition in two innovative displays in the new

maritime museum. Craning vessels 23 metres long into place is a delicate operation at the best of times — when it is a canoe in which every plank is delicately lashed together with handmade fibre, and where these lashings have suffered from years of exposure to the elements, the manoeuvre will be especially tense. Central Cranes of Auckland will use two cranes simultaneously to achieve an even lift along the full hull length.



*REWA being lifted out of the water by CENTRAL CRANES. (Roger Reid)*



*The drawing prepared by LA4, Malcolm Deighton and Jasmx for the Auckland City Council Harbour Edge Improvements proposal September 1992.*

Once the vessels are in place, the structural steel of the HOBSON WHARF buildings will be erected over them, containing them permanently within their new 'home'. Restoration of both will be undertaken later in situ — a major task for TARATAI, involving considerable relashing, rebuilding of the outrigger platform and erection of the two masted rig.

TARATAI will be the largest Pacific Islands canoe on exhibition in any museum in the world, and a prominent symbol of Auckland's Pacific character.

## CITY COUNCIL ANNOUNCES LANDSCAPING PLAN

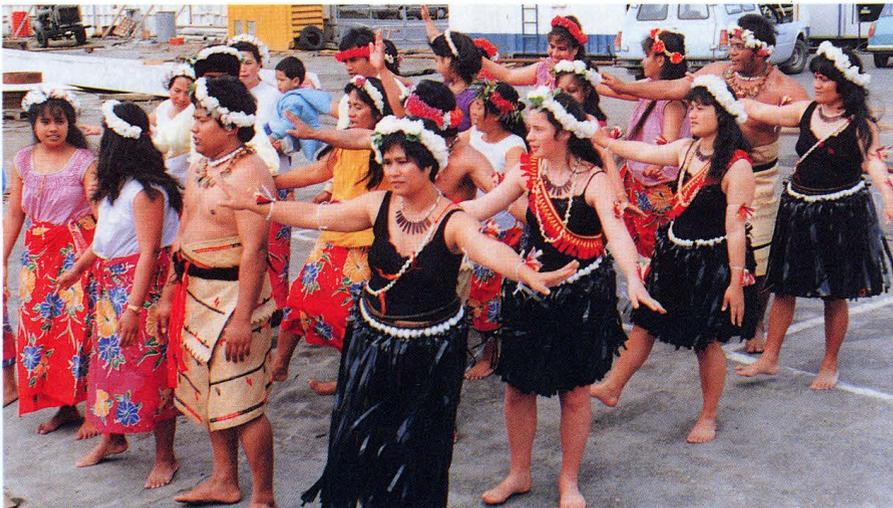
The Auckland City Council recently unveiled its plans for landscaping and beautification work in the immediate vicinity of HOBSON WHARF.

With the support of HOBSON WHARF's architects, Malcolm Deighton and Jasmx, together with environmental planners and designers LA4, the Council planning team

revealed a plan which involves resurfacing of the entire area in front of the museum on the Eastern viaduct the Quay St/Hobson St intersection, and the shore end of Princes Wharf, finally wrapping around the waters edge behind the AHB Engineers Workshop building past the (now) derelict Fisherman's Landing.

The plans de-emphasise traffic and concentrate on pedestrian usage. The change in surface treatment will clearly indicate to vehicles that they do not enjoy priority use in this area. The landscaping intention usually co-ordinate this rather fragmented site, and include the dramatic location of HOBSON WHARF's Americas Cup boat KZ1 in the middle of the Eastern Viaduct outside the museum entrance.

With access to the boat still assured from stairs and gangplanks connected to the museum's boardwalks, KZ1 will provide a dramatic visual destination at the end of Quay Street, and a bold declaration of location and entrance for HOBSON WHARF.



*Members of Auckland's Kiribati community greet TARATAI with song and dance on the HOBSON WHARF building site.*

## THE MARITIME LIBRARY

The following people have gifted books and archival material to the Maritime Library recently.

- Wakatere Boating Club — *Rudder* magazines, bound  
 Max Rands — *Multibull International* and *Cruising World* magazines  
 Anthony Harland — local and international regatta programmes; P-class plans and specification; *Buoyage & Beaconage*.  
 Cliff Hawkins — *The Mariners Mirror* (28 years); Society for Nautical Research reports; *The Great Circle* (38 vols).  
 P & O N.Z. — 'The Blue Book' (*Carriage of Dangerous Goods*); The Steamship Mutual Underwriting Association: *Rules and List of Correspondents*  
 Ross Metcalf — *Rudder, Motor Boat & Yachting* and other boating magazines  
 Wim Bergers — *Old K.P.M. Ships of the Past*, Vols I — IV  
 W.D. Cook — Master's documents; deck officer's sight books; textbooks and tables  
 John Goodwin — photograph album of the building of the motor sailer RAKOA  
 Roger Greenwell — M class racing photographs, late 1940s  
 Percy Ginders — *Yachting World, NZ Yachting & Power Boating* and other magazines  
 Chris Lancaster — abstract of Bob Stewart Designs; 1920s yachting photographs  
 John & Joanna Lusk — Bookplate gift: *Bligh* by McKinney; *An Introduction to Yachting* by L.F. Herreshoff; *Herreshoff of Bristol* — Bray & Pinheiro  
 A. Foster & Co. — Reproductions of David Barker paintings  
 W.D. Cook — Navigation sight books; Masters voyage documents; textbooks  
 Sandy Callinan — Blueprint: Silver Fern sailplan  
 Mr & Mrs B.L. Maples — Bookplate gift. *A Manual of Yacht & Boat Sailing* by Kemp, ed. Leather  
 Brent Leslie — Videotape: Hobson Wharf development, scow building

- W.F. Young — Album of Henry Brett's *Auckland Star* articles Sir Kenneth and Lady Myers — Bookplate gift: *Traditions & Memories of American Yachting* by W.P. Stephens  
 Glendowie Boating Club — Framed print of Jack le Baige cartoon  
 Gainer Jackson — *From a Bare Hull* by Mate; *Yacht Cruising* by Worth; framed photographs of M Class yachts MANOA & MERMERUS  
 Alan Taylor — Original cartoons; *The Maori Warrior* by Taylor  
 Julie Cook — Customs documents, Port of Middletown, 1802  
 Dr. W. Limbrick — Maritime books (8 vols) and *Sea Spray* magazines  
 A. Street — *Boating World* magazines  
 Millard H. Dunning — Bookplate gift: *The Rigger's Apprentice* by Toss; *Laurent Giles: An Evolution of Yacht Design* by Lee & Philpott; *The Merchant Schooners* by Greenhill.  
 R.T. Sexton — *Shipping Arrivals & Departures, South Australia 1627-1850* by Sexton  
 Buster Bartlett — Scow drawing, ink on wood  
 S.J. Fleming — *Boat Building; Tackle Canoeing This Way* by Blandford  
 H.S. Bartley — Bookplate gift: *Lofting* by Vaitses  
 Richard Harris — Framed photograph of USSCO MAHENO in Port Chalmers drydock  
 R.J. Hawkins & E.E. Ewbank — Blueprints of tug OTAGO  
 John Duder — Magazines: *Sea Breezes; Sea Spray*.

Our thanks to all these donors. A list of books and archival material sought for the Maritime Library is obtainable from the project office. Please contact the Curator if you have or know of material appropriate to the Maritime Library and Archives.

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS

The following people have gifted collection items to HOBSON WHARF in recent months. Their contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

- Percy Ginders — Morse key for Morse training kit gifted earlier  
 Cliff Hawkins — HUIA pennant and Nobels house-flag, ex schooner HUIA

- P & O N.Z. — Raytheon Loadmax 200 loading computer  
 F. Jimson — casting patterns for yacht fittings  
 Mrs Edward Donner & Sir Gordon Tait — RN full dress uniform, cocked hat and epaulettes  
 Roger Greenwell — Logan Memorial Trophy 1950-51 MOANI  
 Charles Walters — Spencer Browning compass  
 J.D. Garton — speedboat JON-EL, 1933  
 John and George Pool — yacht fittings  
 Jean Woods — Orient Line engineer's full-dress uniform of A.E. Woods  
 A. Foster & Co — luff-spar furling gear, designed by John Spencer and manufactured by Fosters.  
 A. Foster & Co — Coaxial rigging screw prototype designed by Lindsay Subritzky  
 Jack Potter — Pantry doors ex minesweeper MOA; blocks  
 Jack Gifford — Logan cutter RAWENE  
 Tom Costello — 7½ h.p. and 10 h.p. Mercury and 3 h.p. Outboard Motors Corporation outboard motors  
 David Doidge — Javelin class yacht JIM BEAM  
 John Turnwald — cotton sails ex International 14 and Flying Fifteen  
 Golden Bay Cement — Marconi Radiolocation 12 radar  
 Ports of Auckland — Milan Mrkusich stained glass windows  
 Mrs Dawn Hickson — Y class skimmer GLISSANDO — West Bend outboard motor  
 Barry Thompson — Old Pangbournian tie  
 Gainer Jackson — 12 ft dinghy by Jack Logan  
 Mrs Marjorie Murray-Lee — Wilken's patent log ex yacht NORTHWIND  
 J.R. Beck — Ash oars, blocks  
 E.J. Sutherland — Fastenings;

## THE BOAT YARD

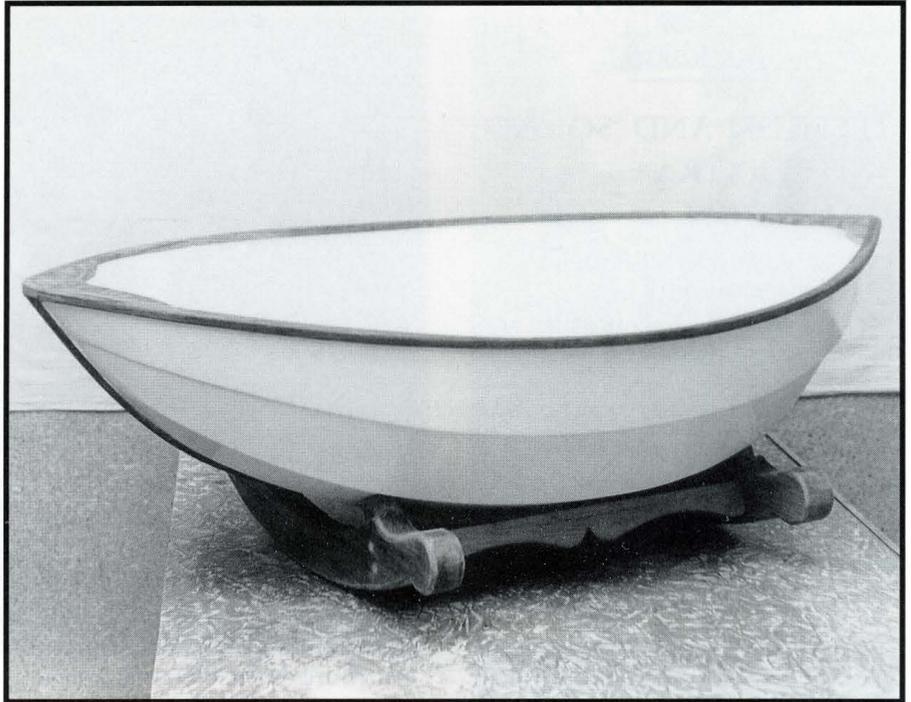
When maritime people talk about 'cradles' they are usually concerned with rather larger 'babies' than the norm. But Ian Newcombe of the Boat Yard is bringing a maritime flavour to the task of putting the smaller bundles of joy to sleep with his hand-crafted boat cradles.

These double enders started as Ian's response to the birth of his sister's first child. He wanted to build a cradle that not only looked great, but was also functional and durable.

The cradle is finished in teak, oak and rewa rewa (New Zealand Honeysuckle) and is set on rimu rockers. And the result? Baby Sophie sleeps just fine (like a baby in fact!) and will probably grow up with a love of the sea.

Since people saw the finished product, demand has grown by word-of-mouth and Ian has been kept busy making more cradles on a demand basis, in between work on the larger boats which are the normal trade of a busy boatbuilder.

Examples of the cradles can be viewed at the boatyard's premises in the Museum's space at shed 20, Princes Wharf. The Boat Yard's telephone number is 0-9-445 1076.



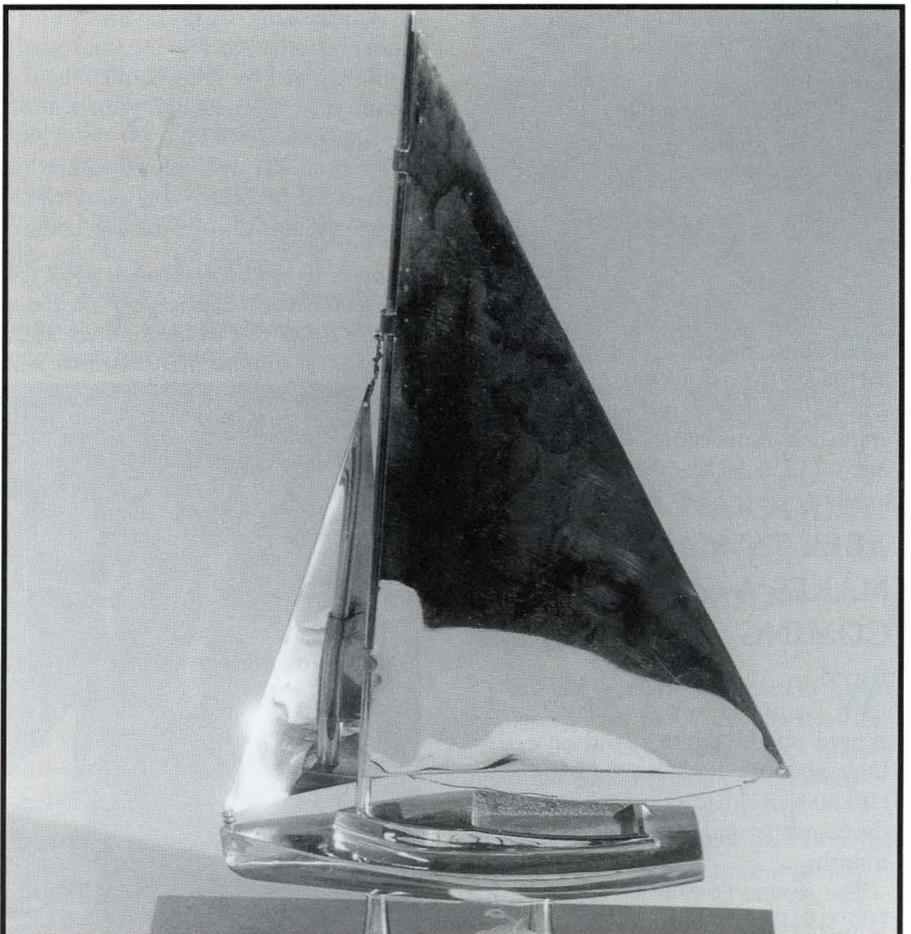
*Ian Newcombe's baby's cradle.*

## WHERE HAVE ALL THE TROPHIES GONE?

**R**oger Greenwell recently gave **HOBSON WHARF** his Logan Memorial Trophy, won in his M-class 18-footer MOANI in the 1950-51 season. This is a most appropriate gift as the MOANI will be the active M for the Hall of New Zealand yachting, along with M1 MAWHITI on static display.

The gift reminded us that numerous classes of yachts and motorboats in which competition used to be intense are now defunct, and the trophies must be languishing somewhere — in boating clubs, private homes or second-hand shops perhaps. Some were reallocated to other classes — the Sanders Cup, for example, went to the Javelins. Some that were premier trophies for their class became awards for 'most improved forward hand' or 'fastest yard sculler'.

We wish to compile a list of trophies, including their present whereabouts, the classes or events for which they were offered, and their donors. Individuals and clubs are requested to let us know what trophies they hold and any information they have about them. Please write to the Curator at HOBSON WHARF, P.O. Box 3141, Auckland.



*The Logan Memorial Trophy, 1950-51, won by M36 MOANI.*

# Telecom

Auckland

## TELECOM AND 'SOUND' — THE EXTRA DIMENSION

Telecom Auckland has joined HOBSON WHARF in commissioning a design brief for an innovative and exciting use of sound in the museum's displays.

Sound Design Studio of Melbourne, a practice with major museum, exhibition, zoo and aquarium clients in Australia, USA and Europe, is working with Telecom staff and the HOBSON WHARF display team to introduce "state of the art" sound environments into the displays.

These are not trite tape-recordings of 'maritime sounds', but are instead complex sound environments in which appropriate CD-ROM sourced sounds are collaged in random sequences by computer. They can vary according to the times of day and seasons, they can be interactive, and they can respond to visitor numbers.

So subtle is the effect, that visitors often are not aware of sound being introduced. And yet, despite the subtlety and an appropriateness so strong that one is not conscious of the sounds, no fewer than 20% and as many as 80% of San Diego's zoo visitors expressed greater satisfaction from their visits when sound systems were operating than when they were silent.

We hope that as a result of this patronage from Telecom Auckland, it will be possible to introduce the final emotional dimension of sound to many of the HOBSON WHARF exhibits.

## ABEL TASMAN'S SHIP MAKES A SECOND COMING

When Abel Tasman, the first European to sight New Zealand arrived off the South island on December 13, 1642, his ship the HEEMSKERK had sailed many thousands of miles over many months.

The second coming of the HEEMSKERK, a beautiful museum model for HOBSON WHARF, will



Telecom Auckland's Director of Sales, Roger Blinko (right) and Business Consultant, Bill Ramsay (left) look over the model of HOBSON WHARF with Director, Rodney Wilson.

arrive in as many hours in early October on board one of the Royal Dutch Airline KLM's aircraft.

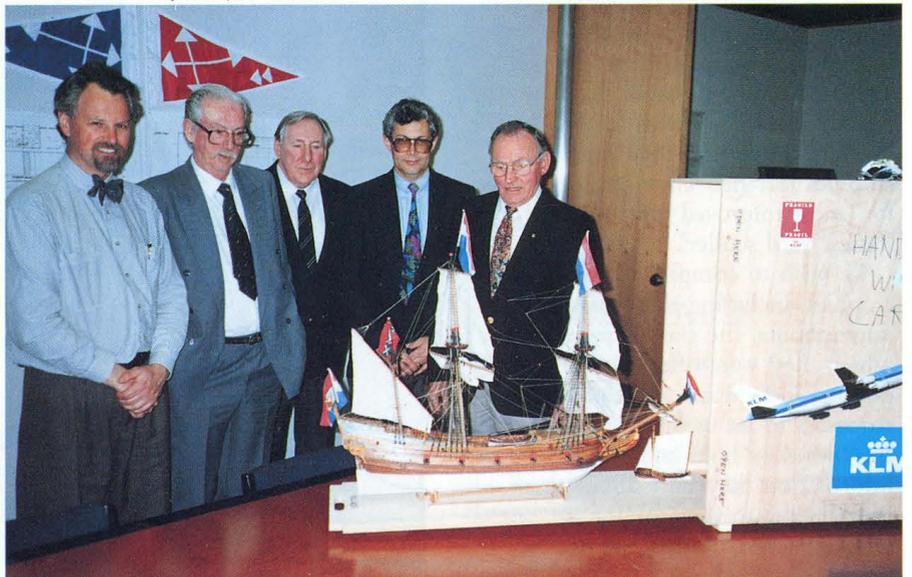
This HEEMSKERK has been built by Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum ship's model restorer Ab Hoving, and was commissioned by Auckland's Dutch community to mark 350 years since the first Dutch arrival.

The model is meticulously built, constructed in exactly the same way as the original ship. Plank for plank

she is an authentic reconstruction. But determining the exact appearance of the ship required hours of study for no drawings were made of ships constructed in the seventeenth century and little information was recorded.

HOBSON WHARF's HEEMSKERK will be the most accurate representation of New Zealand's first European ship. The Dutch community will hand over the model to the museum at a special day long

Members of the "Abel Tasman 1992 Committee" view the model of the HEEMSKERK as she emerges from the travelling case. They are, left to right, Rodney Wilson (HOBSON WHARF Director), Jack van Bavel, George Mulder (Chairman), Fred Scott-Rainsford (KLM Airlines N.Z.) and Kees Wester.





*Chris Fisher surrounded by the results of his labours*

celebration on the HOBSON WHARF construction site on St. Nicholas' birthday, Sunday December 6.

And, in the spirit of Europeanism, KLM will also bring to New Zealand a second model on the same flight — this time the French explorer Dumont d'Urville's L'ASTROLABE. This ship will also be an important feature in HOBSON WHARF's "Hall of European Landfalls."

## A QUEST TO COMPLETE THE COLLECTION

The Auckland Maritime Museum is collecting vintage and other interesting outboards. So far we have acquired approximately thirty engines, mainly in the small horsepower range, dating from the turn of the century through to modern day.

Our aim is to restore and preserve a good collection of motors for future generations to show what pushed or pulled New Zealand through its waters in by gone days.

This is where we need your help. Most of our motors have been cannibalised to keep others going, or have just broken and rotted away. Your assistance locating parts would be appreciated — anything, even old fuel tanks of Eltos and Lockwoods.

Another problem we face is that most of the details on decals have been damaged or painted over making them hard to replicate.

Perhaps your father had an old Evinrude or Champion, or was it your pride and joy, the old kicker that got you to the fish?

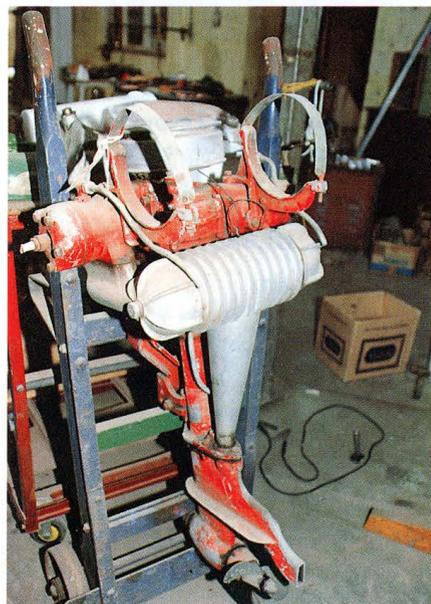
Do you have any photos or manuals of these gems? We need any information on old outboards dating from 1900 to help build up our library. Do you know what a 1932 4 h.p. Evinrude cost and who were the agents for them? Can you remember the Rowboats, Mercurys, Volvo Pentas, Archimedes, Lockwoods, Johnsons and even Westbends from the 1950s? We would like anything that might help.

The Museum is also looking for complete or semi-complete motors to help with our displays.

Do you have, complete or in parts Elto, Champion, McCulloch, Martin, Wankel, Scot-Atwater, from the early 1960s early Eska, 1940s Evinrude Zephyr engines?. We are also seeking European engines such as British Britannias, Coventry, British Anzani and the good old Seagull from the 1930s on.

We would also like to find an early 1950s Mercury with all the chrome for an 18½-foot Seacraft we are restoring for display. Also on our list is a New Zealand- built Argonaut stern leg, or an Arnold France Francecraft stern leg built in Christchurch.

If you can help in any way, please contact the museum.



*Can you identify these? Information and parts needed for restoration.*

## AUCKLAND HARBOUR BOARD GRANT DRAWN DOWN BY HOBSON WHARF

To mark the commencement of the erection of the structural steel for HOBSON WHARF, The City's major new maritime museum, Trustees of the Auckland Harbour Board Maritime Museum Trust paid over the Trust's capital to maritime museum trustees recently.

A grant of \$1,000,000 was approved for the new HOBSON WHARF

development at Christmas 1988 by the Auckland Harbour Board, and although the large Trusts established by the Board were challenged by the Regional Council in 1989, this early contribution to the museum was not contested.

Since the grant was approved, income of \$427,000 earned from it has been applied to the pre-construction phase of the museum's development. Now that construction itself is well advanced, Trustees have passed the Capital over to the museum for its capital development activities.

Chairman of the AHB Trust Mr Paul Titchener, and fellow Trustee ARC Councillor Mrs June Hieatt, agreed that the time for final draw down had been reached and that HOBSON WHARF would not only provide a major recreational, educational and cultural amenity for Auckland; but would also provide the catalyst necessary to encourage further development in the waterfront zone.

## THE COLLECTION RESCUE

In the days before the Lyttelton rail tunnel, the estuary of the Avon and Heathcote Rivers was the sea route into Christchurch. This necessitated crossing the Sumner Bar, sometimes with accident and loss of life.

In 1898 the Lyttelton Harbour Board acquired a 25-foot, four-oared lifeboat, built by Samuel White at Cowes on the Isle of Wight, and established the Sumner Lifeboat Brigade, later to be the Sumner Lifeboat Institution. The story of the Institution will be the subject of a future *Bearings* article.

The first boat, called RESCUE, has come to HOBSON WHARF on permanent loan from the Institution. She will be restored and will be the centre-piece of a special Sumner Lifeboat Institution display.

Our thanks to the Institution for this historic craft, and to Freightways for generously transporting the boat to Auckland.

## JON-EL

Trustee Michael Renhart, and his wife Marie, have generously



*Mr Paul Titchener, Chairman of the Auckland Harbour Maritime Museum Trust, and Mr Jack Jenner, Secretary, handing a cheque to Mr Bob Lorimer, Deputy Chairman of the Auckland Maritime Museum Trust Board at the HOBSON WHARF site.*

sponsored the restoration of HOBSON WHARF's superb 1933 speedboat the JON-EL.

Despite a shabby appearance, this little John L Hacker-designed boat was in remarkably good and original condition. After a good scrape down the Honduras mahogany planking is as fresh as new. Two new pieces of cover board have been scarphed in and the boat stripped and sanded back inside and out.

The wicker seats and canvas windscreen will be restored, the instruments and wheel are being refurbished and all plant is being cleaned, serviced and repainted. The beautifully cast and engineered metal work is being polished prior to refitting. The original Rugby engine is in good condition having run only a few hours in its life.

Even the original, tail first boat trailer is being sandblasted, zinc coated and painted for display. The JON-EL will be one of the two powerboats located in the Powerboat display.

## LOST TIME CAUGHT UP IN SCOW CONSTRUCTION

Although commencement of construction of the Freightways scow was held up for several weeks

because of problems associated with timber delivery, judicious management of the project by Max Carter has resulted in all lost time being caught up.

At the time of writing, the entire hull had been planked and the deck beams sprung into place. Beltings were about to be fitted and the hull sheathed before rolling over. In one of the only departures from tradition, this scow has been built upside down. A reception was held in the HOBSON WHARF workshop on July 31 for the project's sponsors and sponsor-suppliers. Despite the icy climate inside the shed, it was a warm and cheerful event and an opportunity for those who have so generously supported the scow to see progress and meet each other. The spontaneous support for the project has been very gratifying for all at HOBSON WHARF. The extent of that support can be measured from this list of sponsors:

A Foster & Co.Ltd  
Altex Coatings Ltd  
Bennett Marine Products Ltd  
Brierley Properties Ltd  
Brown Brothers Engineering Ltd  
Chevpac Machinery (NZ) Ltd  
Cookes Consolidated Services  
Denray Marine Services Ltd  
Donaghys Industries Ltd  
Electrical Projects Ltd  
Electronic Navigation Ltd  
Epiglass (NZ) Ltd  
Ewbank Brooke & Associates

Fredk. H. Booth & Son Pty Ltd  
(incorporating Maxco Industries —  
Sydney)  
Freightways Holdings Ltd  
Gourock New Zealand Ltd  
Henleys Propellers & Marine  
Hutchwilco Ltd  
L. G. Carder Ltd  
Lusty & Blundell Ltd  
Marine & Industrial (Safety Inspection  
Services)  
Manukau Polytechnic  
Marine Metal Fabrication Ltd  
Maxwell Winches  
Moller Marine Ltd  
Peek Display Corporation Ltd  
Rosenfeld Kidson & Co.Ltd.  
Rule Pumps  
Steel & Tube N.Z. Ltd  
Wiremakers Ltd  
Yuasa Batteries (N.Z.)

By the time this issue of *Bearings* reaches its subscribers and the newsstands, the boat will be right side up and work on the installation of machinery and equipment, building decks bulwarks, cabin and fitting out, well underway.

## TWO NOTABLE VETERANS

Two of the three boats previously on display at Auckland Institute and Museum have been removed for restoration at the HOBSON WHARF workshop.

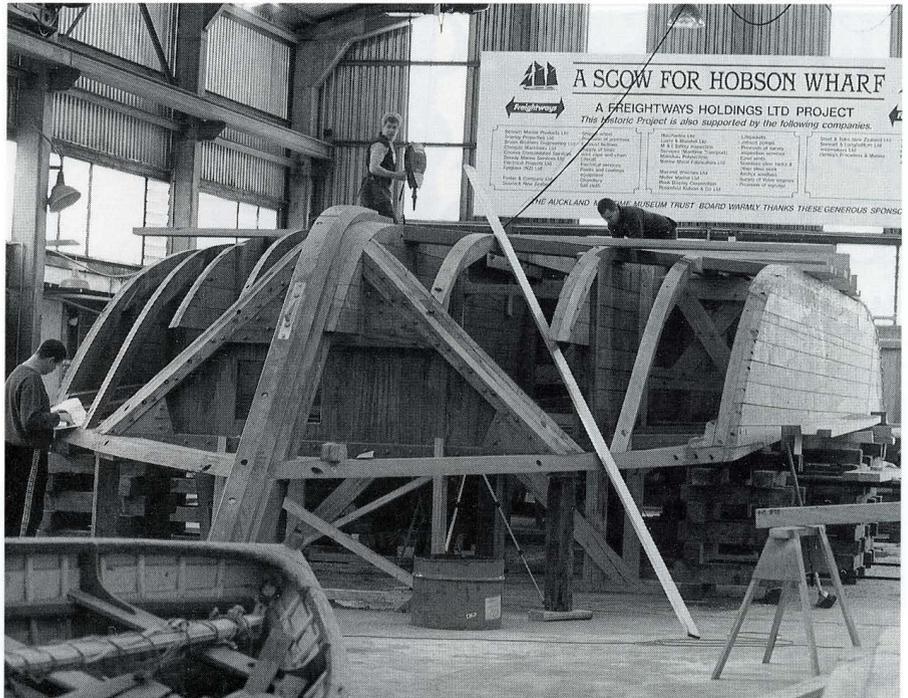
They are M1, MAWHITI, Arch Logan's original M Class eighteen footer from 1922, and the Charles Bailey Jr. X Class IRON DUKE built for Earl Jellicoe, Governor General of New Zealand from 1920 to 1924.

Whilst the work required on IRON DUKE is not too extensive, a 1960's 'restoration' of the MAWHITI (admittedly recovered at the time from the role of kindergarten sand pit) had turned her into a poor shadow of her former self.

Both of these boats have a great deal of history tucked away in them, and the restoration now underway will ensure that our visitors see them in a way that would have been familiar to those who knew them in their prime.

## RAWENE

Well known Auckland yachtsman and a former Commodore of the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, Jack



*The FREIGHTWAYS SCOW, September 1992.*

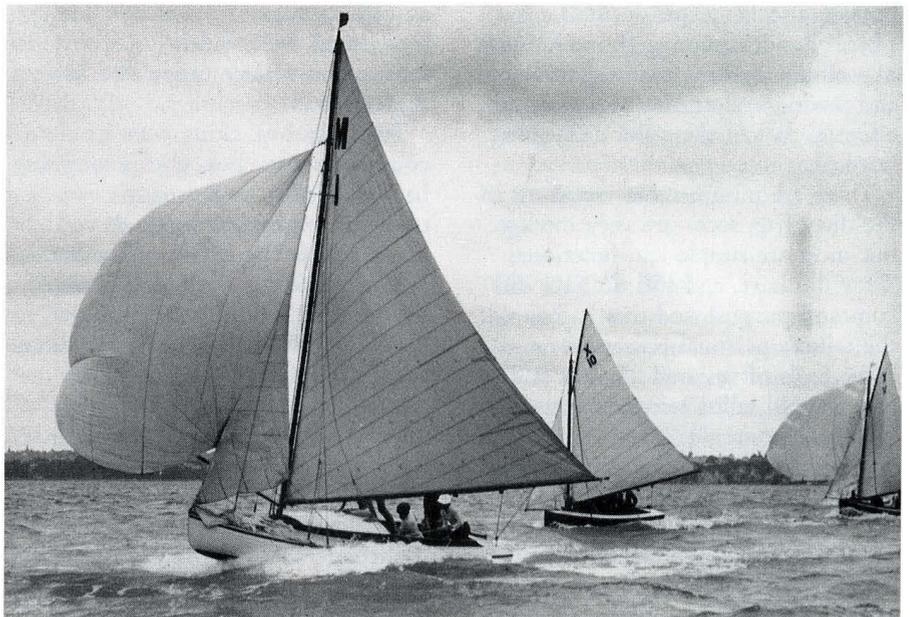
Gifford, has gifted one of Auckland's most famous keel boats to the museum. She is the 1909 cutter RAWENE, the last boat built in partnership by the Logan brothers.

Not only is RAWENE a remarkably fine example of the Logan art but she is especially important for her originality. Owned by Jack and his father Earnest for all 83 years of her existence, RAWENE has not been changed. Only an engine distinguishes her from the vessel that slid down the

ways at Mechanics Bay in 1909. And even then the Logans urged an unwilling Earnest Gifford to at least fit engine beds. He didn't.

RAWENE is a great treasure and one of HOBSON WHARF's most important items. The beauty of this low, lean greyhound is obvious to all who see her. Many thanks Jack, it is a privilege for us to continue your work in preserving this little ship, and in making her accessible to New Zealanders now and in the future.

*M1 MAWHITI and X10 IRON DUKE C. 1923.*



# THE SAILOR'S TRADITIONAL DITTY BAG AND DITTY BOX

An overview of their history and form  
by Louie Bartos

The Ditty Bag is “a small bag in which a sailor keeps small tools and equipment, also personal articles” according to John Rogers in *Origins of Sea Terms a modern glossary of sea-going terminology*. But what is a ditty bag and how did it evolve? The ditty box is a variation in shape and material, but not in purpose of the ditty bag.

The ditty bag and the sea bag, a relative of the ditty bag, were the first projects for an apprentice either in the sailmaker's trade or as a working seaman. The reason for this is that these items incorporated primary skills required when making and repairing sails. According to McLeod (1947), “Apart from the use of the gear, making a bag is good practice for other jobs where cutting out is involved”, referring to the sea bag itself, “among the “old-timers” there is a tradition that a “proper sailor's bag” must contain five flat seams, the bottom also being put in with a flat seam.” Besides learning the techniques of seaming, making twine grommets and sewing eyelets, the bags were an essential part of the sailor's sea-going wardrobe.

There are innumerable variations of the ditty bag; some are very intricate but most are simple and functional. They did have, and still do have one common purpose and that is to hold the sailor's personal possessions and some tools of the trade. It was said that the old sailor referred to his ditty bag as a “housewife”, because in it he had all the essentials for repairing his clothing, personal belongings and generally everything on deck. For an unknown reason the bag was also referred to as a “jewing bag” and was hung from a hammock ring, or



*A reproduction of a bent wood ditty box measuring 5.25 inches in diameter by 3.5 inches high, made of Yew wood with brass fastenings.*  
(Author's collection, made by George Brown, Ketchikan, Alaska)

perhaps a hook or peg next to his bunk in the forecandle. These bags generally were companions to the sailor's sea bags or sea chests. Though these items were widely used, little is known about their origin and how they evolved.

The ditty bag, along with its close cousin the ditty box, goes a long way back in history as do many traditional maritime methods and implements. The origin of the name is lost in the fog of time. It is stated by Admiral Smyth (1867) however, in his *Sailor's Word Book*, that the ditty bag got its name from the word “dittis” or Manchester stuff, from which it was once made. This too is somewhat obscure, since little is known of ‘Manchester stuff’. The manufacturers of textiles in Manchester deny ever making such cloth. It was said that the bag was cut and sewn by the sailmakers and was

twelve inches in length and five inches in diameter. This varied greatly however, as I observed when investigating early and latter day bags in museum collections. In 1923 an answer to a query in the *Mariners Mirror*, on the origin of the bag and the derivation of the word ditty bag and ditty box, emphasised the ambiguity of the origins of these names. They pursued the word dight, in the *Oxford Dictionary*, a word with many meanings, but one is, “to repair, put to rights, put in order”. It is said that this word's latest use in general speech was in 1580, but that it occurs in dialect as late as 1877. It can be assumed that from these sorts of origins the word found its way afloat. An alternative theory suggests that the word came from Scotland or northern England, and that it could have been derived from the term “dudds”, “duddies”, or “duiddies”

denoting cloths, especially working cloths<sup>2</sup>. This seems unlikely however since ditty bags were not known to be large enough to carry clothing. There seems to be no solid evidence pointing to the word's true origin.

The general contents of both the ditty bag and box varied little from that of the sewing basket of a frugal housewife on shore (with the exception of some sea going paraphernalia); hence the name "housewife" which was given to it. It is said that in the Royal Navy they contained beeswax, varied needles, buttons of different types common on clothing of the period, pins, white tape, Dutch tape, thimble, whited brown thread, black thread, worsted blue and scraps of light duck. These items were generally carried in a small wooden box, round or square, or rolled in cloth, tied, and carried in the ditty bag along with the owner's other personal items. An interesting quote from Bechervaise (1839) referring to 1820, "Thursday, making and mending clothes occupies the whole day, when Jack has a fair opportunity . . . of examining his ditty bag and having a view of all the little presents he had from his friends or sweethearts 'ere he left home".

There were other historical references to the contents of the ditty bag — a marlinespike, a fid, a palm and needles, a bullock's horn full of grease and sundry other articles to make the work easier; Holmes (1903).

Moffat (1910) noted, "I wonder how many sailors of the present day carry the ditty bag which, in my time, was hung up at the head clew of every sailor's hammock, and which contained marlinespike, pricker, palm, seam rubber, sailhook, a case with needles, usually hitched all round with twine, the tip of a horn full of grease, and a fancy little serving-board."

### THE STRUCTURE OF A DITTY BAG

As I have mentioned, ditty bags varied in size, quality and intricacy. The one common aspect to all bags was their size and cloth weight. From the measurements and photographs of many ditty bags made in maritime museums and other collections I was able to determine the average dimensions and characteristics of old ditty bags. The average diameter was

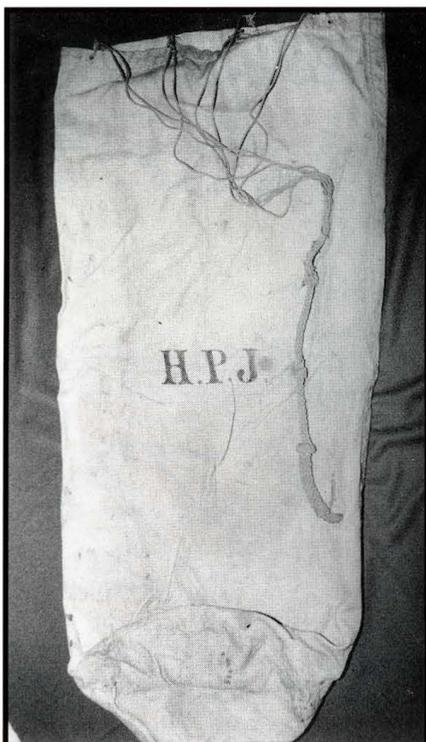


Fig. 1. A typical sailor's ditty bag, fourteen inches high, five inches in diameter with eight eyelets and fancy work lanyard. (The Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts)

six inches, with a typical length of fourteen inches. This average, as is the case with so many artefacts of the seafaring trade is variable. Ashley (1944) gave an average bag diameter of seven inches and length of fourteen inches. The lanyard lengths are possibly the most variable, not only in length but in style. That is, they vary from the most rudimentary to the most exquisite in fancy work and quality of workmanship. The average length of the lanyard is about eighteen inches, with each leg length approximately half to two thirds of the circumference of the bag. The fancy work of the lanyard handle is approximately six to eight inches in length. The lanyard was fastened to between four and twelve hand sewn eyelets, generally sewn around hand-laid marline grommets. The cloth used in the construction of a ditty bag was generally No. 12 duck canvas or lighter, fig. 1.

There are departures from the common cylindrical flat bottomed bag, the most notable being in the Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. The bag is made of four panels, measuring five inches in diameter and twelve inches in length. The four longitudinal panel seams are sewn together with a cloth piping of contrasting colour, in this case black. The bottom, though a continuation

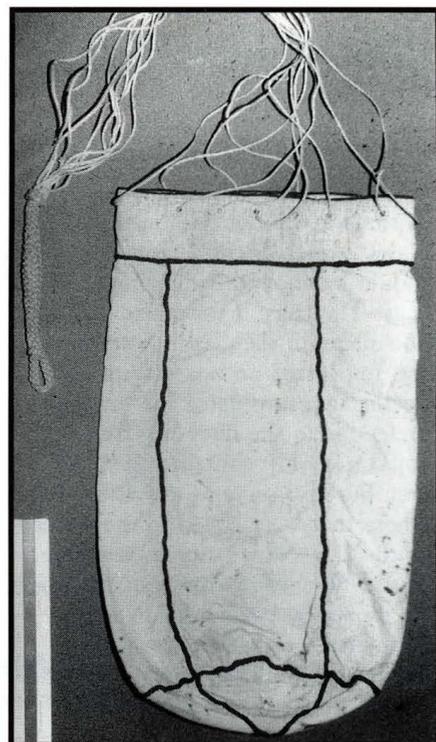


Fig. 2. A departure from the common cylindrical flat bottomed bag is this bag made of six vertical panels with piped seams. (The Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts)

of the side panels, is cut approximately half an inch greater than half the diameter. These pieces are cut into slightly curved gores which, when sewn together with piping, form a bowl-shaped bottom. It has ten lanyard legs, fastened to quarter inch outside diameter eyelets that were sewn into a one and a half inch tabling. This is an outstanding piece of workmanship, fig 2. Another example similar to this bag can be seen in Ashley (1944), in the preface photographs on page 574. Another bag of similar design is described in Smith (1960). Using a single piece of cloth, a hexagonal bottom is formed by cutting six gores which are then sewn together without contrasting piping. This bag measures seven and a half inches in diameter and twelve inches long, and utilises only six lanyard eyelets.

### THE DITTY BOX

The ditty box; according to the *Oxford Companion to Ships And The Sea* "Is a small wooden box in which a sailor kept his valuables, such as letters from home, photographs, etc."

The origins and function of the ditty box were doubtless much the same as the ditty bag; a receptacle for carrying and stowing a sailor's possessions and small working and sewing items. It was more frequently

found on Navy vessels however.

Since hygiene was of great concern to some at sea, Dr. Gihon of the U.S. Navy, advised in 1872 that ditty boxes should be allowed in preference to bags! The bags, if unwashed, would not maintain the cleanliness which was important on board ship. The doctor also considered the ditty box preferable to the ditty bag because it could not only contain paper and pen, but also serve as a writing desk. Those that were issued to the seamen of the U.S. Navy prior to the First World War, were white wooden boxes, six by six by twelve inches, and contained a receptacle for an ink bottle and a built-in trough just under the lid for pens and pencils. The boxes were kept spotlessly white by being scrubbed every Saturday and placed in a rack specially built for their stowage.

Not all ditty boxes were made this way however. They varied in size, shape and style. Some resembled miniature sea chests, some were short and round, and some were round and slightly deeper, always adapting and conforming to the maker's needs. The most common of all was the small round ditty box, with a fitted lid.

The most exquisite and complete ditty box of this type that I have seen is at the Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts. The box is round, and constructed like a small Shaker box. Instead of wood however, it is made of baleen, approximately five inches in diameter and three inches deep and it contained all its original sewing items and materials. Its contents included needles of varied sizes, thread and twine, buttons, and scraps of various types of cloth used for patching.

There is no question that the ditty box was made and used by sailors on the early whaling ships which hunted in the far north, since many examples remain in whaling and maritime museums. An interesting facet of this is in the adoption of the ditty box by the Eskimos, possible through trade or just imitating a good thing. This derivation results in the early Eskimo sewing kits which were also called "wives" or "housewives" and examples may be seen in several state and private museums in Alaska. Some of these sewing kits in the native ditty boxes are quite elaborate,

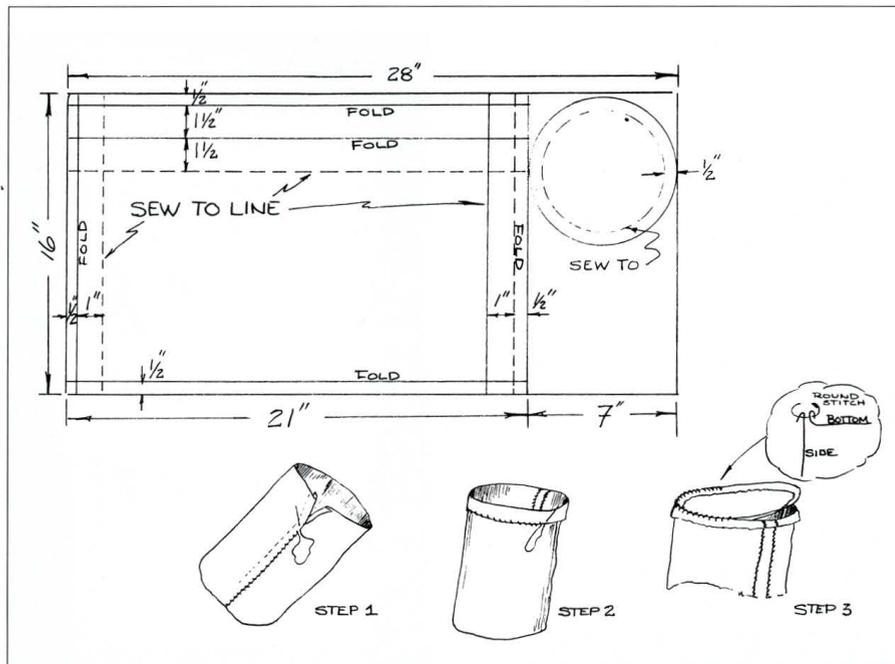


Fig. 4. Cutting diagram for a traditional sailor's ditty bag.

resembling the early rolled needle cases and pouches used by sailmakers.

### THE STRUCTURE OF A DITTY BOX

Like the ditty bag, ditty boxes also vary very considerably. Although there was a standard Navy issue of the type described above, elsewhere the box was made to fit the needs and whims of the sailors who made them. Most of the boxes I have observed are round and average about five inches in diameter and three inches deep. The materials used in their construction vary greatly, as does the style of the lid. An example is shown in fig. 3.

### MAKING A TRADITIONAL DITTY BAG

For those readers interested in making a traditional sailor's ditty bag, the following pattern can be used.

In order to make a bag that measures six inches in diameter and fourteen inches high, a piece of light canvas sixteen by twenty-eight inches is required. From this canvas two pieces are cut as shown in plan drawing, fig. 4. One is sixteen by twenty-one inches, and from the remainder a circle seven inches in diameter is made. To make the construction of the bag easier, it is best to mark and fold all the seam "sew to lines" and grommet holes as shown in fig. 4.

Since this is not an "how to" article, I will not go into the method of construction, sewing techniques, grommet and lanyard making etc., This is well documented in books

listed in the accompanying reference section.

This article merely scratches the surface of the history, form, and variations of the sailor's ditty bag and box, and should not be considered in any sense definitive. If any readers have any further information regarding these items I would be very pleased if they could contact me.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks to the staff at the Peabody Museum, Salem, Massachusetts, Blunt White Library Mystic Seaport Museum, the Library of the San Francisco Maritime Museum for their assistance, and especially to the many old sailors and sailmakers who have helped me in the past.

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- <sup>1</sup> *Mariners Mirror* Vol. 59, p. 452.
- <sup>2</sup> *Mariners Mirror*, Vol. 9, p. 218

Louie Bartos is a sailmaker from Ketchikan, Alaska, and may claim the distinction of being the most northern member of the Friends of HOBSON WHARF.

# DESIGN

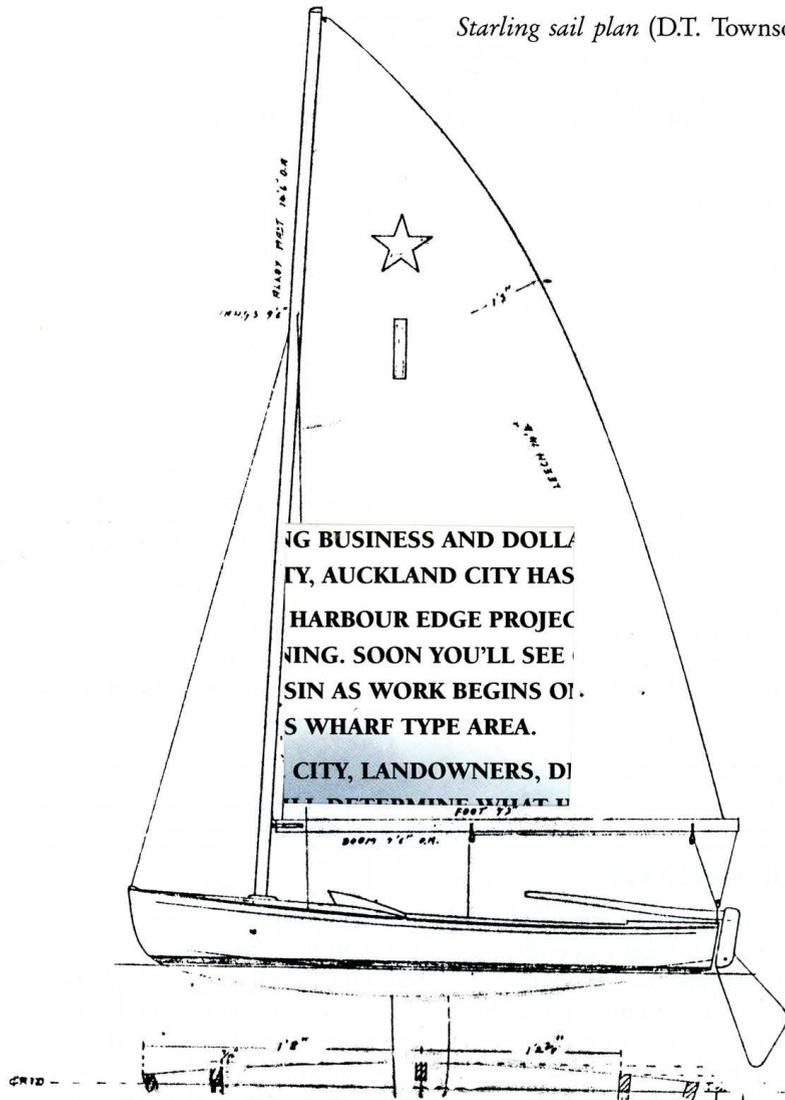
## THE STARLING

One of the popular New Zealand racing dinghy classes, with about 1500 boats in use, is the Starling, a one-design 9½-footer designed by Des Townson in 1968.

The design was to criteria drawn up by John Peet, the Commodore of the Glendowie Boating Club, and was intended for young sailors too large for the P Class and too light for Zephyr, Moth or Cherub. The first boat, STARLING, was built by David Peet, John's son, and the class was adopted and run by the Glendowie Boating Club. With its light weight, simple construction and easy handling, and the control of spars and sail so that expensive modification and development is prevented, the class is likely to retain its popularity for a long time.

The STARLING remained in the Peet family for many years but was sold six years ago. When the boat came on the market recently it was purchased by the Glendowie Boating Club and the Starling Owners Association for preservation at HOBSON WHARF. David Peet is now restoring the boat he built twenty-

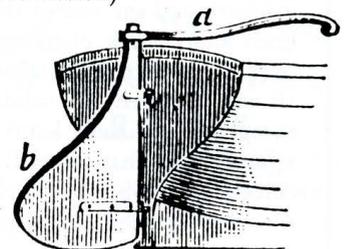
Starling sail plan (D.T. Townson)



three years ago for the Hall of New Zealand Yachting at HOBSON WHARF.

Our thanks to David and to the Glendowie Boating Club and the Starling Owners Association for their generous gift.

Starling No.1 STARLING (D. Peet collection)



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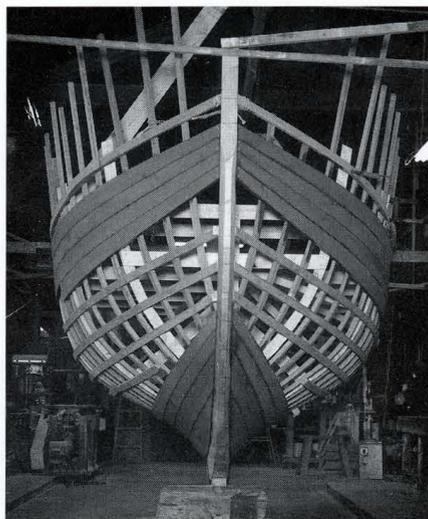
publish what we receive.

If you like the idea as much as we do, please send a photograph and details or encourage your builder friends to do so. Let's show the world how much very good boatbuilding is still being done in the yards and backyards of New Zealand.

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## AMY

Fenwick Williams-designed gaff yawl, built by Rob Kelly of Carvel Yachts, Kaeo, for John Kemp. Inspired by the boat in *Wooden Boat No.41*. Length 24 ft, beam 8 ft 8 in, draught 3 ft 10 in. Traditionally constructed, planked in macrocarpa over American white oak ribs, keel of ironbark and the rest of the structure heart kauri. Deck planking teak glued over macrocarpa with seams fore and aft and staggered. All solid timber except the laminated kauri stem — in a future boat that too will be kauri as cutting the rabet across glue lines and varying grain is not easy.



AMY planking under way

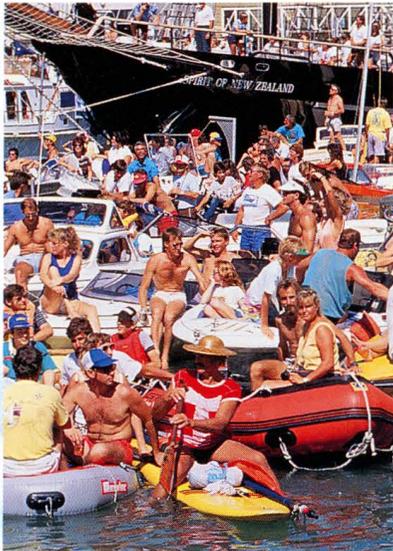


## PUNT

Sailing/rowing version of Kaipara Spunt — 4 metres in length. Built by Herbert Krumm-Gartner and Ian Newcombe — The Boat Yard, for Greg Dowson to be launched after Labour Weekend.

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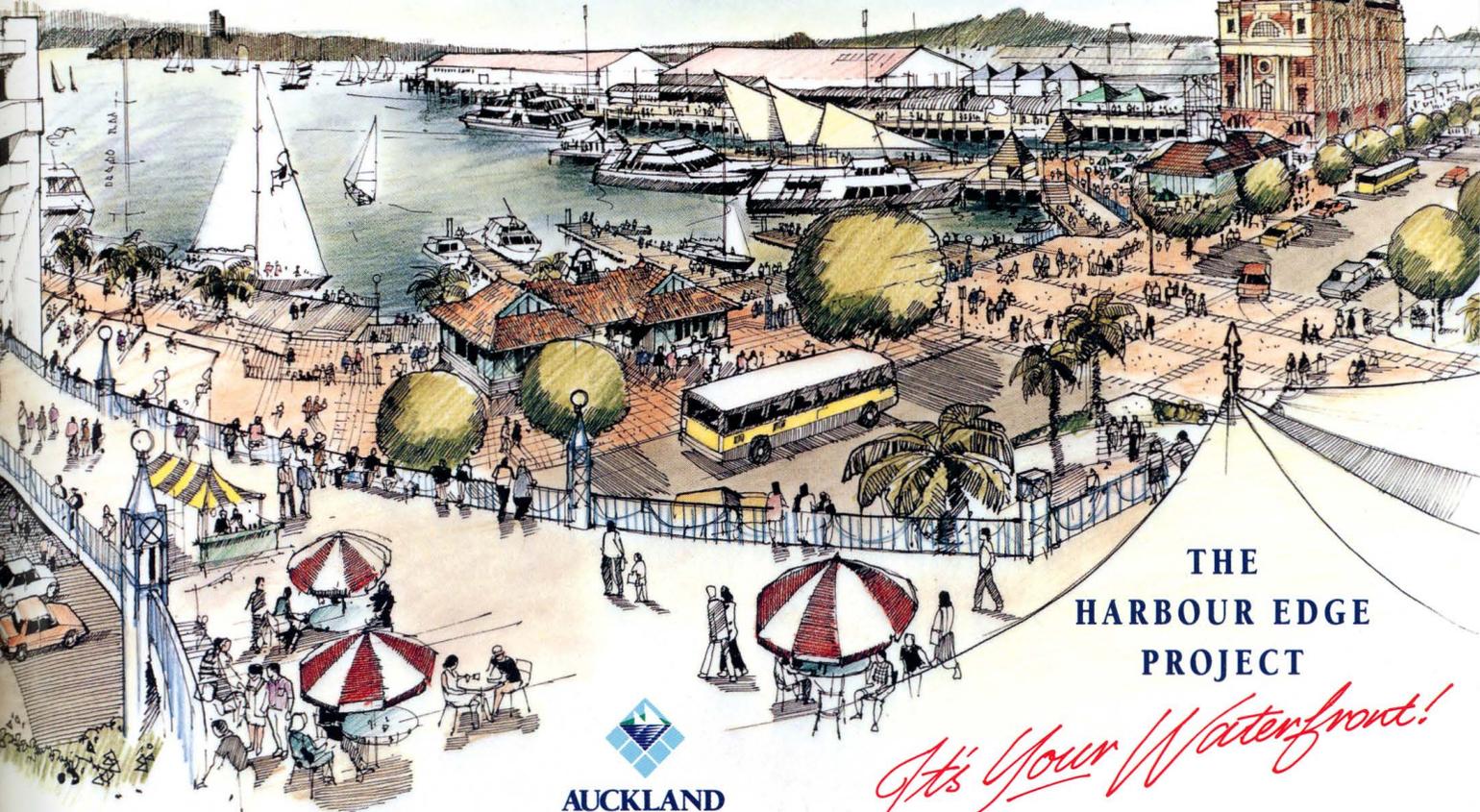
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