



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### *Three Men & a Boat* – the MFV Tacoma Story

The three men are pioneering boat building brothers Bill, Alan and Hughie Haldane and the boat is the MFV Tacoma, built on the banks of the Moyne River at Port Fairy in Victoria and launched in 1951. It is Australia's first purse seiner tuna clipper. It raised the technology and safety bar for the Australian fishing fleet 61 years ago and shaped the destiny of the Eyre Peninsula town of Port Lincoln in South Australia.

"This is a story of passion, dedication to an idea and a lifelong commitment to the Australian fishing industry. What these three men achieved with this significant eighty-four foot wooden vessel was remarkable and makes for a rollicking yarn," producer Ian Doyle said.

The 56-minute documentary, to be aired on ABC Landline at 12 noon on Sunday April 7<sup>th</sup> is an engaging and entertaining story that includes the construction of the vessel and the interstate political intrigue between the post war Victorian and South Australian governments. It also argues that the arrival of the MFV Tacoma in Port Lincoln in 1952, as a single event, was pivotal to the development of the town.

It draws parallels between the MFV Tacoma as the first 'super trawler' to arrive at Port Lincoln in 1952 and the MFV Abel Tasman's arrival in 2012. One survived the initial local opposition and developed a fishing industry, the other foundered in a political storm driven by aggressive public opinion and negative social media.

Filed over 18 months in three states, *Three Men and a Boat* includes the Hobart Wooden Boat Festival, the Haldane family heritage at Port Fairy and Port Lincoln, building the boat using huge hand hewn logs from the Otway Ranges, the tragic loss of a crew member, poling southern blue fin tuna using bamboo poles for the first time in 44 years and remarkable images filmed by cameramen Peter Brodie in 1962 and Andy Haldane in 1978 of day to day life on board the MFV Tacoma.

"I've had unlimited access to the Tacoma Preservation Society's historical images and records including a couple of amazing films shot on board the boat, one more than 50 years ago. It was an absolute gold mine and made the project possible. We were also able to show a number of pioneering fishing families for the first time, moving images of boats that have subsequently been long lost at sea," Ian Doyle said.

*Copies for publication of the historic tuna poling and boat construction photos are available from the Tacoma Preservation Society. Three Men & a Boat - ABC TV Landline, Sunday April 7<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon.*

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