

TACOMA PRESERVATION SOCIETY



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October 2018 Newsletter #11



October 2018

Ahoy Shipmates

Well we are back into it big time. Last week we had a scattering of three lots of ashes and next week a wedding. I reckon there is a movie title in there somewhere.

We have had some great response to our trips this year. The Ladies' Tuna Poling trip is booked up and the Men's only has two spots available. The Taylor Island wool-gathering excursion is also fully subscribed, so sorry to anyone who wants to come. There is no room left. Please book earlier next year.

If you want to be part of the Blessing of the Fleet next year, now is the time to book.

The engineers have been busy over the winter break and completed a list of things too numerous to mention. Jack has been busy painting everything that doesn't move. It's kept everyone mobile in the galley, that's for sure.

Attached is our current schedule for the year. There will be at least one addition in March as a Charity trip. Please let me know if you'd like to crew any of the upcoming trips.

Yours on the Waves

Peter Jessop

Capt. Pugwash

(more commonly known as PJ)

TACOMA'S 2018/19 BOOKING SCHEDULE:

October: Saturday 27th

Jerry Hemmings Wedding Aboard at Spalding Cove

Departing Berth at 7.30am, anchor Porter Bay to load guests from Dolphin

Self catered. Basic crew required.

November: Sunday 11th

Tunarama Ambassadors Education Day

At berth 9.00am basic crew required. Please bring your own lunch.

TACOMA'S 2018/19 BOOKING SCHEDULE (continued)

November: Saturday 17th

Taylor's Island, collecting wool bales
Departing berth 8.30am. The cost \$30.00 per head
Please bring a plate to share for lunch.
Trip already fully booked

December: Monday 3rd

Red Cross Charity Day
Departing berth 11.00am
Crew required. Please bring your own lunch.

December: Friday 21st

Carols in the Marina with *Sing Australia*
Transferring to Dolphin for tour.
On board 6pm.

January: Sunday 27th

Tunarama Blessing of the Fleet & Fireworks Display
Departing berth at 5pm
Cost Members \$30.00. Non-members \$40.00 per head.
Please bring a plate to share

February: Friday 8th to Wednesday 13th

Gerry Veitch Private Tuna Charter Trip

February: Friday 15th to Sunday 17th

**Ladies Tuna Poling Experience – refer to flyer on the website www.tacoma.org.au*

February: Friday 22nd to Wednesday 27th

**Men's Tuna Poling Experience – refer to the flyer on the website www.tacoma.org.au*

March: Saturday 16th

Pukehoe Travel Group
Departing berth 11.30am Self catered.
Crew required. Please bring your own lunch.

All departures from **Sandy Point Drive** unless otherwise advised. The booking schedule is subject to the tide and the weather.

To book a charter or go on one, please contact Peter Jessop on 0419 814 505.

The Blessing of the Fleet trip is very popular, so please book now.

TACOMA'S BERTH:

No news at this point about the due date of Tacoma's birth. Her labour is arduous and we are fearful of the outcome.

'The birth of Tacoma's berth' is being frivolous but the situation is grim so we ask, whatever your faith that you keep her in your heart and thoughts and wish/pray that a berth, mooring will soon be found.

ON THE SLIP:

May 2018

Tacoma has been on the slip for one week. The weed is gone, the hull water blasted, 1500 bronze screws have been replaced below the water line in the starboard midsection of the hull and all the holes laboriously re-plugged and sanded.

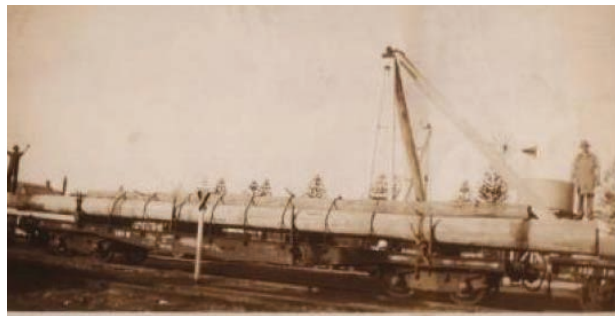
The wood above the water line is basically sound but some parts needed replacing. The planks curve two ways – nothing is square and simple on any boat - be it wood, steel or fiberglass. The engine shaft has been laid bare, ready to be surveyed.

It all sounds so easy but what needs to be recognised are the hours of hard yakka spent doing this maintenance.

I look up again at the boat that towers three stories above me. A steel staircase clammers up her side.



I think of the three young men, the fathers of Ross, Robyn and Andy – of the years it took them to build this boat whilst working, marrying and raising children – And it all began with a vision and a phone call from the Port Fairy train station. Their emotions, overwhelmed at the sight of the massive 70-foot-long logs.



Slipping Work Schedule

Wash off fresh weed growth

Water blast marine build up

Sand old paint to a fair surface

Mark out caulking groves and saw out with 6mm wide 6mm depth

Fill the grove with marine grade sikaflex and sand to surface contour

Mark out fastening points and drill holes to take silicon bronze fastenings prime holes with West System epoxy glue

Fasten hull and plug holes with west system filler

Prime hull with underwater Hempel grey primer

Paint hull with Hempel antifouling

This is history for now and the future. We appreciate all your efforts, Ross, Robyn, Andy Haldane, Jack Bellamy, Daryl Frears, Fred, Peter Jessop; and our new friends Kevin, Zippo and Tony - plus a big thanks to the continued support of the slipway's crew.
Chris Houweling.



The men in the back row are slip workers except for the one on the extreme right. He is a brand new member, Tony Lucena. In front of them is PJ and good old Daryl Frears peaking around Jack Bellamy's shoulder. Front row shows Ross, Jack & Fred.

MY FIRST BIG TUNA - THRILLING BATTLE WITH A GAME FIGHTER:

By Adam Turnbull, Port Fairy, in the Magazine Section of the Melbourne Age and contributed by Tacoma Preservation Society member Marion Mayes (Adelaide)

In an issue of the Melbourne Age is an article under the above heading (*probably 1960s Editor*). One of the illustrations accompanying the article shows Mr. Turnbull with a 36-lb tuna caught near Portland. The article, which should be of interest to Portland and district residents, is as follows:

"For the angler wearied of fishing in quiet streams of shallow waters let me recommend, as a really invigorating sport, a tussle in deep waters with the mighty tuna. Recently, I had my first thrilling encounter in Victorian waters with the great fish which for many years has provided a sport for the "kings" of the angling world.

"The tuna is known and admired for its swift movement and strength, and its beautiful stream-lined shape. It's dorsal and pectoral fins are "seated" into cavities so that when the fish is in motion there is no resistance to the water. Immediately behind the head the body is very thick, and it tapers off finely to, a well-spread tail fin.

"Gladly I accepted the offer of Mr. D. H. Sutherland, of Cavendish, to try the tuna one morning off the beautiful Narrawong beach, near Portland, where we camped. "We caught our first glimpse of a shoal of tuna when about three quarters of a mile out. The school was moving leisurely towards the shore, and the large fish swimming on the surface caused a choppy rippling effect on the water. "We approached the school with the wind astern. With the tiller pushed hard over, the boat took a swift turn at right angles. The move brought our feather jigs in a sweeping motion across the near corner of the school.

"Almost immediately I had a terrific strike. The great fish came almost out of the water with a somersaulting motion and was gone. I felt slightly bewildered and very disappointed – a living torpedo. "An examination after I had reeled in showed that the steel wire trace attached to the jig had been kinked and broken by the gymnastics of the fish.

"Procuring another jig with a swivel wire trace and two shackled hooks to the line, we steamed in an easterly direction to locate another school of tuna. We spotted one after ten minutes. Using the same tactics as before, I was again the lucky one to get the strike. This time my fish made off with a breathtaking run directly off the port side. "The reel fairly hummed a protest at the pace it had to travel. 60 and 80 yards of gut vanished like magic. 'Would I hold him till the boat was brought round?' was my thought as the fish made his first terrific run. "My available supply of line was now small, so, with the engine running at top speed, we started in pursuit with the line singing through the water and the rod very much bent. "Suddenly the fish turned in its tracks. I reeled in the slack with all speed, taking care not to foul the propeller as the boat was brought round to its new course. "Now the battle was on in earnest. After its second run the tuna slackened its furious speed and fought his way to a greater depth, where he began to lunge viciously.

"After circling at half speed several times the tuna again began his straight ahead tactics; which almost beat us. A string of crayfish pots were set across our path, with their cork floats bobbing on the waves. "Skilfully Master Hugh manoeuvred the boat between the nearest cork and the fish, but the tuna again changed his course. Once more we made our way through the strings of corks. My battle with the great fish made my arms ache. Try as I might, I could not bring him to the gaff. "The struggle went on doggedly. The fish would circle to the left, then take a short run to sea, and then again circle to the right. For two hours the struggle continued until we found ourselves almost directly off Portland and four miles away from the spot where I had hooked the tuna.

"After much hard pumping, the tuna came up to about 15 feet from the boat. He swam half on his side, and we got a clear view of this living torpedo, with his blue back and silvery undersides. Here was the very poetry of motion, a sight to delight the angler's eye. "Travelling slowly, we approached the tuna, which was gaffed very expertly by Mr. Sutherland and drawn into the boat. "My hooks had entered both top and bottom jaws and locked them completely. The locking had saved the fish from drowning and had enabled him to put up his great battle for liberty. "Later, Mr. Sutherland exhibited the fish in Hamilton. It weighed 36 lbs and was caught on 80 yards of No. 12 gut with 40 yards backing. The head, I believe, was later mounted and hung in the rooms of The Hamilton Anglers."

Mary of Barrington, NSW/QLD border:

Contributed by Carin and Ross

Two years ago we stopped at the Tattersall Hotel in Barrington on the NSW/Qld border for a cup of tea. When it arrived, delivered by an elderly lady called Mary, I was surprised and delighted to find it delivered on a tray, with a tray cloth, a little china jug of milk and a small plate with Jatz biscuits on which sat cheese and a slice of gherkin, as well as two Monte Carlo biscuits. What a treat!

So this time, as we passed through we decided to pop in again to see if she was still there. Sure enough, sitting in the morning sun on the front veranda was Mary, looking no different for all her 89 years. During our conversation, she asked where we were from, and on mentioning Port Lincoln. Mary proceeded to inform us that she was not a regular TV watcher, but had recently seen a marvellous program on Landline about fishing in Port Lincoln. She gushed about the history and how wonderfully the story was told, "the best thing I've seen in years" she said.

So it was our very great pleasure to introduce ourselves and give her a copy of the DVD. Mary was delighted, and so were we.

That night, after booking into a motel in Charleville, we dined with a couple who we had seen earlier in the day, only to find that they also had seen the Tacoma story on Landline and were also enamoured of the program. One tweet later and all their friends in Sydney knew about it. *Three Men and a Boat* has travelled some distance inland!

As this historic pub was burnt to the ground on Christmas Eve 2017, I just had to include the following article – Editor

MARY:

By John Ellicott - Reported in News / The Land 27/08/2017

She tells customers at her outback pub that if they want a second beer “Well, you saw where I got the first one, you can find it yourself”.

Mary Crawley, 93, is known as the oldest publican in Australia. She is finally pulling up stumps on a 40-year career running the Barringun hotel near what many would term “the black stump”. About 130km north of Bourke, it sits just shy of the Queensland border and sees the passing traffic on the Mitchell Highway.

Mary has seen it all but her biggest wish now is to make sure that the pub does not close. She’s adamant she won’t sell unless the buyer agrees to keep on the licence.

“I’m doing this with a broken heart,” Mary told *The Land*. “I had a fall last year and my children have been doing it in turns to help me out over the last year or so.” Before then, following the death of her husband Alphonse “Bay” Crawley, she was running the pub herself for about four years.



Since they first set up in the Tattersalls’ Hotel at Barringun in 1977, she says she’s never had any trouble. “Country people out here are wonderful people, they are different,” she says. She used to have a band of 20 truckies drop in for breakfast most days of the week on deliveries across the border. They’d have a big breakfast, a little beer, and head on their way. “They were the loveliest people you’d meet.” Their drink was always XXXX.

Mary grew up on farm at Harefield between Junee and Wagga, before she met her future husband Alphonse, a war veteran, in 1948. They moved to Bourke where Alphonse worked in an office before they decided to buy the pub in Barringun. Mary says coming back to Bourke in a light plane one day filled her heart with delight. “We all had to jam up behind the pilot in those days when we landed and I had my little one in my arms, and I’ll never forget the sun shining off the Darling River that day. It was the most beautiful thing I’d ever seen.”

She says she owes it to Barringun and to the memory of the Lake family, who had the pub for 60 years before her, to make sure the doors stayed open. “I owe it to the people. I’m not doing it for the money. It’s always been a very good pub and I’ve never had any horrible things happen.”

As Mary was talking, she said there were a number of caravaners outside. “Caravaners are different,” she confided. She didn’t really want to leave; it was just that her fall had made it hard for her to go on.

“I actually hate it (that she’s selling). I really hoped I died before I had to go.” Mary spends her time looking after her dog Gidgee. Gidgee is named after the numerous Gidgee trees in the district which give off a strong perfume when wet. “A lot of people don’t like that smell, but I love it,” she says. And how does she cope with the months’ long heat waves in the area? “You just learn to put up with it,” she says.

Landmark Bourke is leading the sale, although Mary’s grandson Adam Crawley is also involved through McKimm Real Estate. Adam says Mary will only deal with an applicant that wants to keep the pub as it is - she’s not in it for the money!

McKimm Real Estate says: *Offered for sale for this first time since 1977, Tattersalls Hotel, Barringun. This is surely one of the most unique properties to come onto the market anywhere in the country this decade. The remote but well known outback destination represents a very rare chance to not just purchase yourself a lifestyle but a genuine piece of outback Australian history.*

For many years the pub offered relief to outback drovers in the days when Barringun had five hotels, a racetrack and even a brewery. Now Mary has to get her beer delivered by the postman! The pub was built in 1884 and hand made nails still keep the roof together. It has a full size Alcock and Co billiard table. There’s no tap beer just bottles brought out from the model timber cool room.

The McKimm real estate web site says *The hotel is currently operated by Mary Crawley, who at 93 years of age is reputedly Australia’s oldest publican. An outback legend in her own right, the fact that Mary was able to run this hotel single handedly until she was 92 years old is a testament to the easy and stress free lifestyle this property can offer, should you wish to keep it as is.*

It’s simply not possible to list the historic features and stories of this hotel here as there are so many. The original ledgers of the Barringun Jockey Club are still in the pub and show Breaker Morant still has an outstanding balance and that Will Ogilvie worked on a local station and drank in the hotel, Russell Crowe has slept on the verandah and the survey of the NSW/QLD actually started here.

TACOMA'S SPAWN:

The model of Tacoma was built by Alan Duns in WA and we were delighted that he brought it over to show us, as models are very difficult to transport.

Alan copied every detail to perfection from the crow's nest down. But what impressed me the most were the poling racks. They were made from 3 different weights of wire and have aluminium arms.

Alan told me it took a lot of perseverance to get it 'just right.

Big T's poling racks are missing here having been removed for maintenance. Their absence is fortunate though as it allowed for a clearer photo of T jnr. passing beneath big T's stern.

Well done Alan.



If you are interested in completing a model of the Tacoma, Mark Richards has one on offer. There are details on the front page of the website www.tacoma.org.au

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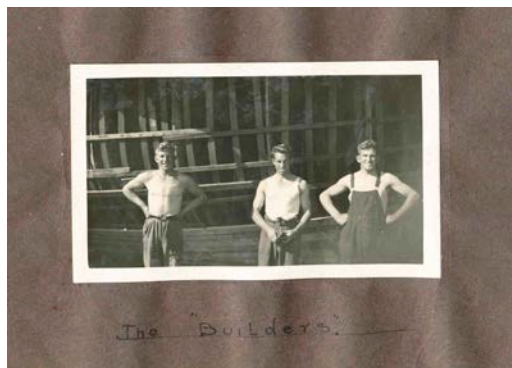
HISTORY: The Amaryllis at War

Contributed by Ross Haldane

(The Amaryllis was built in Port Fairy by the Haldane brothers in 1934 - 35. The vessel was acquired by the government for the war effort 1940 – 45. It was forty feet long and was last known to be auctioned after war and purchased by a Doctor in Darwin - and was never heard of again. Robin Haldane in Port Lincoln made the model below)

DARWIN July 4th 1944

First three vessels left with the advance party and equipment from Darwin on 4 July 1944. The Southern Cross transported 25 tons of equipment and towed two barges to Snake Bay. The Army vessel King Bay was loaded with 50 tons of equipment and 20 personnel and also towed a barge, while the [Amaryllis](#) transported two men and ten tons of equipment. The landing was made across Banjo Beach and once the Southern Cross was unloaded on 6 July immediate action was taken to build the access road to the airfield site.



Due to the secrecy surrounding the project, wireless silence was enforced. Commencing on 11 July, 6 Communications Unit established a Walrus courier service between Bachelor and Snake Bay every second day. The James Cook, Toorbul and [Amaryllis](#) also retained links with the island. On 15 July, 123 members of 9MWS and the Army 19th Works Employment Company and the 213rd Docks Operating Company travelled to Melville Island on The James Cook. At the mid-afternoon point of the 7 July, work on the airstrip, which involved 40 'willing, intelligent and energetic' aborigines commenced. By 14 July the steel mat had been laid and was ready for service.

However, the construction crew had a problem grubbing out tree roots. Approximately 4,000-6,000 stumps had to be individually shattered with explosives and then removed with a power rooter and 90- horsepower tractor. The unit history record of 30 August 1944 states that 'all works had been completed and [the airfield is] fit for operational use'. The airstrip was put to good use at midnight 31 August. The legendary 'Doc' Fenton (one of the original flying doctors and a well-known Top End character) from 6 Communications Unit, landed a De Havilland Dragon aircraft to evacuate a seaman from HMAS Fremantle who had been injured in a shooting accident. Trucks headlights were arranged to show a herringbone pattern of light into the wind direction.

LAUNCHING HISTORY:

Tacoma (California) History, May 3rd 2016

Time was, that the best handmade wood fishing boats on the Pacific Coast were crafted in Tacoma. All the boatyards traced the voyages of their work, Martinac's many pack ice exploring salmon trawlers, the tuna clippers from Tacoma Boat Building and perhaps most legendary of all the purse seiners of Western Boat Company.



The Western Flyer today and in her hayday

And among the storied fishing boats, none can match the celebrity and eventfulness of the Western Flyer launched under the Morgan Bridge from the ways of Martin Petrich's Western Boat in 1937. The Petrich family were co-owners of the Western Flyer when skipper Tony Berry took her to the sardine fisheries off Monterey California and it was there in the off season of spring 1940, that John Steinbeck and marine biologist Ed Ricketts chartered the vessel.

In late March, the stern of the Western Flyer from Tacoma, sailed out of view headed for the Sea of Cortez and a timeless role in American literature and culture. The book Steinbeck wrote about that voyage, laced with Rickett's early theory of an interconnected natural world has become a classic of nonfiction narrative. The Nobel prize winning author's clear fact based storytelling was a perfect voice for Ed Rickett's still radical ideas about the then largely undiscovered science of ecology. Steinbeck's *The Log of the Sea of Cortez* has been compared with Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in terms of building an awareness of the world around us and the responsibility we have to protect it.

Sitting at a navigation desk in the chartroom of the Western Flyer, Steinbeck began his first book following *The Grapes of Wrath*, and sailing into the Gulf of California he and Ricketts observed the ending of freshwater flow into the sea due to the completion of Hoover Dam. Later the Western Flyer would be used to record the collapse of the Pacific coast sardine fishery in the late 1940's and then the damage done by overfishing King crab and halibut in Alaska.

Sometimes history made in Tacoma sails away for a while, and sometimes it comes back.

Expect more on both the past and future of this remarkable boat and its unending story. It's not a quick tell or a short voyage.



John Steinbeck and on right is his desk.



Ref: <https://tacomahistory.live>

CREW of the Month

Capt. Jack Bellamy – Legend



All contributions will be gratefully received. Please email them to me on medley0246@gmail.com if you have an article to offer. I encourage you to have a look at the TPS website www.tacoma.org.au
(Editor: Chris Houweling)