



TACOMA PRESERVATION SOCIETY



APRIL NEWSLETTER 2015: NO.2

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P.O. Box 3088 Pt. Lincoln, 5606 April Newsletter 2015: No.2

FROM THE UPPER DECK:



The world is changing. Women crew on a tuna boat!

What a trip, 8 women and three blokes off on a little fish hunt. It was a fantastic adventure for all and now we have members of both sexes that can tell their yarns, tall and sometimes true, of their poling days.

A happy crew is looking after Tacoma with several new members joining what is becoming the Friday social coffee club. But what is the use of a 12-person galley if it's empty. The next thing will be one of those new fangled Italian machines from Harvey Norman.

I am told it's too dewy to paint before 10am and a little hot after 12 noon. Besides, the coffee club members find it hard to tell short stories. But despite these interruptions to productivity, things do get done.

But light chatter aside, we've come up with ideas to celebrate the arrival of the two American Jangaard brothers in Port Lincoln 60 years ago. Some of their descendants are keen to visit Port Lincoln in February / March 2016. We are putting together a plan.

Talking of plans, is there any one wanting to join next year's 2016 tuna trips? One five day & a two day girl's trip. You should book early as we're anticipating a good demand. Members will get a 10% discount.

Re our berth - it's all good news. Progress is being made by our council and we hope that by 2016 the existing lease will be taken over by the council and we will have a home at last. The new site will give us greater promotional opportunities and help to raise our profile in the community.

The RSL have a booking for 49 people on the night of April 24th. So if you see cannons and loud bangs off the back deck the night before Anzac Day, it will be Tacoma holding an Anzac ceremony. If their pyrotechnic ideas are followed through in the evening, there may be a sound and light show at the town jetty. Look for more information in the local press closer to the date.

Talking of lights, our Christmas and Tunarama nights were well received and will inspire us onto bigger and better things next year. We'll work more with the fishing industry to make the sound and light show a fantastic event. Thanks Bendigo Community Bank for your support.

We're still on course, despite the efforts of our government bureaucracy (without which the Friday coffee club would be devoid of discussion material) and making many happy memories for all who travel with us.

The YTAP's group were a delight to have aboard. Young things frolicking on the back deck and by the way the day went, we might have a wedding on board in the near future. 'Tacoma was where we first met', who knows.

That's what we are all about - bringing people together ... or as Ratty said 'messing around in boats'.

HISTORY OF JANGAARDS:

Extract from PACIFIC FISHERMAN'S NEWS Section – September 1956.

The Jangaards started their fishing in Norway; came to the US and fished Halibut successfully; switched to pilchards in the thirties; switched to Soupfin shark and Albacore as those fisheries boomed; took their boats to Sothern California and concentrated on tuna fishing; been at it ever since successfully.

When POFI and Kayler-Dahl Fish Co. wanted to give long-lining for tuna a commercial trial in the Line Islands a year or so ago, with whom did they contract? The Jangaards, because they were old hands at long lining and tuna fishing too and because they are confirmed explorers and innovators.

When the SA government, Port Lincoln Fisheries, Haldane Brothers and others of the Australian fisheries wanted a test of their tuna resources, where did they make a set? Right for the Jangaards.

There hadn't been any urgent need for Chris and Sverre Jangaard to come to Port Lincoln but they willingly made the trip and gave the local industry prestige, a stimulus, incentive that would have taken us years by employing trial and error fishing methods.

Since last November, the Grenaa has rumbled, thrummed with glee because of all the Tacoma activity. It started on....

7.30pm DECEMBER 5th :



The Tacoma nestled against her pontoon with a Stehr commuter boat idling along side with the Port Lincoln city band on board, playing carols. Bonnie De Graaf and Anna Vanderhart standing on the aft deck of the Tacoma singing Dutch carols.

Sinterklaas is perched in the crows nest surrounded by dazzling lights strung over the rigging and boat. What a wonderful informal start to the festive season. It was un-planned, we were just having a few drinks and nibbles after a committee meeting.

DECEMBER 19th: THE OFFICIAL LIGHTING OF THE MA-

RINA

All our flags were hoisted, including our new Tacoma flag from Muroto and the Pilchard flag made by Deralie and Ross. A large banner from the Bendigo Community bank was strung up on the canal side of the cabin in acknowledgement of their donation of funds towards our new lights. The spotlights shone down from the funnel, accentuating the many strings of led lights strung over the boat.

In good spirits a great party of forty odd guests celebrated the night. It was a great success. Many people viewed Tacoma from Sandy Point Drive and the other vantage point across the canal. We had heaps of positive feedback from people but it was a shame more boats did not turn on their riding lights and join us in the celebration. There will however be another opportunity for the 2015 festive season.

JANUARY 17th: 2015.

The soft glow of the afternoon sun found the Tacoma women sitting on the aft deck. They were gathered to share a meal and discuss the possibility of making a Tacoma quilt as a fundraising project.

During the evening, sitting around the table in the galley, we listened to Carin read a letter about the voyage from Port Fairy to Port Lincoln from Clara to her Mother-in-law. The women realised that on January 16th 1951, the Tacoma left Adelaide on the final leg of their voyage to Port Lincoln. They arrived in Port Lincoln on the 18th January; this put them at sea on the 17th. They imagined the Haldanes, 3 women, 7 children and 6 men sitting around the table where they were sitting, 64 years ago. A toast was made to these incredibly strong pioneering women and they vowed to make this an annual event. The date we chose for this gathering was accidental or was it organised from afar?

Thanks to the Haldane's Scottish heritage and their discipline of saving all letters and documents the history of the Tacoma and the tuna fishing history in SA is secure. Not so for boats such as the Oriol or our sister ship The Western Flyer in America. Two nearly three years ago under the alias of MV Gemini, The Western Flyer sprung two planks, sunk and came to the attention of NORA. What follows is an excerpt from their OFFICE OF RESPONSE & RESTORATION website.

WESTERN FLYER:

Published November 2012

By Office of Response and Restoration Assistant Scientific Support Coordinator LTJG Alice Drury and National Marine Fisheries Service Senior Scientist Kevin Bailey

Alice Drury: *It was lunchtime on September 24, 2012, when I got the call from the U.S. Coast Guard. It involved a sinking boat, some spilled oil, and author John Steinbeck. But I wouldn't discover this last bit until later.*

First, I learned that the F/V Gemini, an old fishing boat moored in Washington's Puget Sound, had sunk directly underneath the Twin Bridges in Swinomish Channel. On its way down, the vessel was slowly leaking diesel. The leak was slow enough and the oily sheen on the surface of the water was so light that the spilled oil was unrecoverable.

Because the water isn't very deep in that area, the upper portions of the sunken boat were visible above the water. Responders very quickly surrounded the boat with protective boom to contain the leak.

I worked with the oceanographers and biologists in my office to provide scientific support not only for this situation but also the worst-case, "what-if" scenario—in case something goes wrong and all of the Gemini's fuel spilled into the surrounding waters.

Fortunately later that afternoon, divers succeeded in pumping the remaining fuel off the Gemini, and the response team was coordinating with the owner to raise the vessel from the channel's bottom.

But it wasn't until that evening that I noticed in a report the boat was actually named the F/V Western Flyer, not the F/V Gemini, which was only a modern nickname. This led to very interesting—and unexpected—lesson on the history and literature of this creaky wooden boat sunk in the Swinomish Channel.

That's when NOAA fisheries scientist and budding ship biographer Kevin Bailey—and John Steinbeck—entered the picture.

Kevin Bailey: *The day the Western Flyer sank, I was visiting the Fisherman's Wharf in Monterey, Calif, the boat's old home in another life. I was there to research a book I am writing about the Western Flyer. I learned about the sinking a few days later from NORA's Office of Response and Restoration Incident News website.*

The Western Flyer is a porthole to the marine environmental history of the northeast Pacific Ocean. Constructed in Tacoma, Wash., in 1937, this wooden-hulled purse seiner lived several lives—surveying in Alaska, fishing for tuna off La Paz, Mexico, seining for sardines near Monterey, Calif.—before it entered literary history as well.

In 1940, writer John Steinbeck, along with his good friend marine biologist Ed Ricketts, chartered the Western Flyer out of Monterey for \$2,500. They were preparing for a six week research cruise to the Sea of Cortez, also known as the Gulf of California.

*This voyage was made famous in Steinbeck and Ricketts' book, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*,*

After Steinbeck and Ricketts' voyage, the Western Flyer would make its way back to the Pacific Northwest, changing hands several times and taking new shape as a fishing trawler.

*It would haul tens of thousands of pounds of Pacific Ocean perch, a fish known to live up to a hundred years. It would spend the early 1960s surveying more than 20,000 square miles along British Columbia and Alaska in the most extensive fishery survey of that coast up to that time. It would head to Dutch Harbor, Alaska, where it would seek out red king crab, with a cook on board who would later turn out to be the father of a character on *Deadliest Catch*, a TV series about Alaska king crab fishing.*

In 1970, the boat's owner at the time had a penchant for the NASA space missions, renaming the vessel the Gemini. After changing ownership several times again between 1971 and 2010, the Gemini finally ended up in Washington's Swinomish Slough under the Twin Bridges on State Route 20, where it's been sitting since 1997, next to the Swinomish Casino and Lodge.

The Western Flyer/Gemini's most recent owner is an Irish immigrant, a real estate developer living in Key West, Fla. He owns several downtown buildings in John Steinbeck's hometown of Salinas, Calif. When he bought the boat in 2010, he had a plan to restore the Western Flyer, somehow get the boat down to Salinas, and park it inside one of the buildings as part of the decor of a restaurant and boutique hotel.

Meanwhile, the boat sat idle for nearly two years—until it sank this past September. The owner told me the boat sank quickly to the bottom because a couple of planks had given way.

I watched a crew refloat the boat at the beginning of October. It seemed hesitant to rise off the bottom where it had rested in the soft mud of the Swinomish Channel for two weeks. But finally the workers succeeded in lifting the vessel, pumping the water out, and putting a temporary patch over the hole.

The owner is sincere about his plan to restore the boat in some fashion, but because of the damage from neglect and sinking, it is going to be an expensive venture, maybe exceeding \$600,000. There's a nonprofit group called the Western Flyer Project that wants to bring the ship back to Monterey for restoration, but they don't have the resources to do it right now. We'll have to wait and see what happens to this historic cultural icon, as it continues its rise from the depths.

Kevin McLean Bailey started his career as a marine fisheries biologist and ecologist in 1974 after graduating from the University of California at Santa Barbara. He later obtained his PhD from the University of Washington. He is a Senior Scientist at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center. He is currently writing a book on the Western Flyer and the environmental history of the west coast. His book *THE WESTERN FLYER* is available from University Chicago Press. ISBN 9780226116761 **Postscript.** The boat now rests in PORT TOWNSEND, WASHINGTON and is the subject of a custody battle between the boat's owner who wants to move it to Salinas, California and a nonprofit group who want it to remain in Monterey.

Latest update on The Western Flyer, February 21st 2015 - just a few weeks ago.



John Gregg of Orange, purchased the boat and plans to restore the ship to its original look in Port Townsend, WA, for roughly \$2 million.

Gregg said he also plans to bring the boat back to the Monterey Harbour where it will act as a working classroom in the harbour and out at sea.

The restoration should take approximately two years. For more Google 'Western Flyer Restoration'.

Photo from forum Wooden Boats

JANUARY 25th:



Our Gala event of the year is the blessing of the fleet which was performed this year by Father Ben. Viewing the fireworks from the Tacoma, the sound of horns, including ours signifying the end of the night and Tunarama.

Can it get any better? Despite the wind, a wave breaking over the aft deck and the rain, the passengers from the birthday party, our guests and crew had a great night. We had four young lads on board and their excitement was contagious. The cheeky boys called down the vents, blew the engine whistle and although they weren't allowed to sound the horn delighted in using the Claxton. As the birthday boy was not officially 60 til the following day, he took the opportunity of climbing up to the crow's nest aided and abetted by two pirates on board – it all added to the fun.

We had little competition for 'the best dressed boat' but still, we were delighted to win. We are so fortunate to have the photo attached. Colin and Cookie from the Celeste [36ft yacht moored on pontoon with Tacoma.]

came by in their Rubber Ducky, picked up Braden Stockham and motored a distance away for a chance at this perfect shot. I'll never forget Braden's broad grin of excitement and his mantra of... 'I can't get Mum's camera wet'!

'What would Hugh Haldane be thinking if he could see the Tacoma now' commented Carin Haldane as we huddled in the galley for warmth from the AGA on the trip back to Tacoma's berth. We all thought he must be pleased with his well maintained boat, happy to see her still working and very proud of his kin keeping the Tacoma and the Haldane name alive.

FEBRUARY 21st YTAP, YOUNG TRADESPEOPLE AND PROFESSIONALS:



Aloha aboard the MFV Tacoma! with Kate Eglinton.

35 folk dressed for their Hawaiian theme, couldn't help detect just a hint of Gilligan's Island as they busily prepared for the trip, bringing refreshments aboard, decorating the boat with colourful flowers, bunting flags and of course the American flag. Ross welcomed the group aboard with the traditional "ALOHA" greeting in keeping with the theme for the day and after the safety briefing we were on our way. For a bit of fun and for those who remember the theme song from Gilligan's Island, perhaps you can sing along. For those younger ones who don't know what I am talking about - Google it on Utube. You may even want to make it your new phone ringtone!



Just sit right back and read this tale
a tale of a great day trip
that started out from Sandy Point
aboard this special ship!

The mates are mighty seafaring men
the skipper brave and sure.
35 passengers set out that day
for a six hour tour, a six hour tour.

The weather started out real hot
the tide was very low.
If not for the skills of the fearless crew
we might've had nowhere to go.

Two sets of volunteers were called
to row boats out to the bay.
The Tacoma followed close behind
we were in for an exciting day.

We passed some yachts from Adelaide
as we headed to Picnic Beach.
The easterly wind cooled us down
the goal was within our reach.

The catered lunch was bountiful
with more fun after lunch.
The skipper used the big white hose
to cool down this rowdy bunch.

Braden showed them how to
catch a tuna, not a whale.
Two brave souls dressed the part
and survived to tell their tale.

Sadly twas time to head for home
as the day was soon to an end.
Two more crew put up their arms to
row boats back through the bend.
The lively group had a great day
the crew enjoyed the fun.
We hope they will come back again
as it's not the S.S. Minnow

When it's all said and done,
when it's all said and done!

© Kate Eglinton





FEBRUARY 27th: LYN'S FISHING TRIP:

Traditionally tuna pole fishing has been a man's domain. This changed on 27th February when eight women became the first all girl crew for a 'Tuna Pole Fishing' trip on Tacoma.

The early arrivals practised putting on safety harnesses, a jumble of black and yellow belts. They found it complex until Claire Webber, a research and Liaison Officer for ASBTIA (Australian Southern Bluefin Tuna Industry Association) arrived and showed us the easy way to do it.

At 1700 hours, mooring lines cast, they were off. Whilst motoring to Taylor Island for the night, Ross gave a detailed briefing on safety and what they needed to wear - rubber overalls, flotation bibs and the harness. It was cumbersome but all understood the necessity.

above: Lyn, Deb and Claire.

When darkness fell and Tacoma anchored, a light was rigged for bait fishing. Shoals of fish were attracted but not enough, however there was a backup of pilchards on ice to use for chumming. The weather report indicated strong wind after lunch so Ross with Fred and Daryl pulled anchor shortly after 4am and were underway by 5am for the Cabbage Patch, a shallow area often frequented by tuna.

To attract fish, they trolled with two lured lines and chummed with pilchards. Mutton birds swooped to feast on the bait and they were a delight to watch.



Carin, Leonie, Claire, Deb, Lyn and daughter Sophie in their gear stood ready on the back deck searching the sea for ripples, birds, any indicator of fish but it was Ross with his eagle eye up on the bridge that spotted them.

Then came a flurry of activity as Ross manoeuvred Tacoma over the school of tuna.

Carin Haldane and Leonie Sawyer stood together in the fishing rack on the end of Tacoma's deck and together, twin poling they landed the women's first catch.

Then Claire Webber and Deb Sykes took their places in the rack and landed four more.

Next came Lyn Head to join the two women and triple poling, they caught one more. Sophie Head replaced Deb, joining Lyn and Claire to hook the last fish and landed it on the deck.

Anna Vanderhart chummed the pilchards and pitched in to help while Chris Houweling took the all-important photos.

They had seven Southern Bluefin Tuna [SBT] on the deck. Excitement was at fever pitch and the word orgasmic floated in the air.

Carin and Leonie jubilant and proud. -left

Not to be forgotten and what must be mentioned is that Daryl Frears had thrown a line over the stern and hooked two tuna making the total catch nine.

The deck seemed crowded with dead, bleeding fish. It looked especially gory when Claire had a tuna on the filleting table collecting specimens to send away for comparison with farmed tuna.

After this the fish were gutted, tagged and put on ice whilst the decks were hosed clean.

Meanwhile down below a sumptuous lunch was prepared for our arrival in Memory Cove where we were to anchor and stay the night.

'How can you express what you felt?' the girls were asked.

Sophie Head told me later 'it was a messy and emotional experience. My muscles screamed with pain but I was so anxious to catch one of those buggers'.

Carin Haldane confided ‘It was a bucket wish moment’ and from her partner Leonie Sawyer ‘a lifetime achievement and a personal milestone’.

Deb’s comment ‘I loved the physical challenge of hauling in the big fish but worried on the first pass about wiping out Claire’s head with the pole!’

Lyn’s words –‘They are magnificent creatures and watching them flip through the water with kingfish was something I’d never seen before and it was the first time I’ve actually caught a tuna so it’s a first for me and was a first for mother and daughter’.

And from Claire Webber, research and Liaison Officer for ASBTIA ‘Few fish in the ocean are stronger than the SBT and today I experienced their power against my own strength and I’m so grateful that I won!’

Claire also took this opportunity to collect specimens of the catch to be sent away for comparison with farmed tuna. For more information on this visit www.asbtia.com.au or www.tacoma.org.au



Whenever an opportunity arose Ross, a gifted raconteur, took time to tell us about the history of Tacoma. He had the girls on the helm, in the wheelhouse, showed them the signalling flags and explained how combinations of letters and numbers meant different things. They examined Tacoma’s original codebook – printed in 1934 and found QUF8 meant 8 intelligent women on board.

At 1500 hours Tacoma was back moored on the pontoon in Sandy Point Drive and the obligatory altogether memory photos.

QUF8 flags on left, Australian maritime flag on right.

Editor:

The men have just returned from a successful 5 day Tuna Pole fishing trip where they caught 48 tuna, the largest being 60 lbs... more of this in the next newsletter along with a feature on ‘The Dolphin’ now in Port Lincoln.

Thank you to all contributors, to the Tacoma Preservation Society Newsletter.

All future contributions will be gratefully received. Please email them to me on medley0246@gmail.com if you have an article to offer – and I encourage you to have a look at the new Tacoma Guide manual on the TPS website... Christine Houweling Editor & TPS Secretary.