

TACOMA

Newsletter

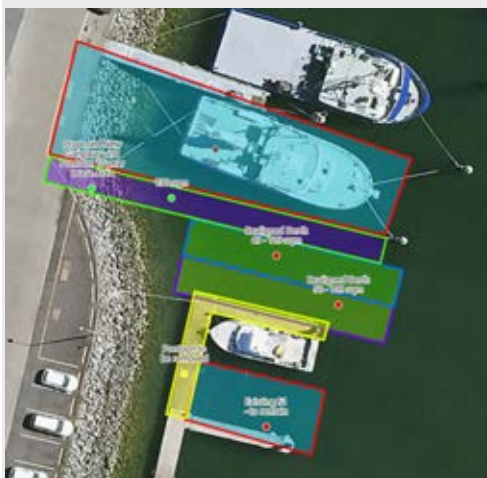
www.tacoma.org.au | Tacoma Preservation Society | Port Lincoln

Tacoma's Tuna Trips 2027

February 2027

Women's tuna trips are fully booked.
Men's tuna trips have four berths available.

Tacoma's Operational Berth



The Tacoma Preservation Society is endeavouring to secure a long-term home for the vessel. Our preferred option is a location near the fisherman's memorial in Lincoln Cove Marina. The state government and council have recently installed a pontoon on the site but have not catered for Tacoma's needs. The plan is now to acquire a mooring alongside the Haldane brother's family's prawn trawler, the Atlas.

Remember 5th November 1951



Rebecca Haldane

Boats have birthdays, but maritime traditions vary on which milestone counts as the official birthday. On the 5th of November 1951, Tacoma was launched and named on the shore of Port Fairy. After a failed attempt the previous night, a bottle of seawater from Port Lincoln was broken on the bow by the boy's mother, Rebecca. Keel Laying - the ceremonial beginning of construction, akin to conception. The keel logs for Tacoma arrived at Port Fairy railway station to be rolled off a truck at 56 Griffin St. on 18th Sept 1944. Commissioning: The official day for Tacoma was the 14th of Feb 1952. Tacoma undertook her first tuna fishing trip to Kangaroo Island and returned two days later with 46 tuna.



Rhonda, Rowena and Ross Haldane

To access this site, it will be necessary to acquire two existing berths, allowing room for Tacoma to manoeuvre safely, and to build a 25m pontoon plus an access gangway. Progress has been made in final costings and potential new leasing arrangements with the Department of Transport. This project is viable with funding from our life members bequeath Garry Emms. The plan is to apply for grants from federal and/or state government. The proposed site, while not presenting TACOMA as publicly as our previous preferred location, will offer easy access to car parking and a 24-hour toilet facility.

Fundraisers



When cashed-up people populated the Tacoma deck for a fundraising event to support a new surfboat trailer, Captain Ross invited the boat song poet Ib and his support musician, Drew, to perform the song "Ghost Tuna in the Sky". When people were consuming the fundraising bait, the song began. It was the forceful lyrics: "When all at once a rotten fish hit the skipper in the eye. It was the sight he dreaded: ghost tuna in the sky!"

Rowing Group News



Australia's oldest operating surfboat is the Tacoma surf boat, built in 1943 by the Haldane brothers in Port Fairy. It is officially documented and recognised by David Payne, a naval architect and the former Curator of Historic Vessels at the Australian National Maritime Museum. The 22-ft surf boat was gifted to the Tacoma Preservation Society along with a 12-ft rowing dinghy and a 14-ft net boat. All three vessels are operated by the society under separate VMPs.

The Tacoma rower's group has for the last two years been involved in retracing Matthew Flinders' activities in Boston Bay in 1802. Next year, the goal is to follow the entire coastline of the bay and around the four islands, a total distance of 60 Nm. The plan is to row once a month and do the trip in 10 Nm sections, weather permitting.

Also, the rowing group is raising funds for a new trailer, which will allow the rowers to explore Coffin Bay and further afield.

To date, three fundraisers have been held, which included a dinner aboard hosted by celebrity chef Kelly, a progressive dinner for 30 hosted by Annite and Liz with onboard canapés, celebrity chef Jens plus lots of helpers. To date, close to \$4000 has been raised. The society has applied to the Bendigo Bank Community Fund Grants for a dollar to dollar. With \$8000, a new trailer with an electric winch can be purchased. In preparation for the rowing season and hopefully to look good on the new trailer, the team has been busy, brush in hand, giving the surf boat a new lick of paint.

The humming, melancholic lyrics of the chorus, so easily adapted by the crowd, gave an unexpected twist to what was to come. The crowd settled briefly to the pole-fishing story of our beloved vessel, Tacoma, but a horror of surprise travelled across the deck, as if washed by the high seas, although there were no winds or waves. It was the sorrowful lyrics of the seamen lost at sea: "When Tacoma came by with fishers' poles, twine and lines, they (the Tuna) jumped onboard and salted the fishermen in brine." A roar of tearful dissatisfaction sounded like a bugle's call, and led by Captain Ross, who stole the microphone, the displeasure over simple sardines in wine terminated the performance of the arts. The singers fled for their lives.

If you are interested in a copy of the song, "Ghost Tuna in the Sky" email lb on



Little Boat Lost and Found



Wooden boats are disappearing from the marine world. Some are wrecked in stormy seas, but most sit abandoned and rotting, while others are rescued and brought back to life and might become celebrities in wooden boat festivals. The Norwegian Zebbie's destiny was to be consumed by a raging bush fire sweeping across the north side hill, threatening the city of Port Lincoln. Would she be saved by a bucketing from a fire-fighting aircraft dropping a load of water? Maybe not. Once the fire had passed, only the odd copper nails would show in the ash. Luckily for Zebbie, our own residential wooden boat enthusiast, Braden, was on hand, and Zebbie was towed out of the bushes with its flat tyres digging up the dirt. After sheltering in a shed for two years, she emerged to begin life again as a lovely 12ft wooden rowing boat. Thanks Braden!



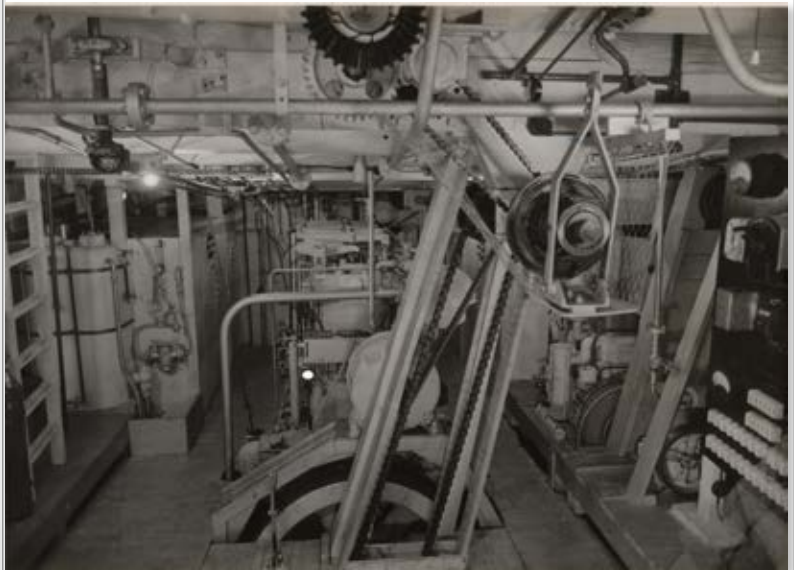


The Coke Run



The Tacoma AGA stove is the centrepiece of the boat's galley, keeping the crew warm on chilly nights. To keep the fires burning, it usually requires a bag of coke, at about 15 kg per day. It is economical, costing about \$4.50 per day. Its greenhouse gas emissions would likely prevent the stove from getting a star rating. Every 3 to 4 years, the team makes the trip to Whyalla to collect a trailer of coke. With the changing fortunes in Whyalla's steel making, we thought it might be a good idea to secure a load before their stack of coke is disposed of. During the early days, Port Lincoln coke was hard to acquire, so the Haldane boys resorted to charcoal from the Wanilla forest.

Old Engines Never Die



When Tacoma's visitors descend the vertical ladder and enter the spacious engine room, one of the first questions they ask is, "How did they get the engine in."

Tacoma has had two engines: the first an Imperial Atlas engine 4 cylinder 240 hp at 240 revs. The engine was sold to the Haldane Brothers as war surplus disposal and had been in Sydney storage yard for four years, being a little rusty and with missing parts. It weighed 19 tons at the time; it was one of the heaviest motors for its horsepower.

The second motor is our beloved Grenå 6-cylinder turbocharged, 500 hp and 500 revs, weighing 9 tons.

To put the Atlas engine into the newly constructed hull, the motor was dismantled and lifted in bits, or as the boys' Scottish engineering uncle explained, 'Laddies, the challenge of lifting a 19 tons monster is simple, just take it up in wee bits,' and that's how the Atlas engine was taken out in 1972 in bits. Its crankcase now lies off the Port Lincoln town jetty, and the 8 tons flywheel off the jetty in Franklin Harbour, perhaps a job for a marine archaeologist.

The oil distribution unit is still in the engine room of Tacoma.

