

Williamstown Maritime Association Inc.

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Newsletter



April / May 2012

Welcome to the April edition of our Newsletter.

There has been a lot of work going on during March to our Tavern with more to come in the next few weeks, all these improvements will make the Tavern a more comfortable venue for you all to enjoy.

From the President's desk;

Dear Members improvements have been going on in the Tavern. The internal toilets have been completed and an internal door to these has been put in. I for one will certainly not miss the old external outhouse. I would like to personally thank Geoff Dougall and Alf Pelns for the enormous amount of time and effort they have put in to build the new facilities.

A final coat of paint is still required if anyone can help wielding a brush or roller (week days or weekends) please get in touch.

We are in the process of getting permanent gas radiant heating installed on the walls as a further improvement.

I understand the Seaworks Foundation is busy planning the development of the site and hopefully some news will be released soon. The museum is still looking for some volunteers to assist on Sundays, if you would like to assist you can contact Geoff Dougall 0416 235 366.

Best regards
Dick Budzienny

"Keep the vision going"

New Register for Tavern

At our last meeting the Committee elected to update our cash register to a Point of Sale register enabling better cash management, better recording capabilities which will save time and money in bookkeeping, and most importantly a better service for members.

With our membership renewals due at the end of June, new magnetic strip membership cards will be issued enabling members discounts of 10% on purchases. As well members can accrue points which they can then cash in for drinks etc.

The Committee would like to see our membership base grow this year, so if you know anyone who may be interested we would love to welcome them on board when the new memberships become due.

We are also looking at ways to get members back involved with all the positive things now happening at our site. The future of the precinct now looks secure and we would like you to be part of it. With this in mind we will be hosting a number of *Members Sundays* at the Tavern.

These afternoons will include a free BBQ for members and a guided tour of the museum, morgue and talks to help you better understand where we are headed and the role the WMA will play.



Site updates;

There has been a lot of activity on our piers of late with the berthing of the Sea Shepherd's ship, the Steve Irwin. The ship will be on Workshops Pier for another month, already she has attracted a large amount of visitors to our site.



The ship is conducting guided tours every Saturday and Sunday. The ship has a shore crew of eighteen who are now familiar faces on the site. They perform maintenance work and function raising duties whilst she is laid up.

The crew are predominately young Americans with a few local volunteers doing administrative work.

Also arriving at Seaworks in a few weeks will be another

of their ships the "Brigitte Bardot". This large catamaran was damaged in the Southern Ocean during their recent campaign against the Japanese whaling fleet.

We have allocated a berth for her on Boyd Pier, just as you come in from Ann Street. She will be an unusual and very impressive visitor to the site. It is anticipated that she will be doing Corporate cruises and hosting functions whilst at Williamstown.



As well as these two ships the piers are stretched to their limit with regular unloading of trawlers who operate off the west coast of Tasmania. The piers are a vital contributor to the financial success of Seaworks.

There is negotiations taking place at the moment by Tallship's Victoria to host at Williamstown in September 2013, a parade of Tall Ships from all over the world. Whilst these talks are in their infancy, we will assure we are well represented to take maximum advantage, by berthing as many of these spectacular ships as possible at our site.

The site is now used regularly by film crews, with a new production now building a set in one of our sheds for a new film "The Handsome Cab Co." The set designers and builders are busy manufacturing a replica 1920's opium den that will then be re-assembled in the loft above our museum. Once this is done the shooting will commence. This is a very innovative way of using our space and I am sure it will create a lot of interest once filming commences.

This is just another example of the way the site is progressing and being used more and more as people and companies realise the unique prospects our site has to offer.

With the great success of the recent classic car show, numerous other enquiries have come in for similar shows to be held here, one that has been booked for later this year promises to be bigger than anything we have seen, conducted by Rotary it will include all sorts of entertainment as well as kids rides and not too mention hundreds of cars, this time the theme will be on *Hot Rods*.

It promises to be a great family orientated show which will be widely promoted and will showcase what the site can offer to many thousands of anticipated visitors.

Both Seaworks and the WMA are now in discussion over better access to the site from Nelson Place, it is in both our interests to make this happen. We are looking at making the police lane, running down the western side of the shed, the main pedestrian entrance to the site. This would include bollards instead of gates and signage directing visitors to various locations, including the Tavern on site. Hopefully this work will proceed fairly quickly, and make the site safer and more user friendly to the public both at weekends and during the week. The site needs to be seen to be open to encourage tourists and the general public to see what we have to offer.



"Steaming into the Past"

A few weeks ago I received an email from a lady in Queensland asking if our museum would be interested in displaying a ships bell belonging to her father.

I of course replied that we would be honoured to add the ships bell to our extensive bell collection. Arrangements were made with the family and I was amazed to learn that her father was Captain James

Carruthers, an extremely well known Master for many years on the Melbourne waterfront. Captain Carruthers was Master of the steam tug "Keera" for many years and then went onto skipper numerous tugs including the "Toorong" for the Melbourne Steamship Co.

Jim retired on the 22nd March 1988 and was presented with the ships bell by the company to mark the occasion.

Along with the bell we were also presented with many of his ships papers from his home country in Preston England, and a magnificent sextant, these items are now on display in our museum and we are indebted to the family for granting us such a wonderful gift. (*Captian Carruthers with the bell and sextant*).

Bells have a centuries long tradition of use in the Navies and Merchant fleets of the world. A ship's bell is usually made from bronze and has the ships name engraved on it.

Signalling, keeping time, and sounding alarms are an important part the ships bell plays in the routine of a ship.

Bells cast from bronze were first developed in the Bronze age, achieving a particularly high level of sophistication in China.

One of the earliest recorded mentions of shipboard bells was on the British ship "Grace Dieu" around 1485.

Before the advent of the chronometer time at sea was measured by the trickle of sand through an hour glass. One of the ship's boys had the duty of watching the hour glass and then turning it over when the sand had run out. When he turned the glass, he struck the bell as a signal that he had performed this vital function.

From this ringing of the bell as the glass was turned evolved the tradition of striking the bell once at the end of the half hour watch, twice after the first hour etc, until eight bells marked the end of the watch. This process was repeated for the succeeding watches. The age old practice still has its place in vessels world wide to this day regulating daily routine, just as it did on our historic vessels under sail in the late eighteenth century.

At midnight on New Years Eve sixteen bells would be struck, eight for the old, and eight for the new. The sounding of a ship's bell found a nautical application as a warning to other vessels in poor visibility and fog. In 1858 under British Naval regulations, ringing a bell became mandatory, today maritime law requires all ships to carry an efficient bell.

Traditionally the bell was maintained by the boatswain's mates, as well as the ships cooks.

Geoff Dougall



LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU FOR SOME GREAT MUSIC ALL THROUGH MAY, JUNE AND JULY AT THE PIRATE'S TAVERN



Please note that bands will be playing every Friday night as usual
and every third Sunday during winter as details below unless
otherwise advertised

May 2012

Friday the 4th. "The Long and Short of It" (Classic Covers with silky smooth harmonies)

Friday the 11th "DJ and the Broach" (Great Rock covers from all era's)

Friday the 18th "The Long and Short of It"

Sunday the 20th "Twisted Willy" (Hard Rock from the 60's and 70's)

Friday the 25th "Krystal and Pete" (Contemporary Classics)

June 2012

Friday the 1st "The Long and Short of It"

Friday the 8th "The Viqueenz" (Pop music from the 60's, 70's and 80's)

Friday the 15th "The Long and Short of It"

Sunday the 17th "Three on the Tree" (Popular Rock songs from the 80's and beyond)

Friday the 22nd "The Complete Barstools" (Acoustic trio with great harmonies)

Friday the 29th (TBA)

July 2012

Friday the 6th "The Timbers" (High Energy alternative Folk Music)

Friday the 13th "Backdated" (Covers from the 50's and beyond)

Sunday the 15th "Bender" (High energy Rock covers)

Friday the 20th "The Long and Short of It"

Friday the 27th "Buzz Me Berkeley" (Popular Rock covers from the 50's and beyond)



