



**Number 140**

**“the ship comes first”**

**Dec 2012**

**The Newsletter of the Barque *Polly Woodside* Volunteers Association Inc.**

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## **CHAIRMAN’S MESSAGE**

Greetings fellow volunteers another year has slipped by and the years are passing us by ever faster.

I wish to thank Samantha Tait, our Chair for the Ship Committee, for her detailed article in this Wave. She writes it much better than I could.

### **Management:-**

Sean De Coury, our Manager has many hats now as he is also Manager of ‘The Old Melbourne Gaol’, and La Trobe cottage as well.

### **The Site:**

The site has been closed to the public during the Dry-Docking period. The dock was pumped out on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> September for what was thought to be for a short period of approximately two and a half weeks, with Polly due to be refloated about 5<sup>th</sup> October, however she wasn’t until 12<sup>th</sup> December, close to 10 weeks overdue.

This meant Polly was closed for a period of 12 weeks.

## **The Pump House**

Sam's report on the Pump House, covers the main points, but I would like to add thanks to Derek Moore who acted as an expert consultant to Bridge and Marine during their work in rectifying the leaks.

## **The Ship**

While she was dry docked, the hull has been cleaned, suspect areas of the hull were successfully repaired with 'plastic steel putty' (no more concrete patches), and under water protection painting completed. Most of this work was done by the volunteers, with rest of the hull to be painted in the near future. Pretty Polly again.

As Sarah and Seumas did not get their contracts renewed, no work aloft can be done. One thing for sure is we are going to miss them.

2013 will see a considerable amount of work to be done on the deck, margins, and pin rails.

I have a feeling this is going to be a very productive year.

## **Christmas Party**

The Christmas party was a great success, with approximately 30 people attending; it was great to see Sarah and Seumas there.

As I couldn't attend, I would like to thank my wife Anne for making everything go so smoothly, with Pat Knowles, Di Rex, and others helping.. Feedback has been good re the Interpretive Centre, the ship and surroundings. Again, thanks to all who attended and made it such a successful day

## **Annual General Meeting**

Venue and date to be decided, but hopefully it will be at Polly Woodside on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February.

All the very best to you all.

### **2013 PWVA SUBS ARE NOW DUE**

**Please forward your 2013 subscription of \$20 to John Wroe, 38 Addison Street, Elwood, 3184. Phone 9531 5626, 0407 530 940. Cheques should be made payable to PWVA.**

**We are sad to report the passing of two more of our long-term volunteers:**

**Beulah Lee :**

She will always be remembered working in the shop at Polly on Sundays, which she looked forward to and thoroughly enjoyed.

She and her late husband Harold (Honorary Life Member of the PWVA), were regular attendees at all our functions.

Jointly they commenced working at Polly in 1976 each giving 36 years of dedicated service to Polly Woodside.

**Rene Wilson:**

Rene will always be remembered for making the peg dolls to sell in the shop, sitting at a table outside of our old mess room, selling her peg dolls with her granddaughter Kate, or with Betty Cromb selling plants there on our market days.

She and her husband Peter (Honorary Life Member of the PWVA), commenced with Polly in 1983 - 29 years.

**Maritime Library & ships photo collection**

Discussions are underway with a view to relocating the maritime library and photo collection from Tasma Terrace to a new location. Once decisions have been made, the new location will be presented in the next Wave.

## **The way ahead – by Samantha Tait, Chair of the Polly Woodside Ship Committee**

This year has been an eventful one for the ship, with a high focus on the ship's forced docking in order to assist the pump house repairs.

### **THE PUMPHOUSE**

As many of you will be aware, unfortunately the repairs to the pump house weren't 100% successful which has sent the State Government back to the 'drawing board'. The conversations I have had recently with the Director of Strategic Projects leaves me with the impression that they are serious about addressing the leaks, and more importantly, consider the refurbishment of the pumphouse to an appropriate level. We all know that this is no small undertaking, so we will endeavour to assist where possible.

### **THE 2012 DOCKING**

In order to relieve the water pressure in the pumphouse, the dock had to be drained; forcing either the move of the ship into the river or docking the ship. After considering the advice of the PWSC, the National Trust decided to dock the ship and take advantage of the opportunity for a look at the hull and to tidy up some of the hull paint. The ship ended up being docked much longer than originally anticipated due to complications in the pumphouse, but on December 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> we saw her safely afloat again.

There were two technical highlights of this docking, which benefited from some of the lessons learnt from the previous docking, namely;

1. The use of extendable, lightweight props for the side shoring: these are the same sort as those used in the building industry and proved to be much easier and safer to handle than the traditional timber shoring; and
2. The use of a well-tested product commonly used in the marine industry called Plastic Steel Putty (made by Devcon). It is commonly used to repair cracks in propeller blades. We used it very successfully to repair the deteriorated areas of the hull plate prior to refloating which prevented the large majority of leaks. Only three very minor leaks came about once we did refloat, and all of those have since stopped of their own accord. I certainly don't want to see any more concrete patches after the success of this trial!



**Polly showing off her new side shoring**

## **MOVING FORWARD**

Earlier in the year, the National Trust decided to change the site management arrangements with the goal of increasing effectiveness and providing the right support structure. With this in mind, Sean De Courcy is now the appointed National Trust manager. Sean is largely responsible for the success of the Old Melbourne Gaol and with the start of the new Night Watch Experience; I believe we are already starting to see some of his magic at work. Sean is highly focussed and a welcome addition to the site

After some months of discussion, the National Trust has recognised their need for a more professional approach to the maintenance and restoration of the ship. As a consequence, two new arrangements are in place:

1. Sean Johnston has been appointed to be the on-site Technical Manager on a part-time basis, attending to organise and support the volunteers on Tuesdays and Thursdays; and
2. With my support, my company has been appointed to draw up a professional Asset Management Plan, using a professional software tool that will allow us to manage the ongoing maintenance and raise, plan and develop ad-hoc activities such as replacing the margin boards.

These are two important steps forward in allowing us to manage the ship professionally and present to the National Trust a mature plan in order to establish a firm budget.

Since my involvement with the ship in 2004, I think this is one of the most positive steps we've made and I hope to see the continued support of the PWVA as we tackle 2013 and some of the significant tasks we have ahead.

## **Pump House Ponderings – Derek Moore**

Following the dewatering of the Dry Dock and the Pump Room pit, there was an opportunity to do some cleaning and lubrication of the heritage machinery, as guests of the contractors Bridge & Marine. From late September to late October, a member of Engineering Heritage Victoria, Mr Owen Peake and myself were able to periodically clean much of the motion work of the engines and remove the water trapped in the crankbed of the engines.

Bridge & Marine have sealed the large water inlets to the steam pumps and the smaller inlets to the auxillary pumps. Hopefully this work will prevent future flooding in the Pump Room. I understand that a Committee of Management is to be formed, chaired by the Dept. of Business & Innovation, to oversee the ongoing care and maintenance of the Pump House.

It is important to be optimistic about this development and the works that have been recently undertaken.