



# WAVELET



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“the ship comes first”

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The Newsletter of the Barque Polly Woodside Volunteers Association Inc.

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**DISCLAIMER:** Please be aware that statements, opinions & comments made by contributors to this journal are not necessarily those of the PWVA Committee and/or its Members.

## **REPORT ON PWVA EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY AT THE MISSION TO SEAFARERS**

The meeting was called to enable the members to hear and discuss the decision by the National Trust management not to proceed with the building of a new maritime museum at the Polly site.

Some 40 members attended. The Trust was represented by C.E.O. Martin Purslowe and Heritage Development Manager Tanya Williams. Also present were Trevor Huggard, Nigel Porteous (Deputy President, The Mission to Seafarers) and MHAV committee members.

Ralph McDonell and John Wroe made presentations on behalf of the PWVA, these were followed by a response from Martin Purslowe, the meeting was then thrown open for questions and responses.

### **MAIN POINTS MADE BY RALPH & JOHN**

Criticism of the Trust management for not advising or consulting the PWVA before making the decision not to proceed with the new museum building.

That the two additional sections of Shed 2 should be roofed and clad.

That an additional building should be erected on site so that there is space for a small maritime museum display dedicated to the river and docklands area and the maritime library which is now (partially) housed at Tasma Terrace.

That the bluestone currently stored on site should be utilised for paving on the site.

That the signal mast should be re-erected in a prominent position.

That any funds coming from Plenary should be entirely spent on the Polly and projects on the Polly site.

## **MAIN POINTS MADE BY MARTIN PURSLOWE**

There was no substantial response to our criticism of a lack of consultation. However, the point was made by the C.E.O. that there needs to be better communication between the Trust and the PWVA (*editor's note: I do not think that the PWVA can be accused of a lack of communication*).

There is to be no new museum building on site. The \$3 million+ from Plenary which was to be spent on the new building will now be spent on the ship.

A further \$2 million "landscaping budget" is to be spent on refurbishment of Shed 4, fitting out of Shed 2 and general "landscaping".

Shed 2 is to be re-erected and the two extra sections of Shed 2 are to be roofed and clad. It is to be fitted out with a 300 sq m exhibition gallery, workshop, offices, reception and toilets.

Shed 4 is to be refurbished and leased out for 25 years to a café/restaurant enterprise and the annual income of \$60,000+ will go to the National Trust.

The engineering report from BMT has been received and includes short, medium and long-term recommendations on conservation and restoration of the ship. Ballast is to be reduced and repositioned.

There has been a verbal commitment by the Department of Major Projects to fund the \$8 million to \$10 million required to refurbish the dry dock which will probably include a cradle in which the Polly is to be housed.

The pumps are to be housed in a largely glass building.

## **CONTRIBUTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR**

It was stressed that the maritime library and photo collection should be returned to the Polly site, not Tasma Terrace where it is now housed.

Maritime artefacts (600 cu m now in store in Footscray) to will have to remain in storage pending possible use at a proposed Williamstown site.

The whole site should be managed as one from public's view in interest of overall viability (MP agreed with this).

Concern was voiced about having a critical mass of attractions on site to make the whole site viable.

Concern was voiced about parking for volunteers.

The signal mast must be re-erected (this is to be investigated).

## **GENERAL**

Minutes were taken and whole meeting taped. The taped minutes are to be transcribed and located on our own PWVA website (now being developed) in the future so these commitments are there for as long as we deem necessary.

## **FOOTNOTE**

Since the EGM, the PWVA committee has sought further meetings with the Trust management to outline our suggestions for the site. However, we have been informed by the Trust that everything has been discussed and that there is no need for any further meetings (*what happened to the idea of "better communication"?*). It is unfortunate that the spirit of cooperation between the Trust and the PWVA which prevailed until recently, seems to be at least temporarily abandoned.

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE PWVA CHAIRMAN, RALPH MCDONELL**

First, I wish to pay respects to Harold Canning, who gave up his attendances to POLLY, of a Wednesday, only very recently. He was a regular attendee from well before the time that I first joined the PWVA. His input was with painting, as long as I remember. Every time that I see a scratch in the paint on the gangway I am reminded of the many times that Harold repainted it.

At this point of time, as POLLY becomes ever more 'boxed in', no changes have yet appeared on the area of land remaining for us, between the two (former) drydocks. There is some planning for the re-opening of POLLY to the public, but nothing physical so far, beyond the preparation for re-housing the mizzen topmast, and general maintenance – painting, caulking and so on.

We have made application to the Navy for the lead ballast from the warship CANBERRA, currently being stripped of everything before being sunk off the Heads. It's not at all certain that we will get the lead, for it may still be of acceptable standard to be used in new warships. If we do get it, it will greatly reduce the space taken up by ballast in the hold, thereby given space for certain displays or activities on board.

Part of the hemming-in of our old ship has been the driving of two piles in the basin, one of them embarrassingly close to the route for POLLY if and when she is taken out of the dock. This will almost certainly have to occur in order that work can be done on the drydock itself, before POLLY is returned there. Engineers' plans are being drawn up for the final closure of the drydock with the ship in it.

When developments occur that affect our site we will let you know.

On the subject of travel, I have received a postcard from Alastair Reed, from the UK, after he had been on a trip down the Amazon. Also from the UK, a photo has been received from Rod Lukey, who purchased a fairly new UK canal long boat, which he and Jenny inhabit until November, when they will return to Melbourne.

Ralph McDonell

## **PROPOSAL FOR A PWVA WEBSITE**

We are currently putting together a PWVA website. The Wave and other notices will be posted to this site. Members who do not have internet access will continue to receive the Wave and other information through the post.

## **RETIRE MENT OF HAROLD CANNING**

Harold Canning who is a long-serving member of the PWVA has retired from “active duty” and the committee has agreed that Harold will become an Honorary Member. Harold joined the PWVA in 1983 and was a Wednesday regular with painting being his forte.

## **AUGUST GENERAL MEETING**

To avoid “meeting fatigue” the committee has decided not to hold the normal August General Meeting. Any news will as usual be communicated to members via the Wave (now Wavelet).

## **ONGOING PWVA-FUNDED PROJECTS**

Repairs and rebinding have been completed (and paid for) on 16 of the PWVA’s collection of Lloyd’s Registers of Shipping and they look very impressive. A further 3 are at the binders and should be finished by the end of July. Once these last 3 are done, the rebinding of the collection will be complete.

Shipboard projects include the fabrication of “Victorian-style” toilets (“heads”), purchase of a set of international code flags and casting of a pair of pump flywheels.

**All this costs money, and donations from members are always welcome.**

## **NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY**

Glen, John, Alan, Dorothy and Jenny are now more or less established at the library at Tasma. New lighting is to be installed in the fullness of time and in the meantime we shall continue to grope around in the gloom. Most of the Lloyd’s Registers are on the floor waiting for the building of new bookshelves. Searching for a specific Register usually involves crawling around on the floor with a torch in hand (just ask Jenny!). In the meantime, the bulk of the maritime library of 3,000 books is in storage at Footscray with apparently no possibility of finding space at Tasma.

## **PUMP HOUSE PONDERINGS**

Early in April I was advised by Multiplex that I could no longer go into the Pump Room until I had completed a one day Site Safety Induction (Red Card) course and a Multiplex site induction. Both of these were duly undertaken on 24<sup>th</sup> April and I was able to regain access on 30<sup>th</sup> April. On each occasion that I wish to enter the construction area, to access the Pump House, I have to phone a specific Multiplex foreman to gain the okay and then wait for him to unlock the access gate, which no longer has a National Trust padlock on it. So far, I have had to wait up to 30 minutes at the gate, to gain entry.

I continue to periodically check the sump pumps and the anodes, plus the general status of the Pump Room.

There has, to my knowledge, been no on-site presence of the National Trust executive or Heritage Victoria representatives. I am not aware of any of their efforts at photographing the changing precinct nor archaeological investigations, despite repeated requests by Email. Graeme Cooper is the only Trust employee who has shown any interest. I have never seen the Multiplex 'heritage architect' Bruce Trethowan on site, despite what he wrote in his Conservation Management Plan of August, 2007.

Today (June 17<sup>th</sup>) the roof of the Pump Room was being removed, so I had no access. I have recommended that at least one additional electric pump be placed in the sumps, to deal with the greater water inflow. This is inevitable, despite the undertaking of Multiplex to place tarpaulins on the scaffolding mezzanine "floor" above the steam engines and pumps. The next 2 -3 months will be a critical period for the survival of the Pump House.

I hope that the enclosure, especially the roof, is installed ASAP, to provide better protection for the contents of the Pump House, including the boilers which have been exposed for months.

The contractor is focused on the Convention Centre, but the Pump House is reliant on their construction efforts. The Trust has downgraded their interest in the precinct and Heritage Victoria appears disinterested. The support of Graeme and all volunteers is greatly valued.

Derek Moore

**IN ORDER TO SAVE TIME AND MONEY, WE PLAN TO SEND FUTURE WAVELETS BY EMAIL TO THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE IT. IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS (SEND TO [jacwroe@bigpond.net.au](mailto:jacwroe@bigpond.net.au)).**

**THANKS**

**John Wroe - Editor**