



# WAVE



Number 159      “the ship comes first”      December 2017  
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.



**A very Merry Christmas, and a safe and Happy New Year to you  
and yours.      See you all in 2018.**



Roger Wilson and Mark Thomas with the Memorial Plaque Panel in position at last.

Chairman's Chat

January 2018 will be the month of celebrations commemorating 50 years since the National Trust purchased Polly for one cent. . More details to follow.

Also an announcement may be forthcoming from the National Trust soon regarding Polly.

The number of volunteers is steady with about fourteen of us getting around the table on Tuesdays. The regular volunteers are, Don Knowles, Roger Wilson, Richard Barber, Todd Gardiner, John Slater and D'Arcy Wells. Campbell McCullough comes down by train from Bendigo every second Tuesday. Ash Green who divides her time between Polly and the Old Melbourne Gaol, week about, is now working with Wayne and Damien Bette, whenever sea time allows them aloft on the mizzen ratlines,. Welcome back Peter Allen, who gets down when he can. John Maxwell is still laid up at home – we wish him all the very best, and assure you John, we will save some work for you when you are back on your feet. George Corcoran rang to apologise for not getting down to Polly, but his wife is in Hospital. George we are thinking of you, and to Julie all our very best wishes with the hope you will be home soon.

Richard and John are at present working on the standing rigging cutting out the worn or frayed serving, then renewing as required. Our new volunteer Neil (that can be embarrassing at times) has been thrown in at the deep end, working with Phil and co. on the rigging down in the hold.

The blocks are continuing to be overhauled and painted by Simon and his new Carer Nicky. The volunteers are concentrating on completing the standing rigging, so the two mainmasts can go up when ready. On completion of the main mast's restoration, it will be the foremast's turn.

Don has taken on making the mast wedges, (which secure the masts where they go through the deck) with me as his assistant. A job that seemed easy at the start until we realised each one of them had to be individually shaped and fitted into its place. With the foremast wedges nearly ready Don has had a wrist operation, which means he now is in a frustratingly supervisory role only for a month or so.

Roger Wilson is making the mast boots (the canvas covers that seal the lower masts where they pass through the deck), which look awfully complicated to me, but being a perfectionist, he made models of them to confirm he had got them right, and is also repairing canvas covers when necessary.

The Gaff is still on the wharf waiting to be sent aloft to its place on the Mizzen mast.

The Memorial Plaques board has been mounted on the wall in the Museum, and Roger is framing the board with rope containing fancy knots, which will be the final touch and it will look great.

It should be finished in time for the 50 years celebrations. Many thanks to my son Mark for creating this, our tribute to our past volunteers.

Thanks also to Ferdie, Rupert, Phil, Roger, Christian & co. from whom we are all learning traditional skills from great teachers.

### **Stop Press: From Phil – Progress on the Mainmast's Rigging**

*Standing Rigging:* 90% completed. *Running Rigging:* 60% completed.

*Blocks:* 45% completed We will not be sorry when it is finished, however there is still the Foremast and Mizzen to go.

Shara Canzano, our Manager, is coming down to Polly every Tuesday when we are on site, and is really getting things done.

Neil.

# HMS Victory: Preserving the world's oldest commissioned warship



A computer-generated image of the new support system HMS Victory is to receive. Photo: BAE Systems

**As part of what contractor BAE Systems described as the most extensive restoration project the 252-year-old HMS Victory underwent following her repair after the Battle of Trafalgar, the world's oldest commissioned warship will receive a new structural support system for the ship.**

Specialist engineers from BAE Systems are collaborating with the National Museum of the Royal Navy on the unique project to help preserve HMS Victory.

Since HMS Victory first docked in Portsmouth Naval Base, she has been supported on 22 steel cradles and a concrete plinth. In order to preserve HMS Victory's wooden hull, the existing cradles, which were installed in 1925, will be replaced with 134 precisely positioned props. The props will evenly distribute the ship's load to recreate the natural stresses experienced on the hull when the ship was supported by water.

Andrew Baines, Project Director at The National Museum of the Royal Navy, said: "HMS Victory is a unique museum object of international importance. This type of support is a first for any historic ship, and it's essential we get it right.

"The new support system design and the installation process have been painstakingly developed over the past five years. The expertise we have gained, and will continue to gain in the delivery of this project, will not only safeguard Victory's future but help us to support other historic ships around the world."

The work to restore HMS Victory began in 2011, which included removing the masts and booms before work could begin to prevent water damage and reduce rot. The project has also seen the ship's hull repainted and refurbishment of Admiral Lord Nelson's Cabin and the Great Cabin.

A new walkway onto the ship provides visitors with easier access to parts of the ship that were previously unseen. The project has also seen the instalment of a new fire detection and suppression system.

HMS Victory is the oldest warship in the Royal Navy's fleet and is the flagship of the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Philip Jones KCB ADC. She will remain open to the public as a visitor attraction throughout the restoration project which is due to complete in 2018.

Three Excerpts from 'Ships Monthly' December 2017 edition, provided by Campbell McCullough.

## **TALL SHIPS ABANDON USA**

### **UNDER SAIL**

The State of Hawaii has given its approval to plans to return the sailing ship 'Falls of Clyde' to her birthplace in Scotland. Her owners, The Friends of Falls of Clyde, say they are awaiting a definite date for a semi-submersible heavy lift to become available to transport the vessel, but hope she will be on her way by the end of the year.

'Falls of Clyde' was built by Russel & Co. at Port Glasgow in 1878 for the Glasgow-based Falls Line, and the vessel has been lying in Hawaii for the last 54 years.

Meanwhile, New York, on the US east coast has seen the departure of the four-masted barque 'Peking'. The classic windjammer, which was built by Blohm + Voss in Hamburg in 1911 for Laeisz Line, arrived home in Germany in early August after a voyage aboard the project load carrier 'Combi Dock III'.

'Peking' was then towed to Peters Werft in Wewelsfleth for restoration and renovation, which is expected to take around three years and cost about €26 million, and she will then become a static museum ship in Hamburg.

## **SUB DILEMA**

### **SUBMARINE**

The Submarine Memorial Association (SMA) has backed an appeal to save the Balao class submarine 'Ling' (SS-297), which became part of the New Jersey Naval Museum in Hackensack NJ in 1972. Hurricane Sandra in 2012 left the boat stuck in silt, and since 2015 there has been no means of access and her condition has deteriorated.

New owners of the land plan to redevelop the area and have served an eviction notice, creating a major challenge for the museum and the submarine. The boat does not have to move, because she is not on the land that the developers own, but she may be dismantled where she lies.

## **PADDLERS SILENCED**

### **PADDLER**

The haunting sound of a steam whistle will no longer be heard whenever a paddle steamer arrives at or sails from Zurich Burkliplatz. Switzerland's Federal Office of Transport (BAV) has ordered the Lake Zurich Navigation Co. (ZSG) to stop its vessels sounding their sirens at the quay after complaints about the noise were received from a local resident. Horns should only be sounded in a dangerous situation, for example if a swimmer is too close to the ferry.

A spokesman for ZSG said the ban marked the end of a long standing tradition and that the company 'quite sad' about the situation, but that there was little hope of overturning the decision. The ban will affect ZSG's veteran paddle steamers, 'Stadt Zurich' and 'Stadt Rapperswil'.



*Shara Canzano, our Manager provided this article published in Belfast Telegraph, Sunday Life Magazine, on Sunday October 29 2017*

## **POLLY STILL SHIPSHAPE 130 YEARS ON**

### **Fascinating story of Belfast –built barque that’s still attracting thousands to its decks.**

**By James Barlett**

WORKHORSE: The Polly Woodside, or Rona, as it was called then, just before it was saved by the National Trust of Australia

**THE Titanic might be the most famous ship to come out of Belfast’s shipyards, but there’s another vessel that made its maiden voyage from Queen’s Island some 25 years before that — and she’s still welcoming thousands onboard today.**

The Polly Woodside was completed in 1885 at a cost of £14,000 by Frank Workman and William Clark, two pioneers who left Harland and Wolff to set up a “wee yard” nearby at the ripe old ages of 24 and 19 respectively.

A three-masted, iron-hulled barque, the Polly was designed to be an efficient, globe-trotting workhorse. During her career she rounded Cape Horn a number of times and racked up 1.5 million miles before dropping anchor on the other side of the globe in Melbourne, Australia. The Polly isn’t glamorous like the Titanic or her White Star sisters, but she does have a few stories to tell — including a brush with Hollywood stars.

Sunday Life was lucky enough to get a personal tour of the vessel as she underwent renovations recently.

Back in 1885, owner William Woodside was planning to name his new ship after his wife, Marian, but because of her non-stop chatter he chose her parrot-inspired nickname, Polly, instead.

What Marian thought isn’t known, though the silver inscribed posy holder she received on the November 7 launch day is now in the dockside museum.

The colourful museum is loosely based around crew memories, and especially the diary of George Andrews, a carpenter on a 1904 journey from New Zealand to Glasgow.

A video shows a recreation of that journey — in which two men died — and you learn that ships could be gone for weeks, months, or even years, and had to rely on maps, a compass, a sextant and the knowledge of the captain and his navigator. Often a ship was never seen again.

Tours at the museum are led by a guide dressed in scuffed boots, a chunky sweater, overalls and a cap. You’re first led through a tunnel that seems to rock, much like conditions would have been on the Polly.

Leaving the tunnel you see a huge map of the many ports the vessel visited, and the museum itself is a treasure chest of the age of sail, including crew photographs, letters, and carvings as well as flags, ropes, lanterns, boat models, a sailmaker’s sample book and the vital tools and equipment (some of which gave us phrases like “fair and square” and “spinning a yarn”).

The Polly was sold and renamed the Rona in 1904, and spent the second half of her life as a stripped-down, non-sailing coal lighter working on the other side of the world.

When it was realised she was the last of her kind, the National Trust of Australia controversially bought the abandoned virtual wreck for a cent in 1968. After 60,000 hours of work by staff and many volunteers, most of whom were former sailors, the ship was restored and opened to the public in 1978 as the renamed Polly Woodside.

Sunday Life recently had the chance to step on to the gangplank and get on board. Aside from modern lifebelts and some handrails (health and safety at work), almost everything is either original or restored.

The blueprints were lost in the Belfast Blitz, and during the original restoration the wooden masts, the rigging, the decks and the figurehead had to be reimagined, though the lower masts and the hull are all original.

Particularly memorable are the cramped wooden bunks, which were hot, meaning that when one crew member was on watch, another was asleep in his bunk.

There was also the tiny crew galley with its black stove and, below decks, the more impressive poop deck quarters of the officers and the captain.

There was a more countryside-type kitchen for them, a saloon with a fireplace, a mess room, the navigator's cabin and more.

There were only eight deaths during the Polly's lifetime, though one of those came on the maiden voyage when Able Seaman Hugh Davidson (20), from Island Magee, was listed "drowned at sea".

Just over a year later, 16-year-old ship's boy Thomas McNeilly, from Londonderry, took his first and only voyage (he was washed overboard on the return journey from South America).

And in 1890 Belfast-born Ordinary Seaman Robert Young (19) fell to his death from the upper topsail.

"Most sailors didn't even learn how to swim," said the guide. "They knew it was better to go quickly, rather than slowly die of hypothermia."

Back out on deck there were the tall masts, ship's wheel, barrels for bathing and storage, buckets for bailing and countless strands of ropes and rigging stretched, coiled and knotted in every possible way.

Climbing up a short ladder at the bow we came to the ship's bell, which was rung to tell the helmsman where to go and when. Too often the weather made it impossible to simply signal or shout instructions.

"You're standing where Hugh Jackman did," said my guide, explaining that the Polly was once a pirate ship when it was temporarily rechristened the Jolly Roger and Jackman and 14-year-old Levi Miller gave interviews and posed for photographs to promote the movie *Pan*.

We take a moment to look out at the Melbourne skyline, but then we hear a creak of wood from the Polly and the wind whips the rigging.

It's hard to imagine what that first crew — all from Northern Ireland, save for the cook — were thinking when they left Belfast Lough bound for South America via Cape Horn, but at that moment at least, we were taken back in time.

# After Mysteriously Disappearing in WWI, Australia's First Submarine Finally Found

## The craft disappeared during in heavy haze early in the war

Wreck of the AE1 (Royal Australian Navy)

By [Jason Daley](#)

December 22, 2017 12:40PM

After 103 years, one of Australia's most perplexing maritime mysteries has been solved. This week, as [Lindsey Bever reports for \*The Washington Post\*](#), a search crew discovered the wreck of HMAS AE1—the first submarine fielded by Australia, which disappeared during World War I while assisting in the capture of German territory on New Guinea, just north of Australia.

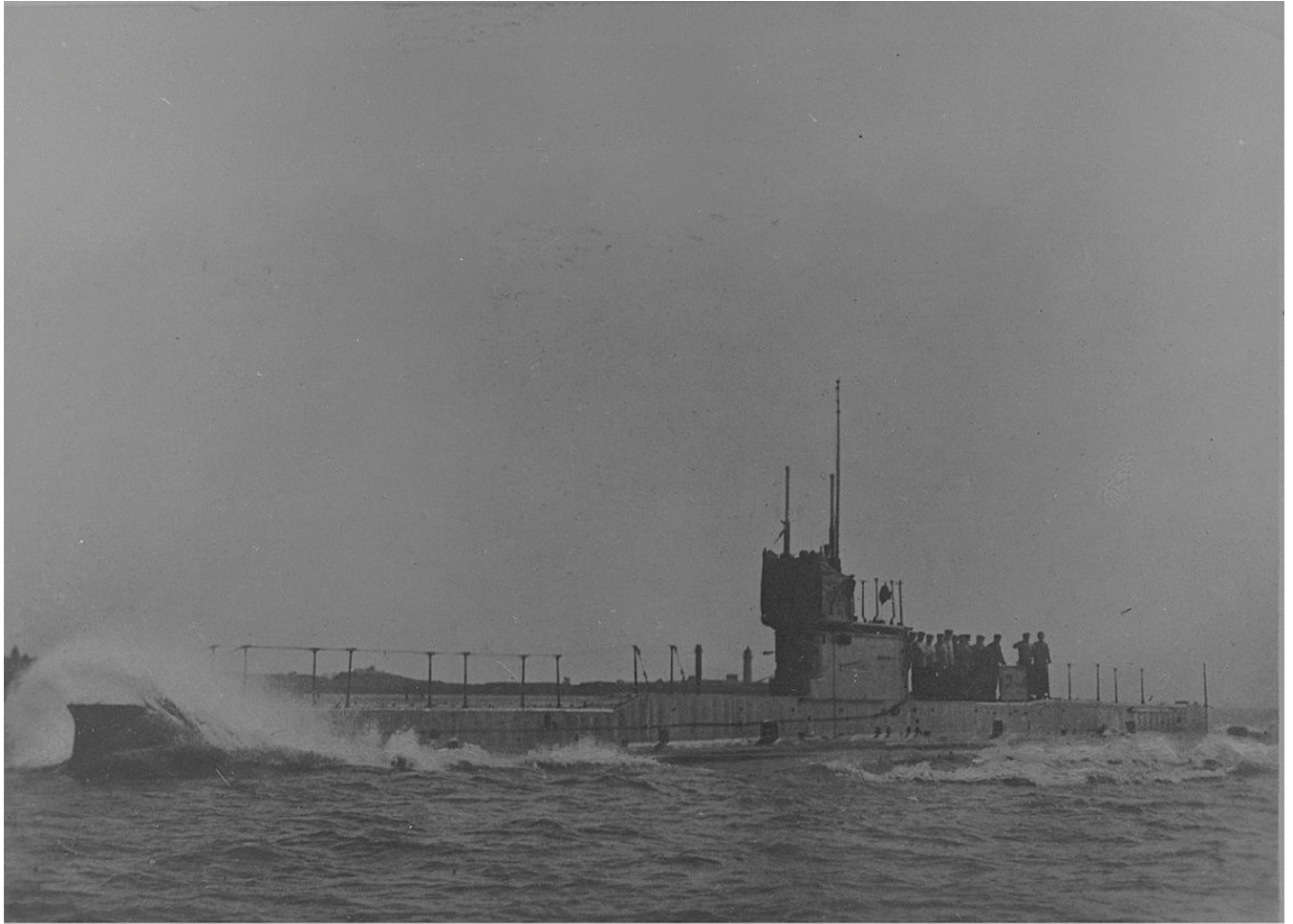
The submarine and its companion ship AE2 were deployed in 1914 in the early weeks of World War I and ensured the German surrender at Rabaul in September of that year. But the following day, according to [the Australian Navy](#), the ship headed off to patrol the Duke of York Islands in a heavy haze—and it disappeared into the fog.

The destroyer *Parramatta* accompanied the sub's companion ship AE2 on this venture, and worked with the ship to keep visual contact with the sub during the patrol. But still, it vanished with 32 crew and 3 officers on board. It was the Royal Australian Navy's first casualty of the war and first Allied sub lost during the conflict.

As [Judith Vonberg at CNN](#) reports, searches for the vessel were brief as personnel was needed elsewhere as the war progressed. But since the 1970s, 13 expeditions have set out in search of the sub to no avail. "When a submarine just disappears, it can be anywhere," nautical archaeologist Innes McCartney at Bournemouth University tells CNN's Vonberg. "There are hundreds and hundreds (of submarines) on the bottom of the ocean. They are generally chance finds."

For the most recent search, the Royal Australian Navy teamed up with the the Submarine Institute of Australia, the Australian National Maritime Museum, Fugro Survey and the Papua New Guinea Government, according to [a press release](#). And the team didn't go in without preparation, report [Stephen Fitzpatrick and Sam Buckingham-Jones at \*The Weekend Australian\*](#). Expedition leader and retired Rear Admiral Peter Briggs did extensive research and preparation, which allowed his team to find the ship at the first location surveyed.

Last Sunday, the survey ship *Fugro Equator* used multi-beam echo sounder, side-scan sonar and an underwater drone to survey the seabed, locating an object of interest. They eventually found the sub near the Duke of York Islands in Papua New Guinea in 1,000 feet of water.



AE1 in operation (Royal Australian Navy)

Vonberg reports that the team created a 3D rendering of the object and dropped a camera down to confirm that the craft is indeed AE1. The vessel is in surprisingly good shape, and the cause of the sinking is not apparent, but may be discovered after further inspection.

As Fitzpatrick and Buckingham-Jones report, the families of the deceased have been contacted and arrangements are already underway for a wreath-laying ceremony at the site sometime next year. The loss of the AE1 remains vivid for the many people affected by its disappearance. Sixty-six-year-old Robyn Rosenstrauss grew up in the home of her great uncle James Fettes who died on AE1. “His loss was something my grandmother, Margaret Fettes, never got over, and I was very close to her, so I felt it, too,” she says.

The discovery raises hope that searchers can locate several other lost vessels in the area. As Australian Maritime Museum curator Stephen Gapps tells Fitzpatrick and Buckingham-Jones, “with new technologies for underwater searches, there is added hope for the discovery of other similar mysterious wrecks such as *HMAS Matafele*, lost with all hands in June 1944 between Queensland and Papua New Guinea, or the *SS Waratah*, lost without a trace in 1909.”

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**STOP PRESS:** Sunday January 7<sup>th</sup> 2018 will be a date to look forward to.

Proposed date of our Annual General Meeting is Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February.

**Reminder – Subscriptions for 2018 are due from January 1<sup>st</sup> 2018**