



WAVELET



Number 123

“the ship comes first”

Sep 2008

The Newsletter of the Barque Polly Woodside Volunteers Association Inc.



POLLY WAS MOVED FROM DUKE'S DRYDOCK ON TUESDAY 26TH AUGUST 2008 TO HER TEMPORARY BERTH IN THE RIVER AT NO.4 SOUTH WHARF TO ENABLE REFURBISHMENT OF THE DRYDOCK - POLLY'S PREVIOUS MOVE WAS IN HER CENTENARY YEAR OF 1985.



PWVA Committee:

Chairman: Capt. Ralph McDonell, ralphmcd@bigpond.com.au, 9807 5646

Vice Chairman: Neil Thomas, thomclan@optusnet.com.au, 9802 4608

Hon. Secretary: Jenny Hunter. 9690 3669

Hon Treasurer and Wavelet Editor: John Wroe, jacwroe@bigpond.net.au, 9531 5626

Other Committee Members: Don Knowles, 9877 1584; Neville Keown, 9877 9234; Keith Lyons, 9802 4533; Vic Hatfield

Polly's move from Duke's & Orr's Dry-dock to No. 4 South Wharf - Neil Thomas

On 26th August 2008 a briefing was held in No. 4 Shed Mess Room, where we were introduced to Sean Johnson the Dock-Master, who explained in detail our duties while the ship was being moved. Ralph, Don, Neville and I along with Peter, Graeme and John were ferried across to the other side of the dock. The walkway had already been removed.

Using our wharf crane we placed the spare gangway onto the ship so Ralph, Graeme, Don, Neville, Peter and I could embark. The gangway was then removed.

On arrival of the line-boats, mooring lines were cast off and our only contact with the shore were the handling lines controlled by volunteer gangs each supervised by a seaman. This assisted control of the ship during the move. There were 2 boats at the bow, and one at the stern which was handling 2 lines, with a second boat standing by.

Suddenly we realized we (or the shore) were moving. Slowly and carefully Polly was moving out of the dock and passing the old dock gates. As we edged into the river we could feel the breeze pushing the ship. A line-boat maneuvered between us and the bridge builder's barge, giving you an idea just how neat it was. Into the river and turning, we were edged into the wharf against our home made fenders (tyres on a pole, tied to the wharf), and then we were made fast to the wharf.

A stepladder was placed against the bulwark and we disembarked. The entire operation only took approximately 30 minutes, and went so smoothly. It was amazing!

I feel a vote of thanks should go to all the volunteers, the seamen who supervised us, the employees from BTM (the company that did the ship survey), the line-boats' crews with their incredible skill, and our Dock-Master Sean Johnson whose direction made the operation seem so easy.

What a day!!

Neil



Photos by Neil Thomas, Glen Stuart & Ann Gibson

Ralph McDonell

Our very best wishes go out to Ralph who suffered a fall resulting in a fractured pelvis. Ralph is still in the Valley Hospital, Dandenong North after a lengthy operation. After a set-back last week, Ralph's condition now seems to be improving and is looking forward to receiving visitors.

Ralph's cheerful and dynamic presence around the ship and site are greatly missed by all his friends.

Alma Doepel donation

The PWVA has written a letter to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria expressing our support for the return of the sailing vessel Alma Doepel to Port Phillip Bay. A copy of the letter follows:

“Re: Sailing Vessel ALMA DOEPEL

I am writing to you on behalf of the 127 members of the Polly Woodside Volunteers Association for your assistance in providing funding for the preservation of the wooden topsail schooner ALMA DOEPEL which is currently undergoing essential maintenance in Port Macquarie and due shortly to sail back to her home port of Melbourne.

The ALMA DOEPEL was involved in interstate trading from Melbourne between 1916 and 1959 and is the oldest example of this style of timber vessel still in seaworthy condition.

In 1975 she ended a 15 year period of intrastate trading between Victoria and Tasmania and was brought to Melbourne for refurbishment to a sail training vessel.

Until 1999 she carried 4,500 young people for 5-day training voyages in Port Phillip Bay and up to 50,000 people enjoyed day trips in the Bay.

We understand that some funding will be required to bring the ALMA DOEPEL to an “in-survey” condition and we strongly support any request for the State Government to provide this funding.”

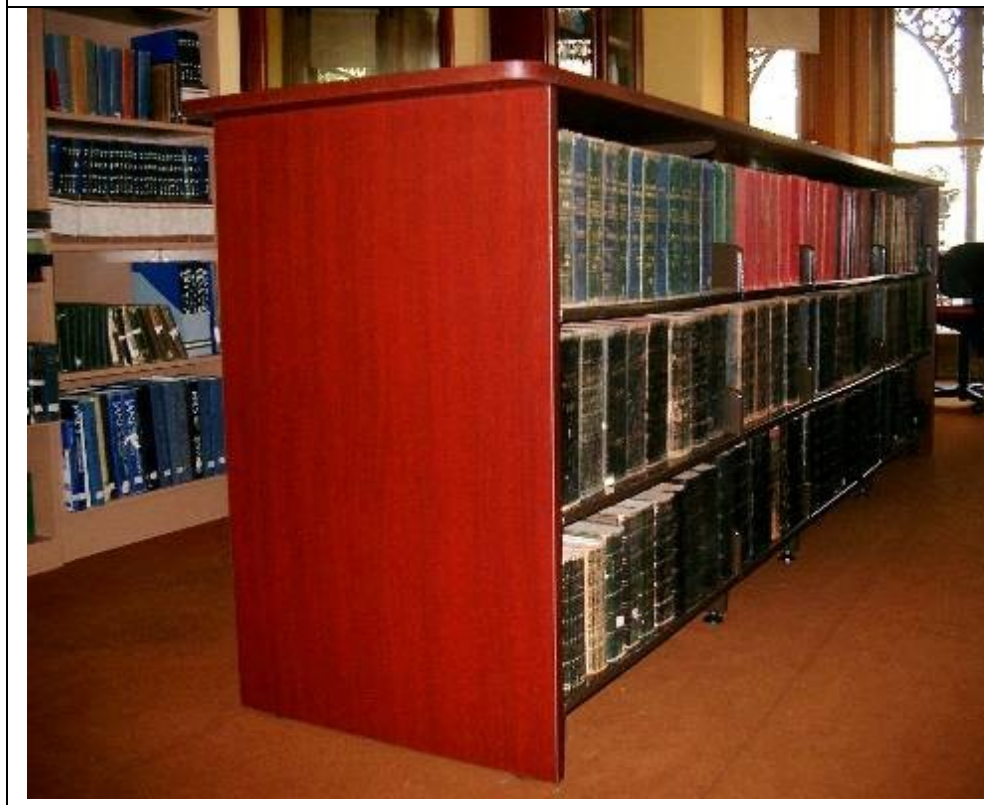
To assist in the refit of the Alma at Port Macquarie with a view her return to Victoria, the PWVA has made a donation of \$1,000 to the Alma Doepel Refit Fund.

News from Ship & Site

I understand that progress has been made towards the planned refurbishment of the Dry-dock and that plans have been submitted to Heritage Victoria for approval. Shed 4 (the workshop) is apparently due to be de-constructed in the next 4-6 weeks and arrangements have been made for the storage of machine and hand tools in containers on site and on the ship so that ship maintenance can continue.

Library

Glen Stuart, Dorothy Minkoff, Alan Morris, Jenny Hunter & John Wroe are still beavering away in the library at Tasma Terrace. We now have our valuable collection of Lloyd's Registers housed in new purpose-built bookshelves. The days of crawling around on the floor with a torch are over!



Photos - Glen Stuart

Pump House Ponderings - Derek Moore

Much of the corrugated iron on the North (River) wall, all of that on the East (Dry Dock) wall and all of the colourbond on the roof was removed in early July. Some large sheets of plywood, plus tarpaulins were placed over much of the open roof, but gaps, especially at the Dry Dock end, often develop on windy days, despite retying by the contractors.

To try to reduce interior water damage in the Pump Room, Multiplex covered the Engineer's Office in black plastic. Similarly, I covered the tops of the Engineer's Cupboards and the Telephone Box, to try and protect their contents.

Excavations in the Pump House precinct revealed a few timber sections (? related to the Dry Dock), a 1.5 metre piece of heavy chain and 2 pieces of? riveted Ship's Plate. Two buried? Dry Dock mooring points were temporarily exposed. These contract excavations were preparatory to the concreting of all of the bare ground surrounding the Pump House, this is now being rapidly paved.

Checking the function of the electric Sump Pumps and the ingress of debris into the Pump House, especially the sumps, from the construction works is a continuing challenge.

Cladding of the enclosure over the Pump House is now underway, with some cladding in place over a portion of the roof. Hopefully this process will be completed sooner rather than later.

An on-site meeting was held with Tanya Williams on 16th January, to discuss the fate of steam piping and other Pump House artefacts currently stored in a shipping container. The Trust's Industrial Heritage Committee will be invited to examine these and other items on site, as another cull of items is getting underway, due to the requirement for the Trust to vacate Shed 4 and the grounds between the two Dry Docks.

Derek

Falls of Clyde



We understand from a reliable source in the U.S. that the 4 masted iron barque "Falls of Clyde" may have to be sunk since adequate funding for her preservation has not been forthcoming. It seems surprising that a country as wealthy as the U.S. cannot find the wherewithal to save such an important historical vessel.

Falls of Clyde is the only surviving [iron-hulled](#), four-[masted full rigged ship](#), and the only surviving [sail-driven oil tanker](#) in the [world](#). She is presently a [museum ship](#) in [Honolulu, Hawaii](#). In 1973 she was entered into the [National Register of Historic Places](#). In 1989 the Secretary of the Interior designated the Falls of Clyde a [National Historic Landmark](#)—one of only thirty-three in the state of Hawaii.^[3] The current owner, the Bishop Museum, has plans to sink her by the end of 2008 unless private funds are raised for an endowment for her perpetual care.

She was built in 1878 by [Russell and Company](#) in [Port Glasgow, Inverclyde, Scotland](#), launched as the first of eight iron-hulled four-masted ships built for [Wright and Breckenridge's Falls Line](#). She was named after the [Falls of Clyde](#), a waterfall up the [River Clyde](#). She was built to the highest standard - [Lloyd's Register A-1](#) - for general worldwide trade. Her maiden voyage took her to [Karachi](#), now in [Pakistan](#), and her first six years were spent engaged in the [India trade](#). She then became a tramp, pursuing general cargo such as [lumber](#), [jute](#), [cement](#), and [wheat](#) from ports in [Australia](#), [California](#), [India](#), [New Zealand](#), and the [British Isles](#).

After twenty-one years under the [Red Ensign](#), *Falls of Clyde* was purchased for US\$25,000 by Captain [William Matson](#) of the [Matson Navigation Company](#), taken to [Honolulu, Hawaii](#) in 1899, and registered under the [Hawaiian flag](#). When the [Republic of Hawaii](#) was annexed by the [United States](#) in 1900, it took a special act of the [United States Congress](#) to secure the foreign-built ship the right to fly the [Stars and Stripes](#).

To economize on crew, Matson rigged *Falls of Clyde* down as a [barque](#), replacing the five yards on her aftermost ([jigger](#)) mast with two more easily-managed fore-and-aft sails. At the same time, he added a deckhouse, charthouse, and rearranged the after quarters to accommodate paying passengers. From 1899 to 1907, she made over sixty voyages between [Hilo, Hawaii](#), and [San Francisco, California](#). She carried general merchandise from San Francisco and sugar from Hawaii, and passengers both ways. She developed a reputation as a handy, fast, and commodious vessel; her voyages averaged 17 days each way.

In 1907, the [Associated Oil Company](#) (which later became [Tidewater Oil](#)) bought *Falls of Clyde* and converted her to a bulk tanker with a capacity of 19,000 barrels (three million liters, 800,000 gallons). In this configuration she sailed from [Gaviota, California](#), with [kerosene](#), which she discharged in Honolulu at the [Oahu Railway and Land Company's](#) Pier 16. On her return voyages, she carried bulk [molasses](#) to California, where it was used for cattle feed.

In 1927, the bark was sold to the [General Petroleum Company](#), her masts were cut down, and she served as a floating fuel depot in [Alaska](#) until 1959. She was sold to William Mitchell, who towed her to [Seattle, Washington](#), intending to sell her to a preservation group. Mitchell's plan fell through and subsequent efforts by Karl Kortum, director of the [San Francisco Maritime Museum](#), and Fred Klebingat, who had sailed in her as chief mate in 1915, to place her in [Long Beach, California](#), or [Los Angeles, California](#), were similarly disappointed.

Source: [Wikipedia](#)

We are sad to announce the death of RALPH VARNES. Ralph was the donor of some 35,000 ships photos which have been lovingly documented by Glen Stuart and his assistants and now form the core of the MARITIME LIBRARY SHIPS PHOTO COLLECTION currently in the National Trust library.

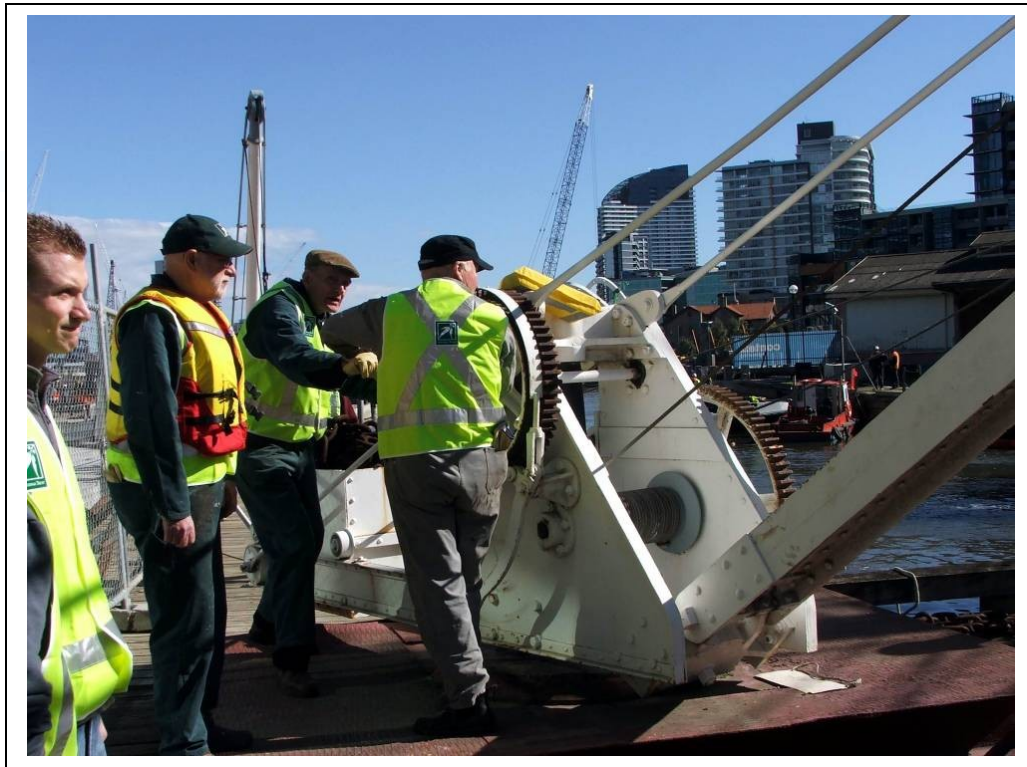
RE-BERTH FOR POLLY WOODSIDE - Tanya Williams

After months of negotiation the National Trust is pleased to announce a commitment from Major Projects Victoria to fund the refurbishment of the Duke's Dry Dock, *Polly's* home for more than 30 years. This project, in excess of \$8 million, is a significant step in ensuring the ongoing preservation of the *Polly Woodside* by allowing the ship to be periodically dry docked to undergo maintenance and restoration works *in situ*.

Duke's Dock dates to 1875 and is one of the few surviving relics of Melbourne's extensive shipbuilding and repair industry that used to stretch along the Yarra's Southbank from the Queen Street Bridge to Docklands.

The works will be undertaken by Contexx Engineering and include the provision of a new dock wall, hydraulic dock gates and base slab with keel, bilge and side shoring supports designed and built specifically to accommodate *Polly*. The design specifications have been developed together with the National Trust staff and consulting Naval Architects BMT defence services. The dock works form part of an overall \$13 million development of the former Melbourne Maritime Museum Precinct to ensure the *Polly Woodside*'s future as a major Victorian National Trust tourist attraction, and provide a new link to Melbourne seafaring heritage

The dock works are expected to take around ten months to complete after which *Polly* will be returned to her "new and improved" home.



Ralph, Don & Neil winching the gangway in place, pre-move.