



Number 162 “the ship comes first” September 2018

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

PWVA Committee:

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Hon.Secretary: Jenny Hunter. 9690 3669, jmdhunter39@gmail.com

Temporary Treasurer and Wave Editor: Neil Thomas

Committee Members: Don Knowles, 9877 1584; Roger Wilson, 9376 6429

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Don Knowles rebuilding one of the many blocks

Chairman's Chat:

You will recall in the June Wave I appealed for help due to the decimation of your Committee – I can report the only contact that was made to me was from Eric Pool, who is in his nineties and lives in Yallambi.

Therefore, it is with regret that I have no alternative but to inform you we are, by our 'Rules of Association', no longer able to function as an Association as we do not have a complete committee.

At present your illegal committee consists of:-

Chairman – Acting Treasurer – Acting Wave Editor:-Neil Thomas.

Vice Chairman – VACANT

Secretary:- Jenny Hunter

Committee Members:- Don Knowles Roger Wilson.

In other words your committee is operating with only two of the four executive positions occupied

If this situation cannot be resolved, then we will consider continuing on until the end of 2018, having our Christmas party, and then holding an Extra-Ordinary meeting to voluntarily disband the Polly Woodside Volunteers Association in early February.

50 years is not a bad run for an incorporated Association.

Whew! That has got that out of the way.



Volunteers:

Our volunteer numbers are fluctuating between four to about ten on a good day. The stalwarts being, Don Knowles, Roger Wilson, Richard Barber, John Slattery, Campbell McCullough coming down by train from Bendigo, John Maxwell, Tod Gardiner, and D'Arcy Wells whenever they can. Also Simon with his new carer Effie, are doing a great job overhauling the sheave blocks, and dead eyes (these dead-eyes were hand-made by Arthur Woodley from red-gum timbers, salvaged from the old Mornington Jetty). Wayne and Damien Bette, come down whenever their sea time allows them to. Also welcome to a new volunteer Charlotte who comes from America. Remember Sarah, one of our ex Facilitators? She came down as a volunteer on three Tuesdays. while on holiday. She and her husband now live in America.

Don Knowles is overhauling and renovating blocks.

Richard Barber is continuing to parcel and serve the rigging with stoic determination.

Roger Wilson has completed the Mizzen mast-coat (see later article), but feels that was the easy one, as there isn't a lot of room around the Fore and Main masts where they go through the deck.

Maintenance Coordinator: Ferdi Darley, and his team are really working hard on mast and fittings, overhauling, renovating and renewing gear, see the article on Ferdie and his team from the 'Classic Boat' an English magazine later in this Wave.

The ship: The workspace erected in the hull on top of the ballast, continues to be well used with shipwright Arthur getting assistance from any volunteers he can shanghai

Management: Shara Canzano our Manager has the site looking great. There is a great rapport between the volunteers and management with security being an important issue.

The Pump House: The periodic working bees at the Pump House are ongoing. Thanks Derek – all these improvements in the Pump House are thanks to you.



Roger Wilson's Mast-coat being installed on the Mizzen Mast

With our mast-coat team Roger Wilson, John Slattery, Campbell McCullough, and myself, gathered for instructions and explanations, and then we duly assembled at the foot of the Mizzen mast.

The mast coats are canvas covers that seal the lower masts where they pass through the deck. They are multi-layered segments of canvas, tailor-made to wrap around and be sewn together around the mast. (Top right photo).

To achieve the seal, the lower section is tack sewn in place then marlin (weatherproof cord) is tightly wound around the mast (Bottom left Photo).

The canvas is then folded down over the marlin, and hand sewn down, joining the two ends (Bottom right photo)

The next job to be done is to soak the mast-coat with water, and paint the mast-coat while still wet. This causes the mast-coat to shrink, making a tighter and waterproof seal



Thanks to Roger's dedication and being a master craftsman, we have a perfect seal.

Rupert working on the deck of 'Tandanya' in his father's work-shop.

MEN AT WORK

YARD VISIT FJ Darley Traditional Shipwrights, Melbourne.

Ferdi Darley used his rigging skills to move from film work to boatbuilding.

Australian Ferdi Darley learned his trade in England. As a young man he travelled to the UK to work at Square Sail, the organisation that specialises in providing period vessels for film production, at the time in Bristol. There he stayed for 10 years, gaining a solid grounding in traditional rigging.

There came a time when Ferdi decided a land-based career would be a better option, and he was keen to serve an apprenticeship in shipwrighting and blacksmithing.

Six years later he returned to Square Sail for another three years before he and his English wife, Wendy, decided they would like to bring up their two sons in Australia.

They might have ended anywhere but when Ferdi got a job in Melbourne as head shipwright in the reconstruction of the officer's accommodation on the Polly Woodside—the three-masted cargo vessel built in Belfast in 1885—that pretty much sealed their fate (Ferdie also works on Alma Doepel).

Ferdi started his own company in 2000 and 10 years later he moved into the Williamstown waterside premises (Seaworks area) from which he still trades today. He now has a team of seven shipwrights, including his son, Rupert, who is in the second year of his apprenticeship, while Wendy does the accounting and almost all of the varnishing.

Wendy, Rupert & Ferdi



'Alma Doepel'

