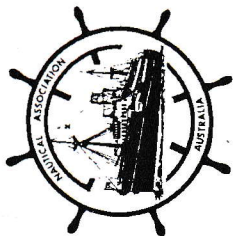
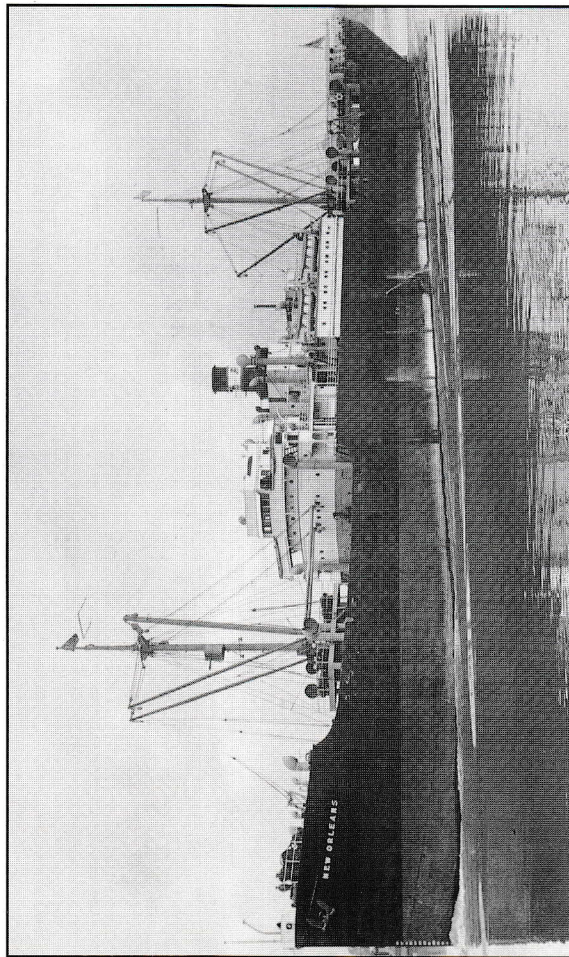


THE LOG



QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE NAUTICAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.
VOL.33, NO. 1, ISSUE 139 - NEW SERIES
FEBRUARY 2000



NEW ORLEANS

American Pioneer Line's 6,174grt cargo vessel, one of the numerous Design 1037 types built by Doullut & Williams
SB Corp. New Orleans, LA in 1920. (see article *American Pioneers* p.4)

(A. Duncan)

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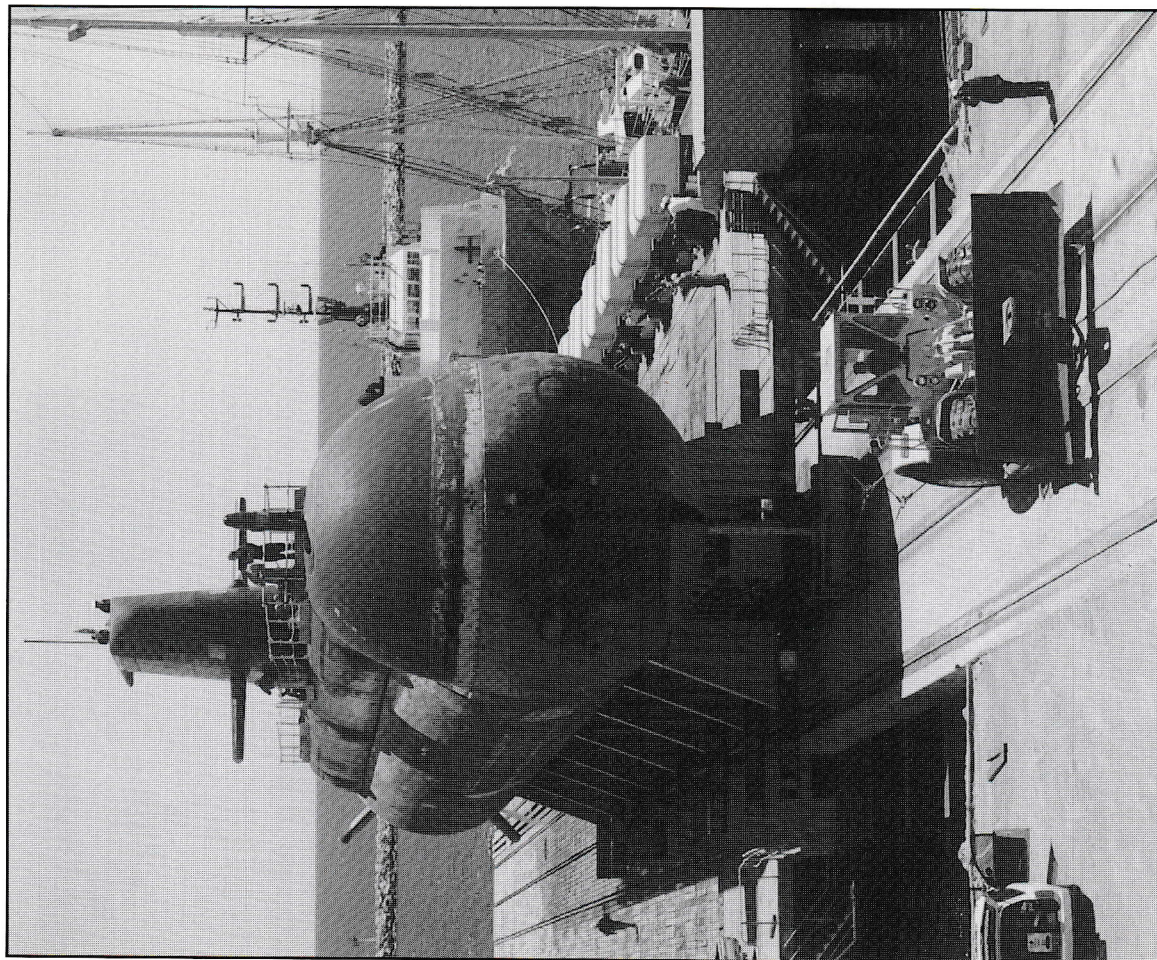
quarterly journal of the

NAUTICAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

Vol.33, No.1, Issue 139 - New Series
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HMAS **Farncomb** on the Tenix Shipbuilding (WA) shiplift facility at Henderson, Western Australia, for a trial slipping on 25 October, 1999 (see p. 46)
(POPH S. Connolly, RAN)

AMERICAN PIONEERS

from W. G. Volum

For two decades after World War II the C2 type cargo steamships of American Pioneer Line were familiar sights in Australian ports. The name American Pioneer Line goes back to the 1920s and the United States Shipping Board era, but the antecedents of the service can be traced to the mid-nineteenth century. This article gives an account of the background and development of the Line.

Antecedents

In the early 1920s a cargo service was operated between US Atlantic ports and Australia (with some sailings advertised as via New Zealand) by United States and Australasia Steamship Co. Inc. of New York. This line is said (Daily Commercial News, 15 September, 1926) to date from "more or less uncertain beginnings" in 1853 when New York merchants chartered "clippers" to carry manufactured goods to Australia via Cape of Good Hope. Return cargoes were obtained "from whatever port offered profitable shipments".

This suggests somewhat nebulous origins, but three full-page advertisements in Wright's Australian & American Commercial Directory and Gazetteer, 1881-82, offer some enlightenment. Some of the text from these advertisements is quoted:

Mailler & Quereau 51 Stone Street, New York. "Proprietors of the Kangaroo Line of Australia and New Zealand Packets. Established in and continued since 1853. Dispatching vessels monthly to the ports of Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney, Australia; Brisbane and Dunedin, Queensland (sic; no doubt the ships' masters knew where to go); Lyttelton, Wellington and Auckland, New Zealand."

R. W. Cameron & Co. 23 South William Street, New York. Established 1852. "Proprietors of the "Diamond" and "Light of the Age" brands of oil, and Pioneer Line of ships for Australia, New Zealand and the East. Cash advances made on consignments of wool, tin and other approved produce from Australia and New Zealand. Orders solicited for American productions, accompanied by approved credits." This firm is described as Shipping and Commission Merchants.

Henry W. Peabody & Co. Merchants and Factors, 114 State Street, Boston. "Give special attention to the purchase and shipment of every description of American products and manufactures, including tramway and railway stock and material. Correspondence and indents from responsible houses solicited. Proprietors of Peabody's Australian and South African Line of vessels to Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Dunedin, Lyttelton, Wellington, Auckland, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Natal."

United States and Australasia Steamship Co. Inc. was incorporated in 1898. The service continued to be operated with chartered tonnage, and at this time there were said to be generally two sailings a month - more or less. Sailing frequencies appear to have fluctuated somewhat, due no doubt to trade conditions and competition, and since the service was operated with chartered tonnage this would be readily accommodated. In any event the service appears to have been disrupted by World War I.

The United States and Australasia Steamship Co. (US & A Lines) resumed sailings from New York to South Africa, Australia and New Zealand in 1919, employing ships assigned to it by the United States Shipping Board. The company was reactivated by five US merchant houses: Arkell & Douglas Inc. (as Arkell & Company, an advertiser in the 1881-82 Directory), H.W. Peabody & Company, Mailler & Quereau, William E. Peck and R.W. Cameron. The Hog Islander **Sataria** departed New York on 2 August 1919. The service to South Africa was terminated by the USSB in 1921; it was re-established in 1922 with Clifford D. Mallory appointed by the Board as managing operator, and he was replaced in 1924 by Ernest M. Bull of A. E. Bull Steamship Lines. Finally, the American-South African Line, as it was then known, was sold by the Board in 1925 to the Farrell interests. This is mentioned in view of the acquisition by Farrell, forty years later, of the Australian service of American Pioneer Line, as US & A Lines is regarded as the antecedent of both this and the Farrell service to South Africa.

United States Shipping Board

The United States Shipping Board (USSB or the Board) was established by the US Congress in 1916, to regulate shipping and to promote the development of the US merchant marine. With the entry of the USA into World War I as a combatant in April 1917, the Board established the Emergency Fleet Corporation (EFC), to which the Board delegated its ship construction programme. Vessels then under construction in US yards were requisitioned and the EFC awarded contracts for many more. Thus, from 1917 to 1921 a vast number of ships was completed for the ownership of the USSB. The active cumulative programme of the EFC as at 30 November 1919, (i.e. one year after the Armistice) totalled 2,314 vessels of 13,628,711 dwt, which included 1,416 steel-hulled general cargo ships of 9,457,684 dwt.

With the end of the war and possessed of this vast fleet, the task of the Board was to develop international trade routes and eventually to sell those routes, and preferably also the ships employed, to approved US operators. Many of the smaller and otherwise less economic ships were eventually sold for demolition without further service. Inevitably, many hundreds of ships remained in lay up. The largest group of ships was, as noted above, the steel-hulled general cargo ships, and the most suitable of these for international/long distance routes were ships in the range 5,500 - 7,000 grt; their service speeds were mostly in the range 10/11 knots (although many were turbine steamers) and thus more akin to tramps than to contemporary cargo liners. It appears that only one of these was completed as a motorship, this being **William Penn** (7,615/1921) built by Pusey & Jones Co., Gloucester City, NJ, which had a service speed of 12 knots (see below).

In establishing and developing international trade routes, the Board selected and appointed private companies to act as managing operators, the commercial risk remaining with the Board. Many of the services operated at a loss (and thus proved hard to sell), and from time to time the Board would rearrange, discontinue or combine services, or replace operators. Ships sold with services might, on the failure of the purchaser, be repossessed by the Board. Ships would be withdrawn from and returned to layup depending on trading conditions. The Board's policy in the 1920s was to hold a number of ships in "spot" condition i.e. able to proceed to sea on 48 hours notice; during the year ended 30 June 1925 the Board had made repairs to "upward of 100 vessels" to maintain this capability.

At 30 June 1925 the Board controlled 1,245 ships of 8,563,150 dwt, including 1,138 steel-hulled cargo ships of 7,961,542 dwt. During that year an average of 892 ships was laid up; in 1925/26 the average had fallen to 719 ships, due mainly to vessels having been sold for demolition. In June 1924 the Board inaugurated a diesel conversion programme, and fourteen general cargo steamships were authorised for conversion. The builder contracted for two engines defaulted, and twelve ships were converted under this programme, comprising:

- four ships, Design 1013 (Robert Dollar type) originally built by Los Angeles SB & DD Co., San Pedro, Calif.: **Crown City**, **West Grama**, **West Honaker** and **West Cusseta**.
- eight ships, Design 1027 (Oscar Daniels type) originally built by Oscar Daniels SB Corp., Tampa, Florida: **City of Dalhart**, **City of Rayville**, **Sawokla**, **Seminole**, **Tampa**, **Unicoi**, **Wilscot** and **Yonachichi**.

The first of these conversions was **Tampa**, which was recommissioned on 2 November 1926; **West Honaker** and **Unicoi** were also recommissioned in 1926, eight were completed in 1927 and the last, **Wilscot**, was recommissioned on 18 March 1928.

In the fiscal year 1927/28 eight more ships were authorised for conversion to diesel (and three larger ships for conversion to diesel-electric, but these are irrelevant to this article). These ships were units of the numerous Design 1037 type and all had originally been built by Doullut & Williams SB Corp., New Orleans, LA.: **City of Elwood**, **Galveston**, **Jeff Davis**, **Oldham**, **Potter**, **Ward**, **Wichita** and **New Orleans**. All were, after conversion, recommissioned between 13 April 1929 (**Galveston**) and 18 October 1929 (**Jeff Davis**).

The Board considered that these motorships would be most suitable for its long distance services because of their low fuel consumption and long range, and accordingly they formed the backbone of the various services of American Pioneer Line in the 1930s. The total cost of this programme was US\$23.3 million, so whether it proved to be an economic proposition is debatable. With continued sales,

largely for scrapping, the average number of Board ships laid up was 270 in the year ended 30 June 1930 and 242 in the following year.

By the mid-1930s the US merchant fleet was becoming increasingly obsolescent, consisting largely of the surviving units of the fleet built in 1917/21. There had been relatively few ships built since then and they were predominantly specialised vessels (e.g. passenger, reefer, tanker). In 1936 the US Congress passed the Merchant Marine Act, pursuant to which the United States Maritime Commission was established in that year as successor to the Board. The Commission was charged with the renewal of the US merchant marine, and it took over the remaining, and still substantial, fleet of the USSB.

Evolution - US Atlantic Ports / Australia Service

When the USSB withdrew the US/South Africa service from US & A Lines in 1921, that operator was left with its service from US Atlantic ports to Australia and all sailings in both directions could then be scheduled via the Panama Canal. In the early twenties some sailings were still advertised as calling at New Zealand ports. Normal ports of call in Australia were Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, with other ports on inducement. Home port was New York, and the ships would normally call also at Boston. The general manager of United States and Australasia Steamship Company was Robert G (or H) Moran, who had apparently been involved with the company for some considerable time.

In 1924 the USSB authorised the consolidation of three of its Pacific services and gave the name American Pioneer Line to the resulting amalgamation. This was the first appearance of American Pioneer Line as a trading name. The three services thus amalgamated were those of Barber Steamship Lines (US North Atlantic ports to Far East; operator of eleven USSB ships), Kerr Steamship Co. (US North Atlantic ports to Dutch East Indies; operator of six USSB ships) and Tampa Intercoastal Steamship Co. (US Gulf ports to Orient; operator of eleven USSB ships). The operator appointed by the USSB for the new American Pioneer Line was Atlantic, Gulf & Oriental Steamship Co., and the consolidation allowed a reduction of four ships. At this time, in the USSB fiscal year ended 30 June 1925, the USSB adopted other new trade names, including Atlantic Australian Line for the US Atlantic ports/Australia service operated by United States & Australasia Steamship Co., which then had six USSB ships assigned to it - enough for a monthly service. The USSB's American India Line was then operated by Roosevelt Steamship Co. Inc. of New York with five ships.

Then on 20 June 1926 the Board authorised the consolidation of the American India Line with the Atlantic Australian Line, the combined service to be operated by Roosevelt Steamship Co. Inc. The Board believed that combining these services would give better service and reduce costs, particularly as it would be possible, between wool seasons in Australia, for ships jointly to cover both routes, returning to the USA via Indian ports. In addition, the Board intended that the newly-converted motorships would be assigned to these services. The first sailing to Australia under Roosevelt auspices was taken by **Eastern Planet**, which departed New York on 12 August 1926 bound for Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide. This ship had previously been operated in the Australian service by US & A Lines for the Board. The first Roosevelt advertisement in the Australian shipping press appeared in DCN on 29 September 1926. For the time being the Australian service continued to be known as Atlantic Australian Line.

Roosevelt Steamship Co. Inc. was established in 1920. It was controlled by Kermit Roosevelt, who was president of the company. Kermit Roosevelt was the second son of Theodore Roosevelt, 26th president of the USA (1901-1908). He (Kermit) was, in the thirties, also vice president of United States Lines and of International Mercantile Marine Company, and these three companies were closely connected with one another. In 1921 Roosevelt Steamship Co. was one of three shipping companies appointed by the USSB to manage passenger ships operating on the North Atlantic under the title United States Lines. Roosevelt Steamship resigned from the management in 1923. Roosevelt Steamship was again involved in managing ships under the style United States Lines Company from 1931 to 1934. Roosevelt Steamship Co. and its president were clearly well known to the Board and, given the latter's proclivity for rearranging and amalgamating services, it is perhaps not surprising that Roosevelt was preferred in the Australian reorganisation. US & A Lines was, however, aggrieved at the loss and, in the words of a DCN commentary (15 September 1926 - DCN sided with US & A Lines on the issue), "instead of following the precedent of other 'beheaded' operators and dropping quietly out of the picture, decided to remain in the service it established in 1853, and announced the sailing to Australian ports of the steamer **Chincha**, an American vessel".

So US & A Lines continued in the Australian trade, in competition with USSB / Roosevelt, using ships chartered from private US owners. The second ship, following **Chincha**, was the motorship **Challenger**. Most of the ships chartered thenceforth, however, were owned by United States Steel Products Company (in 1927 renamed Isthmian Steamship Company), a subsidiary of United States Steel Corporation; these ships were: **Birmingham City**, **Ensley City**, **Knoxville City**, **Steel Age**, **Steel Mariner** and **Steel Trader**.

Two years later US & A Lines gave up the unequal struggle and abandoned its Australian service. The last ships on the US & A Lines berth appear to have been **Birmingham City** and **Steel Mariner**, about October 1928. Agents in Australia for US & A Lines were George A. Parker, Sydney, and Dalgety & Co. Ltd., who acted jointly until Parker withdrew in January 1928. When Roosevelt Steamship Co. took over the operatorship of Atlantic Australian Line the Australian agency went to Wihl. Wilhelmsen Agency Ltd., and this company retained the agency throughout the American Pioneer Line era and the ultimate Farrell Lines ownership of the service.

During the USSB fiscal year 1927/28 the American Pioneer Line was split into two sections: the Atlantic ports/Orient service was designated American Pioneer Line - Atlantic Division with Roosevelt Steamship Co. awarded the operatorship; the US Gulf ports/Orient service became American Pioneer Line - Gulf Division with Tampa Intercoastal Steamship Co. (of New Orleans) appointed operator. At 30 June 1928 Roosevelt Steamship Co. had assigned to it by the USSB seven ships for the American India Line, six ships for the American Pioneer Line Atlantic Division and twelve ships for the Atlantic Australian Line. All these services nominally operated at monthly frequency; twelve ships was too many for a monthly service to Australia, but the frequency would fluctuate according to trade demands and some of the ships would return to the US via India.

In the following fiscal year, 1928/29, the USSB authorised the unification of American India Line, Atlantic Australian Line and American Pioneer Line - Atlantic Division, the amalgamated line to operate as American Pioneer Line under the operatorship of Roosevelt Steamship Co. The American Pioneer Line - Gulf Division was renamed American Gulf Orient Line. The first advertisement in the Australian shipping press to use the new name appeared in DCN on 10 April 1929 when American Pioneer Line (Australasian Service) with Roosevelt Steamship Co. Inc. as operator announced the steamer **Arcturus** to sail from Australian ports for Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore. At 30 June 1929 Roosevelt Steamship Co. was operating 26 ships under American Pioneer Line with two sailings a month to Australia (about eleven ships), monthly to India and monthly to the Far East.

Thus the US Atlantic ports/Australia service adopted the name under which it was to operate until its sale to Farrell in 1965. The three American Pioneer Line services continued under USSB (and from 1936 USMC) ownership and Roosevelt Steamship Co. operatorship until the early years of World War II. During the years of USSB ownership the principal competition in the US Atlantic ports/Australia service came from certain British lines prominent in the UK/Australia and New Zealand trades.

The trade routes of the American Pioneer Line were among the last to be divested by the US Government. In December 1939 the United States Maritime Commission, the successor to the USSB, sold the service to India to American Export Lines Inc., and in the following year four of the motorships were transferred from the USMC to American Export Lines: **New Orleans**, **Sawokla**, **Unicoi** and **Ward** were renamed **Exbrook**, **Excellency**, **Excelsior** and **Exton** respectively. Within a year or two all were back under Government control with their original names. **Sawokla** was sunk by the German commerce raider **Michel** on 29 November 1942 and the others were broken up soon after the war.

In 1940 the two Pacific services of American Pioneer Line, and the trading name, were acquired by United States Lines Company. In the Australian shipping press, American Pioneer Line's advertisement in DCN on 2 May 1940 still had Roosevelt Steamship Co. as managing agents for the USMC; next day the advertisement had United States Lines Co. as proprietor of the line - both announced the forthcoming sailing of **City of Elwood**. United States Lines Company would remain the owner of American Pioneer Line's Australian service for the next 25 years.

Whether Kermit Roosevelt had any significant involvement in these dispositions is questionable. In World War I he had been commissioned into the British Army, served in Mesopotamia as Captain in a motor machine gun unit, and was awarded the British Military Cross, the Montenegrin War Cross and the Order of Danilo. Upon the United States entering the war he transferred to the US Army and served

in France, commanding a battery of artillery. Upon the outbreak of World War II he served in the British Army as a Major from September 1939 to March 1940 and from June 1940 to May 1941. He was no longer a director of United States Lines in 1940. He was the officer appointed to command the British contingent in the International Volunteer Force to fight in Finland in 1940. He died on 4 June 1943, aged in his mid-fifties, by which time he held the rank of Colonel.

The Ships - 1920 to 1942

At first glance there appears to be a bewildering number of USSB ships assigned to the Australian service. With the large pool of ships, and operators able to call ships from and return ships to the pool depending on trade requirements, this is perhaps not surprising. From 1928 Roosevelt Steamship Co. was able to switch ships between the three services it now operated for the USSB.

Nevertheless, certain patterns emerge. At the beginning of 1920, of eight ships listed for US & A Lines in *DCN*, four were of Design 1037 and built by Federal SB Co., Kearny, New Jersey. These were turbine steamers of 9,600 dwt and thirty were built by Federal; a further eight of this design, built by Doullut & Williams, were subsequently converted to motorships and were frequently on the American Pioneer Line berth to Australia in the thirties (see above). Federal SB was a subsidiary of United States Steel Corporation, and subsequently built ships of this design for its parent company's shipowning subsidiary, United States Steel Products Company (see above), including some of the vessels chartered by that company to US & A Lines after the latter lost the USSB operatorship. The four ships on the Australian berth in 1920 were **Bellbuckle**, **Liberty**, **Lorain** and **Marne**. Two more of this class visited Australia on the American Pioneer Line berth in 1940; see below.

By early 1922 the US & A Lines sailing lists were dominated by a group of ships built in Japanese yards for the USSB. They continued in the Australian service under US & A Lines and later Roosevelt auspices until replaced by the newly-converted motorships in 1927. Most of the Japanese-built ships were flush-deckers of 9,000 dwt from Kawasaki Dockyard, Kobe: **Easterner**, **Eastern Sea**, **East Wind**, **Easterling** (all completed 1918), **Eastern Moon** (1919) and **Eastern Planet** (1920) - all of about 5,800 grt. The larger **Eastern Light** (7,192 grt/1918) was built by Osaka Iron Works, Imoshima.

Three steamers built by Skinner & Eddy Corporation, Seattle, Wash., appeared on the berth briefly in 1929; they were **Egremont** and **Jadden** of Design 1079 (Skinner & Eddy type, 9,600 dwt) and **Editor** of Design 1105 (Editor type, also 9,600 dwt). By this time the route was predominantly served by the recently converted motorships.

Of the miscellaneous steamers berthed during the twenties, several may be mentioned. **Cape May** (10,100 dwt), built by Bethlehem SB Corp., Sparrows Point, Md, had been ordered by The Shipping Controller (UK Government) as **War Saturn** but was requisitioned by the EFC and completed for the USSB; the ship was in Australian ports c. 1922/24 and was sold by the Board as early as 1925. Another ship laid down for The Shipping Controller (as **War Juno**) was requisitioned and completed as **Western Glen**; built by Ames SB & DD Corp., Seattle, this ship was on the berth 1926/27 (for US & A Lines and then Roosevelt) before being sold in 1927, but finally went to the British flag during World War II as **Empire Gembuck** and as such became a war loss in 1941.

Noted above among the motorship conversions are four ships of Design 1013 (Robert Dollar type). Two sisters that remained steamers were on the berth: **West Cherow**, built by Northwest Steel Co., Portland, Oregon, was in Australian ports in 1922 and ultimately became a war loss as **Keystone** in 1943; **West Loquassuck** was built by Skinner & Eddy, Seattle, was in Australian ports in 1929 and 1930 and went to the breakers in 1938.

Five ships of Design 1015 (Moore & Scott type, 9,400 dwt) were in Australian service at various times. **Nokatay** (built by Moore SB Co., Oakland, Calif.), in Australian ports 1920, was broken up as early as 1929, one of several ships of this class and from this builder to be broken up in 1929/31. Three were built by G. M. Standifler Construction Co., Vancouver, Washington: **Nishmaha** was on the berth in 1920 and lasted until 1954 when she was broken up after service under the Panamanian flag; **Cokesit** made Australian voyages 1924/27, and **Arcturus** from 1927 to 1930. **Cokesit** and **Arcturus** were sold to Chandris in 1937 for service under the Greek flag as **Adelfoi Chandris** and **Ioannis Chandris** respectively, and became war casualties under the Italian and German flags respectively. The fifth ship in this group was **Oakpark**, built by Virginia SB Co., Alexandria, Virginia (a Morse concern) as **Jennie R. Morse**; on the Roosevelt berth in 1928, was broken up in 1938. The last of the steamers to serve

on the American Pioneer Line berth to Australia between the wars appear to have been **West Loquassuck** and **Arcturus**, each of which made a voyage in mid-1930.

The late-1920s and the 1930s belonged to the motorships. Details of the USSB conversions are given above. From early 1927 the motorships were scheduled to sail in the Roosevelt services to Australia and India. The first three conversions, **Tampa**, **Unicoi** and **West Honaker**, each made one or two voyages elsewhere before joining the Roosevelt fleet, but by April 1927 the nine ships listed as on the Australian berth included the motorships **West Honaker**, **Crown City**, **Tampa**, **Unicoi** and **West Cusseta**. In June 1927 the sailings to Australia include the twin screw motorship **William Penn** which, as noted above, appears to have been the only steel-hulled ship built for the USSB as a motorship; it is the only motorship in a 1923 listing of the Board's fleet.

Of the twenty conversions, all recommissioned between November 1926 and October 1929, all except **West Grama** are known to have made sailings to Australia in American Pioneer Line service. **West Grama** and **Wilcox** were recommissioned on 7 December 1927 and 18 March 1928 respectively and were assigned to the New York/South America service, but **Wilcox** made a sailing to Australia in 1930. The motorships were of the three island type typical of the USSB deep sea cargo ships, but upon conversion their appearance became distinctive by the replacement of their steamer funnels with small stacks mounted on white box-like structures. The ships carried passengers, providing, in the words of the Board, "very desirable space for a limited number of passengers". Lloyd's Register identifies **Unicoi**, **Sawokla**, **Jeff Davis** and **Ward** as passenger ships, implying that they could accommodate more than twelve passengers.

When US & A Lines resumed Australian sailings after World War I, with USSB tonnage, twelve steamers were assigned, allowing about two sailings a month. After the initial burst of postwar prosperity the number of ships was reduced to six, allowing monthly sailings, and this applied for most of the twenties, although frequency of sailings was somewhat flexible. In 1927 there were ten ships assigned to Roosevelt for the Australian service and five for the Indian service; both services were stated to be monthly in frequency and some Australian ships returned to the USA via India.

By June 1928 Roosevelt, now operating three services, had assigned to it 25 ships; twelve for the Australian service, six for the North Pacific and seven for India - all services were nominally of monthly frequency. By June 1929 Roosevelt still had 26 ships, with the Australian service recorded as two sailings a month. With the onset of the trade depression, the number of ships assigned declined to 22 by June 1930, 17 by June 1931 with sailings to Australia reduced to one every sixty days, twelve by June 1932 and eleven by June 1933. While sailings to Australia were stated to be one every two months even this was flexible; in 1932 six sailings from Australian ports have been identified with a gap of four months between the departures of **Sawokla** in July and **City of Rayville** in November, while in 1934 five sailings are identified with three months between successive departures of **City of Rayville** in April and July. From this low point in 1934 the number of annual sailings from Australian ports gradually increased until 1940 when twelve sailings are identified and 1941 with fourteen.

Apart from the trade fluctuations, ships could be switched between the three American Pioneer Line services operated by Roosevelt Steamship Co., and there appears to be no discernible pattern in the allocation of ships to the Australian service. Although all but one of the motorship conversions are known to have operated to Australia, the number of visits by individual ships varies widely. Least seen in Australia were the Robert Dollar type ships built by Los Angeles SB & DD; after appearing soon after conversion in the late twenties, **West Honaker** did not reappear until late 1940 and 1941 (three trips) and **West Cusseta** did not return until 1941 when she made two trips - these dates are based on visits to Melbourne. (**Crown City** reappeared in April 1942, but apparently for another operator).

Most of the sailings were taken by the eight Oscar Daniels ships and the eight built by Doullut & Williams, with in aggregate about 40 sailings by the former group and about 50 by the latter over the period 1930/1942. Based on Melbourne port data, **Wilcox** made only one visit (in 1930), **Oldham**, **Seminole** and **Galveston** two each and **Sawokla** three. The most frequent visitors were **City of Rayville** (13 visits, although she did not appear at all in 1935, 1938 or 1939), and **Jeff Davis** and **Wichita** (ten each), followed by **Potter** and **Ward** (eight each). These numbers should be regarded as indicative only, as ships may occasionally have omitted Melbourne, particularly in the early years of the war.

City of Rayville finished her career in Australian waters; on 8 November 1940 while on passage from Adelaide to Melbourne with a cargo of wool, lead and copper for New York the ship struck a mine in Bass Strait and sank within a few minutes, about 6 1/2 miles south east of Cape Otway.

In 1941, with the US still neutral for most of the year, the American Pioneer Line (now owned by United States Lines Co.) was still substantially served by the motorships, with sailings by the following: **West Honaker**, **City of Dalhart**, **Tampa**, **Yomachichi**, **City of Elwood**, **Jeff Davis**, **Potter** and **Wichita**. The ships were removed from the service in 1942 with sailings identified in that year by **Tampa** and **Ward**.

Some of the former USSB steamers made late appearances in the trade with the Hog Islanders **Lehigh** and **Quaker City** making one voyage each, in 1940 and 1941 respectively. Two of the Design 1037 type ships, first seen here in 1920, appeared in 1941 with **McKeesport** and **Vincent** making one voyage each. For **Vincent**, Brisbane proved to be her last port of call; on 12 December 1941 the ship was sunk by the Japanese armed commerce raiders **Aikoku Maru** and **Hokoku Maru** 600 miles north west of Easter Island (25.41S, 118.19W) while on passage to New York; the crew were taken as prisoners of war. **McKeesport** became a war loss in the North Atlantic in 1943. The two Hog Islanders also became war losses, as did **Sataritia** that made the initial sailing for US & A Lines in 1919; **Sataritia** was by then operating under the Soviet flag as **Kola**.

By the early years of World War II new ships were emerging from the building programme of the United States Maritime Commission (USMC or the Commission). The first to appear on the American Pioneer Line's Australian berth was the early C2 type motor vessel **Lightning** (6,194/1939) in February/March 1940, and again three months later. This ship passed to Moore-McCormack Lines in 1940 as **Mormacfern** and in 1942 became the US Navy's cargo ship **Mercury**. The C2 type motor vessel **Sea Witch** (6,022/1940) made at least two trips in 1941 and another in 1942. In December 1942 **Sea Witch** became a troop transport for operation by the War Shipping Administration, was returned to USMC in 1946 and in 1947 sold to Swedish owners as **Axel Salen**. Notwithstanding this history, display advertisements for American Pioneer Line as late as December 1948 featured a photograph of **Sea Witch**. The names given to C2 type ships, other than those intended for private US owners, were derived from the fast US-built sailing clippers of the mid-nineteenth century, many of which had been seen in Australian waters. The first **Lightning**, built at Boston in 1854 by Donald McKay, was destroyed by fire at Geelong on 31 October 1869.

From 4 June 1942 ships' names were omitted from DCN and were not to reappear until late in 1945. American Pioneer Line advertisements continued to appear, without ships' names or sailing dates, throughout the war. Even in 1942 the advertisements offered "frequent sailings" at "regular intervals", but in later years this also was omitted. The USMC's building programme, including the emergency war programme which produced the Liberty and Victory ships, provided the source of tonnage for these wartime sailings.

The former USSB ships were now at the end of their economic lives, but those that survived the breakers to the outbreak of war rendered invaluable service. Many were transferred to Britain early in the war and served under the Ministry of War Transport with Empire names. Those that survived the war were broken up soon afterwards, except for the few that were sold foreign and thereby survived for a few more years.

The fates of some of the USSB steamers have been given above. Some of the Japanese-built ships were broken up in the thirties and the remainder sold for further trading. In 1937 **Easterner**, **Easterling** and **Eastern Planet** were sold to Chandris for service under the Greek flag as **Mari Chandris**, **Antonios Chandris** and **Jenny Chandris** respectively; the last-named founded on 12 November 1937 and the others were war losses. Several of the motorships served with the US Navy: **Yomachichi**, **Tampa**, **Ward**, **City of Dalhart** and **City of Elwood**. **Jeff Davis** was under US Army control for part of the war. **Wichita** disappeared without trace while on passage from Takoradi to New York and was considered to have been torpedoed and sunk by a submarine about 100 miles north east of Barbados on 19 September 1942. Five were scuttled off the Normandy beaches as blockships in June 1944: **Galveston**, **Potter**, **Wilscow**, **West Honaker** and **West Grama**. Also used as a Normandy blockship was the steamer **Illinoian**, originally the Japanese-built **Eastern Light**. Perhaps the last to survive among the USSB ships discussed above was the Skinner & Eddy steamer **Egremont**, which served under the Panamanian flag 1941/45 as **Calobre** and in 1945 went to the USSR as **Borodino**, remaining in Lloyd's Register until 1968.

(to be concluded)

SYDNEY AND THE BLUE ANCHOR LINE PART 4: THE WARATAH AND CAPTAIN ILBERY

from D. Finch

ADDENDA

Waratah

Writing in the *Durban Mercury* 19 July, 1999 Mr. David Willard, former journalist, Cape Times and Natal Witness, and a 'Waratah expert' says: "There is little to contradict the assumption that this wreck is in fact the well-documented **Khedive**, a German East African steamer, lost in 1913." Actually **Khedive** grounded on Cape Morgan at 4.30p.m. 16 August, 1910 (*Cape Times*, 17/ 8/10). **Khedive** founded in shallow water about one mile off shore with part of her funnel and masts protruding above the surface. (*Cape Times*, 18/ 8/10). The wreck discovered by Mr. Emyln Brown last year is in 65 fathoms, six miles off shore and some 40 miles north of where the German steamer lies. Mr. Willard goes on to give the findings of the official inquiry into the loss of Waratah as:

"It was simply not feasible that a large passenger liner, fully provided with lifeboats, rafts, life belts (on deck) and all kinds of spars and other light gear, and with much buoyant material could founder and sink so suddenly that nothing whatever would break loose or be cast adrift to be found by searchers or washed ashore..."

This is completely at variance with the report of the inquiry as published in *The London Times* (refer The Log, November 1999, p. 155). Mr. Willard continues "My own research suggests that, disabled, she could have drifted around the world, finally to be scuppered near Cape Horn by Captain Ilbery to allow her passengers and crew to make a dash for the nearest land by lifeboat. Obviously this desperate attempt, if it happened, failed." No comment is necessary to this statement.

A very strong opinion is held in South Africa that there is a treasure to be found in the wreck of **Waratah**. This opinion is based on the following facts:

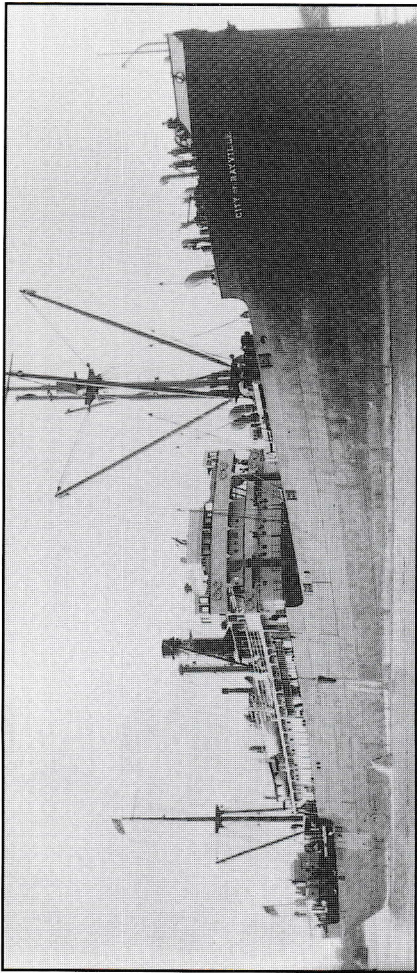
- In the archives in London is a cargo plan for **Waratah** Voyage 2 homeward. In a lower hold is a space designated for '300 tons bullion' to be loaded in Sydney and consigned to London.
- Among the depositions presented to the Court of Inquiry (December 1910) William Duncan, chief officer, s.s. **Hunter** stated that they discharged 'bullion' into **Waratah** in Sydney.

The general interpretation of 'bullion' is of precious metal, but it does have other connotations. "Lead bullion is produced at Mount Isa and Cockle Creek in New South Wales and exported from there." (*World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol.23, p. 616).

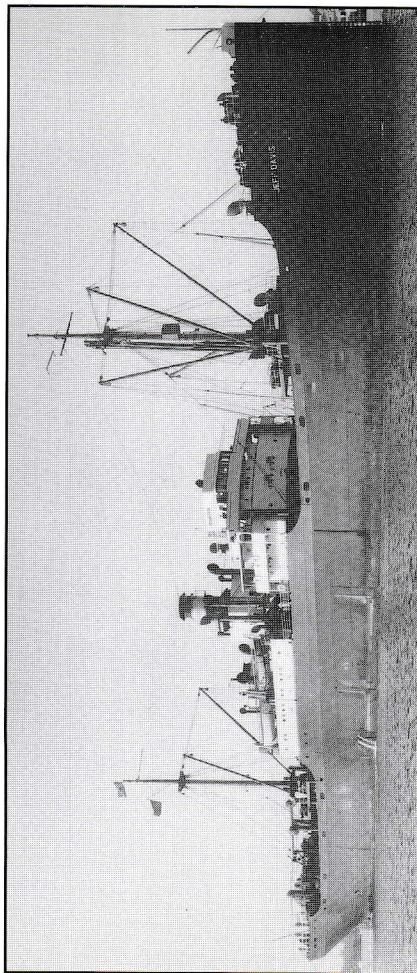
The manifests published in *The Daily Commercial News* include the following entries: in the preliminary listing, July 1, 1909- Gibbs, Bright & Co. - 7800 bars lead. In the complete manifest published 3 July the wording is amended to read - Gibbs, Bright & Co. - 7800 bars bullion. Had Waratah been carrying a cargo of great value there would seem little doubt that it would have attracted the same sort of publicity as did **Laurentic**, **Egypt**, **Niagara** etc. Nevertheless regardless of the above, South Africa still believes that a treasure lies 400 feet down six miles off the Transkei Coast.

Captain Ilbery

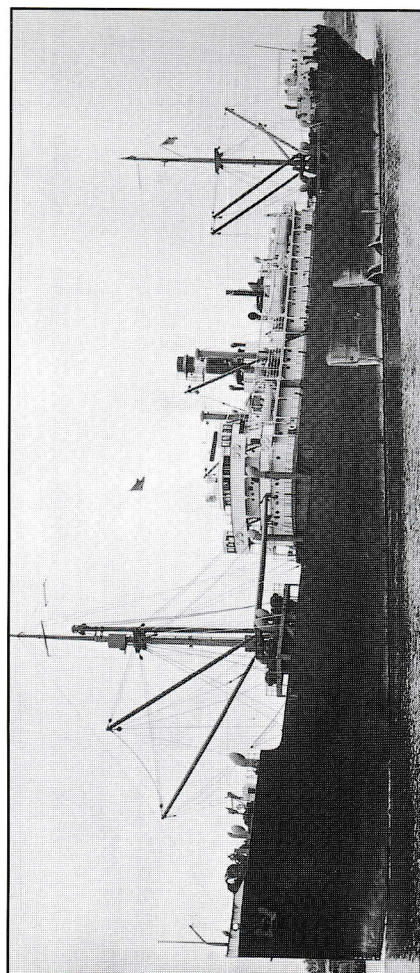
In the brief biography of Captain Ilbery in the November issue, *The Log*, (p. 160) we stated "at no time did he take over from another shipmaster." This is not quite correct. Ilbery had had command of **Wilcannia** since July 1899 and in May 1902 was to hand that vessel over to Captain W.G.Lingham to enable Ilbery to stand by **Commonwealth** which was building on the Clyde. With Lingham's ship **Bungaree** running late **Wilcannia** sailed on time and the two ships met at Las Palmas where the masters exchanged vessels, Lingham returning to Australia in **Wilcannia** whilst Ilbery brought **Bungaree** home.



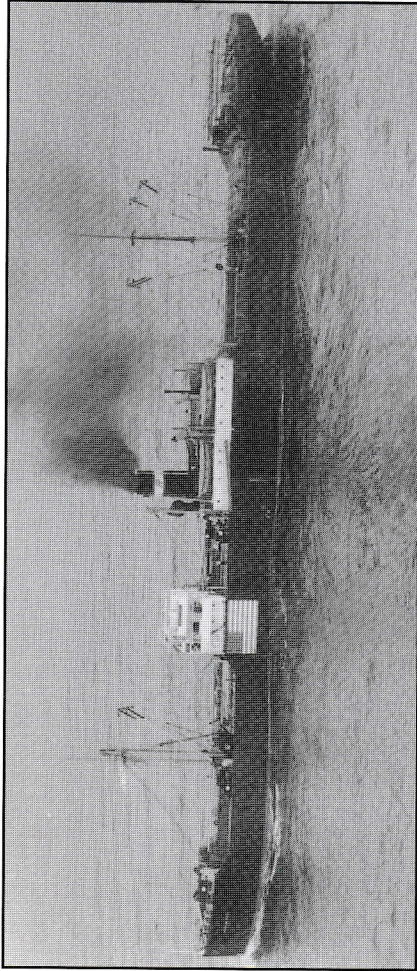
CITY OF RAYVILLE a Design 1027 (Oscar Daniels type) sunk by a mine in Bass Strait. (A. Duncan)



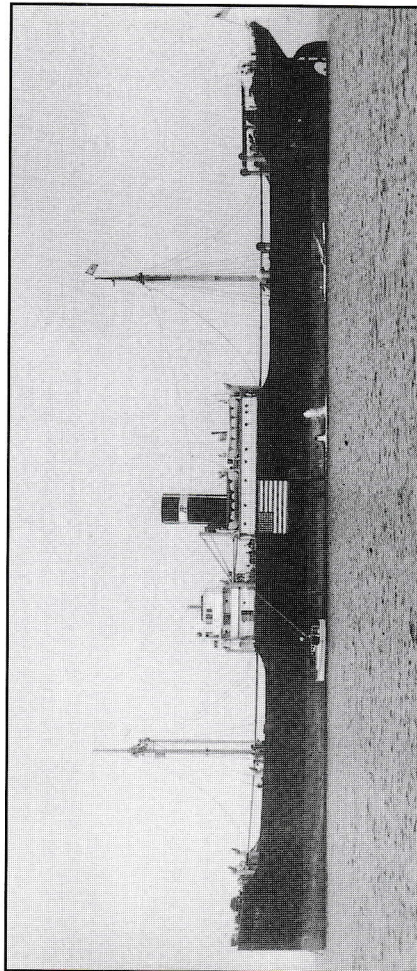
JEFF DAVIS a Design 1037 type built by Doullut & Williams SB Corp., New Orleans. (R.J. Tompkins collection)



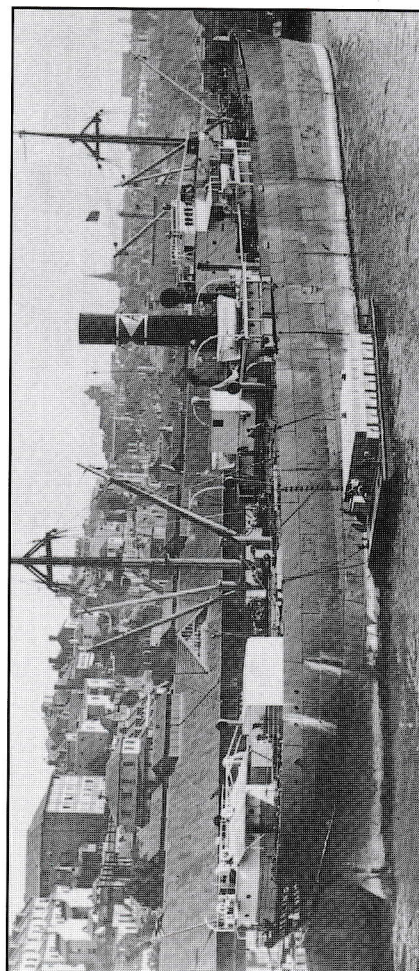
CITY OF DALHART a further example of the Design 1027 type, built by Oscar Daniels SB Corp. (A. Duncan)



QUAKER CITY former USSB Hog Islander made one voyage to Australia in 1941. (R.J. Tompkins)



VINCENT a Design 1037 steamer. Sunk by Japanese raiders after leaving Brisbane in Dec. 1941. (R.J. Tompkins)



EASTERLING USSB steamer clearly showing Atlantic Australian Line funnel marking (R.J. Tompkins)

THE BELFAST AND KOROIT STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY LTD.

An Eventful First Five Years - 1882 to 1887

from S.J. Evans

The Belfast and Koroit Steam Navigation Company Limited [BKSN Co.] was formed in 1882 but the story properly starts about 1878. Commencement of the harbour works to turn Port Fairy, on the Moyne River in Western Victoria, into a river port revived interest in the formation of a Port Fairy based steam ship company. In 1872 an attempt was made to form a Moyne SN Co, but the machinations of Robinson and Lilly, plus inability to raise the capital locally, resulted in failure. Further attempts in 1874 and 1877 also failed. However, by 1878 the harbour works had made considerable progress. Sailing vessels came up the Moyne on a regular basis and many believed that Port Fairy would soon have the best port in Western Victoria. Already it was served by a plethora of shipping, both sail and steam, but only one of the steamers then in the trade (s.s. **Dawn**) would ever be able to get up the river and reap the cost savings of loading against a wharf. In March 1878 the Gippsland SN Co's **Murray** was the first steamship to come up the Moyne and, on a regular service, demonstrated the cost savings possible by loading direct from the river wharves. Warrnambool had its own steamship company, the Warrnambool Steam Packet Company Ltd., which serviced all the western ports with three steamers. Portland had just managed to subscribe enough capital to form the Belfast and Portland SN Co and put **Dawn** into the trade. Agricultural production in the Western District was increasing and virtually all produce had to go through one of the western ports in order to reach its markets. Alone amongst the western ports, Port Fairy did not have its own steamship company.

The small number of progressive business men of the town were frustrated by the sight of "foreign" steamers such as **Murray**, **Richmond**, and **Argyle** reaping the rewards of the Port Fairy harbour works. By 1882 a number were tired of procrastination and they informally discussed how a company might be formed and capitalised. These discussions resulted in a well-attended meeting being held on 15 March 1882 and, for once, action resulted. The meeting quite quickly resolved- "That the Belfast and Koroit Steamship Company be formed, with a capital of £20,000 in 10,000 shares of £2 each" and appointed a sub-committee to draw up a prospectus. A Provisional Committee was formed, a prospectus agreed on and ordered to be printed.

Steamer companies, keen to sell off surplus or ageing vessels, were quick to offer them to the potential company. In a letter to the committee, Nipper and See made a play to become a major shareholder and, to influence that decision, indicated that they were about to have a 350 ton steamer, with a speed of ten knots, built especially for the Port Fairy trade and emphasized the assistance their shipping experience could be to the fledgling company. They were prepared to take up to £5,000 worth of shares (which would give them a minimum of 25% of the new company), but appeared to make this dependent on the Port Fairy company buying their steamer **Richmond** which, they said, could be kept in the trade until a new steamer was obtained, "thus providing two steamers to trade between Belfast and Melbourne". Since none of the promoters of the new company had any shipping experience this was a tempting offer and some favoured accepting. Desire for independence ultimately prevailed and, perhaps remembering the Robinson and Lilly fiasco of 1872, the offer was refused. On 26 May a meeting of shareholders was held at which the deed of association was adopted and registration of the company authorised.

At a meeting of the Provisional Committee on 2 May, the steamer **Casino** entered discussions for the first time. B. B. Nicoll, of Sydney, had written offering two steamers for sale. Almost sister ships, **Helen Nicoll** and **Casino** had been built that year in the United Kingdom for the northern rivers trade in New South Wales. Both were over 300 tons gross, draught of about ten feet and speed ten knots with accommodation for some 50 saloon and 40 steerage passengers. It was agreed that, from the description, either could be suitable providing the price was not too high. At the end of May, the Committee had another letter from B. Nicoll to say that **Casino** was now in Australian waters and was expected to arrive at Warrnambool on 31 May to load potatoes for Sydney. It was decided that the vessel should be inspected for suitability whilst she was in the area.

Casino (O/N 86361) was named after the northern New South Wales town and had been built at Dundee by Gourlay Brothers and launched in February 1882. Her gross tonnage was 425 and she was 160.4 feet

long, with a breadth of 24.1 feet and depth of hold 10.2 feet. She had a forecastle 35 feet long, bridge 40 feet and quarterdeck of 51 feet. She was a schooner rigged, iron-screw steamer with three masts and a well deck. Her compound, 2- cylinder steam engine had cylinder diameters of 21 inches and 36 inches and a stroke of 24 inches. Steam was provided by a single-ended boiler at 70 lbs. pressure. Her engine had been built by her builders and was of 65 nominal horse power. She could carry 300 tons on a draught of 10 feet and was said to have a speed of 10 knots. The shallow draught made her very suitable for Port Fairy's river port and she had accommodation for 35 saloon passengers and for a number of steerage passengers in the forecabin. Whilst at Warrnambool she was inspected by a number of Belfast & Koroit S. N. Co.'s shareholders and they reported favourably on her. On 31 May 1882 the company telegraphed Nicoll to ask what the price would be for **Casino** and there was considerable disappointment when he replied that she had already been sold. However, the sale fell through and **Casino** suddenly became available again. At a meeting of BKSN Co shareholders on 1 July 1882, the Provisional Committee announced that the company had purchased **Casino** for £14,250 and that she was being surveyed and overhauled in Sydney.

Thomas Boyd, formerly of Nipper and See's **Richmond** which had come up the Moyne when trading to Port Fairy, was appointed **Casino**'s captain - a post he was to hold for some 18 years - and she sailed from Sydney on 19 July 1882 for Wollongong where she loaded 325 tons of coal for Melbourne. With that load she drew 10 feet aft and 8 feet forward and arrived at Melbourne on 23 July. The company was now able, with some pride and a sense of achievement, to advertise her first arrival in Port Fairy. She left Melbourne for Port Fairy at 5.35 p.m. on Friday, 28 July 1882 with 16 saloon passengers, 4 in the steerage and 35 tons of general merchandise, arriving at Port Fairy on Saturday morning. Her arrival caused great excitement in both the town and the district and the Gazette gave an eyewitness account of the event-

"There was more animation in Belfast on Saturday last [29-7-1882] than we have witnessed for years past. Flags were gaily flying from almost every business establishment, while many private residences were not much behind in the display of bunting. The cause of the unusual stir and bustle on the part of the residents was attributable to the fact that the first boat belonging to the Belfast and Koroit Steamship Company - the **Casino** - was to be formally introduced to her owners that morning. For a couple of hours prior to the arrival of the vessel the banks of the river, the Flagstaff reserve, and indeed all points of vantage had been taken up. the vessel was taken to the Steam Packet Wharf where she was made fast, and in a few minutes she was crammed with human freight from stern to stern."

On 1 August **Casino** sailed for Melbourne and so began a journey together through time for her, the townspeople, and the Company, which would last almost exactly fifty years. Both the Company and **Casino** became much loved icons to the people of the town who saw the ship as an old friend which not only represented the development of the town, but also its shipping history. She was later affectionately known as "the old Cass" and when she was wrecked in 1932 the mood in the town was grieving and sad, as if a loved member of the family had died.

Mid-1882 was a period of substantial shipping competition, for Port Fairy was being served by three steamer companies and the BKSN Co. had to break in to that trade. The Western SN Co had **Julia Percy** and **Nelson** on the run, the Portland & Belfast SN Co had **Dawn**, and now **Casino** had been added. Initially, and in order to benefit from local loyalties, **Casino** ran only between Melbourne and Port Fairy and was rarely less than a full ship on the run back to Melbourne. Business was good and involved almost the whole Western District. Hamilton business people found they saved "12s 6d per ton all round, by patronising the road to Belfast instead of the railway to Portland." Her success was enough to scare off, at least temporarily, both the Warrnambool and Portland companies whose **Julia Percy** and **Dawn** ceased to call at Port Fairy in January 1883. Despite this the BKSN Co made a loss of £508 in the 13 months to 31 August 1883. The primary cause was the large interest bill for the period (some £700) due to the company being under-capitalised. Although by 28 February 1883 a total of 6,052 shares had been taken up they were only paid to 20 shillings each and one year after the float the company's paid-up capital was only £5,996. Consequently, BKSN had large borrowings from the Bank of Australasia (£9,053). If initial paid-up capital of the company had been higher it might have broken even in the second half of the first year because the second half loss was only £91 7s 7d.

The next two years were successful and profitable for the BKSN. In the first half of 1884 the company made its first small profit (£172 18s 4d) and expanded it to £1,122 2s in the next half, enabling it to pay

its first dividend at the rate of 8% per annum for the second half ending 31 August 1884. Profit for the year ending 31 August 1885 was an even better £2,087 1s 10d, enabling the company to pay its shareholders an 8% dividend for the year. By February 1884 paid up capital was still only £6,217 and the annual interest bill remained high at an annual rate of £756. But the early profit success of the company caused the directors to make a mistake which had significant financial consequences for the company and precluded it from becoming financially strong prior to the largely unexpected onslaught on the Western Ports trade by Howard Smith in 1886.

By 1882, as the following table shows, potato shipments from Port Fairy were substantial and increased in the years immediately thereafter :-

Potato Shipments from Port Fairy 1882-87		Variation from previous year	
Year ending 30 June	Shipments Tons	Tons	%
1882	9,600		
1883	12,200	+ 2,600	+ 27.1
1884	18,092	+ 5,892	+ 48.3
1885	19,400	+ 1,308	+ 7.2
1886	18,582	- 818	- 4.2
1887	10,762	- 7,820	- 42.1

Source: Compiled by Town Clerk and local shipping agents and published *Belfast Gazette* 16 September 1887

Similar quantities were being exported from Warrnambool and, in the 1884 season, the BKS Co, despite the widespread depression in the Australian shipping trade, had been forced to charter the steamer **Franklin** in order to lift all the potatoes available to the company. Thinking that the potato crop would continue to increase, and believing that new competition would not emerge, the BKS Co directors, in December 1884, took a major step - they not only bought a second steamer, but one which was too small to be economically viable in the trade. With considerable fanfare they announced the purchase of the new steamer **Bellinger**. Like **Casino**, **Bellinger** had been built for one of the Nicoll brothers, in this case G. W., and was an iron single-screw steamer with shallow draught. But there the similarity finished. She was only 125 feet long and 225 tons gross, with a 45 horsepower compound steam engine and a top speed of only 9 knots and accommodation (which was not up to **Casino's** standard) for 16 passengers. The company paid £8,250 for her. It was soon apparent that her economics did not stack up to those of **Casino** as is clearly shown in the first full six months of **Bellinger's** operation to 31 August 1885 :-

	Casino	Bellinger
Working expenses	£ 3,322	£2,404
Insurance	£338	£ 289
Repairs	£ 55	£ 64
Total operating costs	£3,715	£2,757
Earnings	£ 6,596	£ 3,388
Gross Contribution	£2,881	£631
Gross Cont. as % of earnings	43.7%	18.6%

Source: BKS Co accounts in *Belfast Gazette*, 22 September, 1885

Whilst they were winning the competitive battle for the trade the BKS Co could get away with the relative inefficiency of **Bellinger** but it was different when a newcomer with an aggressive reputation arrived. William Howard Smith had made a short foray into the Western Ports' wool trade in 1871. Now he attempted to use the large, rapidly expanding, potato exports from Warrnambool and Port Fairy as a basis for a new entry into the trade. The Howard Smith steamer **You Yangs** had called at Port Fairy in April 1884 and picked up 2,710 bags potatoes. She took on more potatoes in Warrnambool before

leaving for Sydney. Presumably this voyage was successful because, in January 1885, William Howard Smith and Sons appointed R. Robinson & Sons as their Port Fairy agent and, beginning at the end of January 1885, despatched a steamer from Port Fairy every Thursday for Sydney, loaded with potatoes. Early in the year **You Yangs** and **Rodondo** were in the trade and **Moreton** was soon involved. In addition Andrew Kell, a Port Fairy shipping and produce agent, arranged for the Australasian Steam Navigation Co's steamers **Birksgate**, **Cintra** and **Tenterden**, whilst en route from Adelaide to Sydney, to call weekly for potatoes in the 1885 season.

By February 1885 the trade was becoming crowded. There were now five companies using eleven steamers to lift potatoes from Warrnambool and Port Fairy. They were BKS Co (**Casino**, **Bellinger**), Western SN Co (**Nelson**, **Julia Percy**), Portland & Belfast SN Co (**Dawn**), Australasian SN Co (**Birksgate**, **Dingadee**, **Cintra** and **Tenterden**) and Howard Smith & Sons (**Moreton**, **You Yangs**). Of these only **Casino**, **Bellinger**, **Dawn**, **Dingadee**, and **Moreton** were able to come up the Moyne River and load directly from the wharves. Consequently they took the lion's share of the potatoes. Neither the Australasian SN Co nor Howard Smith lasted the full season and had ceased calling by June 1885. Nevertheless, the six months to 31 August 1885 were very profitable for the BKS Co, with its highest half-yearly profit yet of £2,088. As we have seen, most of this derived from **Casino**, with **Bellinger** making only a modest gross contribution. Indeed, if one took account of the increased interest payments due to the purchase of **Bellinger**, the contribution that vessel made was very marginal. Paid up capital had been increased by almost fifty per cent to £9,342 but instead of this resulting in reduced interest payment, the purchase of **Bellinger** had caused interest payments to increase still further to an annual rate of £916.

Early in January 1886 Howard Smith's **Moreton** resumed running but this year there was a difference; she was now on a regular Melbourne-Port Fairy-Warrnambool run in direct competition with the three Western District companies. Howard Smith was interested only in the high volume potato trade and, as Portland was not a potato port, their vessels did not call. A previous runner in the Port Fairy produce trade now re-appeared, although only for Port Fairy-Sydney cargoes. John See & Co had bought **Coorong** and, on her way from Melbourne to Sydney, she now called at Port Fairy to lift potatoes. One consequence was that the port of Port Fairy was rather busy, so much so that on 27 January, 1886 there were five steamers in port at the one time. **Moreton**, **Casino**, and **Bellinger** were moored to the wharves in the Moyne River whilst **Julia Percy** and **Coorong** were anchored in the bay. In February the Australasian SN Co's **Hesketh** and **Tenterden** took loads of potatoes from Port Fairy to Sydney and **Hesketh** paid a number of visits during the season.

There was some indication, from cargoes published in the shipping section of the *Belfast Gazette*, that, at least in the early part of the 1886 potato season, **Moreton** was leaving only a bit better than half full. But late in February, as a result of the settlement terms for the shipping strike, the BKS Co, Western SN Co and Portland & Belfast SN Co jointly announced that "on and after March 1st" freight rates would be increased. There was some evidence, albeit without specifying the company, at the shareholders' meeting of the BKS Co, on 20 March, 1886, that Howard Smith had begun to cut freight rates. By now it was also clear that the quantity of potatoes shipped would be, at best, no more than the previous season. In fact, by 30 June, 818 tons were shipped, 4.2% less than in the previous full year. By the end of March it was clear that Howard Smith had cut the freight rate for potatoes from Port Fairy to Melbourne by almost half - from 12s 6d per ton to 7s 6d. This was for potatoes loaded from the wharf and no lighterage was payable. Those steamers - **Nelson**, **Julia Percy** - which picked up their cargo from lighters in the bay were at a tremendous disadvantage. Their position, and that of **Casino**, **Bellinger**, and **Dawn** worsened almost immediately when Howard Smith announced a further drop to 5s per ton.

The impact of this competition and rate cutting on BKS Co profits became clear when the company announced its results for the half-year to 28 February, 1886. It had turned round from a reasonable profit to a loss of £79. Such a loss was not too serious, except that only a short part of the potato season was included, and it did not augur well for the future. Whilst **Casino** still made a significant gross contribution in the period (£1,048 - 25.2% of earnings), **Bellinger** barely covered her operating expenses (£280 - 10.4% of earnings). From correspondence in the *Belfast Gazette* it was clear that the rate war had now spread beyond potatoes and extended to freight for other produce and live sheep and lambs. The BKS Co directors, in their report, blamed the loss on competition from Howard Smith saying that because of "an antagonistic opposition to the local company by a Melbourne firm which has

reduced the rates of freight, the local steamship company's half-yearly statement is not so satisfactory as its predecessors." Further reference to rate cutting was made by the Chairman during the shareholders' general meeting. But the shareholders, or at least those present at the meeting, were in favour of fighting back and it was reported that "shareholders of the BKS Co. present at the meeting intimated they would prefer to sacrifice every shilling of interest they held in the company than see the vessels run out of the trade."

The Western SN Co was hit harder than the BKS Co, because they were simply non-competitive from Port Fairy and their directors' report for the period talks of sailing with virtually empty ships. Despite having the majority of the trade from Warrnambool, profit for the half-year was only £135. In May 1886 the Howard Smith Company replaced **Moreton** with **Geelong** on the Melbourne-Port Fairy-Warrnambool-Melbourne service but the problems of the trade were about to change. In a bold, and perhaps desperate, move the Portland & Belfast SN Co announced that from 19 July 1886 its freight rates were drastically reduced. Its rates would now be Melbourne-Port Fairy 2s 6d per ton and Port Fairy-Melbourne 4s per ton. Somewhat ominously the announcement concluded that "further freight reductions are anticipated".

But no further reductions were necessary. Howard Smith had been bested at rate cutting and had now had enough. The company signalled defeat, although it was to return more successfully in the 1890s, when it announced in the Melbourne, Port Fairy and Warrnambool papers:

"Belfast and Warrnambool Trade Notice

The undersigned beg to notify that the s.s. **Geelong** will be laid up for the present, until the trade is restored to a more settled condition and rates are established on a more reasonable and remunerative basis; she will then resume her place in the trade as before."

Howard Smith picked the right time to get out for worse was yet to come. The potato crop failed and for the year ending 30 June 1887 potato shipments from Port Fairy were only 10,762 tons, a reduction of 7,820 tons (42.1%) on 1886. Shipments from Warrnambool were down by a similar amount, so shipping companies involved in the Western Ports trade had some 15,000 tons less potatoes to ship in 1887 compared to 1886. There was no chance to make it up in other produce because potatoes and wool were dominant in volume of products and this was a period when, despite total wool shipments from Port Fairy increasing, a substantial proportion was shipped directly from Port Fairy to London by Gulf Line and other overseas ships. One consequence was that the Western SN Co was forced completely out of the Port Fairy trade. From late April 1887 the company ceased calling at Port Fairy and the port never returned to their itinerary. Indeed, both their steamers (**Nelson** and **Julia Percy**) were put up to auction in September 1887. Although both attracted bids neither reached the reserve price and the company was forced to continue operating.

The half-year accounts to 31 August 1886 recorded a disaster for the BKS Co with a loss of £1,308 6s. Surprisingly, there was not much difference in earnings by both vessels compared with the previous half-year which means the company worked each vessel harder than previously. As might have been expected from vessels being worked harder, and despite attempts to economise in their operation, operating costs were higher. Interest was still £435 11s 5d for the six months. **Casino's** gross contribution was halved to £551 (13.3% of earnings), whilst **Bellinger** made a gross loss of £242 (10.5% of earnings).

Gross Contribution of **Casino** and **Bellinger** for six months ending 31 August 1886:

	Casino	Bellinger
Working expenses	£3,163	£1,986
Insurance	£ 341	£ 289
Repairs	£74	£266
Total operating costs	£3,578	£2,541
Earnings	£4,129	£2,299
Gross Contribution	£551	- £242
Gross Cont. as % of earnings	13.3 %	- 10.5%

Source: BKS Co accounts in *Belfast Gazette*, 15 October 1886

Being under capitalised and with high interest payments the BKS Co was almost on the ropes and drastic action had to be taken. Fortunately a first step enabled the directors to announce in their report to shareholders that "as an agreement has now been entered into between the three Western Companies, your Directors hope for a remunerative trade during the coming year". The second action was to sell **Bellinger** and face up to the loss the company would inevitably take on her book value because the Colony was in the midst of a shipping depression. Before the shareholders meeting the BKS Co sold **Bellinger** for £5,875 - a book loss of £2,388. This loss was dealt with in 1887 by handing each shareholder a loss of ten shillings on each £2 share owned, reducing paid up capital of the company from £12,466 to £9,499.

During this period the BKS Co purchased the Steam Packet Wharf at Port Fairy. It had been using this wharf for several years and although, with operating losses and an uncertain financial climate, it was a brave decision, it was also a sound long-term decision which brought benefits to the company over the next fifty years.

The potato season opened in 1887 without a Howard Smith steamer on the run. Presumably the previous experience, combined with a partial crop failure, meant that prospects for the season were not good enough to bring them back into the trade. Nipper and See sent the steamer **Lawrence** (built 1884 - 399 tons gross) to Port Fairy to pick up potatoes. She first arrived on 5 April 1887 and plied for several voyages to Melbourne before running into trouble in the Moyne River on 20 April. She had arrived at Port Fairy on 19 April, under command of Captain Smith, and took on 2,239 bags of potatoes, 69 bags barley and 2 cases of butter before sailing for Melbourne shortly after daylight next day. When off Warrnambool **Lawrence** was observed to be down slightly by the head and would not answer her helm properly. It was discovered that there were several feet of water in the forehold and that she was making water freely. Pumping began but the water still gained and Captain Smith decided to make for Warrnambool which she reached about 10 a.m. in a sinking condition with about eight feet of water in the hold. A diver went down and found that one of the plates on the starboard side, near the forehold, was fractured for about four inches. The diver plugged the leak with blankets and then fastened plates, both inboard and outboard, over the fracture, bolting these plates together. When pumped out **Lawrence** was able to continue her passage to Melbourne, albeit with a substantial portion of her cargo ruined. Probably as a consequence of this accident, coupled with the partial failure of the potato crop, no more Nipper and See steamers traded to Port Fairy until March 1890, although the company continued to operate as produce buyers in the district.

The agreement on freight rates between the three companies trading to the Western Ports assisted them all financially but the poor potato crop reduced the volume enough to ensure that none had a good result in 1887. There are no accounts readable for the BKS Co for the six months ending 31 August 1887 but it is known that the company made a small loss. However the company returned to profit in the next six months to 28 February 1888. By then it was in a much better competitive situation. Its only regular competitor in the Port Fairy-Melbourne trade was the Portland and Belfast SN Co's **Dawn**, enabling the BKS Co to look to the future with more confidence.

Note: Port Fairy was officially named "Belfast" from 1843 to 1886 when, at the request of the townspeople, it reverted to its original name of Port Fairy. This explains the use of "Belfast" in the steamer company's name but the modern "Port Fairy" is used throughout this article.

References: *Belfast Gazette*, 24/31 March, 5 May, 2/21 June, 1 August, 19 Sept., 1882, *Lloyds Register of British & Foreign Ships* 1896-97, BKS Co accounts in *Belfast Gazette*, 22 September 1885, *Belfast Gazette*, 29 Jan., 16 Feb., 30 March, 16 April, 27 July, 15 Oct., 1886

NAUTICAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA - ADDRESSES

The following addresses should be used for communications to the Association:

Editor:
R A Priest, PO Box 214, Blackburn, Vic., 3130
Business (03) 9894 1855 Business Fax (03) 9894 1336
e-mail address - waimea@bigpond.com.au
Treasurer: J B Labrum, PO Box 142, Caulfield South, Vic., 3162
Secretary: D W Finch, PO Box 384, Katoomba, NSW, 2780.

Photos for inclusion in *The Log* should be sent to M. Carolin, 79 Hannan St, Williamstown Vic., 3016.

ALDINGA

from I.J. Farquhar

An unobtrusive flyer of last century, the 368 ton two funnelled steamer **Aldinga** achieved a consistency of performance matched by few steamers of her era. Built in 1860 by Scott and Company of Greenock for the Melbourne based partnership of James McMeckan and John Hutchison Blackwood, **Aldinga** came out to Melbourne under jury rig sail in 100 days. Arriving in Melbourne on 8 October 1860 she was then slipped to have her propeller fitted, her funnels placed in position and to be painted in her owner's colours.

With her raked stem, two funnels and three tall masts, barquentine rigged, she had attractive lines which enhanced her reputation as a ship of distinction. She had a length of 202.6 feet, a beam of 24.6 feet and a depth of 13.4 feet. She was designed to achieve 12/13 knots in good weather on a coal consumption of 25 tons per day. Passenger accommodation varied over the years but she regularly carried between 100 and 150. The name **Aldinga** came from a small community east of Adelaide, the country base of miller Samuel White, who had provided substantial financial support to McMeckan Blackwood in the development of their service between Melbourne and Adelaide.

After twenty seven voyages on her designed run between Melbourne and Adelaide, **Aldinga** was sent to Otago to capitalise on the growing demand for passages across the Tasman following the gold rush in that province which started in June 1861. **Aldinga** arrived at Port Chalmers on 16 September 1861 under the command of Captain John McLean. It was the charisma of McLean, as a master mariner who was always pushing his vessel to the limit, that added to her reputation as a flyer.

After only 12 return voyages, a group of 62 Dunedin businessmen feted Captain McLean with a complimentary dinner. Chaired by Vincent Pyke, Otago's Goldfields Commissioner, Captain McLean was described like his good ship **Aldinga** as "well found and well conducted". He was presented with a purse of 150 sovereigns as "an expression of the high sense of the valuable service you have rendered this city and province by the regularity and rapidity of your passages between Melbourne and Dunedin". John McLean was already well known in Otago, as the master of the McMeckan, Blackwood **Omeo** which had pioneered their Trans Tasman service in 1860 and his reputation was enhanced by stokers and other crew calling him "Hell Fire Jack" for his practice of always driving the crew for a maximum effort, commensurate with safety. On several occasions leaving Port Chalmers, **Aldinga** lightly bumped other vessels at anchor in the hurry to get to sea.

Aldinga regularly carried parcels of gold back to Melbourne and on one voyage in February 1862 she carried a record 33,666 ounces. She had a lucky escape from disaster when she brushed over Waipapa Reef on the south east corner of the South Island at 5.05 am on 24 August 1862 and opened her bottom plates. She was beached at Bluff for temporary repairs and then came back to Port Chalmers for further patching prior to return to Melbourne in ballast on 9 September. She was luckier than the ill-fated **Taranua** which was wrecked in the same spot on 29 April 1881 with the loss of 131 lives.

In January 1863, John McLean was replaced as Master by John Stewart, who had delivered the vessel from Scotland. Captain McLean remained in the Otago trade as master of the larger McMeckan, Blackwood vessel **Alhambra**.

Some of her passages were made in a little over four days (11.5 knots average) and one voyage between Bluff and Dunedin was accomplished in a remarkable 9.5 hours at an average speed of over 14 knots. Until a new mail contract was established with the New Zealand Government in December 1863, **Aldinga** was regularly completing two round voyages a month between Melbourne and Port Chalmers, with a call at Bluff en route. On the completion of her mail contract in December 1864, **Aldinga** left Port Chalmers on 18 December on her last New Zealand voyage and even that round trip was accomplished in 11 days 4 hours.

She then returned to the Melbourne - Adelaide service and sailed on 29 December 1864 on the first of some 320 round voyages between the two port cities for McMeckan, Blackwood. Her unobtrusive

reliability over the next twelve years has probably not been eclipsed by any other vessel. The 505 mile route was often covered in little more than 40 hours and on one occasion in April 1874 she managed to achieve a 39 hour passage. The New Zealand mail on **Alhambra** had not arrived to connect with the departure of the P & O mail steamer **Baroda**. **Aldinga** met **Alhambra** in Port Phillip, transferred the mails and then chased **Baroda** to Adelaide where she successfully reached Glenelg prior to the departure of the P & O vessel.

McMeckan, Blackwood had long dominated the trade between Melbourne and Adelaide and when the newly formed Adelaide Steamship Company put their two new larger steamers - **South Australian** and **Victorian** - on the run in January 1877, they could only compete against them with the ageing **Coorong** (15 years), **Aldinga** (17 years) and **Omeo** (19 years). Dropping fares and freights and increasing frequency didn't help. In July 1877 they sold **Aldinga** to the Adelaide Company and agreed not to compete in the direct Melbourne/Adelaide trade. Although the sale price was £16,000, McMeckan Blackwood were given half the payment in Adelaide Steamship shares. In a compensating move, Adelaide Steam also gave the Melbourne company their agency work at that port. After the takeover a single round trip fare on that service returned to £5 - double the rate charged during the "war"!

Aldinga carried on in the trade, albeit under new owners. Adelaide Steam then fought off competition from Howard Smith in 1880 but later that year the Sydney based Nipper and See put **Claud Hamilton** on the Melbourne/Adelaide run and another costly freight war commenced. Adelaide Steam decided to use **Aldinga** as a "fighting ship" against Nipper and See and advertised her schedule identical to that of **Claud Hamilton**. Over the 40 competitive sailings, before the owners of **Claud Hamilton** capitulated and sold their ship to Adelaide Steam, **Aldinga** often made the faster passage arriving in port well ahead of her rival. For the period of this "engagement" against Nipper and See, Adelaide Steam brought back veteran master John McLean.

In between these bursts of competition, **Aldinga** was kept as a reserve ship to relieve **South Australian** and **Victorian** (commonly called the South and the Vic). As she ended her 21st year of service she was still well supported and was regularly carrying more than 100 passengers on each leg. Over the years much of the goodwill she generated amongst travellers came from her various masters. Apart from short term appointments, Captains John Stewart, Hugh McMeckan, and William McLean (younger brother of John McLean) all served over six years each, John McLean a total of five years and her last master, Norwegian born Olaf Odman served two years. Despite the short time he was Master, the name of John McLean was always associated with **Aldinga**. Born in Stranraer, Scotland, in 1818, he first visited Melbourne in 1849 but it wasn't until 1851 that he took up permanent residence in that city. He was Master of the Melbourne/Geelong paddle steamers **Victoria**, **Melbourne**, **Duncan Hoyle** and **Citizen** as well as a brief time with **Ladybird** prior to joining McMeckan, Blackwood in 1855. He was in command of most of their vessels including **Omeo**, **Aldinga**, **Alhambra**, **Albion**, **Otago**, **Taranua**, **Gothenburg**, **Arawata** and **Ringarooma**, eventually becoming Commodore master.

His brother William had been in command of **Victorian** for several years and when he died suddenly in 1881, John McLean succeeded him as Master and remained in command until 1886. He was highly regarded by his employers and for periods he also relieved as Marine Superintendent for the company. He decided to return to Scotland for a visit and left Melbourne in May 1886 to bring out the Port Phillip paddle steamer **Ozone**. Prior to leaving, his friends and businessmen of Melbourne presented him with a testimonial and a purse of 600 sovereigns. His name carried an "aura" which reflected his skill as a shipmaster and the widespread popularity he enjoyed from the travelling public. On the return voyage to Melbourne **Ozone** called into Batavia and there he contracted malaria. Although he safely brought the paddle steamer to Melbourne he never recovered from this illness and he died on 8 July 1887 at the age of 69 years.

By the early 1880s, **Aldinga** was an old and costly vessel with over 450 Melbourne/Adelaide voyages behind her. She was sent to Sydney on 6 January, 1883 in the hope of finding a buyer. After lying idle for four months she returned to Adelaide to make two further voyages to Melbourne before again being dispatched to Sydney on her sale to the Mount Kembla Coal Company. She ballasted to Sydney and arrived 9 June, 1883 to undergo extensive renovations at Morts Dock and Engineering Works at

Balmain so she could efficiently carry 225/300 tons of coal from Port Kembla to Sydney. Large hatchways were cut and double friction winches were fitted. In 1887 she was more drastically modified and new engines and boilers were fitted. Her bowsprit was cut off, a mast and a funnel removed and her fine lines and identity as a flyer were no longer visible and she attracted little attention as she carried coal between Australian ports and also to the Pacific. One writer suggested her truncated stem gave her the appearance of the snout of a rhinoceros!

There was little excitement in her remaining years as a collier and as the 1890s advanced, she spent more time in "lay up" than she did at sea. In January 1890, following the grounding of the Lund liner **Riverina** at Island Point, Rame Head, between Cape Everard and Gabo Island, Victoria, **Aldinga** was sent down to assist in the salvaging of the cargo before the vessel finally broke up. She left Sydney on 29 January and towed the small steamer **Greyhound**, down and back. The shallow draft **Greyhound** was used as a tender to get close to **Riverina** and **Aldinga** returned to Sydney with 250 tons of cargo, mainly brandy, whisky, paint and softgoods.

She survived until 22 January 1896 when she ended her days piled up on the outer end of Bellambi Reef, 33 miles south of Sydney. She had loaded 300 tons of coal at Wollongong and intended to top this up at South Bulli when she struck the reef just before daylight. **Aldinga** became firmly embedded and soon filled with water. The crew abandoned the vessel and she soon broke up. Captain Hector Boyle said it was dark and misty when the old ship struck the reef, but the Marine Board judged him to blame for the loss of the ship and he lost his Master's certificate for three months.

Despite the humdrum nature of her years as a collier, **Aldinga** will always be remembered as one of the more distinctive passenger steamers of last century.

CORRESPONDENCE

The HMAS Cerberus Museum

Recently on a PROBUS outing I visited the museum of HMAS Cerberus which is a non-profit museum located within the grounds of the Navy new-entry training establishment at Western Port, Victoria. It has expanded considerably in recent times and now occupies the entire building of what was once the Supply School, itself an historic building having been completed in 1926.

The primary objective of the museum is to research, record, preserve and present the history of HMAS **Cerberus** and the Victorian colonial forces inasmuch as it relates to **Cerberus** and naval training. The museum additionally preserves and presents the general history of the RAN since its creation in 1911. Enquiries can be directed to the Curator on 0359 507 141.

Whilst there I learned of the new stained glass window depicting the AMCs/LSIs **Kanimbla**, **Manoora** and **Westralia** in the nearby Chapel of Saint Mark. I contacted the President of the Kanimbla Association and asked him for information on the dedication. His response said:

"In the presence of 350 former ship's company members and relatives, the AMC/LSI service of three coastal passenger liners in WWII, was remembered on Sunday 14 November, 1999 by the dedication of a stained glass window in The Chapel of Saint Mark at HMAS Cerberus, Western Port, Victoria. The window depicts **Kanimbla**, **Manoora**, and **Westralia** in descending order, as LSIs, with the respective emblem above each ship. The window was designed, crafted and donated to the three ships' associations and HMAS Cerberus by Commodore Dacre H.D. Smith AO RAN (Rtd)."

Loorana and Sumatra

from J.Dillon

I am seeking information on the small coastal vessels **Loorana** and **Sumatra** and was it **Sumatra** that towed the Bruny Island steel vehicular ferry **Mangana** ex-**Ewan W.Alison**, from Auckland to Tasmania. (The answer is yes: Editor).

My address is PO Box 37, Cygnet, Tasmania, 7112.

NEW BOOKS

Unfinished Voyages, Western Australian Shipwrecks 1881-1900 by Lynne Cairns and Graeme Henderson; University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, WA, 6009; hardback, 383 pages, 180 by 240mm, illustrated, maps, bibliography, glossary, indexes; \$55.00.

This is the third volume in a series recording Western Australian shipwrecks; the second volume, covering the period 1851-1880, was published in 1988 (see The Log, p. 21, 1989). It is a comprehensive and high quality book, well illustrated and with notes on sources accompanying each entry.

Tropic Tide, An Adventurer's Life by Mandaley Perkins; Bantam Books; softback; 412 pages, 230 x 150 mm, illustrated, maps, index; \$25.00.

Written by his daughter, this is a biography of Victor Bruce Perkins (1913- 1992), the Darwin -based shipowner (see The Log, p. 174, 1994). Perkins led a colourful life - pre-war Singapore, prisoner of war including time on the Burma railway, post-war Malaya and the Communist insurrection, and finally Darwin from the 1950s. The story is well written and gives a good account of establishing and operating a business in the "top end". Most but not all of the Perkins ships are mentioned in the text; few vessel details are given and only two are illustrated.

Royal Australian Navy, A - Z, Ships, Aircraft and Shore Establishments by J.H. Straczek; Navy Public Affairs, Sydney, 1996; no pagination but c. 262 pages, 285 x 200mm, illustrated with profile drawings of ships and aircraft, lists of the ships' hull numbers and letters, abbreviations, sources; \$55.00.

Based largely on Australian and Naval Historical Section archives, this is a listing (from **Aaron** to **Zital**) of named craft known to have served in the RAN and colonial navies. It includes ships ordered but later cancelled, merchant ships manned by naval personnel, some vessels identified for naval service but not taken up, a number of foreign naval vessels that came under the control of the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board, and craft operated by the Services Reconnaissance Department and other obscure organisations. For each vessel basic data is given, including launching, commissioning and pay off dates, dimensions and tonnage, armament, pennant numbers, and brief remarks on employment and termination of naval service. It is, accordingly, most comprehensive and a mine of information. The inclusion of shore establishments is a useful feature. Intended names are recorded, and we find, for example, that the Battle class destroyer **Anzac** was intended to be named **Matapan** but this was changed due to RN use of the name; similarly a River class frigate intended as **Murray** became **Culgoa**. The S and T class destroyers acquired in 1920 were to have been renamed but the decision was rescinded. This book is an invaluable reference.

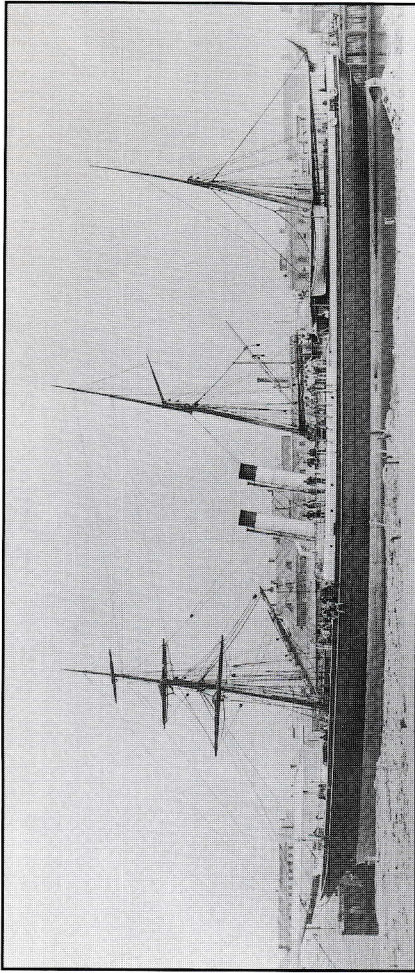
These titles may be obtained from Captain J-L Boglio, Maritime Books, P.O.Box 72, Currumbin Queensland, 4223. (phone 07 5534 9349; fax 07 5534 9949).

WGV

The Champion of the Seas; by Rod Fraser; Pilgrim Printing Services Pty Ltd, PO Box 1245, Glen Waverley, Victoria 3150; softback, 320 pages, 250 x 174 mm, illus., 47 b&w some repeated, 4 colour, index; \$38.00 incl. p&p.

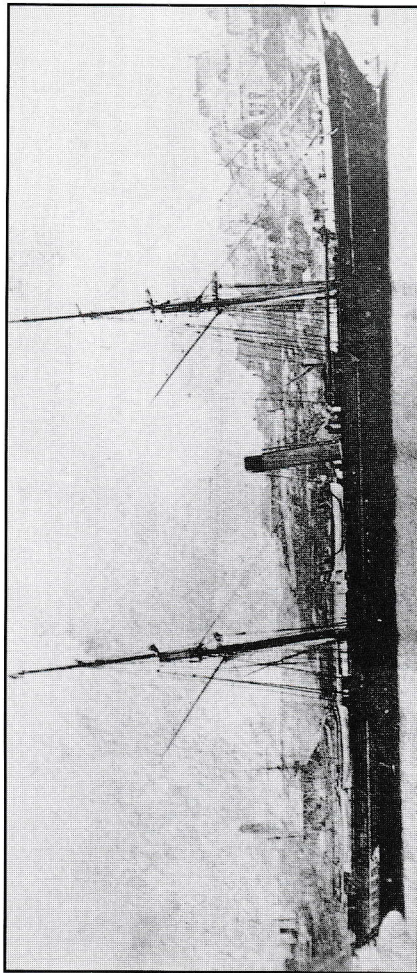
The clipper ship **Champion of the Seas** was built in 1854 by Donald McKay at East Boston for the famed Black Ball Line of Messrs James Baines and Co. of Liverpool. When completed she was the largest trading sailing ship afloat, registering 2,447 tons with a length of 252 ft bp. **Champion of the Seas** made 15 emigrant voyages from Liverpool to Melbourne between 1854 and 1868 altogether bringing some 5,300 passengers and emigrants. This is the most comprehensive account of a Black Ball Line ship produced and includes voyage details, newspaper accounts, full texts of 19 newspapers produced on board during 1854 and 1855 voyages, extracts from four passengers' journals, crew lists and log book entries and a complete list of the 5,300 passengers brought to Melbourne. Foreword by M. K. Stammers, author of *The Passage Makers*, a history of the Black Ball Line, from which the chapter on the ship's history is reproduced. A detailed insight into ocean travel on a famous clipper ship of the time.

LDR



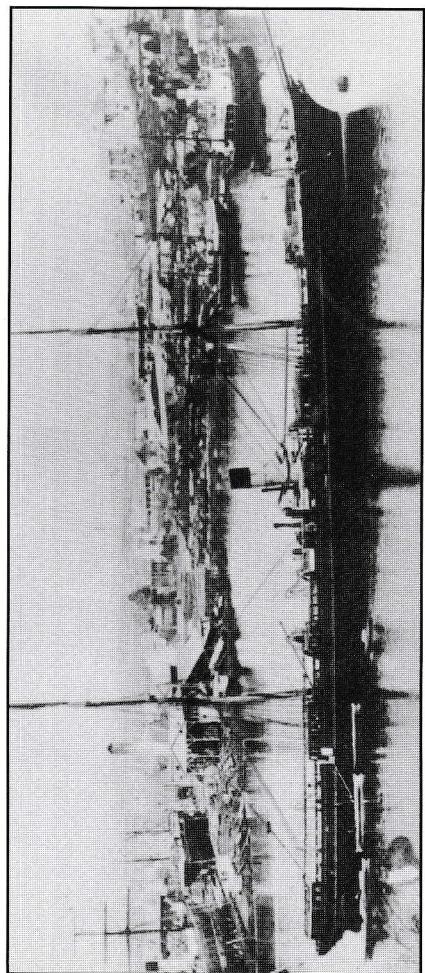
ALDINGA a consistent performer (see p. 20)

(I.J. Farquhar collection)



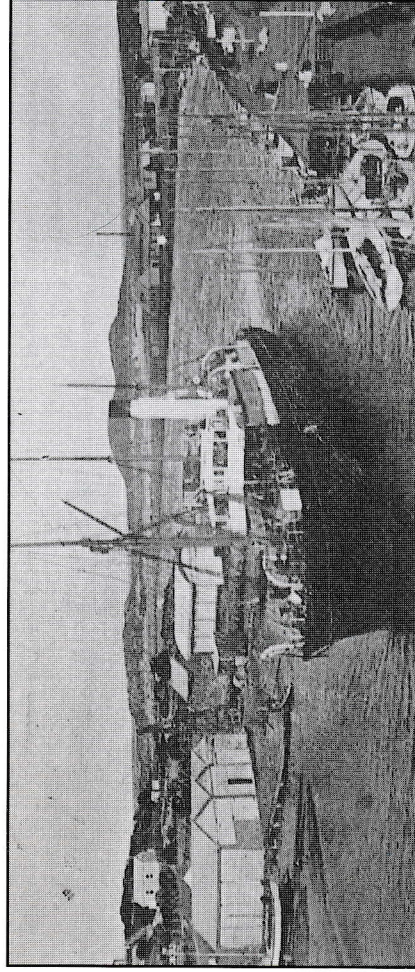
RUAHINE iron, twin-screw steamer built at Limehouse in 1865 (see p. 31)

(I.J. Farquhar collection)



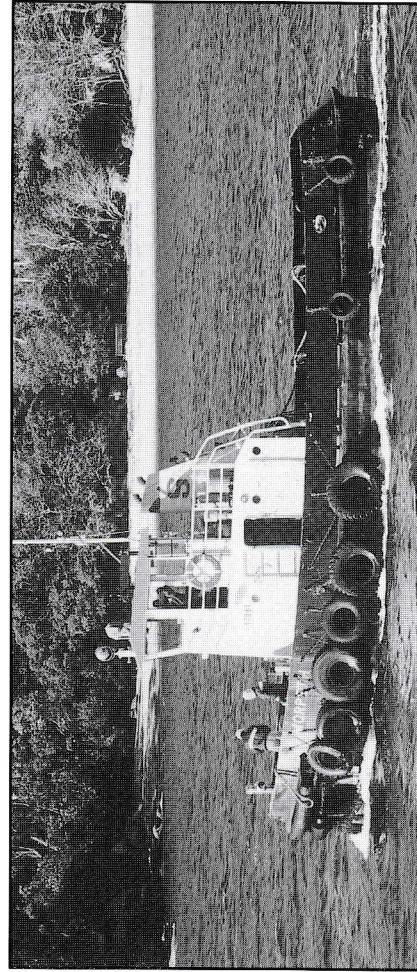
RAKAIA iron, screw brig built at Govan in 1866 (see p. 32)

(I.J. Farquhar collection)



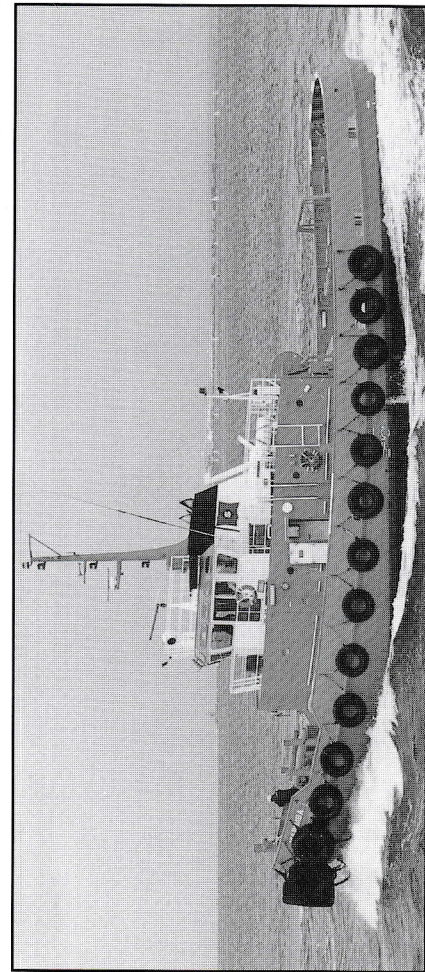
CASINO coming up the Moyne at Port Fairy in about 1905 (see p. 14)

(S.J. Evans collection)



MORPETH working on the Northside storage tunnel project (see p. 29)

(J.Y. Freeman)



MARIMBA now well over 20 years old (see p. 28)

(R.A. Priest)

THE TUG MERCHANTS' DILEMMA

from B.J. Browne

The present difficulties of Adsteam Marine and Howard Smith, faced with the financial collapse of the Oceanfast International shipyard at Henderson, WA, whilst holding contracts to build seven tugs for the companies, is much a virtual repetition of the events of October 1991 when the previous occupier of the site, Ocean Shipyards, went into receivership, causing Adsteam to take over and complete the three tugs under construction directly as Stirling Marine Constructions.

In the event, the tug with the most familiar name in Western Australian waters, **Wilga**, and registered to homeport Fremantle, went east to Sydney for Waratah Towage. The second vessel, **Turner**, first intended for South Australia as **Tarcoola**, went to Port Hedland, and the tug with a name better known on the east coast, **Wyong**, registered to homeport Sydney, stayed with Fremantle Tug Operators.

Earlier, in May 1983, their erstwhile associate Brambles Industries had incurred similar complications when Colan Shipbuilders of Port Adelaide went into receivership during construction of the rig supply/offshore tenders **Torrens Tide** and **Swan Tide** (both 1141 grt, 4040 bhp). Brambles took over and completed the vessels under the title of Torrens Shipbuilders. At the same time, they were in some dissension with the Sydney builder of the smaller **Lakes Tide** (191 grt, 900 bhp), before claiming the vessel and completing it in December 1983.

Adsteam, with the closure of their Adelaide Ship Construction in 1973 (see The Log, Vol. 18, No.4) and the need for second generation motor tugs, had gone initially to Alan Fogarty's Tamar Steel Boats of Launceston for ten newbuildings, first in 1975-76 for the Burness Corlett designed **Wangaree** and **Warringa** (both 232 grt, 2440 bhp, with twin fixed propeller nozzles and multi-rudder arrangements), and then in 1983-86 with the Barnes & Fleck designed **Warang**, **Warilla**, **Tusker**, **Wonga**, **Woona** and **Tarpan** with raised fo'c'sles, and the flush decked **Warrawee** and **Walana** (all 3600 bhp, with twin azimuthing stern-drives). **Taminga**, an identical vessel to **Tarpan**, was delivered to Adsteam by Carrington Slipways at Tomago in mid-1983, not to mention the large number of tugs, some 12 vessels, ordered by them or their partners in other ventures between 1975-1986.

With the 1991 insolvency of Carrington Slipways, who had built 20 rig supply vessels and a total of 67 tugboats in the period 1965 to 1987 amongst over 200 vessels of varied types constructed, with the last mercantile tug by this shipbuilder, **W J Trotter** (470 grt, 4800 bhp), delivered to the Adsteam/Howard Smith associated Queensland Tug & Salvage Company in June 1986, there was a need to find other shipbuilders.

A new yard at North Arm, Port River, Adelaide using the title Adelaide Ship Construction International, and of no connection to the former Adsteam subsidiary of 1957-1973, delivered **Giru** (308 grt, 3200 bhp) in 1991 that, after some travails on the east coast with machinery problems, finally reached her homeport, Townsville, on 19 November, 1991 for North Queensland Marine Towage, an Adsteam/Howard Smith affiliate. Over the next two years the yard also built **Cape Nelson** and **Cape Grant** (both 305 grt, 3000 bhp) in 1992-93 for Brambles Industries' North Western Shipping & Towage Company, for service at Portland, with all three vessels of the now obligatory azimuthing stern-drive arrangement, though with differing machinery manufacturers. Port Lincoln Ship Construction delivered **Koona** and **Karoo** (both 307 grt, 3600 bhp) to the then Adsteam/Brambles associate Wallace Tugs, Port Kembla, and **Pilbara Mars** and **Pilbara Comet** (both 370 grt, 3600 bhp) to Dampier in mid-1993. This yard was placed in receivership in December 1993, following the delivery to Port Phillip of the vehicular ferry **Queenscliff**.

The Western Australian shipbuilding industry, which owed much of its early success to a burgeoning fishing industry in the 1960s, has also built a number of tugs for commercial operators, mainly in its home state. Australian Shipbuilding Industries (later Transfield ASI, Transfield Shipbuilding WA, now Tenix Shipbuilding WA) had its beginning building fishing vessels for the founding Verboon family, first at Fremantle's fishing boat harbour, moving in 1970 to the present site at Jervoise Bay. Over 350 vessels of all shapes and sizes have been built in the period since 1968, from basic launches, ferries and at least 150 fishing vessels, to quite sophisticated craft, including the 57 metre purse-seiners **Solomon Premier** and **Solomon Chieftain** for Honiara in 1988, the cargo vessels **Roberta Juli**, **Frank Konecny** and **Gordon Reid** in 1990-91 for WA Stateships, the numerous 'Pacific Class' and similar

patrol boats for destinations in Oceania, Hong Kong and Kuwait, and the supply vessels **Lady Elizabeth**, **Shelf Supporter**, **Canning Tide** and **Shelf Challenger**.

Tugs have included **Cape Le Grand** (111/1972, 425 bhp), **Capel** (163/1976, 2245 bhp), **Challenger** (397/1980, 3200bhp), **Kungurri**, **Koumala** and **Kuttatub** (428/1983, 4200 bhp), **Tammar** (163/1984, 2560 bhp), **King Bay**, **Withnell Bay** and **Champion** (478/1985-6, 4200 bhp), **Coongan** and **Corunna** (420/1986, 3600 bhp), **Wambiri** (477/1986, 4800 bhp), and **Hearson Cove** and **Cowrie Cove** (473/1989, 4200 bhp). Of these last eight tugs, five were actually designed 'in-house' by the shipyard, and nominated as their 'Titan Class'. The most recent tug built by the yard was an export order, the Niigata Z-Peller **Tang Gang Tuo No.1** (293 grt, 2024 bhp), another 'in-house' design, completed in September 1993 for The People's Republic of China, Tangshan.

Ocean Shipyards also had a fishing industry background, and for a time were associated with Lombardo family interests. From 1969 they constructed about 45 fishing craft in total. Their involvement in the offshore gas and oil service-related fields saw a number of utility/workboats constructed and some of the fishing craft modified. Their first tug was the 1969 built **Marchart IV** (65 grt, 730 bhp), then the small workboat **Samsom II** (21/1984, 293 bhp) for Cliffs Robe River Iron Associates, Cape Lambert. For Dampier, **Pilbara Star** and **Pilbara Saturn** (372 grt, 4200 bhp) were delivered in 1985, **Beacon** and **Pelsaert** (190 grt, 2350 bhp) to P & O Australia in 1987 for Geraldton, with the similar **Yurumba** for BHP/Groote Eylandt Mining Company in 1988, these last three designed by Philip Curran of WA. Also in that same year **Mataranka** (150 grt, 1440 bhp) was delivered to Adsteam and N D Hegarty & Son to take up station at Darwin. Then came the three-tug order from Adsteam and the resulting closure.

Faced with the difficulties now apparent when building locally, what may the future hold for the local tug merchants? Will they go back to importing both new and secondhand craft from overseas sources, as was the usual practice until the late 1950s?

It is not unusual now to see Japanese and other 'foreign' built tugs in Great Britain and Europe amongst the major tug fleets. Howard Smith, with their predominant towage interests in England, have recently purchased a new Japanese built vessel **Chek Chau** (267/1998, 3600 bhp) from The Hongkong Salvage & Towage Company, to serve alongside two other Japanese built tugs acquired from J P Knight in 1991, for service on the Medway as **Lady Emma**. Since obtaining control of the North British Maritime Group of Hull in 1989 and The Alexandra Towing Ltd of Liverpool in 1992, Howard Smith (UK) have also taken delivery of eight purpose-built Voith water tractors from McTay Marine on the Mersey, and three azimuthing stern-drive vessels from Damen of Holland, so it is not inconceivable that they may look to overseas yards for future newbuildings if the price is competitive.

Adsteam have recently imported a Japanese tugboat **Titirangi** (137/1982, 2200 bhp, ex **Fukoka Maru**, ex **Kyoto Maru No.2**) to service a contract at Gisborne, NZ. Previous to this, three other Japanese built tugs have been imported into New Zealand. One, **Purau** (246/1986, 3000 bhp), was a new construction of Australian design by M J Doherty, that stranded north of New Caledonia on her delivery voyage and had to be towed back to Nagasaki for repairs, finally arriving at Lyttelton in January 1987.

When, in August 1993, BHP Transport and Port Waratah Coal Services obtained an option on a non-exclusive towage licence for the Port of Newcastle, they had no choice but to look overseas if they were to quickly commence operations. Three brand new Voith water tractors, lying idle at Malta, were obtained and arrived at the port on 23 January 1994. These vessels had been built to the order of Ferrostaal A G of Essen, acting on behalf of The Government of The Republic of Iraq (Ministry of Oil State Company for Oil Projects SCOP), for operation at the proposed Iraqi owned berth at the Yanbu terminal. When completed in July 1990 by Scheepswerf K Damen of Hardinxveld-Giessendam, they were in the livery of The Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, registered at Jeddah. However the Gulf War put paid to this endeavour, and on their delivery voyage from Rotterdam they remained at Malta until acquired by Hunter Towage Services to become **Carrington**, **Mayfield** and **Wickham** (all 496 grt, 4800 bhp). Shortly after commencing operations it was realised that a fourth tug was necessary, and a 1974 built Voith tractor **PSA Victory** was obtained in Singapore, much modified to a contemporary design by Barnes & Fleck, that arrived at Newcastle in November 1994 as **Ballina** (290 grt, 2900 bhp).

Another unusual occurrence was caused by the stranding on 27 January 1990, in cyclonic conditions at Cape Lambert, of the Carrington Slipways built **Wickham** (313/1972, 3200 bhp). Refloated and

declared a constructive total loss, the tug **Tai O** (411/1986, 4000 bhp) was chartered from The Hongkong Salvage & Towage Company as a replacement until a newbuilding could be obtained. **Tai O** had previously been at Cape Lambert in 4-5/1989 for the scheduled docking trips to Darwin of **Wickham** and sister **Roebourne**. Hongkong Salvage & Towage were also contracted to provide project management for the construction and delivery of replacement vessels. Subsequently, in June 1991 the Niigata Z-Peller **Pannawonica II** (453 grt, 4800 bhp) arrived, followed in August 1991 by the identical **Lambert**, both built by Matsuura Tekko Zosen of Higashino, Japan. These tugs were close sisters, but without the elaborate deck equipment and fire-fighting gear of **Yam O**, that had been delivered to Hongkong Salvage & Towage in March 1991.

Three other tugs imported into Australia, though not normally utilised in port ship towage, are interesting vessels. The first, **Total Endeavour** (496/1995, 4000 bhp) of Total Marine Services, was purpose-built in Singapore by Jaya Shipbuilding from a design by Kerton Marine, to support the offshore tanker loading facilities near Thevenard and Barrow Islands in the North-West. Another Singaporean construction, **C R Campbell** (80/1977, 730 bhp), is a lighterage tug on the Brisbane River. Built by Sing Koon Seng at Jurong to a Conan Wu design as **Jaffer VIII** for Mohamed & Hussain Jaffer Naseeb, the tug was employed at Kuwait until purchased in early 1991 by The Riverside Coal Transport Company.

Another Queensland import is **Ascension** (178/1970, 2000 bhp) that was built at Onoda, Japan as **Hakuyo Maru No. 7** for Fukada Salvage K K, Osaka. Sold in 1973 to the Far East Towage Company (Facility & Finance Investments Ltd), Panama, and renamed **Far East No. 1**, it was used in Hong Kong alongside two other tugs, **Howa** and **Kowa**, of Oyama Kaiun K K of Osaka, in opposition to The Hongkong Salvage & Towage Company, and, by repute, beneficially owned by a group of Hong Kong harbour pilots. When A P Moller/Maersk took over the operation in 1976 following the financial collapse of Oyama, **Far East No. 1** was sold to The Government of the Republic of the Seychelles, renamed **Ascension**, and employed at Port Victoria. Acquired in 1994 by F J Markert (East Coast Fuel Distributors), it arrived at Cairns on 18 December 1994 with a tow, **Marlo** (299/1971).

Recently the Brambles Industries group's North Western Shipping & Towage have imported two secondhand tugs from South Korea. Both azimuthing stern-drive tugs of differing manufacture and equipment, they were acquired from the Sun Hwa Company and towed from Incheon to Hobart by a well travelled **Ocean Star** (437/1977), arriving on 12 June 1998. One, now **Risdon Cove** (127/1993, 2200 bhp), was Korean built as **Expo**, the other, **York Cove** (134/1990, 2200 bhp), Japanese built as **Hokuyo Maru No. 2**, and went to Sun Hwa in 1997 as their **Seven Star**.

In the principal Australian ports, many of the tugs are now well over twenty years of age. In Melbourne and Geelong, for example, the 29 metre tugs **Yarra**, **Edina**, **Macedon** and **Marimba** (all 2440 bhp, with independent steering nozzles) were delivered during the years 1974-78. In Sydney the similar **Wooree** was delivered in 1976, and the original azimuthing stern-drive Duckpeller **Wolli** has been in continuous service at the port since December 1970, so it is not improbable that after the Oceantast hiatus is resolved a continuing replacement programme is initiated.

Local shipbuilding has changed considerably in recent years, unrecognisable from the industry of the 1980s. With a static domestic scene and few orders from traditional sources, the newer and currently very successful yards such as Incat Australia, Austal Ships, WaveMaster International, and SBF Shipbuilders have developed strongly within niche markets, usually building large alloy-hulled fast ferries of innovative designs for international customers, and helped by the relatively weak Australian dollar giving a marked sales advantage. Apart from these specialised shipbuilders, defence contractors have played a substantive part in the continuing viability of the other yards, and the two longest survivors have been able to obtain regular orders from government sources, intermixed with mercantile work.

The longest existing yard, NQEA Australia at Cairns, with beginnings in general engineering and the sugar industry, commenced shipbuilding in the mid-1960s with a landing-craft order for the Australian Army, in the 1970s with 22 alloy-hulled workboats for the Navy and Army, in 1981-84 with fourteen 'Fremantle Class' patrol boats, and more recently the two 70 metre hydrographic ships **Leeuwin** and **Melville**. Since the early 1980s numerous fast ferries have been delivered, including hovercraft and catamarans for local and overseas clients, a range of nine fast ferries for Sydney, and many Philip Herculincat designs for Barrier Reef operators. Recent deliveries to Denmark and French Polynesia have been recorded, and six vessels currently under construction are for Dutch operators, in an

association with Damen. Only a few tugs have been delivered, first **Gulf Investigator** (89/1969, 718 bhp), then **Barrier Cove** and **Reef Cove** (both 209/1971, 2000 bhp), and **Shell Cove** (352/1986, 3600 bhp) as the ultimate Fenwick tug. Currently holding an order to design and construct an 84 metre trailing suction hopper dredge for the Brisbane Port Corporation, NQEA also produced the only substantial cargo carrier of recent times, the 80 metre self-discharging ore carrier **Aburri** (2700 grt), delivered in July 1995.

At Jervoise Bay Tenix Shipbuilding WA have built a strong framework in repair and maintenance, supported by an 8000 tonne ship-lift platform. Current construction includes two 56 metre coastguard vessels for the Philippines, and recent deliveries have included **Sealion 2000**, a passenger and vehicle carrying catamaran for the Kangaroo Island ferry service across Backstairs Passage, and the modified 'Pacific Class' patrol boat **Seahorse Mercator** for Defence Maritime Services. Mercantile manned, this vessel is based at HMAS Waterhen in Sydney as an unarmed navigation training vessel.

The former Carrington Slipways yard at Tomago, owned since 1997 by Forgacs Engineering and now known as Forgacs Shipbuilding, has been idle since the delivery of modules for 'Vessel 6' of the Anzac ship project as sub-contractors to Tenix, Williamstown. After the failure of Carrington Slipways the yard was acquired by the Australian Submarine Corporation to build hull modules for the 'Collins Class' submarines. Now in the final stages of a major repair and conversion programme on the naval vessels **Manoora** and **Kanimbla** at their Carrington location in Newcastle Harbour, Forgacs have signalled their intention to obtain new-building contracts for Tomago, which may see a return to ship construction on this 55 acre site.

NORTHSIDE STORAGE TUNNEL PROJECT-MARITIME OPERATIONS

(continued from page 176, 1999)

from J.Y.Freeman

Details of Vessels

Tugs	grt/built	loa	Owner
1 Harrietta	99/1985	24.5	Stirling Marine Services, Fremantle.
2 Levanter	62.5/1975	16.61	Charter Craft and Marine Services, Eden.
3 Lismore	52/1983	15.6	Stannard Bros. Launch Services Pty Ltd.
4 Morpeth	65/1982	15.8	" " " "
5 Ocean Kilo	59/1998	18.0	Intone Pty Ltd- subsidiary of Labroy Marine, Singapore.
6 Ocean Lima	59/1998	18.0	" " " "
7 Venture Tug 1	59/1998	18.0	" " " "
8 Marrakai (workboat)	23.4/1972	12.4	Stannard Bros. Launch Services Pty Ltd.

Tugs 5, 6, and 7 were built by P.T. Nanindah Mutiara Shipyard, Batam, Indonesia.

Barges

Labroy 119 The first six barges were built by P.T. Nanindah Mutiara Shipyard, Batam, Indonesia during **Labroy 121** 1995/6 and have common dimensions ie: loa 52.67 m x 17m beam x 3.66 m moulded depth. **Labroy 137** Grt is 867 and dwt is 2,660 although for stability reasons with this cargo, loading is **Labroy 138** restricted to 2,000 tonnes. The owner is Elstrade Pte Ltd- a subsidiary of Labroy Marine, **Labroy 146** Singapore. **Labroy 147** **FT 4** 1,050 dwt, loa 40.85 m x 13.67 beam x 3.20 moulded depth. Owner is Curtain Bros, Townsville.

OVERLAND VIA PANAMA

THE PANAMA, NEW ZEALAND AND AUSTRALIAN ROYAL MAIL STEAM PACKET COMPANY

from D. Finch

The Panama, New Zealand and Australian Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, 'The Panama Line', operated a short-lived TransPacific mail service. The company was formed to operate a through mail service between Sydney and Southampton using the company's own ships on the Pacific leg of the journey and connecting with ships of The Royal Mail Steam Packet Company (The RMSP) at Colon by way of the Panama Railroad. This railway followed very closely the route of the canal which became operational some forty years later. Before proceeding it is necessary to look briefly at the Trans Tasman services which the company also ran during the period 1864 to 1868.

TransTasman Services

The Inter Colonial Royal Mail Company had been operating services across the Tasman between Australia and New Zealand since about 1858 until the run was taken over by the Panama Company in October 1864. The mail contract called for two sailings per month, departing Sydney on or about the 15th of each month, the actual date depending upon the arrival of the mail steamer from England, one ship going to Auckland and North Island ports and the other to Wellington and the South Island. From the middle of 1865 following the discovery of gold in the South Island additional sailings were made to Hokitika to capitalise on the demand for passages which resulted. The North Island sailings ceased at the end of 1867 and the last departure for Wellington was **Egmont** on 16 November, 1868. This marked the end for the 'Panama Line'.

The ships employed on the TransTasman service were:

	First Voyage	Last Voyage	First Voyage	Last Voyage
Auckland (698/63)	1864 Oct.	1868 Oct.	Tararua (692/64)	1865 April
Prince Alfred (682/54)	Nov.	1866 June	Rangitoto (574/65)	May
Otago (645/63)	Nov.	July	Lord Ashley (435/57)	June
Egmont (570/64)	Dec.	1868 Nov.	Phoebe (613/57)	August
Claud Hamilton (668/62)	Dec.	March	Airedale (362/57)	August
				Feb.

1866 - The Ships Arrive

The first advertisement for the new TransPacific service appeared on 21 April, 1866. The steamship **Kaikoura** would depart Sydney on 1 June and maintain the following schedule: Sydney dep. 1 June, Wellington arr. 7 June and dep. 8. Panama arr. 5 July. Tranship passengers to Royal Mail Company's steamer. Southampton arr. 29 July (about)

Kaikoura arrived in Sydney on 12 May from London via Plymouth 8 March. The outward voyage was not without incident as two of the three blades of the propeller were lost, the first on 30 March in the vicinity of St. Helena and the second four days later. She arrived Melbourne 7 May.

"Arrival the S.S. **Kaikoura**

The **Kaikoura**, the first of the ocean line of steamers in these waters of the Panama, New Zealand, and Australian Royal Mail Company, which was telegraphed off the Otway on Saturday afternoon, at half-past 4 o'clock, came up the bay yesterday, and anchored off the Sandridge Railway Pier shortly before 1 p.m. The **Kaikoura**, although by no means pretentious in appearance, is a fine vessel of beautiful lines and brig rigged. The registered tonnage of this smart steamer is 1501 tons; and her engines are of 300 horse-power nominal. She carries 1200 tons of coal, and can steam thirteen knots easily on a consumption of twenty-eight tons per day. Her cylinders are eighty inches, with a three feet six inch stroke. On her trial trip she steamed thirteen knots and a half per hour (sic) with her expansion valves opened. She is also built in watertight compartments, and has proved herself a remarkably rapid vessel, under steam or canvas. Her saloon accommodation is of a first-class

order, and aims at a judicious combination of comfort and economy. In providing for upwards of 100 saloon and 40-second class passengers. She has a spacious spar-deck, which forms a splendid promenade. Her pantry is fitted up with a due regard to creature comforts, and contains a steam hot chest, steam boiler, and a steam tea and coffee percolator for the use of the saloon. Below there is a capacious ice-house, capable of containing sufficient ice for the entire voyage from Wellington to Panama, and from the Isthmus to these colonies. Her providore arrangements are spoken of as being complete, and the saloon table is alleged to be equal to that of any first-class hotel in London. On deck the **Kaikoura** is supplied with all the latest and most efficient improvements in the shape of steam winches. She has also a steam capstan for lifting the anchor, and carries patent reefing topsails. She has a top gallant forecastle for the housing of the crew." (S.M.H. 10/ 5/66)

On 26 May a revised timetable Fares were quoted as: was announced:

Sydney	dep.	15 June	Sydney to Southampton	£ 95 to £105 - saloon,	£65 second cabin
Wellington	dep.	24	Sydney to Panama	£55 to £ 60 - saloon,	£35 second cabin
Panama	arr.	21 July	Colon to New York	£15 saloon,	£10 second cabin.
Colon	dep.	23			
Southampton	arr.	14 Aug.			

Kaikoura actually departed Sydney as advertised on 15 June, 1866 providing the first trans-Pacific mail service preceding Pacific Mail's inaugural North America to the Orient voyage by almost six months. On board were six saloon and seven second-cabin passengers for Wellington and eighteen saloon and seven-second cabin for Panama. Cargo amounted to three packages for Wellington and eleven for Panama.

The second ship to arrive in Sydney was **Ruahine** on 18 June.

"Arrival of the S.S. **Ruahine**

The Panama, New Zealand, and Australian Royal Mail Company's screw steamship **Ruahine**, which was telegraphed off Cape Otway on Monday afternoon about 4 o'clock, arrived at the heads the same evening at 11, where she anchored for the night, and came up the bay yesterday morning. The **Ruahine** is the second of the line of ocean steamers intended to perform the Transpacific mail service between Wellington, N.Z., and Panama, and her arrival in anticipation of the April mails from Europe has been eagerly expected. This magnificent steamer, like her forerunner the **Kaikoura**, is brig rigged, and is a handsome specimen of vessels of her class. She has a sharp entrance, and a fine clear run fore and aft, and her passenger accommodation is something extensive, her maindeck berths being fitted up for seventy first-class passengers, forty second-class, and seventy third-class. Her saloon, seventy-seven feet in length, is luxuriously furnished, and is fitted up with a piano, library, and plunge and shower baths, and contains almost every comfort and convenience for voyagers by the Panama route. The **Ruahine** is registered at 1,610 tons, and her load displacement is stated to be 2440 tons, her coal bunkers carrying 1200 tons of fuel, an amount in excess of her requirements, even with full steam during the entire voyage. The steamer is propelled by twin screws, which can be driven together or separately, according as the vessel may have the wind, and the motive power is supplied by two pairs of engines, of the combined nominal horse-power of 400. The engines have two pairs of annular cylinders, with a two-foot stroke, and drive two three-bladed screws, having a diameter of ten feet and a half, and a pitch of 18 feet 6 inches. By working the screws separately the vessel can be turned round as if on a pivot. The boilers are heated by ten furnaces, and are fitted with Davison's (sic) patent surface condensers. The engines are made by the builders of the steamer, Messrs. J and W. Dudgeon, of Millwall. The **Ruahine** left London on April 6th, and called at Plymouth, leaving that port on the 8th..... Her commander, Captain T.S. Beal, is of some eminence in his profession, having commanded the **Queen of the South**, the **Harbinger**, the **Hellespont**, and other large steam vessels. At the termination of the voyage highly laudatory addresses were presented to Captain Beal and his officers by the passengers. The new screw for the P. and N.Z. Company's steamer **Kaikoura** has been brought out by the Company's steamer **Ruahine**, and will be forwarded to Wellington with all possible dispatch. - Argus, 13 June." (Sydney Mail 23/ 6/66)

The Orient liner **Ophir** (6814/91) has been generally accepted as being the first twin-screw mail steamer to serve Australia yet **Ruahine** preceded her into Sydney by over 25 years. Whether she was the first ocean-going steamer with twin screws remains a matter of some conjecture.

Upon arrival at Panama passengers would travel overland by the newly completed Panama Railroad to connect with the RMSP mail steamer at Colon.

The Panama to Sydney service was opened by **Rakaia** on 24 June and when she arrived in Sydney on 1 August she was the third of the new ships to appear.

"The **Rakaia** (s.s.). This beautiful ship, the third belonging to the Panama and New Zealand Company, arrived yesterday morning, at 9 o'clock, bringing the English mails of June 2nd. She sailed from Panama on the 24th of June, and arrived at Wellington on 22nd of July, the voyage being accomplished in twenty-eight days, during the first twelve of which she encountered fair weather; but after passing Pitcairn's Island a series of heavy gales were encountered, which caused the slight delay in her passage from Panama. The **Rakaia** left Milford Haven on the 21st of June, (sic) and called at St. Vincent and Rio Janiero (sic) for coaling purposes. She passed through the Straits of Magellan, and arrived at Panama on the 17th of June. The arrival of this pioneer steamer at Panama was greeted in the most enthusiastic manner. The passage from England to Panama was stormy in the extreme. A heavy pampero was encountered off the Rio de la Plate, obliging Captain Wright to heave-to his ship for forty-eight hours; and in the Straits of Magellan the weather was so severe that the vessel was anchored in Borgia Bay for twenty-four hours. The distance from England to Panama has been accomplished by this splendid steamer in forty-six actual steaming days, and the total distance of over 19000 miles has been run in less than three months, including seventeen days' stoppage. At Wellington the ship was received with a perfect ovation. She left on the 25th ultimo, and has met with very heavy gales at W. and S.W.; but for which, and the fact of having run short of coal, owing to the loss of four of the company's colliers, and consequent short supply at Wellington, she would have been here on the 29th ultimo. She was within 300 miles of this port on the 30th ultimo, proving under ordinary circumstances how easily the service can be performed; and be it remembered that this, the first ship, has had to labour under disadvantages that will not occur again; - hurried to sea from England; arrived at Panama; dispatched thence without any rest, or time to make the few repairs or adjustments that are so essential after so long a voyage, and the passage completed, to the satisfaction of all on board. At Wellington she is again dispatched with a short supply of coal. The **Rakaia** is a brig-rigged vessel of 1500 tons, 265 feet in length, 32 feet beam, and 28 feet depth of hold, and was built at Glasgow, by Messrs. Randolph, Elder & Co.; her internal arrangements are a counterpart of the **Kaikoura** and **Ruahine**, but the saloon displays a far higher style and finish, the ornamentation being elaborate in the extreme, and affords accommodation for 140 first-class passengers, the cabins, it is needless to say, being fitted with every conceivable appliance that can in any way conduce to the comfort of those on board. The engines are by the same firm as the ship, and bear the reputation of being the finest set yet turned out. They are patent compound geared engines of 350 horse-power, nominal working up to 1500 indicated. The two smaller engines are high pressure, with 43-inch cylinders. These first use the steam, it then expands into the compressure cylinders of 79 inches diameter, and having a 4-feet 3-inch stroke, this combined power is given off on a drum fitted with internal gearing, causing the 4-bladed propeller, which is 15 feet in diameter, with a 17 feet pitch, to revolve 2 1/2 times for every stroke of the engines. The engines are supplied with superheaters and surface condensers, patented by Messrs. Davidson (sic). Steam is generated in two cylindrical tubular boilers, 13 feet in diameter, and 16 feet in length. This noble ship is commanded by Captain S.H. Wright, late of the **Calcutta** (s.s.)" (S.M.H. 2/ 8/66)

(Note: In the early days of steam each cylinder was referred to as an "engine", therefore a vessel with compound machinery or with two cylinders of equal diameter would be described as having two engines.)

With 23 passengers, 15 cases, 1 box and 1000 sovereigns **Rakaia** departed Sydney on 2 September and thereby inaugurated the regular departures at the beginning of each month, a timetable that would be adhered to without a deviation of more than one day for the duration of the service.

Kaikoura took the October sailing and **Ruahine** the November whilst on 5 October the steamer **Prince Alfred**, which had been engaged on the InterColonial service since 1864, departed for Panama but "under sail only" with 650 tons coal and one case clothing.

Mataura arrived Sydney on 6 November after a most protracted voyage from London and was advertised to sail for Panama on 1 December. She left London on 23 July and on 4 September the driving wheel was seriously damaged. She arrived Cape Town on the 15th after spending ten days under sail alone while the engineers worked on the damaged machinery. Repairs to the engines kept her at Cape Town until the 23rd but after only three days at sea a further breakdown disabled the machinery for another three days. When nearing the Australian coast on 21 October the engines again broke down resulting in the ship being under sail only for yet another four days.

"The s.s. **Mataura** - The arrival of this fine steamer has completed the line of vessels intended by the Panama and New Zealand Co. to run the mail between this port and Panama, and although her passage from England has not been as rapid as the steamers preceding her; she is, nevertheless, equally as fine a ship.

The proportions of the **Mataura** exceed in every respect those of the company's steamers which have yet been in this port, and her lines, although equally fine and symmetrical as those of her predecessors, the **Kaikoura** and the **Ruahine**, are more suggestive of strength than fleetness. Like them, she is brig-rigged, and fitted up with steam winches and all the latest mechanical improvements. Her length overall is 305 feet, and between perpendiculars 285 feet, her beam being thirty-five and a half feet, with a depth of hold of twenty-seven feet. Her builders are the Millwall Ironworks Shipbuilding Company, and it is but justice to state that they have succeeded in launching a first-class vessel, and have been unsparing in their attention to useful details. Her saloon is a noble apartment, fitted up in superb style, and when lit up at night is almost Oriental in its appearance. There is a well stored library, a piano, plunge and shower baths, and accommodation for 130 first-class passengers, and in the second cabin there is accommodation for 75 passengers. There is a washing and drying machine on board, and the pantry is supplied with a steam hot chest, steam boiler, steam percolator for tea and coffee, and various other arrangements conducive to the comfort of passengers. Her engines are by the same builders as the ship, and consist of three inverted cylinders 70 inches in diameter, with three feet length of stroke, and are nominally of 450 horse-power but will work up to 2300, driving the ship at a speed of 13 1/2 knots; she has surface condensers with 1410 tubes in each, the consumption of fuel being 36 tons per twenty-four hours, and in fact all the most recent improvements have been supplied. Nor must we forget to mention that the comfort of the passengers, and the various arrangements connected therewith have been entrusted to Mr. Owen, the purser, a gentleman whose long experience has justly fitted him to take the office. Her commander, Captain George E. Bird, who has acquired no mean reputation in his profession, having commanded the screw steamship **Golden Fleece**, and also the company's steamer **Ruahine**, on the West India station, is highly spoken of, and, together with his officers, was complimented at the pleasant termination of the passage." (S.M.H. 7/11/66)

The trans-Pacific fleet was now complete but on 23 November it was announced that the December sailing would be by **Tararua** departing on the 2nd and connecting with **Rakaia** at Wellington, **Mataura** being in the hands of M'Arthur & Co. for a continuation of repairs to the machinery.

1867 - 1868

The service now settled down to one which, considering the distances involved and the comparatively recent development of oceanic steam navigation, can only be described as extraordinarily reliable. With the exception of February, when the sailing was brought forward two days to 30 January to compensate for the shorter month, all 22 sailings from Sydney during these two years were on either the first or second day of each month. Arrivals were almost equally as reliable and varied between the 24th ultimo and 4th instant with the sole exception of **Mataura** in April 1867 (see below).

The final sailings as the service was being wound down were:

	From Sydney	From Panama
Mataura	1868 2 Sept.	1868 22 Oct.
Kaikoura	2 Oct.	23 Nov.
Ruahine	2 Nov	27 Dec
Rakaia	2 Dec	1869 25 Jan.

The Ocean Passages

As a generalisation it would seem fair to say that there was little drama at sea during the two years in which the service operated.

Ruahine, voyage 2 northbound, on 10 November, 1866 when in the vicinity of Chatham Island passed an abandoned schooner or brig, masts and bowsprit missing. On her second southbound voyage (arrived Sydney 31 December, 1866) **Kaikoura** called at Rapa and took soundings to evaluate the island as a possible intermediate coaling station.

"Coaling Station for P.N.Z. and A. Co's Steamers

London papers have the following in relation to a new coaling station in the Pacific:- It appears that the Panama, New Zealand, and Australian Royal Mail Company have decided to have a reserve coaling station at one of the islands in the Pacific, in case of any of the steamers performing the mail service between Panama and Wellington and Sydney running short of fuel from stress of weather or any other cause. The island selected is called Oparu, or Rapa, and is in the direct course of the mail vessels. It has been ascertained from reliable sources that it possesses one of the finest harbours in the world, and the population consists of about 500 friendly natives. The Company's vessels having made ten successful voyages across the Pacific without touching at any port whatever to coal after leaving Panama and Wellington, there will, under ordinary circumstances, be no necessity for the steamers to call at Oparu. Should it be decided eventually to connect Tahiti with this service, it could be arranged for them to touch at Oparu every voyage for that purpose, and the mails for Tahiti could be forwarded to the latter island by a branch vessel from the former. In this way it is believed a large trade would be opened up with the various islands in the centre of the Pacific. Panama Star, March 25th. (S.M.H. 2/5/67)

Rapa is a mere dot in the vastness of the Pacific, 2080 miles from Wellington and 4365 miles from Panama. In terms of familiar locations it is : 690 miles SSE of Tahiti; 460 miles SW of Mururoa; 830 miles WSW of Pitcairn. Rapa was discovered by Captain George Vancouver in HMS **Discovery** in 1791. It is the tip of a long extinct volcano the crater of which now forms the harbour of Ahurei. The island has a circumference of a little over 20 miles and is very mountainous, Perahu topping 2000 feet.

Mataura arrived Sydney, 18 April, 1867, over two weeks late. She had been held up three days at Panama awaiting the RMSP Mail steamer from England. To add to the problem the poor quality coal taken on board at Panama caused her to run short and necessitate reliance on sail for part of the passage.

Ruahine arrived Sydney, 1 June, 1867 lost a boat overboard in heavy weather, whilst the next steamer, **Rakaia**, one month later reported jibboom, topgallant masts and several sails lost in a gale off New Zealand.

Kaikoura arrived Sydney, 4 September, 1867, delayed through accident on the Colon - Panama Railroad and a passage of seven days Wellington to Sydney through adverse weather.

The next southbound steamer, **Ruahine**, was the first to call at Rapa for bunkers from the barque **Midas**. Since the visit by **Kaikoura** the island had been occupied by the French. Most subsequent southbound voyages included a bunkering call at the island.

"The **Rakaia** brought from Oparo (sic) one of the natives who wished to visit Sydney, a powerful athletic man, who made himself very useful, and became a great favourite amongst the crew; the man had been reading his bible (in native language) and was observed to be in a melancholy state of mind during the afternoon of the 24th instant.; at 11 o'clock p.m., he was seen to take a lighted lamp away, which soon after fell on deck, and after a lapse of a few seconds one of the watch went to pick it up, and see what had happened (to) the native, when he could not be found. Search was made, and after ten minutes, not finding him, the ship was put round and steered on the opposite course for the lapse of time the man had been in the water, viz., ten minutes, when the engines were

stopped and then immediately the man's voice was heard, a boat was lowered and pulled in the direction of the voice, but instead of trying to save himself he evaded the boat by diving underneath it; at last he was secured and has been left at Wellington, to be sent back in the **Ruahine**. (S.M.H. 4/11/67)

Ruahine, arrived Sydney 1 June, 1868, spent 32 hours at Rapa taking in more than the usual quantity of coal from the barque **Esk** which had recently arrived. On her last southbound voyage **Mataura** lost two seamen overboard between Panama and Wellington. The next steamer, **Kaikoura**, with 19 passengers from Panama and ten from Wellington was placed in quarantine with smallpox on board.

Patronage

The main problem encountered by the Line was the lack of trade to support the service, apart from the mails and on certain sailings quantities of bullion. On the thirty voyages undertaken the ships departed Sydney with an average of about thirty passengers whilst inward the number was about the same.

When **Kaikoura** arrived in Sydney 1 May, 1867 she carried 420 bags coffee from Costa Rica which reports at the time described as the first of what was hoped would be a continuing and expanding business. This does not appear to have materialised and although imports exceeded exports by a ratio of about two to one there was insufficient cargo in either direction to justify the continuation of the service.

The End of the Line

The four ships were now returned to England, the first to leave being **Mataura** on 15 January, 1869 for London via Wellington and Rio de Janeiro. On departure she carried 56 passengers and 1700 packages of cargo. Next to leave was **Ruahine** on 22 March for London by the same route. From Sydney 69 passengers was increased to 140 upon departure from Wellington. The two remaining ships, **Rakaia** and **Kaikoura**, were both dispatched under sail only on 20 April and 23 May respectively.

Disposal of Ships

The fate of **Mataura** is not clear. Upon arrival in England she appears to have been renamed **Babel** at some stage before being 'sold foreign' in the early 1870s. Further details wanted.

The other three went to the RMSP Company which appeared to have a financial interest in them. According to the Central Record, World Ship Society, all three were re-engined with compound machinery by Day, Summers & Co., Southampton in 1872 and renamed **Tiber** (ex **Kaikoura**), **Ebro** (ex **Rakaia**) and **Liffey** (ex **Ruahine**).

Tiber was wrecked 10 February, 1882 at Porto Plata, Haiti, **Liffey** was also wrecked 22 August, 1874 27 miles west of Santa Maria, Uruguay on passage Southampton to Montevideo. **Ebro** was sold foreign after some years in the RMSP fleet.

I should like to acknowledge the contributions from Ian Farquhar of Dunedin and Captain Iain Stevenson of Brisbane in the preparation of this article.

Details of Ships:

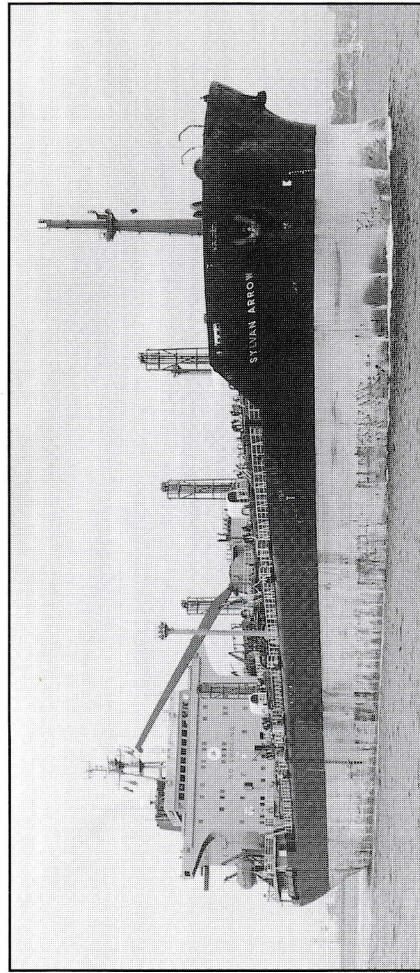
Kaikoura - iron screw brig; 1,501G; built Charles Lungley & Co., Deptford 2/1866; 272.4 x 34.1 x 17.0 feet; port of registry London; machinery simple.

Mataura - iron screw brig; 1,786G; built Millwall Shipbuilding & Graving Dock Co., Millwall, 7/1866; 302.3 x 35.7 x 18.4 feet; port of registry London; machinery simple.

Rakaia - iron screw brig; 1,456G; built Randolph Elder & Co., Govan 4/1866; 273.0 x 34.1 x 18.3 feet; port of registry London; machinery compound.

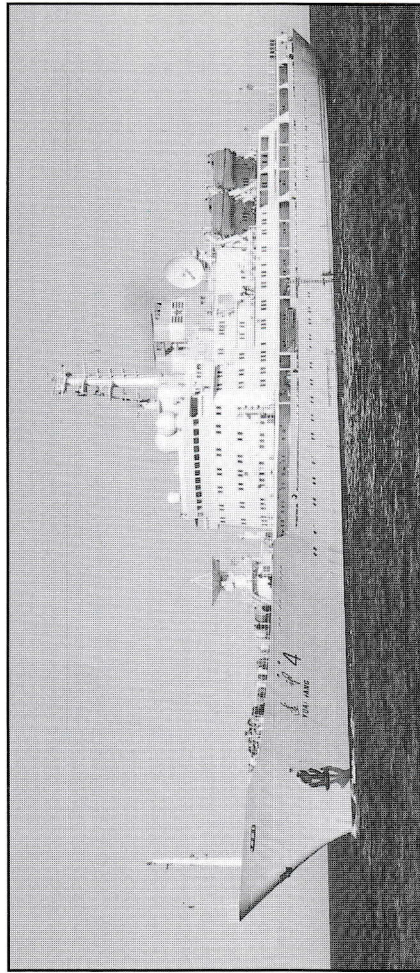
Ruahine - iron twin screw steamer; 1,503G; built J.W. Dudgeon, Limehouse 8/1865; 288.1 x 34.0 x 17.5 feet; port of registry London; machinery simple.

(Ship details from *Australasian Shipping Record* (AMHS) Jan/Feb. 1977).



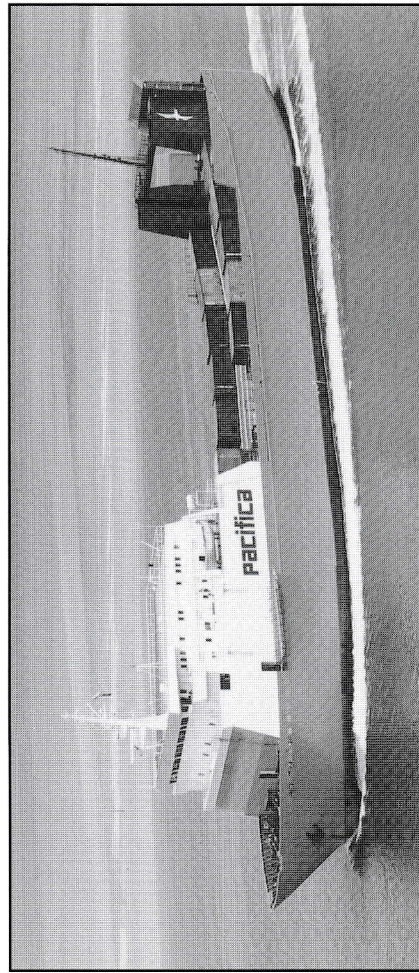
SYLVAN ARROW discharged oil off the coast (see p. 45)

(I. Lawson)



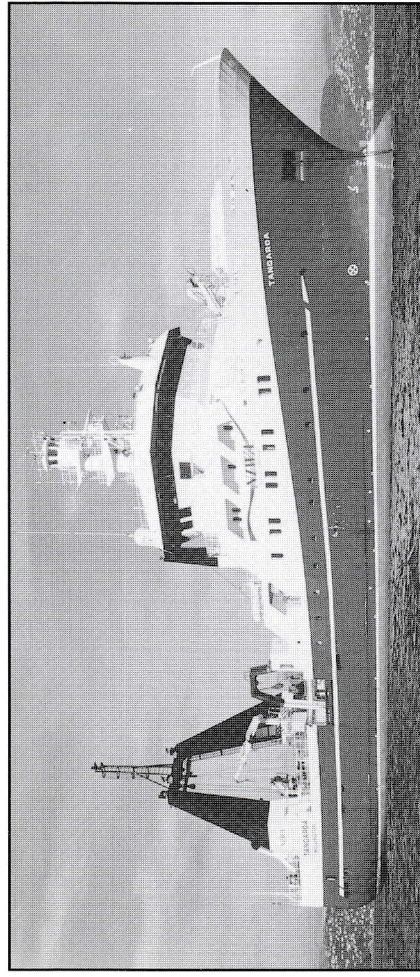
YUAN WANG 4 Chinese satellite-tracking vessel visited Fremantle (see p. 40)

(C. Gee)



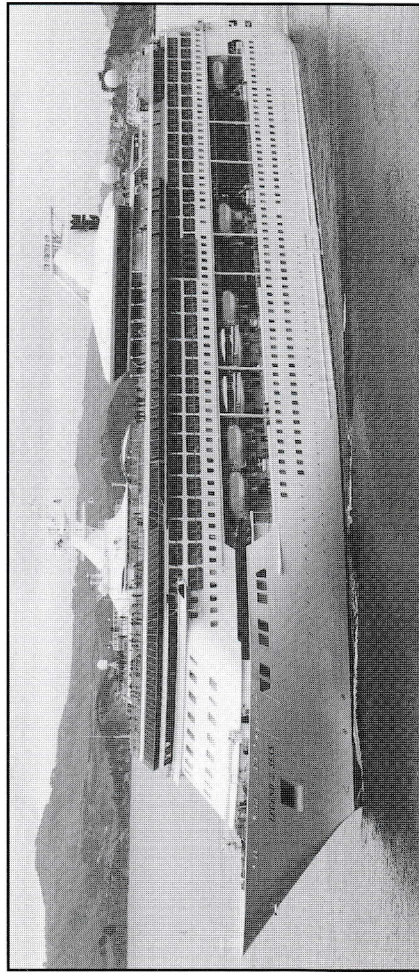
SPIRIT OF FREEDOM introduced new New Zealand service (see p. 39)

(I.J. Farquhar)



TANGAROA to work south of Tasmania (see p. 39)

(V.H. Young)



LEGEND OF THE SEAS first to welcome the new millennium (see p. 40)

(I.J. Farquhar)



MSC NEW ZEALAND dedicated trans-Tasman trader (see p. 38)

(R.A. Priest)

MARITIME MISCELLANY

Closing date for the next issue is 5 May, 2000. Please forward all contributions to R A Priest:

Postal address PO Box 214, Blackburn, Vic., 3130

Home ☎ (03) 9878 0044 Business ☎ (03) 9894 1855 Business Fax (03) 9894 1336

Business e-mail address - waimea@bigpond.com.au

For assistance in compiling this section the Editor thanks: B Browne, J. Freeman, J. Mathieson (NSW), W. Volum, M. Carolin, J & J. Labrum, D. Crisp, L. Rex, C. Jones (VIC), K. Le Leu (SA), C. Gee, M. Navarro (WA), I. Steverson (QLD) I.J. Farquhar, B. Hanson, A. Calvert, N. Kirby, M. Pryce, (NZ).

Additional information sources include *Lloyd's List*, *Fairplay Publications*, *The Navy*, *Marine News*, *WSS Newsletters*, Victoria, Fremantle branches.

Australasia and South Pacific

The 185,000dwt capesize bulk carrier **Pacific Triangle** is under construction at South Korea's Samsung Shipyard for delivery to BHP Transport in the first quarter of this year. To be registered in Liberia, she will be operated as part of a joint venture with Daiichi and will trade both internationally and coastal. BHP are reported to have entered into discussions with the Australian maritime unions on the possibility of Australian manning.

BHP Transport is to dispose of **Iron Spencer** and **Iron Whyalla** in the first half of this year. Built in 1981, the loss of the pair will reduce the Australian-manned BHP fleet to six ships, **Iron Prince** having been sold at the end of 1999. The crews have been informed that if negotiations are successful, one of them will be employed on **Pacific Triangle**, but BHP has calculated the difference in cost between a foreign crew and an Australian crew at \$1.8 million per annum and the Australian maritime unions must demonstrate how they can achieve that level of savings, either on the new vessel or across the fleet, before they can secure a berth.

P&O Nedlloyd are using the two New Zealand-manned vessels, **Sydney Express** and **Wellington Express** to include Burnie on their dedicated trans-Tasman service. The service will now be an eight day cycle, calling Sydney, Burnie, Melbourne, Bluff, Lyttelton, Wellington, Nelson and Sydney. Perhaps ominously for Australian shipowners and seafarers, P&O Nedlloyd have said that the service is "primarily" New Zealand-Australia in nature and they have not "yet" explored the possibility of carrying Bass Strait cargoes, though this could be done using voyage permits as and when necessary.

Mediterranean Shipping Co (MSC) announced the introduction of a direct fortnightly 'Kiwi' service between Auckland, Lyttelton and Melbourne in December. MSC's first direct NZ service commenced from Melbourne on 6 January with the sailing of the 354TEU **MSC New Zealand**, providing both dry and reefer boxes. No stranger to Australian waters, she first came here as **Opal Bounty** in the late 1970s when she was one of the strider class vessels chartered from Sea Containers for the new Australasia/Iran trade which soon collapsed following the overthrow of the Shah. In more recent years she has operated as **Klang Reefer** on a Fremantle/Singapore feeder service.

The Launceston-based company LD Shipping has introduced a new vessel, **Statesman** into the Tasmania/Bass Strait island's service. Built at Launceston by LD Marine and Ship Repairs, she is of barge construction with a bow door. She has been specifically designed for the carriage of logs, grain and containers, and she is also able to carry 300 head of cattle.

After five years in Norwest Shipping's Fremantle to Darwin and WA ports coastal service, **Sina**, the last vessel chartered by this service's forebears, Stateships, has now been replaced. **Sina** arrived back at Fremantle for the last time 2 December, 1999. On 3 December she sailed in ballast to the Tenix shipfitter, Jervoise Bay where she was raised for an off-hire refit and re-delivery to owners, Briese Schiffahrts of Leer, Germany. During this refit **Sina** was renamed **BBC Australia** but there was no change to her blue hull, yellow funnel colours or Antigua & Barbuda registry. On 10 December she was

returned to the water and sailed back to the inner harbour berthing at No.1 North Quay to await orders. On 15 December she went to sea for about three hours to carry out engine trials and then finally sailed for Singapore on the evening of 17 December.

Sina has been replaced in the service by another vessel chartered from Briese, **Helgoland** (4,559/98), which was renamed **Kimberley** prior to its first arrival at Fremantle on 5/12/99. **Kimberley** is registered in Leer, and is a 105m loa, multi-purpose break-bulk and container ship equipped with two 60-tonne capacity deck cranes. In full container mode it can carry up to 320 teus including 45 reefers. She departed Fremantle 9/12/99 on her first northbound cargo voyage on for Broome.

Singapore's Jurong Shipyard has completed the floating production storage and offloading (FPSO) conversion of **Buffalo Venture** for Japan's Modec. Completed in fourteen months from contract award, the \$25m conversion is the latest such project to be completed by Jurong for the Japanese offshore specialist. The **Buffalo Venture** FPSO is located in the Buffalo field which lies in the Timor Sea, approximately 560 km northwest of Darwin. On completion of the conversion the FPSO was delivered to Modec who has chartered the vessel to joint Buffalo field operators BHP Petroleum and Calgary-based Canadian Petroleum. Formerly the 1976-built 103,584 dwt tanker **Spirit**, **Buffalo Venture** has been undergoing conversion to a FPSO unit at Jurong since April 1999. Following the conversion **Buffalo Venture** now boasts an oil production capability of 40,000 bpd with an 850,000 barrel oil storage capacity.

Tanker Pacific's **Pacific Onyx**, chartered by Fletcher Challenge since 1995, made her 100th call at Port Taranaki 23 December, 1999. She has been engaged mainly in the carriage of crude from New Plymouth and the Maui FPSO to Australian ports.

The New Zealand owned research vessel **Tangaroa** has been chartered in a joint venture between the Australian Antarctic Programme and the New Zealand National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research to carry out research of the seabed south of Tasmania. **Tangaroa** was expected to sail from Wellington 11 February, 2000 and return 20 March. It is hoped that data obtained will help scientists better understand the dynamics of the Southern Ocean and how this affects the region's ecosystems and climate.

The American privately owned research ice breaker **Nathaniel B Palmer** sailed from Lyttelton for the Antarctic 20 December, 1999 after being laid up at the port since 8 September. During her four-month cruise down the west side of Antarctica she will carry out studies of seals and other wildlife. Upon completion of the "Antarctic Pack Ice Seals" cruise (APIS) the ice breaker will return to South America. New Zealand's Pacifica Shipping commenced a new service on the New Zealand East Coast on 27 January, calling at Lyttelton, Tauranga, Auckland, Dunedin, Lyttelton on a weekly cycle. Their vessel **Spirit of Freedom** has had the upper deck rebuilt to carry containers, with the ro/ro capability now confined to the lower deck. Containers are now loaded and discharged under port container cranes except in Lyttelton where a mobile crane is used. Pacifica are seeking a replacement vessel for the service.

Alma Doepe, three-masted topsail schooner, had her survey certificate withdrawn by the Marine Board of Victoria 3/1/99 due to the apparent condition of the vessel. Except for several subsequent short voyages for which voyage permits were issued and slipping at Appleton Dock, she has been laid up in Victoria Dock. **Alma Doepe**'s future is uncertain. Plans for her owners, Sail and Adventure Ltd, to purchase the auxiliary ketch **Lady Jillian**, (225/1948), as a replacement did not eventuate. Subsequently it is understood a deposit was paid for the purchase of the UK based Sail Training Association's three-masted topsail schooner **Malcolm Miller**, built 1967.

James Craig, the three masted barque under restoration to sailing condition in Sydney was towed from Rozelle to the Garden Island Dockyard on 11 October and on 14 October slipped in the inner dock. This was the first slipping for the ship since she was relaunched from the Sea Heritage Dock on 23 February, 1997 after hull restoration. Work included the fitting of twin propellers and shafts and hull cleaning and painting. After floating out on 25 November 1999 **James Craig** was berthed at the rebuilt Sydney Heritage Fleet Wharf 7 at Pyrmont adjoining the National Maritime Museum. All masts have since been stepped and sea trials are planned for mid 2000.

The ex Union Co. r/o **Rotoma** is expected to return from survey in China with a red hull, red ventilators and ANZDL emblazoned on her hull. It has been reported that the superstructure remains white, but she now carries the blue funnel with white A of her new owners.

The first shipment of zinc concentrate from Pasminco's new Century Mine left the Gulf of Carpentaria for the Budel smelter in Holland, in the 27,563 grt, 1997 built, bulk carrier **Pretty Flourish** on 22 December. A processing plant at the mine extracts the lead and zinc from the crushed rock, mixes it with water and then pumps it as slurry down a 305 kilometre pipeline to Karumba on the Gulf of Carpentaria. There the water is removed and the zinc is processed into small pellets and stored. Once a fortnight a new purpose-built transfer vessel takes 5,000 tonnes of product per day to a bulk carrier anchored 45 km off Karumba. The transfer vessel, named **Wunma** (storm bird in the local language), is Australian flagged and was completed on 26 August, 1999 at the yard of Jiangsu Yangzijiang in China. She is 4,500 grt approximately and is owned by Pasminco Century Mine.

Tiwal Maru sailed from Bluff 2 December, 1999 for the last time after over ninety voyages since 1984 when she was launched as **Southland Maru**. She has mainly been engaged in servicing the Tiwai aluminium smelter carrying export cargoes to Japan. During this time she has carried over 1.5 million tonnes of export aluminium.

Tenders were to close 13 January, 2000 for the disposal of the dumb barge **Steel Mariner** which has been laid up at Auckland. The sale was called by McDonald Vague and Partners Insolvency. Tenders also closed 21 December, 99 for the covered deck/fuel barge **Steel Navigator** which was lying at Westport. The sale was called by Capital Finance Ltd (judgement creditor) and the Sheriff of the High Court of New Zealand, Auckland.

Overseas

An unusual but impressive looking Chinese vessel arrived at Fremantle from Shanghai on 2 November, 1999, **Yuan Wang 4** (10,975/79), is ex **Xiang Yang Hong 10** -99 and although details of the vessel and its deployment are sketchy, she was built by Jiangnan Shipyard, Shanghai for the Government of the People's Republic of China - East Sea Branch, State Oceanographic Bureau in 1979, classed as a civilian research ship. This 156.2m loa vessel is powered by 2 MAN diesels delivering 18000 hp to twin screws with a service speed of 20 knots. The hull design and propulsion are similar to the Chinese, "Dajiang"-class submarine tenders. Apart from a change in her physical appearance, the name change is also significant in that the Chinese Government operates three other Yuan Wang-named vessels (**Yuan Wang 1,2 and 3**) which are classed as "space event support ships", which no doubt reflects the change in role this vessel has undergone. Yuan Wang means "Long Look".

A first-time visitor to Australian and New Zealand ports during late December, 1999 and early January, 2000 was Royal Caribbean Cruise Line's 69,130 grt **Legend of the Seas**. She was built by Chantiers de L'Atlantique at St Nazaire in 1995 and can carry 1,800 passengers. Her presence in this part of the world was for a 21-day, 14 ports-of -call millennium voyage which saw her at the International Date Line off the Chatham Islands on 31 December. The intention was, and the voyage was so advertised, to be the first and last cruise liner to observe the millennium.

Also in Australasian waters in the New Year was Hapag-Lloyd's new 28,437 grt **Europa** which was delivered from the yard of Kvaerner Masa in Helsinki on 10 September last year.

Following the introduction of the "tonnage tax" in Britain, a number of British ship owners indicated their intention of flagging vessels back to the Red Ensign, P&O Nedlloyd's Lord Sterling being one of them. True to his word, as each of the four Blue Star Line, ex Act vessels - **Sydney Star**, **Melbourne Star**, **Queensland Star** and **America Star**, came out of their fifth special survey, they were re-registered in London. It has been a long time since a Blue Star vessel with London on the stern has been seen in an Australasian port.

Kerry Packer's yacht **Arctic P** (2610/69) visited Sydney on 9 December and remained for the New Year celebrations on the harbour. She is ex **Arctic Research** -93, ex **Arctic** -93. The yacht is run by Kusch Yacht Agentur GmbH, of Hamburg and managed for Magenta Investments Ltd. who list their parent company as Consolidated Press Holdings. **Arctic P** is 1444 dwt, 87.3 LOA, 14.8 beam, with a 6.3m draught. This yacht, and her almost identical sister **Lone Ranger**, seen in Cairns last year, are registered at Nassau, and are ex- salvage tugs previously owned by Bugsier-Reederei und Bergungs GmbH.

A.P.Moller are to introduce four new vessels into their New Zealand/SE Asia service as from March 2000. The four are part of a sixteen ship new-building order from China Shipbuilding Taiwan, the first of which **Nele Maersk**, was christened at Kaohsiung on 14 January. The other three ships for the NZ service are for staggered delivery over the first half of this year.

Union-Castle's first passengershhip venture for more than 20 years started on the evening of 11 December when the cruiseship **Victoria** sailed from Southampton on a 66-night millennium cruise. Union-Castle chartered the ship from P&O Cruises and it is thought that if the venture is a success Union-Castle may be tempted into the booming cruise market for a second venture. **Victoria** cruised round Africa from the east to the west coast and arrived in Cape Town for the millennium celebrations. Cunard's **Vistafjord** was renamed **Caronia** at Liverpool Pier Head on 10 December. She later sailed to Southampton before undertaking a short return cruise to Hamburg. She will winter in the Caribbean. **Caronia** and **Queen Elizabeth 2** are now the only ships left in the Cunard fleet after reorganisation following Carnival's takeover. Three Cunard ships have been transferred to sister company Seabourn, also owned by Carnival.

Tugs and Offshore Tenders

During December the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) commenced industrial action on Adsteam tugs in Townsville, Sydney, Fremantle, Adelaide, Port Kembla and Newcastle. The action was in response to a company proposal in a draft agreement to reduce MUA seamen on their tugs from two to one. As has been the standard in recent years on all Australian tugs, Adsteam employs two MUA seamen plus a master and an engineer. The company claims that only one seaman is necessary because the engineer can also work on deck and this is the norm overseas. The MUA disputes the company's contention saying that there are plenty of examples of tug manning overseas in excess of four and that to reduce the deck crew to one is unsafe.

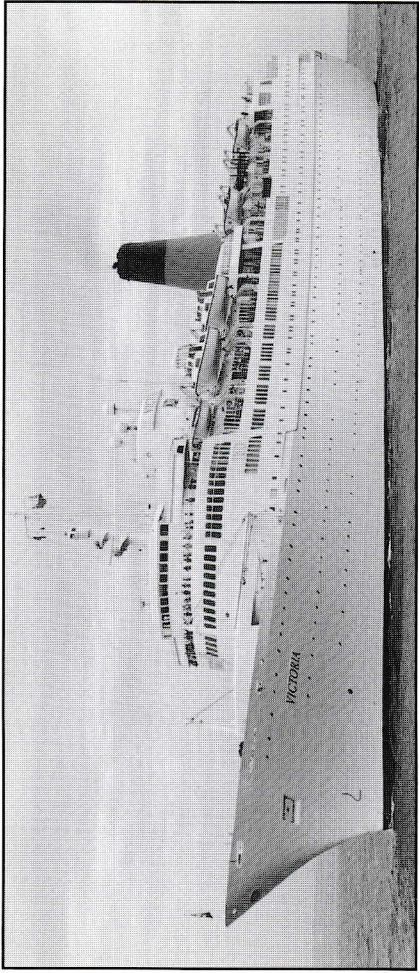
While Adsteam is attempting to introduce three-man tugs, Ports of Auckland have gone one step further. Their new tug **Waipapa** was launched at the Whangarei yard of Northland Port Corporation on 6 January. **Waipapa** is the first of three new-generation tugs to be built by Northland Port for Ports of Auckland. The 22 metre **Waipapa** has a 50 tonne bollard pull provided by twin Ulstein omni-directional drive units powered by two Caterpillar 2200 hp engines, a displacement of 338 tonnes and a speed of 12 knots. The vessel will operate with only two crew, both of whom are described as "multi-skilled" ie: they are qualified as both master and engineer.

The new Adsteam Marine harbour tug **Bunbury** departed Fremantle 3/12/99 on its delivery voyage to Bunbury where it was commissioned for service 7/12/99. This tug has replaced the smaller and now quite elderly **Capel**, 1976/163 grt. Dimensions / statistics of **Bunbury** are : 31.875m loa, 11.236m beam, 4.72m draft, 395 tonnes grt, 770 tonnes displacement. Main engines are 2 x Daihatsu 6DKM-28 diesels, each 2400 BHP @ 750 rpm, giving a service speed of 12.5 knots. The fore deck-mounted towing winch is a Bratvaag single drum type with a bollard pull of more than 60 tonnes.

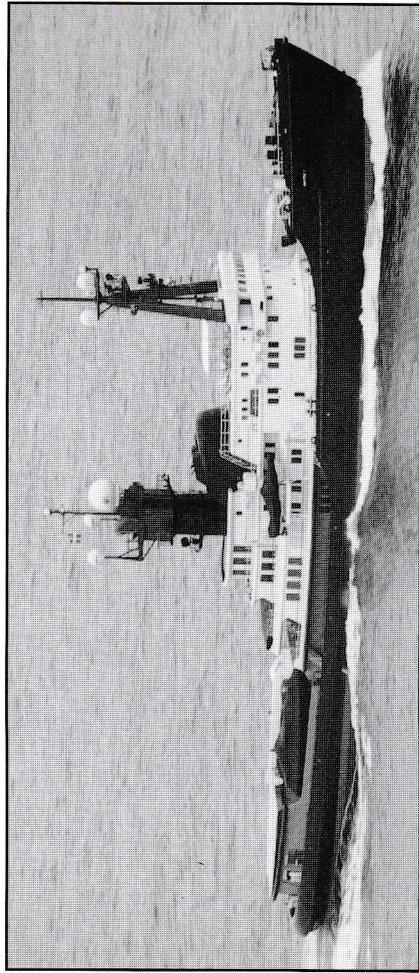
Two harbour tugs **Bambo** and **Teck** built by Structural Marine in South Coogee, under contract from Austal Ships, have now been delivered. These 29.5m loa vessels were built as far as can be ascertained for operation in the French-controlled Comoro Islands, which lie between the East African coast and the island of Madagascar. The Mayotte-registered **Bambo** departed Jervis Bay on Christmas Day 1999 on its delivery voyage with first refuelling point being at the Cocos Islands. The Kingstown-registered **Teck** did not leave on its delivery voyage until 11/1/00, also bound for the Cocos Islands.

Ferries, Fishing and Harbour Craft

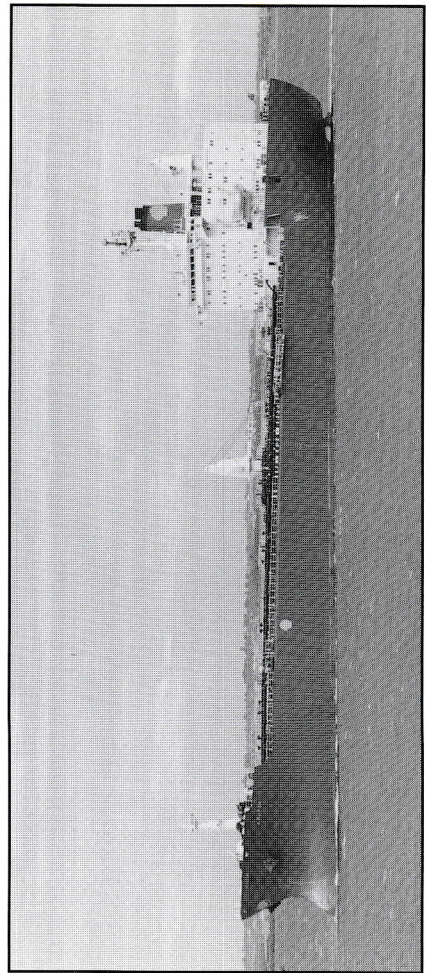
The restored Wanganui River paddle steamer **Waimarie** featured in Wanganui's millennium celebrations. The local press claimed that the 80-tonne riverboat, which has undergone a three-year NZ\$3 million restoration, was re-registered at midnight giving it a unique double as they claim it to also be the first steamboat registered in the 20th century. **Waimarie**, which worked the river for 50 years before sinking at its moorings in 1950, was raised from the muddy riverbed near Wanganui's Moutoa Quay in 1993.



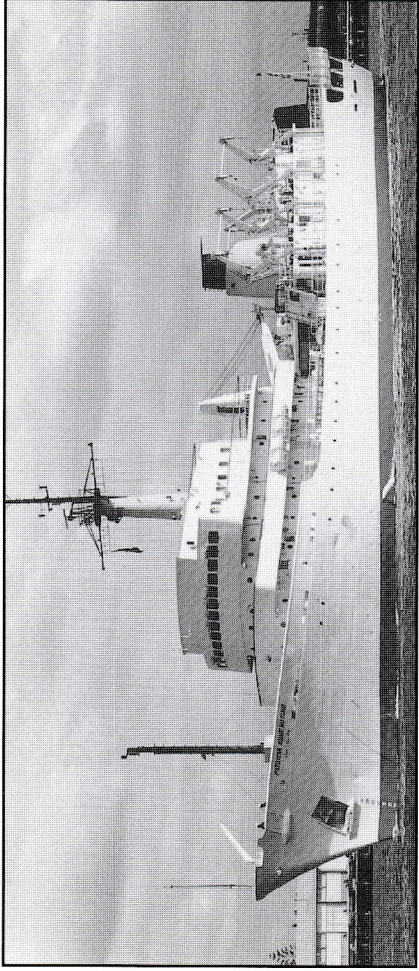
VICTORIA in Union Castle colours including houseflag painted behind bridge (see p. 41) (T. Jones)



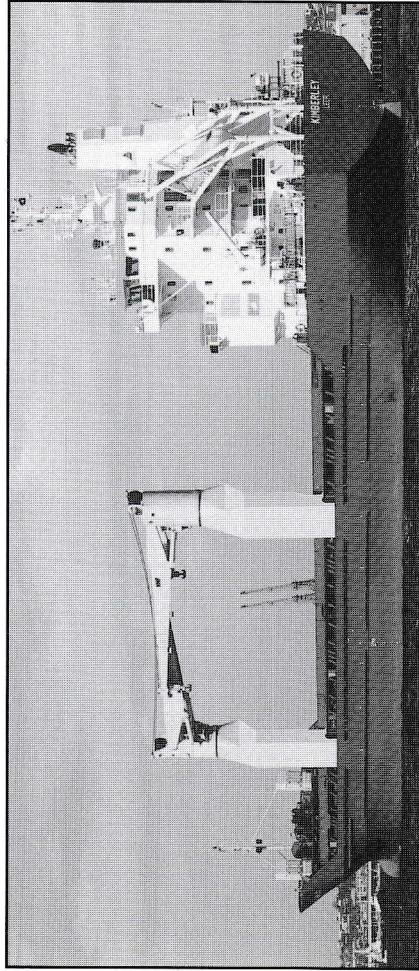
ARCTIC P Kerry Packer's yacht arriving Sydney (see p. 40) (J.Y. Freeman)



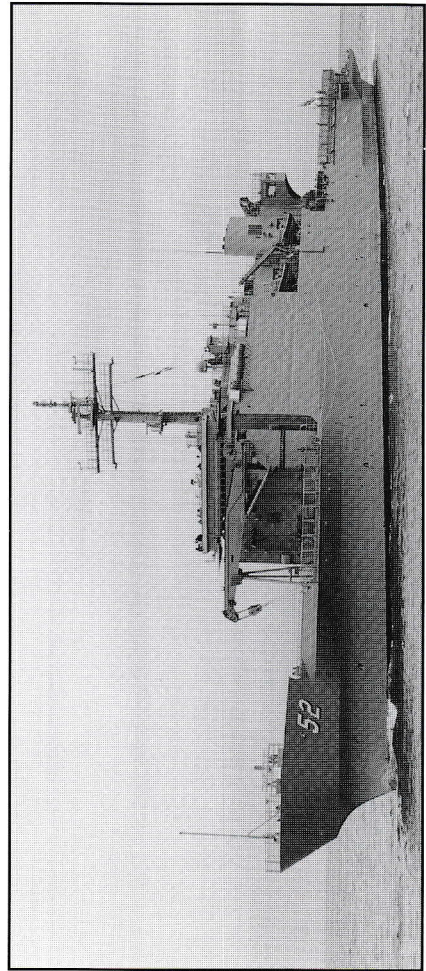
EBURNA maintenance subject of criticism (see p. 45) (R.A. Priest)



PATRICIA ANNE HOTLUNG returning from trials at Fremantle (see p. 46) (C. Gee)



KIMBERLEY arriving Fremantle for the first time (see p. 39) (C. Gee)



HMAS MANOORA has completed a 2½ year refit (see p. 46) (R.A. Priest)

The day cruise and charter vessel **Georgianna McHaffie** entered service at Western Port, Victoria, in September 1999. The vessel is owned by Western Port Heritage Cruises (associated with Clover Cottage restaurant of Berwick) and operates from Western Port Marina, Hastings. Dimensions are 40.0m x 7.00m x 3.2m moulded depth with a draught of 2.6m. A turbo charged 6 cylinder Kinoshita diesel engine provides a service speed of 13 knots. Cruises of up to five hours are undertaken and in its present configuration the vessel can accommodate 150 passengers. **Georgianna McHaffie** was built as **Haishio** ("Quick Waters") at Tadotsu, Japan, in 1961 for Setonakaiki Kisen KK for service as a ferry on the Sea of Japan. In October 1977 she was donated by the Government of Japan to the newly independent Solomon Islands and operated by (sold to) Coral Seas Ltd and renamed **Independence** for inter-island ferry service with, it is understood, certification for 590 passengers. In 1981 **Independence** was purchased by Mr. A. Behn of Brisbane for commercial operation in Brisbane and was imported as a dumb lighter, ie with engine inoperative and renamed **Explorer**. The scheme did not proceed and **Explorer** was sold for operation as a stationary restaurant in Brisbane, operating for only two weeks. A further owner intended to rejuvenate **Explorer** as a private yacht in Brisbane but this did not eventuate. (From 1981 to 1988 the vessel was privately owned, initially by Mr. R. Stiffler, and subsequently by several other owner/operators and operated as a stationary restaurant moored in the Brisbane River under the name **Explorer**.) In 1988 **Explorer** was purchased by the Priddle family, also of Brisbane and renamed **Reliance V** with the intention of operation as a Jehovah's Witnesses missionary ship in the Solomon Islands. The engine was rebuilt, other work completed and **Reliance V** was first registered in Australia, with Brisbane as home port in 1995 but the vessel remained in Brisbane. Bought (in Brisbane) by the present owners in July 1998 and renamed **Georgianna McHaffie**, official number 854845, home port Melbourne, she was initially slipped in Maryborough, Queensland where a bow thruster was fitted and engine and propeller/shaft work was carried out. She arrived at Hastings, Western Port in November 1998. There she underwent extensive modifications and refitting, including extending the upper deck aft and the installation of timber panelling plus high quality furnishings and fittings. The vessel is named for Georgianna McHaffie (1830-1885) who was the first white female settler on Phillip Island.

Anson (see p.42 1999) was sold November 1998 by Electrolytic Zinc Company of Australasia Ltd to Mr. Paul Harvey of Brisbane. After arrival there she was handed over to new owners Pacific Trading Ltd of Port Vila, Vanuatu and sailed from Brisbane 12 December 1998 for the South Pacific.

Company and General

The replica 59 metre Dutch East India Company (VOC) trading ship **Batavia** arrived in Sydney on the semi-submersible ship **Condoek V** on 26 November 1999 via the Cape, having left Holland on 25 September. She was floated at Garden Island on 3 December and moved to the National Maritime Museum in Darling Harbour on 5 December for exhibition and some operation under sail until early 2001. **Batavia** has not operated under sail since being completed. She was built by Willem Vos at Leystad in Holland over the period 1985 to 1995 by traditional methods. The original **Batavia** was wrecked on her maiden voyage off the Houtman Abrolhos Islands off the WA coast in 1629 and the wreck was discovered in 1963. Surviving sections of the hull are on exhibition in the Western Australian Maritime Museum at Fremantle.

An RAN mine-scanning operation during the Crocodile 99 exercises discovered the wreck of the steamer **Nautilus** in 23 metres of water off Bustard Head and divers were sent down from HMAS **Benalla**. They salvaged a porthole which is now in the collection of the Gladstone Maritime Museum. A side-scanning sonar, intended for surveying and mine detection, had been used for the first time and produced a very clear image of the vessel; lying upright on the sea floor. **Nautilus** was built in Maryborough in 1890 as a 288 ton hopper barge for the Queensland government. She was bought by John Burke Ltd in 1916 as a freighter. In 1928 she was thrown against the Mackay Harbour wall and badly damaged. She sank under tow of **Canonbar** on 6 May 1928.

Accidents and Mishaps

Fratelli D'Amato SRL and the master and chief officer of the tanker **Laura D'Amato** were charged under the Marine Pollution Act following the July spill of more than 300,000 litres of light crude into Sydney Harbour. A government investigation found that crew members opened several valves on the fully-laden tanker which was discharging at Shell's Gore Bay terminal. The three pleaded guilty on 3 December, 1999 to charges brought by Sydney Ports Corp. They each face a maximum fine of A\$1.1m.

A Melbourne court released on bail the master of Mobil's product tanker **Sylvan Arrow**, who was charged over an oil spill. Capt Javed Ahmed Bhombal, 35, was charged under the 1983 Protection of the Sea Act over a 17 n-mile spill south of Wilson's Promontory in the week before Christmas. The spill was witnessed and reported by a passing New Zealand frigate. The ship was allowed to leave Victorian state waters following the investigation, but Capt. Bhombal was ordered to reappear at the Melbourne Magistrates Court on 27 March to answer the charges.

Port regulations which clearly state that small craft must give way to large vessels maneuvering in confined waterways, were aptly illustrated in Sydney Harbour on New Year's Day when a yacht came into collision with a departing tanker. Despite continual warning blasts from the sirens on the tanker and the accompanying tugs, plus three verbal warnings from a close-by Waterways craft escorting the tanker, the yacht, manned by Polish nationals, appeared to be oblivious of the oncoming danger. The resultant collision with the 97,159 dwt, Teekay owned **Sentosa Spirit** flung three of the yachts into the water, two of them passing down the tanker's side to be washed clear at the stern and recovered. The third appeared to be going under the hull of the tug **Werra** which was lashed up. **Werra's** master de-clutched the Z-pellers and turned their cowlings towards the swimmer which prevented the possibility of serious injury from the propellers, and he was recovered by the escort vessel. Meanwhile the yacht was carried impaled on the tanker's bulbous bow for several hundred metres, despite the tanker's propellers going full astern at the moment of impact.

A recent Marine Board of Victoria investigation report concerning an incident involving Shell's 1979-built product tanker **Eburna** (18,654grt) has concluded that the vessel's poor state of repair had exposed Melbourne to a possible serious explosion. **Eburna**, under charter to Mobil at the time, was departing Melbourne's Holden Dock, and when Howard Smith's tug **Keera** took the strain on her tow line, a fairlead for/ard on the port side came away, and together with a section of handrail, slid down the towline onto the bow of the tug. There were no injuries. There was no damage to **Keera**, but on **Eburna** a longitudinal crack in the deck plating underneath the dislodged fairlead doubling plate was observed. This crack exposed the cargo tank and the Marine Board report indicates that whilst the atmosphere adjacent to the exposed petrol was almost certainly too rich for instant ignition, any subsequent spark in the vicinity of the opening could have resulted in an explosion. The crew temporarily plugged the hole in No 1 port tank and the vessel was taken to the outer explosive anchorage to enable temporary repairs to be carried out before she departed for Western Port. **Eburna** has a recent history of problems on the Australian coast. Two years ago, she suffered hull damage when she allegedly touched bottom leaving Port Phillip. On 26 July last year, a port state control inspection revealed about 50 deficiencies. The Australian Maritime Safety Authority said at the time that the ship was not being maintained in a condition meeting international conventions and in particular the ISM Code, which relates to the proper management of a vessel. Soon after on 15 August, **Eburna** spilled 20-30 litres of unleaded petrol into Botany Bay. The incident was discovered during a routine random audit by a Sydney Ports Corporation officer. Subsequent inquiries revealed that high level alarms on the vessel's tanks were not operating and alternative monitoring arrangements had not been put in place.

Ports

The establishment of a new ferry terminal on New Zealand's South Island has finally been given the go-ahead, but it is not expected to be operational until at least 2004. The new NZ\$120 million terminal for Tranz Rail's Cook Strait ferries would save approximately 30 minutes in crossing time. However, Tranz Rail has said it could be a year before the company decides whether to move from the present terminal at Picton to the new site, 66 km south at Clifford Bay. They said the company would have to re-evaluate the project because of the lengthy delay since Tranz Rail had first applied to move.. Proposals for a new port at Clifford Bay were first raised in 1946.

Melbourne's new bulk-grain facility at Appleton Dock is nearing completion. To be known as the Australian Bulk Alliance Port of Melbourne Facility, it will be served by a new access road to be known as Enterprise Road, and a standard and broad-gauge rail line which will carry 40-wagon trains of grain from Victoria and New South Wales. Work on the ship-loading area is almost finished and dredging of the berth has been completed.

Rationalisation could result in the closure of some Australian oil refineries. Australia's refineries have been affected by competition from Asia, in addition to regulations involving high capital investment to upgrade fuel quality. In order for the refining industry to remain competitive, the Australian government has suggested that the eight refineries in operation may have to be rationalised.

Naval

The fleet replenishment tanker **Westralia** underwent post-refit sea trials during January and was expected to rejoin the fleet at the end of the month. The ship has been in refit since being severely damaged by an engine-room fire which claimed four lives in May, 1998. During her absence the RAN's other underway replenishment tanker **HMAS Success**, and the RNZN tanker **HMNZS Endeavour**, were worked hard to cover for her, especially during the East Timor operation.

On 25 October, 1999 the Collins class submarine **HMAS Farncomb**, SSG 74, 1998/2450 disp tonnes, was towed dead-ship from Fleet Base West to the Tenix shiplift facility at Jervis Bay. This is the first time that one of these vessels has been docked in Western Australia since being home-ported at Fleet Base West. The tugs **Tammar** and **Sacramento** were used for the tow with two DMS launches assisting the submarine into the dock. Once positioned, the dock-deck was raised with the 77.42m loa submarine settling onto a special \$1 million cradle and then lifted fully out of the water and positioned into Tenix's yard via the transfer rail. Refit work was carried out over a two-week period and **Farncomb** was returned to the water on 6 November and towed back to Fleet Base West. (See photograph p.2)

The former RAN survey ship **Moresby** has departed Fremantle bound for a new role. In mid-November 1999 the vessel was lifted on the Tenix ship lifter at Jervis Bay for a hull clean and repaint. During this period she was renamed **Patricia Anne Hotung** and registered at Panama. Underneath the name on the bow, in smaller italics, was painted the wording "Spirit of Hong Kong". The hull was repainted white as before and no change was made to her buff funnel colours. This 35 year-old vessel has been purchased by Hong Kong millionaire, Mr. Eric Hotung, chairman of the Hotung Institute of International Studies. The ship is named after Mr. Hotung's wife. It was reported that more than A\$1 million was spent on refitting the vessel for its new role as a mercy ship at East Timor. It will initially be used to transport refugees from West Timor to Dili, East Timor.

The last operational Oberon class submarine **HMAS Otama** left her Sydney home port for the last time on 29 March 1999 for overseas deployment and will return to her new home port, **HMAS Stirling**.

The Attack class patrol boat **Bayonet** was sunk by explosive charge on 21 September 1999 at a location 19.5 miles south west of Cape Schanck in Bass Strait. **HMAS Bayonet** was commissioned on 22 February 1969, handed over to the RANR in Melbourne on 27 March 1982 and was paid off on 26 June 1988, becoming training vessel **Bayonet** at **HMAS Cerberus**. From 1989 to 1993 she was also used for target towing off West Head range, remaining alongside after this time.

HMAS Manoora called at Point Wilson for two hours on 25 January before heading south in search of heavy weather as part of her sea trials following a 2 1/2 -year refit at Newcastle. Built as **USS Fairfax County** in 1971, she was acquired by the RAN, along with her sister **HMAS Kanimbla**, in 1994. The purchase was the subject of considerable controversy as, what was originally considered to be a "bargain", turned out to be anything but when the true condition of the hulls was ascertained after they had been accepted.

Errata

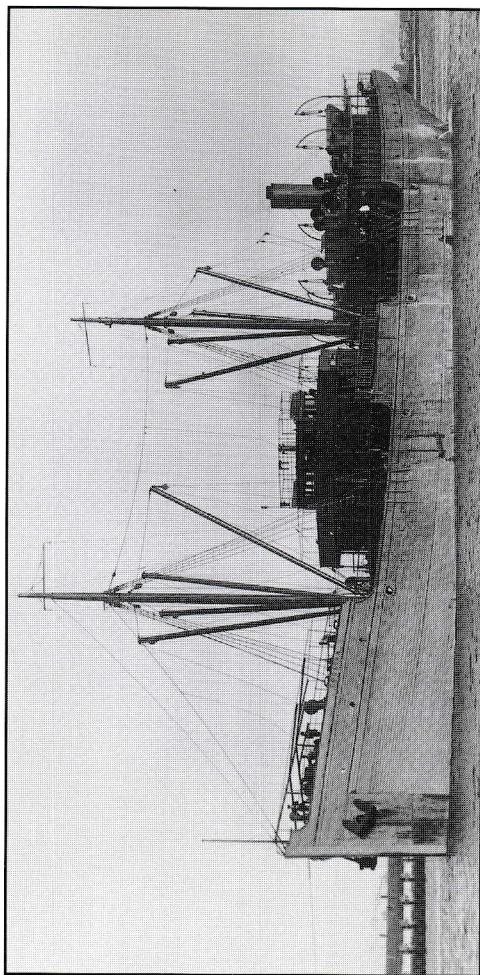
On page 185, Issue 138 - we referred to **P&O Nedlloyd Fremantle**'s green hull and buff upperworks reflecting the ownership of Peter Dohle of Leer, Germany. This vessel is actually owned by Hermann Buss of Leer and the green/buff is his colour scheme. Peter Dohle vessels are normally battleship grey.

On page 182-3, Issue 138 - we stated "The only other vessels owned by USSCo were the tug and barge on the Westport/Port Kembla coal trade. **Karamea** and **Union Bulk I** were both disposed of to New Zealand Cement Holdings during September." Three vessels are actually involved, **Gawler**, **Karamea** and **Union Bulk I**. They are owned by Union Shipping Bulk Ltd. and are also periodically involved in transporting coal from Westport to Lyttelton. Their management and crewing were contracted to Buller Port Services, a fully owned subsidiary of NZ Cement Holdings, in September.

On page 184, Issue 138 - for Semborg Guardian read **Svendborg Guardian**.

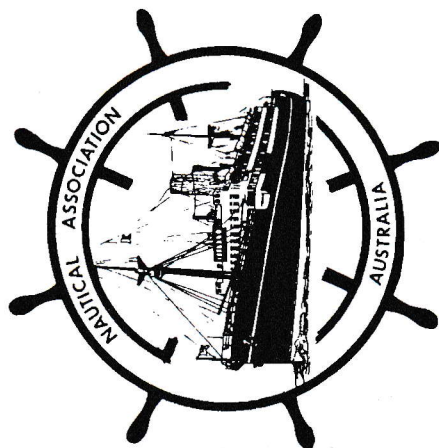
COOLCHA

from I.J. Farquhar



(I.J. Farquhar collection)

The 2,403 ton wooden motor vessel **Coolcha** had a very short life under the Australian flag. She was built by Sloan Shipyards, Olympia, Washington in 1918 for the Commonwealth Government Line and was one of a series of four similar ships. A further ten wooden vessels were ordered from Patterson and McDonald of Seattle and all fourteen ships were ordered towards the middle of World War I, at a time when shipowners were desperate to replace the huge tonnage of ships lost in the war. Flushed with enthusiasm for their fleet of 15 "Austral" tramps and the acquisition of 29 ex enemy vessels, the Commonwealth Government Line was keen to expand the fleet further. With acute steel shortages, they turned to vessels built of wood. American shipyards were busy building several types of wooden ships but Australia was the only country to place a specific order. **Coolcha** and her sisters **Cethana**, **Culburra**, and **Challamba** were 264 feet in length, and powered with two six cylinder diesel engines. **Cethana**, the first of the four, was the first motorship the Commonwealth Government Line ever owned. Lloyd's Register records that the ships were held together with "hardwood trenails, salted and specially treated". These were essentially wooden dowels with a split end into which a wedge was driven. All the vessels needed continual caulking to keep them seaworthy. **Lloyd's Register** also had a custom made classification of 12A1 for the wooden ships. **Coolcha** sailed from the United States on 21 November 1918 and arrived Sydney 24 December. She then loaded coal from Newcastle to Singapore, sugar from Java to Melbourne and Sydney, after which she worked interstate. She was aground on Kangaroo Island 28 June 1919 and, along with her sisters, she was sold to J.E. Chilberg of Seattle in April 1919. **Coolcha** left Australia for the United States in August 1919 being under the ownership of the Commonwealth Government Line only from 26 October 1918 to 31 December 1919. Chilberg failed on the payments and the Australian Government repossessed the ships in 1920, eventually disposing of the quartet the following year to W.L. Cornyn & Co. Inc. San Francisco. This contract became embroiled in legal argument and with the value of second hand ships drastically dropping in the early 1920s she and her sisters realised less than a quarter of the earlier agreed price. Registered to the Ocean Motorship Company (Cornyn & Co.) she stranded near Esquimault, Vancouver Island on 15 December 1923. She was refloated but was broken up after a stranding in 1927, and **Cethana** and **Culburra** longer lives with **Challamba** being broken up after a stranding in 1927, and **Cethana** and **Culburra** being broken up in 1933 and 1941 respectively. The fourteen wooden ships were a disaster and the Commonwealth Government Line lost over £2.3 million on the contracts which included the legal costs when the shipyard of Patterson and McDonald went bankrupt and all the arguments on the sale prices of the vessels. Being built in wood as a wartime emergency measure they could not hope to compete with steel tonnage in a peacetime market.



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