

# THE LOG



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QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE NAUTICAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.  
VOL. 53, NO. 4, ISSUE 222 - NEW SERIES



Wyuna (1,304/1953)

(R.Leek/NAA)

The late Bob Leek took this excellent shot of **Wyuna** off Queenscliff in June 1975. Ferguson Bros, Port Glasgow, built her for the Port Phillip Sea Pilots in 1953. When working she would be stationed at the Pilot Boarding Ground off the entrance to Port Phillip (The Rip) and transfer pilots via her boats to and from ships arriving or leaving Melbourne or Geelong. Her role became redundant in the 1970s when her owner started to use fast launches for transferring pilots and in 1979 she was sold to the Australian Maritime College in Launceston for use as an underway training vessel out of Beauty Point on the Tamar. In 2004 she was on-sold for possible use as an accommodation vessel and later for conversion to a yacht but both plans failed to eventuate and in 2013 she was donated to the Western Port Oberon Association who planned to preserve her as a museum ship alongside the ex-RAN submarine **Oberon** at Crib Point. A lack of funds has bedevilled these plans and today she languishes at anchor in the Tamar.

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quarterly journal of the

NAUTICAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

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ABN: 18 382 946 943

Vol. 53, No. 4, Issue 222 - New Series  
2020

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### Opposite

Another classic Bob Leek photograph, this one Ports & Harbour's buoy tender **Rip** (657/1942) anchored Port Phillip on 23 November 1981.

**Rip** was a converted Bathurst class minesweeper/corvette, one of 60 such vessels built in eight Australian yards during the course of World War II. She has the distinction of being Yard No.1 at BHP's ship-building facility at Whyalla, South Australia, and was given the name HMAS **Whyalla** for obvious reasons. Like all of her class, she was worked hard during the War; she came under attack by Japanese aircraft on two occasions but escaped without damage both times, apart from some crew receiving shrapnel wounds on the first occasion. She was decommissioned on 14 May 1946.

**Whyalla** was sold to the Victorian Public Works Department on 10 February 1947; they converted her to a buoy tender and renamed her **Rip** after the notorious entrance to Port Phillip. She was withdrawn from service when replaced by the second **Rip** (640/1984) and was to be sold for scrap, however, when the Whyalla City Council heard of her intended fate, they purchased her for A\$5,000. She was sailed back to Whyalla with a volunteer crew under the power of her own triple-expansion engine. Once there she was converted back close to original configuration and placed on dry land as a museum ship; one of only two Bathurst class still extant, the other being **Castlemaine** afloat at Williamstown, Victoria.

PRINT POST PUBLICATION NUMBER 100003238

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