



CASTLEMAINE CHRONICLE

Previously published as CASTLEMAINE CAPERS

An Occasional Newsletter

Issue #11 – Mar 2025

Welcome to the latest edition of our captivating chronicle all about your favourite ship, and the people who man it – yourselves!

Our usual Xmas/New Year opening marathon came and went and was reasonably successful. Meaning we achieved the three reasons we open every day: we took a satisfactory amount of money, we sold a goodly amount of souvenirs and educated many people about the significance of the ship and its history. The money goes towards week to week maintenance and running costs and also into our dry docking or slipping fund (if only we had somewhere to slip). The souvenirs hopefully remind the purchaser of the great time they had on board and to come again or recommend us to their friends etc. And lastly, and perhaps most importantly, educating visitors who are younger than us (and who isn't younger than us) that the world didn't start on their birthday. A big thank you to all who manned the ship during this period. We are now back to our normal opening of weekends and public holidays.

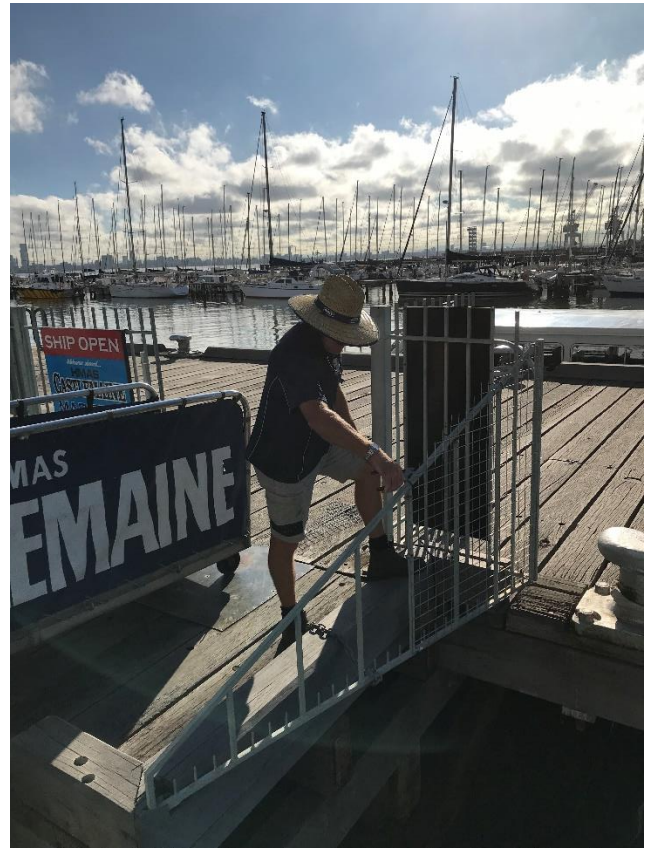
In regard to manning the ship on public open days it is quite challenging filling the roster at times. Ideally there needs to be a minimum of three persons each time we open. So anybody reading this who would like to give up maybe one or two days a month to man the ship please look out for the email with the roster attached and let me know.

Apropos souvenirs, we have an amazing selection available now thanks to Dick. Next time you are on-board check them out – perfect presents for a person who has everything!

In the last edition I flagged that we looked like we would be able to get our hands on an Oerlikon gun for the starboard bridge wing. Well, I was hoping to be able to announce in this newsletter that it was on board but it isn't yet, there is a delay which hopefully we can work around soon – it's still coming though!! Like everything else when doing business in Melbourne **'it has to come from Sydney'**.

During the hot spell here in Melbourne towards the end of the school holidays we had some invaders onto the ship. As has been the custom for eons in hot weather kids come down to Gem Pier to dive off the end, it's a rite of passage for kids brought up in Willy. Some enterprising youths decided that diving off the pier was a bit tame so they got onto the ship and jumped off the stern also some climbed onto the awnings and dived off there. This is trespass and potentially dangerous. They

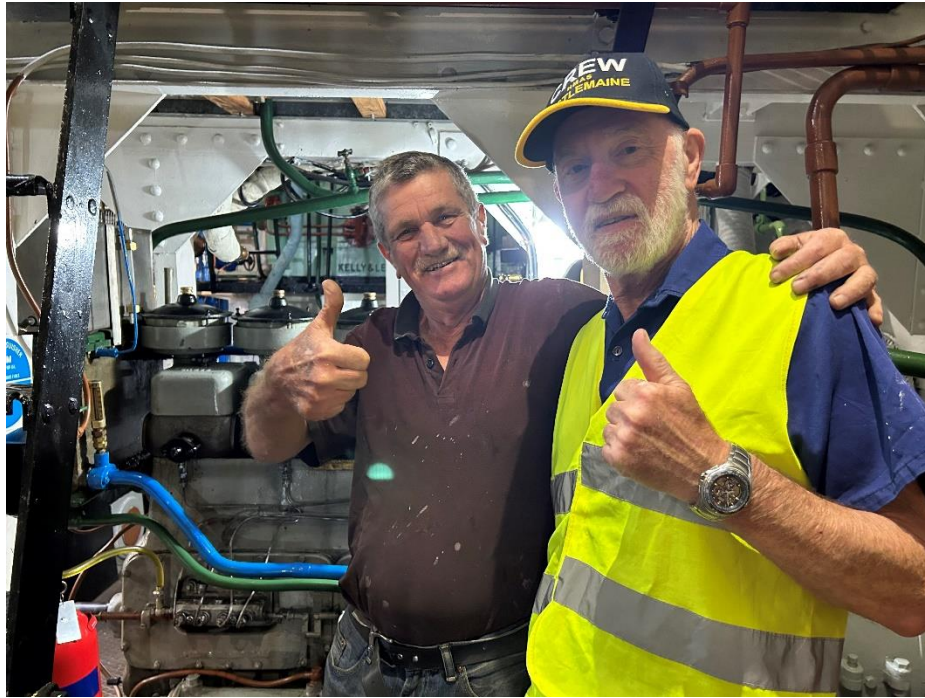
were getting on by climbing around the fence near the gangway so a deterrent had to be found. See below Dean attaching the deterrent to the fence.



Grants from various organisations go a long way in helping volunteer organisations like ours survive. But first you need to apply and have a specific project in mind, some applications are easyish but others quite onerous, however over the years we have been very successful with our applications. We currently have three applications at various stages, firstly we applied for funding from the 'Saluting Their Service' grant scheme to install histories of the 56 Australian manned corvettes onto our website. The histories have been collated from various sources by Kerry Hodges the author of our book. We have been successful with that grant and are just awaiting the money to pop into our account. The second grant is through the federal government 'Volunteers' grant scheme. This scheme is run through the office of the local member, in our case Tim Watts MHR. First we had to apply to his office for permission to apply for the grant, permission which we have now received so then we need to do the real application which is now done and submitted. In this case we are applying for monies to assist with our insurance costs. The third grant is from the Maritime Museum of Australia Museum Assistance Scheme. This application has now been submitted and we are applying for funding to weld doubler plates in four places on the deck where we are looking at a total of about 9 sq. metres of plate. Grants, in money or in kind, have played a big part in the restoration of the ship since 1973. Whether it be favourable terms when docking or slipping the ship or paint for the hull lots of companies and individuals have contributed to getting the ship to where it is today.

I suppose you are wondering where all the pictures are as I've only used two so far, well here they come.

In a previous edition I talked about Geoff and company firing up the Southern Cross diesel, well every time he gives it a run it's like he's won Tatts. Below he is congratulating himself along with Jim whose expertise ensured the beast had enough juice to turn over.



Geoff has also been busy re-furbishing the fwd. windless, Just in case we need to drop anchor at any time! On the left below busy with the paint brush. On the right is Mick one of the multi-skilled members of the electrical department trying to get a shine on a cover off the windless.



Remember the McGarvie memoir? Well there were some photos attached and one of them showed the painting on the port side of the 4" gun shield. It was a version of this cartoon character 'mascot' named 'Sweeping the Seas Clean'. As the photo did prove that *Castlemaine* did have one of these 'mascots' from time to time, it was decided to replicate it on our gun. Our resident artist and naval knot guru Steve undertook the task, it is now in place. It was installed by another of our multi-skilled electrical department Jim, ably assisted by Peter. On the left below is the original photo from the McGarvie memoir and on the right fully installed. The starboard side of the gun shield has had the 'mascot' 'Bee Bomber for a number of years.



Below is Steve the artist standing next to his crowning glory!



It is with sadness that I report the passing of another of our long time volunteers. Daryl Bunting crossed the bar on 7th March 2025 aged 98 years. He served for two years in the RAN from 1945 to 1947. Daryl's work lives on in the *Castlemaine* as a lot of the cabinet and joinery work in the cabins was produced in Daryl's garage and assembled on board.



RIP Daryl

As you can tell from the contents of this newsletter I haven't actually been inundated by articles for inclusion in it. I can understand your reticence as you are unlikely to be picked up by News Ltd and syndicated around the world. So instead of dreaming of the big bucks you have to start small in a small unassuming but quality newsletter then build to bigger things. So come on, there must be some tall tales or true worth telling.

Please send your articles or any comments about the newsletter to me Bob Pearson at newsletter@hmascastlemaine.org.au

TTFN
Bob