

# THE SEVEN SEAS CLUB of AUSTRALIA

**“TO PROMOTE AND FOSTER THE COMRADESHIP OF THE SEA”**

**Founded 1968**

**Incorporated 1996**

**Patron**

***His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le, AC***  
**Governor of South Australia**

*An elected COM shall run the Club in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation & Standing Orders*

## NEWSLETTER No. 88 June 2021

### Greetings Members-

It has been some time since the last newsletter, which has been an eventful period for the SSC.

We were saddened to hear of the illness of Secretary Ian Small; he has been very supportive in assisting me with the newsletter and I hope that he is well on the road to recovery now.

Bob Smedley has stepped in to take on the role of Secretary in the interim. Bob has also given me an article about his historic boat “Anyndah.”

I would like to include an article on a member’s boat as a regular feature of future newsletters.

Thank you to those who have sent in contributions for this edition of the Newsletter:

John Braendler, for the President’s Report along with an additional note regarding the recent SGM; Captain Peter Thomas for his monthly historical notes and for reformatting the “Shoestring” sailing story given to me by Ken Messenger; John Ford for his painting and Nautical Terms article and Bob Smedley for sending me the Sailors Prayer that he read out at a recent meeting. Trevor Powell has also sent in some of his wonderful random photos taken at Port Adelaide.

Fair Winds,

Terry Beaston

### **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

**June 2021**

**John Braendler**

The Club remains in “good health” with well attended interesting meetings of fellowship and seafaring. Amidst that, however, it has been a tumultuous time for the Club here for over 3 years, and especially over the last 3 months and this one issue.

Much consideration has been applied to the fundamental change to the Club from “Gentlemen’s” club to a non-gender Club. Society, governments, community associations are in many instances progressively moving towards the equal inclusion of a female membership.

There are, however, significant such organisations retaining single gender status. Both have their reasons which are accepted by Government regulations.

For the Seven seas Club there is a long and entrenched history and tradition for what it is, and a new wave movement for considering change. Without going into the very many arguments for and against, these are the extreme ends and it is clear that there are indeed, many female seafaring related persons in significant seafaring and nautical roles and positions of the highest caliber and held in the highest regard.

Finding a criteria to perhaps include these, but not to make the Club a wives/partners to accompany their

menfolk for a monthly dinner has been controversial. Between these extremes lie a multitude of considerations.

A two-step process was put in place through our respected, trusted Committee of Management (C.O.M.)

Firstly, a survey was conducted to see if members wanted to put such a change to the vote. Of the order of 79% of members voted to put that question.

So, secondly, the C.O.M. devised a motion to put to a Special General Meeting to vote on changing membership from being single gender to being non gender. This is a fundamental and constitutional issue and required a 75%+ vote for change, to be implemented, or considered further. That % was not achieved, so the status quo remains for the Seven Seas Club of Australia – i.e. a “Gentleman’s Club.”

Both the idea of such change and the commitment, deep feelings and emotion it generated, have seen robust – even heated - debate and reaction on the part of some members; ill feeling, sufficient to see some individuals opt to leave. This has been a balancing act of some diplomatic proportions, but now seems at least acrimoniously, democratically and constitutionally accepted.

I’d like to think that a moratorium on this issue could hold for at least a 12 months time, to settle the Club again into “the Comradeship of the Sea” – its foundation for us all.

Aside from this, the Club has run as usual, with well attended dinner meetings, interesting, relevant speakers, and the usual meeting segments on shipwrecks, history, and the life and work of A. Villiers.

The traditions of the sea have been maintained and upheld with the appropriate toasts, acknowledgement of the passing of our Naval dignitary HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, and care shown to our members in adversity. Our treasurer Daryl Matthews has this month been awarded the status of “Distinguished Member” for long term, generously given, and personally caring contributory service.

As a footnote, I do feel that I have been handed not only a hot potato, but a whole field of them. I also acknowledge and sincerely thank the many members who put a great deal of thought, time and care about the Club to me, along with much of procedural, semi legal and personal support to get through this.

May the Seven seas Club of Australia here in Adelaide prosper further & continue that which we all so value.

## June 7<sup>th</sup> 2021-Late News item

As president and personally, I am still receiving some disconcerting correspondence from a few members.

The resignation of the Vice President from his position, (not from the Club) prompted me to respond with “me too”, but I’ve penned this note instead.

The discontent with some opting to not attend out of protest, and even those few resignations is a cause for concern. This is largely generated from the recent issue of Club gender and the meetings and voting related to that and some upset at the conduct of some members.

We are a Government registered Club and will have to re-write our Club rules in line with recently announced guidelines and templates in the very near future. These require the inclusion and compatibility with things like bullying, respect of women, gender neutrality, harassment, member fairness and protection, rule wordings, and so on.

In some ways they simplify our spread of rules and operational and constitutional documents. There is a distinct possibility that our Club issues will be resolved by this govt requirement, rather than through in-Club debate, voting etc.... C.O.M. already has a subgroup considering and to be working with these aspects.

If you are involved, you can influence the Club direction, but if not, you can’t. This note is an appeal to all to stick with this, and the Club - to see this through - in the spirit of the Club focused around “comradeship”, respect, co-operation and contributory participation.

Let’s enjoy the June meeting 16.06.21 as we always do. I look forward to seeing you there, then.

John Braendler

## On this month (January) Historical notes for the month of May 2021

Compiled By Capt. Perter Thomas

### May 1st 1982

British Warships and Fighter Bombers bombed Argentinean positions at Port Stanley on the Islands as war broke out over the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands.

**May 1<sup>st</sup> 1707**

The union between England and Scotland is proclaimed

**May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1933**

The first modern sighting of the Loch Ness monster is reported

**May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1494**

Christopher Columbus sights Jamaica.

**May 5<sup>th</sup> 1821**

Napoleon Bonaparte "the Little Corporal", dies in exile on the remote British island of St Helena. He was 51.

**May 6<sup>th</sup> 1937**

The airship Hindenberg catches fire and is destroyed within a minute.

**May 7<sup>th</sup> 1915**

The British passenger ship *Lusitania* was torpedoed by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland, losing 1,198 of its 1,924 passengers, including 114 Americans. The attack hastened neutral America's entry into World War I.

**May 8<sup>th</sup> 1942**

During World War II in the Pacific, the Battle of the Coral Sea began in which Japan would suffer its first defeat of the war. The battle, fought off New Guinea, marked the first time in history that two opposing naval forces fought by only using aircraft without the opposing ships ever sighting each other.

**May 12<sup>th</sup> 1949**

The Soviet Union lifts its blockade of Berlin.

**May 13<sup>th</sup> 1855**

The immigrant ship *Nashwauk* was washed ashore just south of the Onkaparinga River.

**May 14<sup>th</sup> 1943**

Hospital ship *Centaur* torpedoed and sunk off Cape Morton Queensland by a Japanese submarine and 268 lost.

**May 17<sup>th</sup> 1943**

RAF Lancaster bombers caused chaos to Nazi German industry by destroying two huge dams. Dr Barnes Wallis's bouncing bombs skimmed the surface of the water to reach their targets.

**May 18<sup>th</sup> 1804**

Napoleon Bonaparte is proclaimed Emperor of France.

**May 24<sup>th</sup> 1941**

German Battleship *Bismarck* Sinks HMS *Hood*

**May 26<sup>th</sup> 1940**

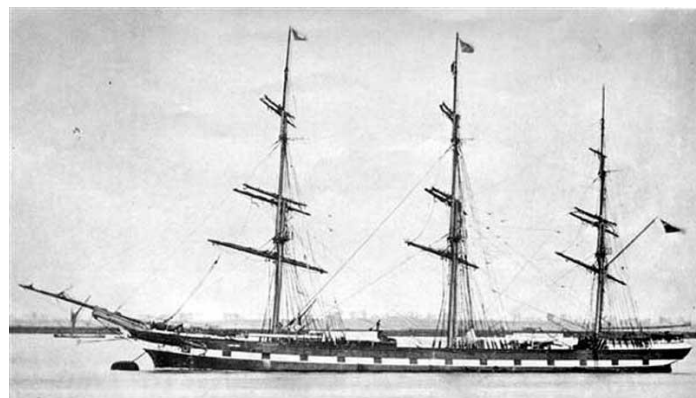
The Dunkirk evacuation began in order to save the British Expeditionary Force trapped by advancing German armies on the northern coast of France. Boats and vessels of all shapes and sizes ferried 200,000 British and 140,000 French and Belgian soldiers across the English Channel by June 2nd.

**May 29<sup>th</sup> 1953**

Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay are the first people to reach the summit of Mt Everest.

**May 31<sup>st</sup> 1878**

The iron clipper-ship *Loch Ard* wrecked on south west coast of Victoria near Port Campbell with only two survivors. (photo below)



**Recent Seven Seas Club Speakers:**



Dr Adam Paterson spoke at the SSC April meeting for "Flinders Night" and how he has developed an inter-active site at the Museum for accessing information on Flinders explorations.



Paul Rees, director of the National Motor Museum and the SA Maritime Museum receives a bottle of wine from President John Braendler for his talk to the SSC on his work.



Chris Barkham gave an interesting talk on his experiences on a variety of square riggers, including the "One and All". He also reflected on his incredible opportunity to skipper some very expensive yachts in the Mediterranean Sea.



May SSC meeting-Julian Murray gave a talk to the SSC about his association with the Friends of Paul McGuire Library. Julian also spoke about his work at the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron as Slip Master and the origins of his amazing shed!



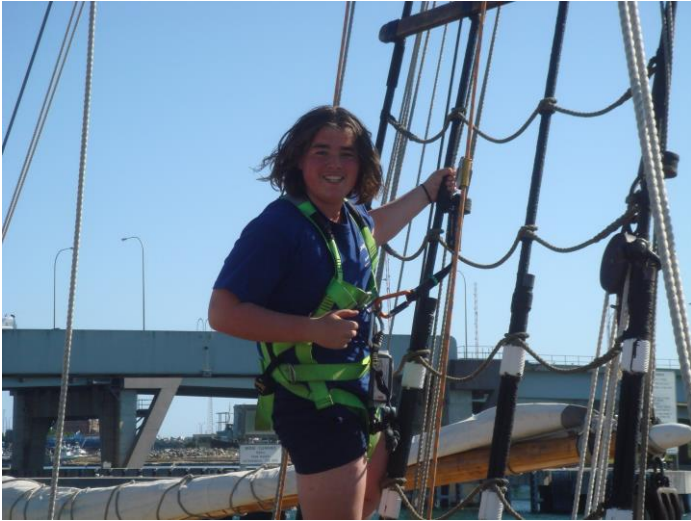
Guests attending the March SSC meeting-starting from the left and going clockwise around the table--Ian Roark, Nigel Barkham, Andrew Barkham, Bob Sexton and Bob Buchanan.

**Proposed Dinner Meetings & Speakers for 2021:-**

21 <sup>st</sup> July	Geoff Cann	Experiences as a Sea Shepard Captain
18 <sup>th</sup> Aug.	Cpt. Bob Smedley	Ship Handling School with Manned Models
15 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	Dr. Walter Dollman	Ancient Greek Sea Battles
20 <sup>th</sup> Oct.	TBA	Trafalgar Night
17 <sup>th</sup> Nov.	Ian Keane	Stella Maris
3 <sup>rd</sup> Dec.	TBA	Ladies Night

# Baxter & Grimshaw Foundation Inc.

One and All sponsored voyages



My name is Luke Swann and I was lucky enough to be sponsored by Baxter and Grimshaw to participate in a 5 day sail on the One and All. I am very grateful for being given such an opportunity. It certainly was a life changing experience for me.

I was very unsure and nervous in the days before we left. I knew if I chickened out, I would always regret it so decided to just do it and I might have an ok time. What actually happened was, that I ended up having the time of my life. I met some awesome friends and learnt so many new things. I hope I can go back as a volunteer one day.

When we arrived early that Sunday morning, we were divided into 3 groups. Port, Starboard and Middle watch groups. I was in the middle watch group. We worked in 4 hour shifts on the ship as crew. Doing everything. The hardest time of all for me was the first night. I hadn't slept much the night before and my group was placed on the graveyard shift of 12-4am. I was already so tired and had to work 4 hours in the dark and cold. Most of us got seasick the next day which added to the tiredness! I got over this and eventually got some sleep in my bunk!

We left on a sunny day, but the next day turned wild. Really windy and high seas! As we approached

Kangaroo Island, we had to side track due to the bad weather and head to Port Rickaby.

The next day once we were at Port Rickaby we went ashore to play some beach cricket. This was a lot of fun. We had all gotten to know each other by now so there was lots of banter and fun on the beach! Back on the boat after a couple of hours and right back to work.

The food cooked for us was amazing. In such a tiny kitchen. The chef was incredible, and all our meals were delicious and filling. The mess where we all ate was my favourite area as it was where we talked the most and got to know people in the other watch groups.

One of the most memorable moments for me was the day we returned to Port Adelaide. A few of us got to stand at the top of the highest jib as we sailed back into the harbour. It was such a great feeling. I felt that returning home like that symbolised for me, that we had reached the top of a challenge that seemed so daunting at the start.

Thank you again for supporting me and giving me such a great experience. I know how lucky I am and will never forget my One and All trip. Luke.



Madison on the right, with her foster parents and Baxter and Grimshaw Foundation representative, Barry Allison, before leaving on the trip on the One and All.

Madison is scheduled to speak to the SSC about her experience on the One and All.

## In Memoriam, Merchant Navy, 1939-45

No cross marks the place where we now lie  
What happened is known to but us  
You asked, and we gave our lives to protect  
our land from the enemy curse.  
No Flanders Field where poppies blow  
No gleaming crosses, row on row  
No unnamed tomb for all to see  
and pause, and wonder who we might be.  
The Sailor's Valhalla is where we lie.  
On the ocean bed, watching ships sail by  
Sailing in safety now thru' the waves  
Often right over our sea-locked graves.

We ask you just to remember us.



Letter to the SSC Australia :

Dear Member,

Further to my e-mail of this morning and, in particular, Item 2 on Prince Philip's passing, I do apologise for misspelling his name. It is Philip, with one "l", not two. I should have checked. Thank you to all those Members who have pointed this out.

Since sending out this morning's e-mail several Members have suggested collating similar anecdotes in relation to their encounters with Prince Philip for possible collation into a magazine tribute.

If anyone has similar stories they would like to be considered please pass them onto me or our Hon. Magazine Editor, John Callcut (whose name I am also determined to spell correctly from now on).

Thank you.

Best regards

*Director and Hon. Secretary  
The Seven Seas Club (1922) Ltd.*

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## Stranded at Glenelg



B 25195

The Yacht, Renown 3 (and others), stranded on Glenelg Beach after the "Hurricane strength" storm off of our metropolitan coast on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April 1948.

The height of the storm occurred in the early hours of Sunday the 11<sup>th</sup> of April. Winds measuring 81 MPH tore through Adelaide, unroofing houses, uprooting trees and causing widespread damage. It was reported to be the strongest storm in living memory with some 72mm of rain falling as well.



B 25194

All along the coast boats were wrecked, with hardly a fishing craft or pleasure boat left afloat. Two ketches were wrecked at Outer Harbour, a big freighter was torn from its moorings in the Port River and badly damaged. Large sections of the Brighton and Glenelg Jetties were swept away.

From a post by Grant GT  
Images: State Library



**Watercolour by John Ford of a Migrant ship approaching the Port River 1840**

## **Nautical Words-provided by John Ford**

### **Flemish Horse**

An extension of the foot rope on the end of a yard It has been suggested that Flemish horses (i.e. animals from Flanders in Belgium) were regarded as being more unruly than most, and hence the unstable outer "horse" acquired this name.

### **Three Sheets to The Wind**

Don't be taken aback to hear that sheets aren't sails, as landlubbers might expect, but ropes (or occasionally, chains). These are fixed to the lower corners of sails, to hold them in place. If three sheets are loose and blowing about in the wind then the sails will flap and the boat will lurch about like a drunken sailor. The phrase is these days more often given as 'three sheets to the wind', rather than the original 'three sheets in the wind'. The earliest printed citation that I can find is in Pierce Egan's *Real Life in London*, 1821:Sailors at that time had a sliding scale of drunkenness; three sheets was the falling over stage; tipsy was just 'one sheet in the wind', or 'a sheet in the wind's eye'. An example appears in the novel *The Fisher's Daughter*, by Catherine Ward, 1824:

## Handover Fist

'Hand over fist' is a little more descriptive of hauling on a rope than 'hand over hand', after all, when we grab on a rope to pull it, we do make a fist and then reach forward with our other open hand. This term makes an appearance in William Glascock's *The naval sketchbook*, 1825:

## Slush Fund

Despite it not being the apex of culinary delight, it was considered a perk for ships' cooks and crew and they sold the fat that they gathered from cooking meat whenever they reached port. This perquisite became known as a 'slush fund' and the term joins the numerous English phrases that first saw the light of day at sea. The sailors in the navy are allowed salt beef. From this provision, when cooked nearly all the fat boils off; this is carefully skimmed and put into empty beef or pork barrels, and sold, and the money so received is called the slush fund. In the same year, *The Army and Navy Chronicle* suggested that a ship's slush fund would be a suitable source of money to buy books for the crew:

To give men the use of such books as would best suit their taste, would be to appropriate what is their own, (viz.) the slush fund for the purchase of such works.

This is the beginning of the meaning we now have for 'slush fund', that is, money put aside to make use of when required. The use of such savings for improper uses like bribes or the purchase of influence began in the USA not long afterwards.

**The Bitter end** As you might have deduced, a bitt is a post fastened in the deck of a ship, for fastening cables and ropes. When a rope is played out to the bitter end, it means there is no more rope to be used.

**Tell it to the Marines** [The commanding officer] if a soldier complained to him of hardships that he could not comprehend, would be very likely to recommend him to "tell it to the marines"!

"He may tell that to the marines, but the sailors will not believe him."

## Swing a Cat .. Not enough room

Two meanings have entered our language for this saying. The first, which is the most common that when a sailor was to receive the punish of x number of lashes with the cat o' nine tails that the bosun had to be given plenty of room to swing the cat. The second is not so common. When the catboats were riding at anchor plenty of sea room had to be given in a tight anchorage to allow for the change in the wind.

## The Devil.....

This definition is from Admiral Henry Smyth's invaluable *Sailor's Word-Book: An Alphabetical Digest of Nautical Terms*, 1867. That definition wasn't entirely clear to me, but a correspondent who describes himself as 'an engineer and vessel constructor' clarified it this way: "Devil - the seam between the deck planking and the topmost plank of the ship's side". This seam would need to be watertight and would need filling (caulking) from time to time. On a ship at sea this would presumably require a sailor to be suspended over the side, or at least to stand at the very edge of the deck. Either way it is easy to see how that might be described as 'between the devil and the deep sea'.

## By and Large

When the wind is in that favorable 'large' direction the largest square sails may be set and the ship is able to travel in whatever downwind direction the captain sees fit. 'By' is a rather more difficult concept for landlubbers. In simplified terms it means 'in the general direction of'. Sailors would say that to be 'by the wind' is to face into the wind or within six compass points of it.

The earliest known reference to 'by and large' in print is from Samuel Sturmy, in *The Mariners Magazine*, 1669 "Thus you see the ship handled in fair weather and foul, by and large."



## Wide Berth - Goodly Distance

Like many seafaring terms it dates back to the heyday of sail, the 17th century. An early use comes from the redoubtable Captain John Smith in *Accidental Young Seamen*, 1626:

"Watch be vigilant to keep your berth to windward."

Berth came to be adopted more widely into the language, just meaning 'distance from'. There are several such figurative uses of the word, in the 17th and 18th centuries - 'a good/clear/strong berth' etc. We have to wait until 1829 for Sir Walter Scott's *Letters on demonology and witchcraft* for 'a wide berth' though:

"Giving the apparent phantom what seamen call a wide berth."

## Taken Aback

If the wind were to turn suddenly so that a sailing ship was facing unexpectedly into the wind, the ship was said to be 'taken aback'. An early example of that in print comes from an author called Eeles in the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, 1754:

"If they luff up, they will be taken aback, and run the hazard of being dismasted. "Note: 'to luff' is to bring the head of a ship nearer to the wind. The figurative use of the phrase, meaning surprised rather than physically pushed back, came in the 19th century. It appeared in *The Times* in March 1831:

"Whigs, Tories, and Radicals, were all taken aback with astonishment, that Ministers had not come forward with some moderate plan of reform."

## Larboard / starboard

the Italians derive Larboard from *quella borda* 'that side' and starboard *questa borda* 'this side' abbreviated to *star borda* and *la borda*.

## Under way

Weigh from the Anglo Saxon *Woeg* To move or carry. More confusion enters with doubts over the phrase's spelling. The term 'weigh anchor', and the fact that when ships are loaded with cargo and ready to sail they are weighed down, has led to the phrase being written as 'under weigh'. This a common enough misspelling to have become almost standardized; so much so that, in his 1846 *Nautical Dictionary*, Arthur Young wrongly suggested that under weigh was in fact the correct original spelling:

"Under way, this expression, often used instead of under weigh, seems to be a convenient one for denoting that a ship or boat is making progress through the water, whether by sails or other motive power."

## Tide Over 'Tiding over'

That is, the eking out of a small stock until a larger supply arrives, doesn't at first sight appear to have any direct connection with tidal waters. That's because the meaning of this phrase has changed slightly over the years. The original 'tiding over' was a seafaring term and derives ultimately from 'tide' being synonymous with 'time'. The literal meaning was 'in the absence of wind to fill the sails, float with the tide'.

## By the Board

The board is the side or the decking of a ship. In common with many nautical phrases, 'go by the board' dates back to the 17th century. Most of the early references to this phrase relate to masts of sailing ships that had fallen 'by the board'; for example, John Taylor's *Works*, 1603:

"In this fight their Rear-Admirals Maine Mast was shot by the board and *The London Gazette* No. 60/3, 1666:

"Our Main-stay, and our Main Top-Mast came all by the board."

It isn't clear exactly whether the phrase 'go by the board' originated with the meaning 'gone over the side' or 'fallen onto the deck'. The usually definitive Admiral William Henry Smyth gives equivocal meanings in his listing of the term in *The Sailor's Word-book: An Alphabetical Digest of Nautical Terms*, 1865

### **Fathom Out**

When we say that we fathom something now we mean that we grasp or understand it. In the Middle Ages to fathom something was, in keeping with the literal 'fingertip to fingertip' meaning of the word, to encircle it with the arms. From the 14th century onward, people who embraced each other were said to be fathoming. That meaning has now fallen out of use, which at least spares us from daily 'fathom and tell' stories in our tabloid newspapers.

### **All at Sea**

This is an extension of the nautical phrase 'at sea'. It dates from the days of sail when accurate navigational aids weren't available. Any ship that was out of sight of land was in an uncertain position and in danger of becoming lost.

### **As the Crow Flies -**

When lost or unsure of their position in coastal waters, ships would release a caged crow. The crow would fly straight towards the nearest land thus giving the vessel some sort of a navigational fix. The tallest lookout platform on a ship came to be known as the **crow's nest**.

### **Pipe Down -**

Means stop talking and be quiet. The **Pipe Down** was the last signal from the Bosun's pipe each day which meant "lights out" and "silence".

### **Toe the Line -**

When called to line up at attention, the ship's crew would form up with their toes touching a seam in the deck planking.

### **Rummage Sale -**

From the French "*rimage*" meaning ship's cargo. Damaged cargo was sold at a **rummage sale**.

### **Son of a Gun -**

When in port, and with the crew restricted to the ship for any extended period of time, wives and ladies of easy virtue often were allowed to live aboard along with the crew. Infrequently, but not uncommonly, children were born aboard, and a convenient place for this was between guns on the gun deck. If the child's father was unknown, they were entered in the ship's log as "**son of a gun**".

### **Taking the wind out of his sails -**

Sailing in a manner so as to steal or divert wind from another ship's sails.

### **Start Over with a Clean Slate -**

A slate tablet was kept near the helm on which the watch keeper would record the speeds, distances, headings and tacks during the watch. If there were no problems during the watch, the slate would be wiped clean so that the new watch could **start over with a clean slate**.

### **Touch and Go -**

This referred to a ship's keel touching the bottom and getting right off again.

**Dead Horse (Flogging a dead horse):** The term "flogging a dead horse" alludes to the difficulty of getting any extra work from a crew during a celebration held by British crews when they had been at sea four weeks and had worked off their initial advance (often one month's pay). At the expiration of the first month of the voyage, it was at one time customary to hoist in the rigging a canvas effigy of a horse. Today, "dead horse" refers to a debt to the government and/or advance of salary.

**Don't hand me a line:** An expression now used to ask for a speaker to consider telling the truth. This originated from the frequent observation that the person speaking or telling a story would not be helping to tie up boat lines or ropes while docking, but rather leaving the job to the other sailors.

**Holy Mackerel:** Because mackerel is a fish that spoils quickly, merchants were allowed to sell it on Sundays contradicting the blue laws in 17th-century England. The phrase "Holy Mackerel!" is still used today as an expression of surprise and/or astonishment.

•  
**Mind your P's and Q's:** Sailors would get credit at the taverns in port until they were paid. The barman would keep a record of their drinks on a chalkboard behind the bar. A mark was made under "P" for pint or "Q" for quart. On payday, the sailors were liable for each mark next to his name, so he was forced to "mind his P's and Q's." Today the term means to remain well behaved.

**Port and Starboard:** Port is the nautical term for left and starboard means right. Originally the words come from the old sailing ships that did not have a rudder and were steered using a board on the right side which became known as the "steerboard" side, the other side of the vessel was called the port side as the boat was docked on this side so as to not interfere with the steering board.

**Whole nine yards:** This expression means everything or all encompassing. The expression comes from the old square-rigged sailing vessels that had three masts with three yards of sails on each. The whole nine yards meant all sails were up.

### **Dressing down**

Thin and worn sails were often treated with oil or wax to renew their effectiveness. This was called "dressing down". An officer or sailor who was reprimanded or scolded received a dressing down.

### **flotsam and jetsam**

These are legal terms in maritime law. Flotsam is any part of the wreckage of a ship or her cargo that is lost by accident and found floating on the surface of the water. Jetsam are goods or equipment deliberately thrown overboard (jettisoned) to make the ship more stable in high winds or heavy seas. (Lagan are goods cast overboard with a rope attached so that they may be retrieved and sometimes refers to goods remaining inside a sunken ship or lying on the bottom.) The term flotsam and jetsam shore-side means odds and ends of no great value.

### **pipe down**

A boatswain's call denoting the completion of an all hands evolution, and that you can go below. It was the last signal from the Bosun's pipe each day which meant "lights out" and "silence".

Toe the line When called to line up at attention, the ship's crew would form up with their toes touching a seam in the deck planking.

### **Yankee**

The word Yankee is believed to originate with Dutch merchants. Dutchmen would refer to American sea captains as "yankers," which translates as "wranglers." This was apparently due to the Americans' ability to drive a hard bargain.

### **Feeling blue**

How often do you hear people talking about feeling blue or have the blues? An entire genre of music comes from this phrase. Who knew that came from the world of sailing? See-the-sea.org explains the popular phrase comes from a custom that was practiced when a ship lost its captain during a voyage. The ship would fly blue flags and have a blue band painted along her hull when she returned to port.

-Regards John Ford F.A.S.M.A.



## Anyndah

-Thanks to Capt. Bob Smedley for the history of his current boat-Anyndah

Norman Ford had **Anyndah** built by Searles boatyard in 1928. She was designed in 1914 by Albert Strange.

Norman had seen a design in an English yachting magazine and asked R. T. Searles and Son, boatbuilders of Largs Bay at the time, to build one the same.

She was launched at Cruikshank's Corner. The cost was 700 pounds.

The name **Anyndah** is likely to have come from an aboriginal word meaning **one**, as Norman only intended to have one boat, and he did.

In 1931 he won the inaugural single-handed Island Cup race against much bigger boats. Norman Ford was widely regarded as one of the two most outstanding Squadron Members before the Second World War along with Tom Hardy Snr.

Norman sold **Anyndah** to Mark Tostavin after WWII. Mark had an engine installed and later sold her to Doug Verco in 1954, he changed her to a cutter rig.

**Anyndah** was then sold to a man in Sydney around 1948. Keith Flint is recorded as the next owner, and he sold her to Bill Martin in 1962. Roy Wooding purchased her in 1974 and sold her to Harry Cook in 1977

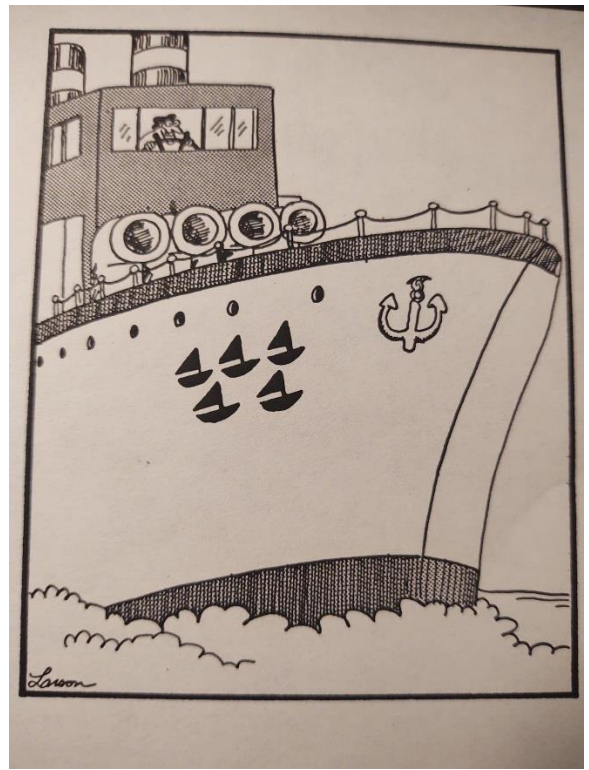
Other owners as far as we know have been:- 1990 Harry Murphy, 1993 Alan Rice and from 1994 Rob Smedley.



**She was often used as a Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron official boat as shown above in 1985**

*Editor's note: I would like to make this a regular feature-"Seven Seas Club Members Boats"*  
*Please consider providing a story about your boat for the newsletter for future editions*

## On the lighter side



Trevor Powell sent in the following random photos taken in Port Adelaide recently:



### SHIFT of AK FALIE - 3 June 2021

Auxillary Ketch Falie, photographed as she left the North Arm, Port Adelaide after slipping, under the tow of Maritime Construction's small tug, Mosman. Unfortunately, after these photos were taken she had to return to the shipyard and was taken strait back up the slip - 3/06/2021.



Container ship MV Holsatia, arriving at Outer Harbor - 23 May 2021



Metropolitan Fire Service's MV Gallantry patrolling the Inner Harbour - 26 May 2021



Pilot Vessel Norman Carr heading out from Outer Harbour - 28/05/2021



Trawler FV Frank Cori departing from the Outer Harbour, Port Adelaide - 2 June 2021

# Shoestring Single Hander

## The \$250 Pacific Crossing

Thanks to Ken Messenger for the article and to Capt. Peter Thomas for reformatting it for inclusion in the newsletter

Fred Rebell, in 1931 sailed a converted 18-foot racing skiff across the Pacific to the United States. This extraordinary seafarer even made his own navigational instruments.

Just after the Depression in 1930 his future in Australia looked bleak. Rebell had come from Latvia 23 years earlier and had been a moderately successful migrant, but with no prospects of regular employment, he decided to try his luck in the United States; furthermore, he resolved to sail there in his own boat.

Before long he found a craft which he described as “an 18-foot, centre-board sloop, of the type that had been perfected for racing on the sheltered waters of Sydney Harbour, and I bought her complete with sails for 20 pounds (\$40).”

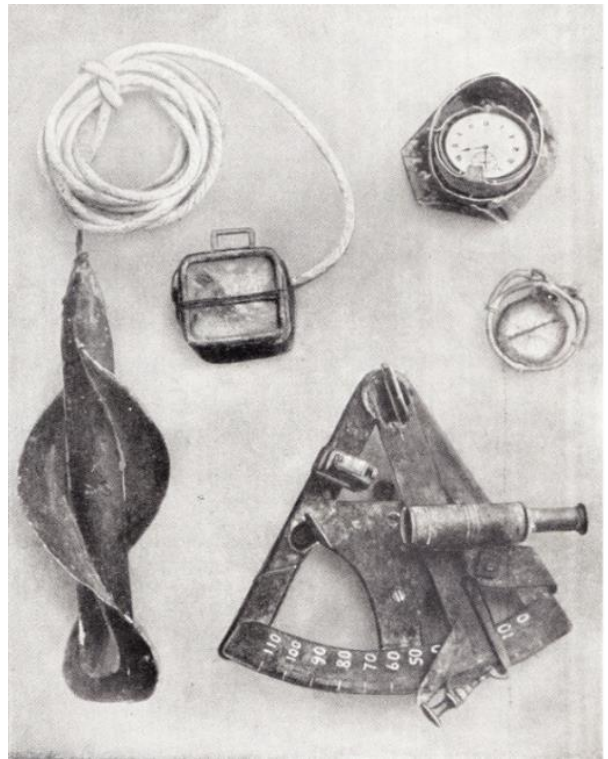
Fortunately, he was a carpenter by trade and so was capable of carrying out improvements to the boat. He then found employment as a handyman at 30 shillings (\$3) a week and from this, he saved enough to provision the craft for a year’s voyage.

He commented that in addition to a boat and provisions, a mariner needs navigation instruments and charts. This was beyond his means as he was very hard up.

Fred Rebell knew absolutely nothing about navigation instruments or how to use them. He submitted himself to a stern, self-imposed regime of study in the Sydney Public Library and he bought a 70-year-old Navigation Manual for reference when at sea. Meanwhile, he regularly practiced boat handling on Sydney Harbour.

Rebell’s method of making a sextant as outlined by himself reads:

“The materials I used for my sextant were several pieces of hoop-iron, a boy Scout telescope, an old hacksaw blade, and a stainless-steel table knife. I broke pieces off the knife to make the mirrors. The hacksaw blade was for the degree-scale. I chose it because of its regularly cut teeth and because I could bend it into an arc. I so chose the radius of the arc that two teeth made one degree”.



Next, a chronometer was essential and although Fred Rebell could not make one, he did the next best thing. He bought two cheap watches (each as a check on the other). He wrote “I slung them in gimbals, so that the motion of the boat could not affect them.”

Another essential instrument hand-made was the taffrail-log, of which he wrote “this is the instrument that records how far you have travelled through the water since it was last set. A spinner is trailed in the water and that turns cogs which actuate a dial on-board.” The device he made had a constant 20 per cent error but he allowed for the error and it served him well.

Charts were too expensive for the 9,000-mile voyage. Undaunted, he returned to the Sydney Public Library and set about drawing his own charts. He copied them from “a somewhat ancient atlas” and although they served him well, he wrote “it was not till later that I found the disadvantage of having used that old atlas, as some of the islands I came to had not been discovered when it was published.”

Provisioning for the voyage presented fewer difficulties than had at first been anticipated. Rebell estimated the voyage would take about a year. “True I could replenish my stores at islands on the way.” He wrote, “so I provisioned her with only six month’s supply of dry food. I packed it all in paraffin cans, fitted with screw caps: plenty of flour, which is to say: rice, wheat, pearl-barley, peas, beans, sugar, semolina, rolled oats, and powdered skim milk. Also, dried fruit, potatoes,

onions, lime-juice, olive oil, treacle, and yeast. I also took on board 30 gallons of water, in tins and drums which I had lined with asphalt (and it kept remarkably well like that). But because I was provisioning her at minimum cost. I could allow myself no luxuries. I took no tinned food, no tea, tobacco, spirits or medicines. My rationing allowed for one and a half pounds of dried food per day, and about one-third of a gallon of water. I might, of course, hope to catch some fresh fish; seawater would have to serve me instead of salt.”

He concluded his inventory with “a Primus stove for cooking, a bottle of methylated spirits, matches, and five gallons of paraffin. I also stowed on board an electric pocket-torch, my kit of carpenters’ tools, paint, pitch, bits of wood, nails and assorted odds and ends that I thought would come in useful during the voyage.” The entire cargo weighed, probably half a ton while his total expenditure on ship and stores was 45 pounds (\$90).



Finally, he named his sloop Elaine and although lacking any official “papers” whatsoever – without even a passport – on the evening of December 31, 1931, he beat out to sea in the teeth of a Southerly Buster. Exhibiting incredible naivete he sailed through Sydney Heads and set out on his 9,000 nautical mile odyssey.

He thought he was heading for New Zealand, but after four weeks at sea, he found he was in fact, some 200 nautical miles north of his intended course, so he steered instead for the Fiji Islands. A month later, with the hurricane season already begun and when he was down to his last gallon of drinking water, he sighted land; it turned out to be Yanutha Island, some 65 km from Suva on Viti Levu, main island of the Fiji Group.

He found the bottom part of his centre plate was missing. Now he understood why Elaine had slipped so many miles to leeward and had been ready to heel over in the lightest breeze.

Moving to Suva, Fred Rebell encountered considerable difficulties with the harbour authorities because of his lack of identifying documents. Nevertheless, in those happy-go-lucky days he managed to talk the bureaucrats’ round and eventually was permitted to go ashore.

During the seven weeks he lived among them, the friendly Fijians took him to their hearts. They also helped repair his boat, a job they did so well that on the day of his departure, April 20, he described the Elaine as a finer boat than when he left Sydney. She was also better equipped; for kind friends had presented me with a barometer and a proper set of charts.

After a few days at sea, Elaine began to leak. She had been long on the slip at Suva; her seams had opened, and she had dried out. So, he called at Naitamba to effect repairs, before later, he again set sail for Western Samoa.

On May 2<sup>nd</sup> he arrived at the port of Apia. He encountered no problems entering the port as the authorities had been forewarned of his arrival by radio from Suva. He remained for about a month before setting sail again on June 25, bound via the Danger Islands, to Christmas Island.

Approaching his destination, Rebell found he was sailing through a sea of abundance. Marine life was all around him. A large shoal of fish followed the boat. A school of porpoises played around while a flight of boobies soared above them. Then approaching the island, sharks came from everywhere, converging on the boat in a frenzy, they thrashed about and within seconds had snapped up the whole shoal before disappearing. Rebell anxiously sailed through an opening in the reef and thankfully entered the island’s lagoon. A few minutes later M. Rougier, manager of a French owned copra company on the island, came out in a launch manned by Tahitians to tow me to the company’s jetty.



For 11 days Rebell enjoyed the Rougiers' hospitality. Meanwhile, M. Rougier had Elaine slipped and repainted. When he took his departure on August 25, he found the boat had been given a new suit of sails, a supply of tinned foods and onions, yams and coconuts. The next port of call was to be Honolulu. At last, on September 15, he sighted Hawaii – only to spend five days becalmed with a yellow flag off Oahu. Finally, as nobody seemed to notice him, he sailed into the harbour of Honolulu. He stayed here for five weeks and set sail on November 3, for the United States. The longest lap of the whole voyage was now ahead of him.

On December 10, when he was 37 days out, he ran into a cyclone, passed through its centre and survived. On December 28, the tiller broke, and the mainsail was blown to shreds; later in another gale, he lost the storm jib, and the boat was nearly swamped, yet he pulled through and on January 3, 1933, he raised land, San Nicholas Island, about 1101 km south west of San Pedro.

Unfortunately, a week later, Elaine was driven aground in a harbour squall and subsequently became a total wreck. Fred Rebell eventually returned to his native Latvia but, in 1937 he bought a Baltic fishing boat and set out again, bound for the romantic isles of the South West Pacific.

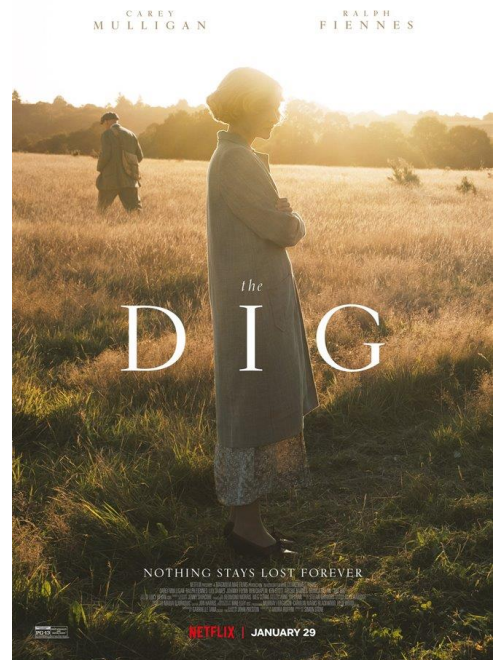
Above magazine article produced from “**Escape to the Sea**” – The Adventures of Fred Rebell who sailed singlehanded in an open boat 9,000 miles across the Pacific.

Published by “Digit Books” R475 Brown, Watson Ltd London



**Disclaimer:** The views expressed in advertisements and articles published in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the SEVEN SEAS CLUB of AUSTRALIA.

## Film of the month:



In 1939, archaeologist Basil Brown (Ralph Fiennes) arrives in Woodbridge, Suffolk, at the behest of landowner Edith Pretty (Carey Mulligan). With the help of his apprentices Peggy (Lily James) and Stuart (Johnny Flynn), Brown searches the property for any significant finds until he stumbles upon the remains of a Viking burial site. Naming the site Sutton Hoo, Brown's discovery challenges the conceptions of British history to their very core, making significant strides in the field of archaeology in the process. Based on true events. Directed by Simon Stone.

## SSC LADIES NIGHT

**OUR LADIES NIGHT DINNER MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS CLUB, 207, EAST TCE., ADELAIDE**

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

at

**1900 FOR 1930 HRS**

**RIG OF THE DAY – SMART CASUAL**

**All Members, partners, and their guests are invited to attend this special Dinner Meeting. Guest speaker for the evening will be Peter Shaughnessy who will speak on the reasons for increasing number of NZ Fur Seals in the SA Marine and Murray Environment,**

**Covid-19 precautions and procedures apply as required by venue**



