



CASTLEMAINE CAPERS

An Occasional Newsletter

Issue 2 – Dec 2022

Welcome to the second issue of the *HMAS Castlemaine Museum Ship* newsletter.

Since the amazingly successful 80th birthday event the volunteers have been winding down and preparing the ship for the summer. This means putting the awnings up in an attempt to minimise the heat inside the vessel. As is the ships tradition the awnings go up around Cup Day and come down around Easter and I'm pleased to say we did not break tradition and the awnings are well and truly up. Unfortunately our volunteer photographer was engaged in some other very important task (polishing brass) and, thinking he would have plenty of time for photos, took his time. In past years the erection of the awnings has sometimes been akin to a comedy sketch and took many hours, however this year it went like clockwork and was done before the poor photographer realised it. There are a number of reasons for this but mainly it was the more sophisticated labelling and tagging system employed when they were taken down last Easter!

Our landlord Parks Victoria, who to be fair look after us pretty good, decided they had a problem with some of our mooring lines. In particular the steel cables used for our spring lines. This necessitated changing the steel for rope and making a few other adjustments to some of the rope lines. This took place in early November and below are some of the volunteers hard at work.



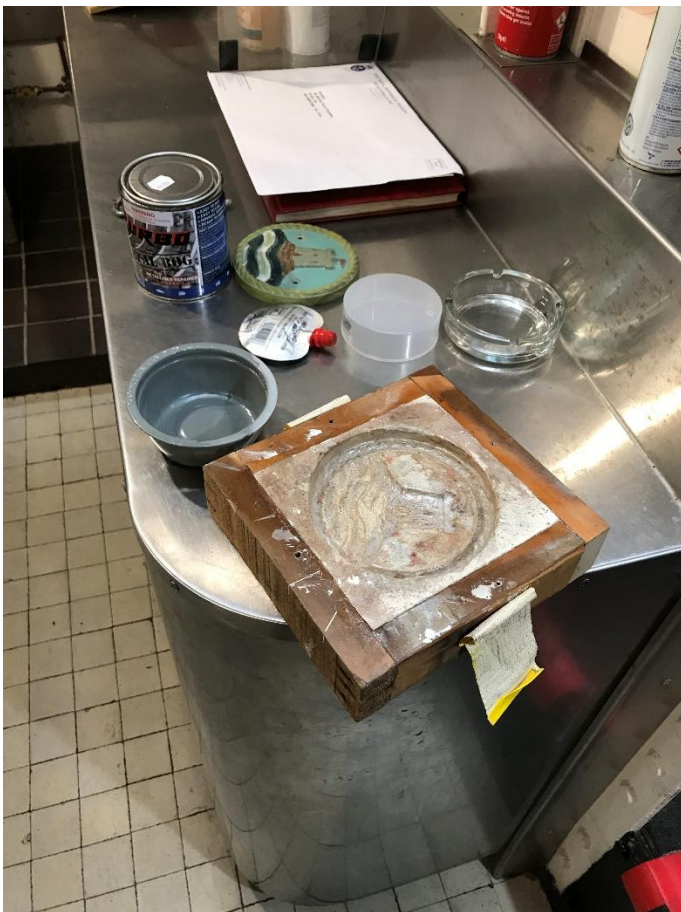
Above: Mike on the stern feeding a rope across to Andrew & Noel. Below: Dennis, Martin, Mike & Andrew



Left: Noel, Dennis & Andrew fighting the ropes and at right Geoff coiling an old wire spring.



Andy made a suggestion that the port side motor boat should have a ships crest on both sides of the bow same as the starboard side lifeboat. After much searching and head scratching a mould for the required crest was found in Bobby Gerring's store. Andrew took it upon himself to make two of the crests, using the mould, out of a tin of bog that contains fibre glass found in the paint store.

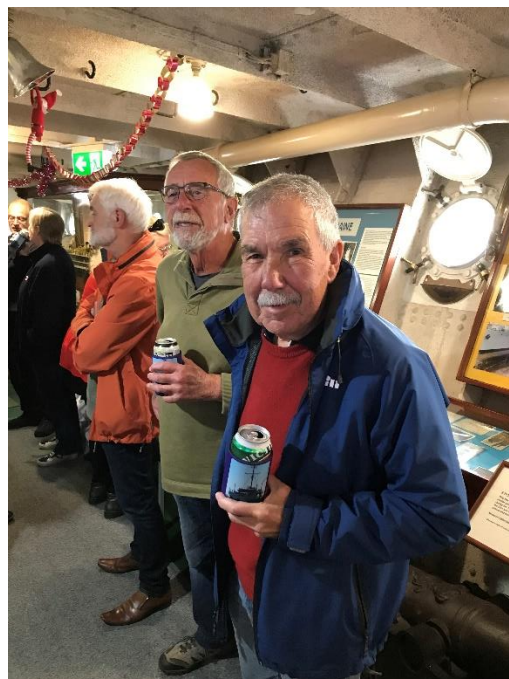


Left: all the makings inc. a metal crest which we are trying to replicate (and a stray ashtray?). Right: mixing the bog (I hope that stirrer isn't an expensive hacksaw blade Andrew).



Mixing the cake and the finished product, not bad considering we weren't sure it would work. A bit of paint and it will look fine on the motor boat, now to make another!

On Wednesday 14th Dec we had our annual Christmas drinks do. Due to the shocking weather the function was held in the Seaman's/Stoker's mess (museum) rather than the more salubrious quarter deck. After having our grand bash for the ship's 80th in October it was decided to have a small intimate gathering and just as well too as we would have been a bit squished in the mess. Below are a few photos and if you were there and don't feature I apologise on behalf of the photographer who is only an amateur.





On our Tuesday maintenance days the usual tasks continue apace although we never seem to get very far ahead (like painting the Sydney Harbour Bridge, or the Forth Bridge if you are from Scotland). Tasks such as polishing brass, cleaning the decks, chipping and painting, eating cake/biscuits and drinking tea/coffee. It's all in a day's work for our very willing and capable volunteers. The volunteers who man the ship on our public open days are doing a great job also, we have had a fantastic year in terms of feet over the gangway, money in the kitty and sales of souvenirs.

Going back to the ship's crest for the motor boat, the second one was made successfully and both were painted by Andy. In the next edition of *'Castlemaine Capers'* I will include photos of the intricate task of installing them on the motor boat.

I would just like to take a few moments to mention one of our volunteers who is doing it tough at the moment. Doug Lapham, who has been known to spend many a Saturday down on the ship, is a bit crook over in WA. Our thoughts go to Doug, Dot and family and get well soon Doug.

On a sad note two of our esteemed colleagues John Halton & Russell Hopton crossed the bar this year – RIP fellas.



And, in closing this second edition of our newsletter, I would like to wish you all and your families a Merry Christmas & Healthy New Year.

Bob