

CASTLEMAINE CAPERS

An Occasional Newsletter

Issue 3 – Apr 2023

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

I'd just like to give a shout out to our volunteers who man the ship on our public open days, weekends and public holidays. They have missed out on a mention in past newsletters but they are just as valuable as the Tuesday blokes it's just that they don't get as dirty.

Our port side lifeboat is now resplendent with the new crests on both sides of the bow. Part of our Electrical Department (Jim & Noel) took on the task of affixing them. Why electricians you may ask, because their department had the glue.



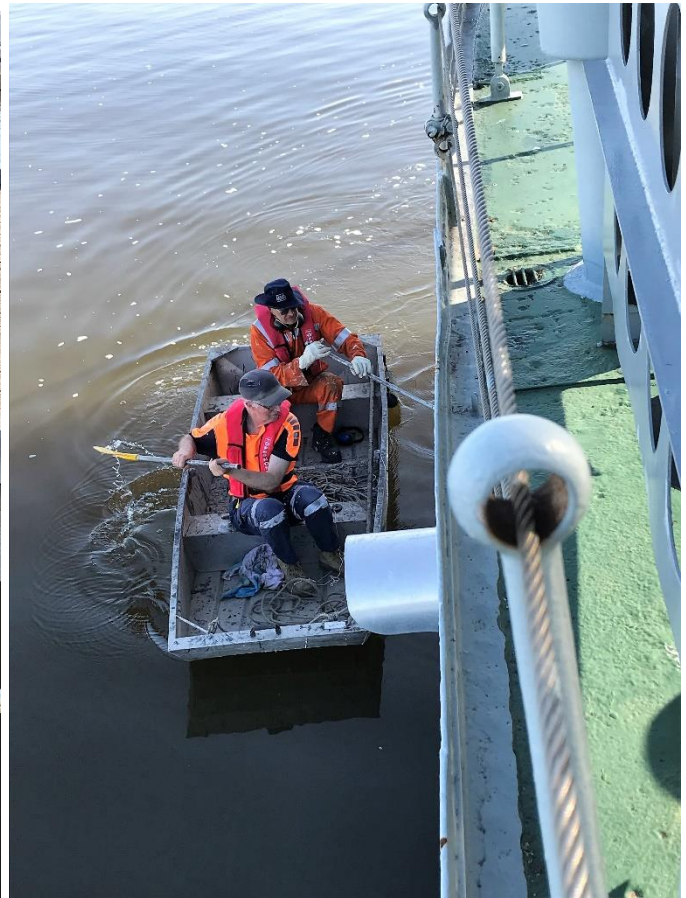
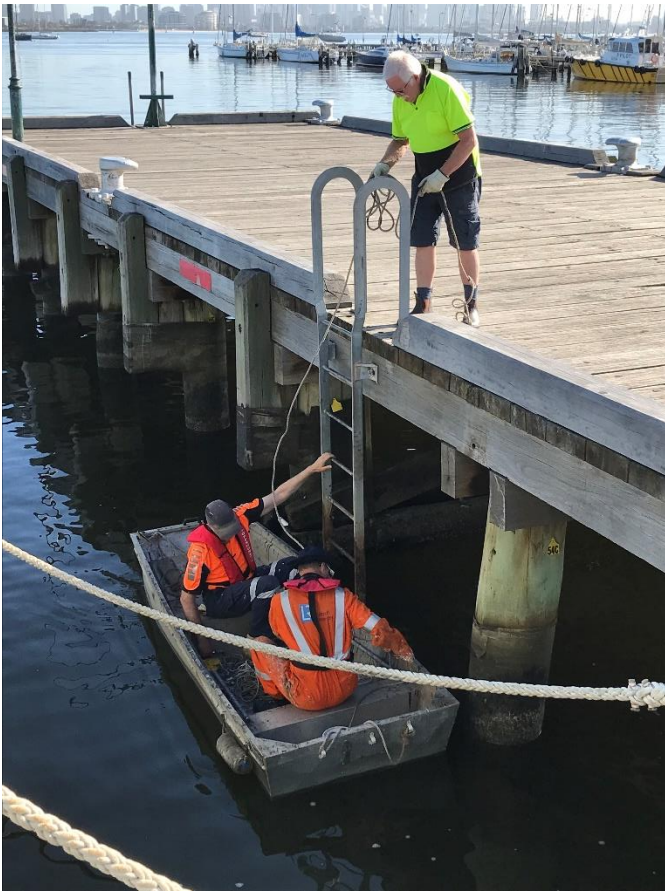
Meanwhile continuous maintenance continued with Martin slapping on the grey on the Carley float.



The deck in way of the fwd. windlass has been receiving some attention from Andy with his favourite tool the 'Rattle Gun'. As part of the maintenance of the windless plinth the timber edging was removed for some refurbishment. The timber was in pretty good nick so thanks to Mike and his singing tools the refurbishment is well under way.



One of the more interesting ongoing tasks is keeping up with the condition of the area of the hull around the wind and water line. To do that requires two intrepid volunteers to float around in our punt and address areas of rust with the 'rattle gun' hanging over the ships side followed up by paint. In the pictures below are Andy and Martin, two of our younger (it's a relative term) volunteers taking to the water.



Geoff and his team (Mick) has continued his mammoth undertaking of painting just about everything in the engine room. Two examples are below, valve chests and pumps.



The Southern Cross diesel engine has also been subjected to Geoff's care having been overhauled, cleaned and painted as you can see from the before and after pictures below. It is hoped to have the engine running again soon once the fuel pump and injectors return from being re-furbished.



Apart from two diesel engines, the Southern Cross above and a lovely purring Gardner, every piece of machinery on the ship was designed to run on steam. All machinery is operational and is run regularly, however as we can't make steam we use compressed air.

It is now eight years since the ship was in the Alfred Graving Dock and the ship's sides were painted. Over the last few months the port side is gradually receiving a new coat of grey. Most of the work is undertaken by leaning over the side of the ship with a long pole and small but very efficient roller. The pictures below show Dennis with the pole and Jim spotting.



If you can't reach that particular spot with a pole from the deck then we put the pole in the punt with two intrepid sailors who love mucking about in a boat. Besides they're building up their sea time. In the pictures below we have Noel and Andy 'mucking about'.



During March we had the pleasure of hosting five people from Castlemaine. Three councillors and two representatives from Flowserve – was Thompsons, Kelly & Lewis makers of our main engines and some of our auxiliary machinery. It is about 20 years since we had contact with the City of Castlemaine and now, thanks to Dick's efforts, we have re-established a link between our ship 'Castlemaine' and the city she was named after. Our new relationship with Flowserve has already resulted in them sending us a set of vintage photos related mainly to the production of marine steam engines at their factory in Castlemaine. This gives us an idea of what Australia was capable of doing in those years leading up to and during WW2. Both groups were presented with two framed photos of the ship: one in Port Moresby in 1943 and one leaving Alfred Graving Dock in 2015. Also a framed copy of the drawing showing the ship with the three paint schemes used during her active service. A plaque designed and made by Dick from a section of the original wood mast with an inlaid 1920 penny, same as the original penny placed beneath the mast according to tradition.



On the left Mike, Dennis & Dick with the representatives from Flowserve and on the right the three councillors.



Dennis and Dick with our visitors after the presentation.

As you may well know there is more to preserving the ship than doing jobs in overalls and getting your hands dirty. There is the administration of the project as a whole which is managed by a committee with the admin jobs shared amongst the committee members. One of the biggest tasks is ensuring we have the cash flow to pay our bills and fund our maintenance projects. To that end, as an all volunteer organisation with no government or corporate support we, the Maritime Trust of Australia (HMAS Castlemaine), have to rely on entrance fees collected at the gangway when we are open to the public for the majority of our funds. Other sources are donations, in money or in kind, and grant monies from various private, local, state and federal agencies. Grants have to be applied for and there is no guarantee that we will be successful. However we have had some success in recent years with projects such as the new Honour Board in the Mess Deck/Museum - grant money provided by the DVA 'Saluting Their Service' scheme. We have also had success through the Commonwealth Volunteers Grant scheme administered through the office of our local member Tim Watts. That scheme has provided us with scaffolding, safety equipment and first-aid training. We also received grant monies from Hobsons Bay City Council towards running our 80th birthday celebrations and the publication of our book 'HMAS Castlemaine - The Corvette That Came Home'. Those are just some examples of the assistance we have received over the years to help keep the ship floating and in good repair to preserve for future generations and present to the public on our open days.

Other tasks involve maintaining our assets register, this includes all the museum items displayed in the mess deck and throughout the ship. Ensuring that the exhibits are displayed in good order and working towards new and perhaps more relevant exhibits in the future.

A job that can be overlooked when making sure the ship is presentable to the public is polishing the brass work on the bridge and in the engine room – a big thank you to all who polish the brass!

Also, a big thank you to all our volunteers for whatever you do to make it all possible.

The next edition of this newsletter will include photos of the crew taking down our awnings, make sure not to miss that.

The 'Castlemaine Capers' newsletters are also available on our website:
hmascastlemaine.org.au

If you have any comments or contributions, please send them to me Bob Pearson at
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Cheers & TTFN

Bob