

# CASTLEMAINE CAPERS

An Occasional Newsletter

Issue # 6 – Dec 2023

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Welcome to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of our occasional newsletter.

We are coming towards the end of another successful year in the operation of Australia's best presented museum warship, *Castlemaine*. Not only have we had a good year in regards to visitor numbers but also our ongoing maintenance programme is achieving our goals. In the back of our minds when thinking about maintenance is our next docking. It is now just over eight years since we were last in dry dock in 2015 so the time is now approaching where we will need to be docked again. Although Alfred Graving Dock is still there in the BAE shipyard it is no longer a viable option (never say never!) and there is no other slipway available in the Port Phillip area. So where do we go, food for thought eh?

As always we are endeavouring to enhance the visitor experience and this year saw the introduction of our first two dummies (see Newsletter #5). We have a new innovation planned for the engine room next year – more on that in the next newsletter. We now have a computer based asset register which has been gradually filled throughout the year and which will hopefully be complete soon. The package; tablet, camera and programme was obtained through a grant from Hobsons Bay City Council.

Researching and recording the history of the ship and the men who served on her in wartime is an ongoing task. Over the years the names of the crew members have been gathered and are presented on an Honour Board situated in the Mess Deck/Museum. In addition we have folders with copies of all service records, service certificates and other relevant documents for each man and, where available, photos. We have the same replicated on our on-board computer. This year Kerry began searching the internet for crew member photos and has managed to find about maybe thirty (sorry Kerry I didn't keep track!) which have gone into the files and also on our website. We have also managed to find another seven crew members that we were not aware of so their names have been squeezed on to the Honour Board.

In late October we had visits from sailors from the Marine & Electrical Engineering School at HMAS Cerberus.





So that's what a spanner looks like!

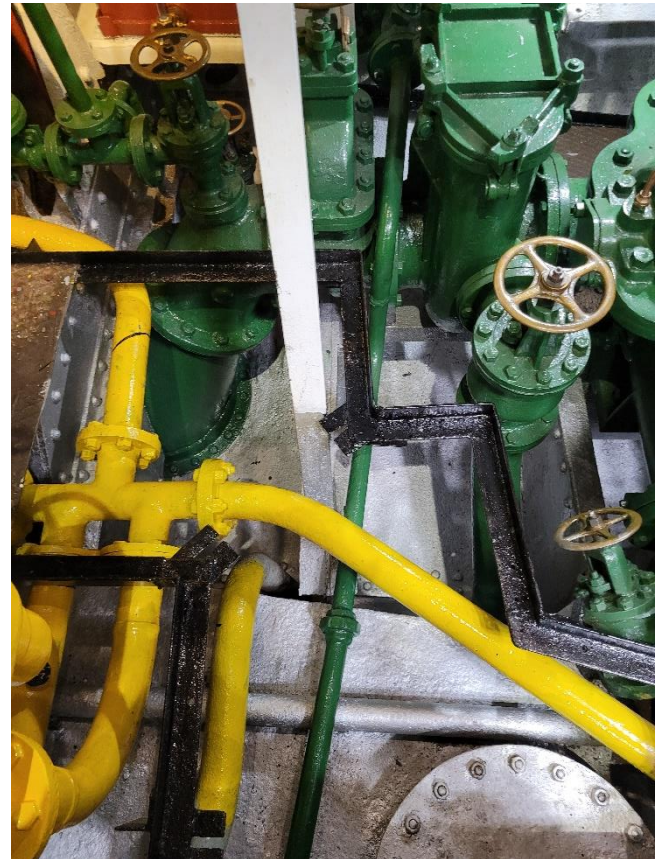
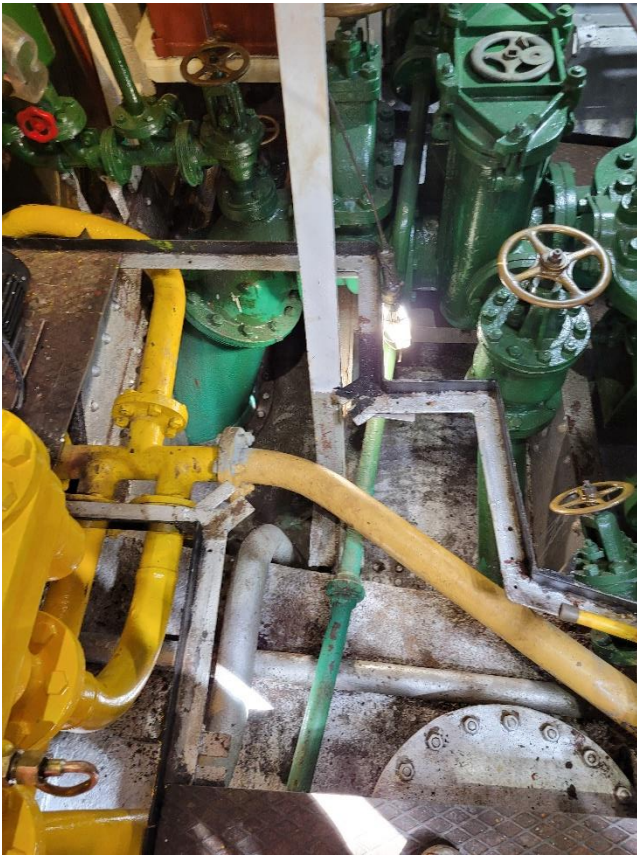


*(Photos HMAS Cerberus)*

Our 'Bilge Rat' Geoff has been busy cleaning, scraping and painting the bilges. Also replacing the broken chain on the port engine drive.

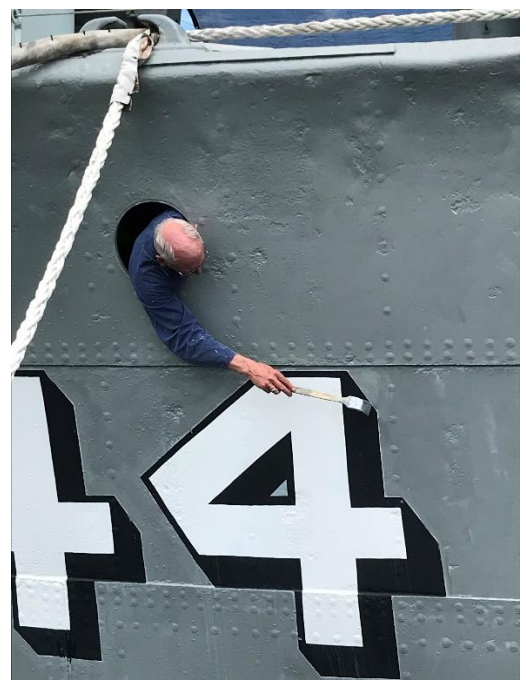


By special request, from Geoff, the two pictures below show a before and after of part of the bilge.



In the last newsletter I reported that the painting of both port and starboard sides of the hull was complete. That was not strictly true as there were small sections in way of the pennant numbers on both sides that needed a more delicate artistic touch.

'Cometh the Hour Cometh the Men' to paraphrase some ancient Greek. On the starboard side we have Martin in the punt and Andy, showing not only his artistic side but his circus skills as well, on the plank. On the port side Dennis being a little bit safer but no less artistic.



On Dec 14<sup>th</sup> a small intimate drinks and nibbles soiree was held on the after deck for volunteers their partners and friends of the ship. The reasons for holding this event are firstly to thank all these people for their efforts over the year and secondly we've always done it so why break tradition!



Dennis giving his Presidential 'State of the Ship' address

I would like to offer, on behalf of the committee, our thanks to all our volunteers for the work that you put in to keep the ship in its remarkable state of preservation. That includes the workers at our Tuesday maintenance days and the people who man the ship on public open days, which provides the funds to keep doing the maintenance.

I'd also like to thank the people who provide services to the ship, people I'd like to call 'Friends of Castlemaine'. Bill & Susie Gerritsen of Australasian Corrosion Consultants who provide our cathodic protection, Greg Blunt for organising updates of our Honour Board and Kate Lance our publisher and website guru for all her work and advice.

And lastly thanks to all the wives, partners etc. as without your understanding and provision of day release chits none of what we do would be possible.

Please visit our website now and then as there is always something new. Indian Corvettes is the latest.

All the 'Castlemaine Capers' newsletters are also available on our website:

[www.hmascastlemaine.org.au](http://www.hmascastlemaine.org.au)

If you have any comments or contributions, please send them to me Bob Pearson at [newsletter@hmascastlemaine.org.au](mailto:newsletter@hmascastlemaine.org.au)

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all  
Bob