



e-news: February 2009

The best of Australia in the heart of Tasmania

If you are one of the 40,000 people who enjoyed the wonderful four days of maritime and woodcraft celebrations from 6th – 9th February, you'll want to put the dates of the next Australian Wooden Boat Festival in your diary: 11th – 14th February 2011. Less than two years away! If you have suggestions for improvement, special features, or other items to include in the Festival please let us know. We do listen to what you have to say, and it's worth noting that the Indigenous Watercraft project and display idea came about following a suggestion from a boat owner received in mid-2007.

In spite of a drop of rain on Saturday, the eighth Australian Wooden Boat Festival was a wonderful event. Rather than include photos in this newsletter, a selection of some of the shots taken by our volunteer photographers is now up on Flickr at the following address:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/awbf2009/> you can scroll through the photos or select a slideshow.

According to many of the 550 owners who brought their wooden boats to this year's Festival, it was the "best ever". The range of boats on display was the main highlight for the majority of owners, and with a quarter of the boats being first-timers there were plenty of new vessels to admire in the Hobart docks.

Whether you watched it from the water or the shore, Friday's Parade of Sail was superb, setting the scene for a long weekend of boating pleasure. Tall Ships the *James Craig*, *Enterprize*, *Young Endeavour*, *Lady Nelson* and *Windward Bound* looked magnificent on the River Derwent with hundreds of boats all headed for Sullivan's Cove.

Docking over 400 boats on the Hobart waterfront was no mean feat, but with a dedicated team of 70 dock crew volunteers and skilled boat handling by the skippers, the job was done efficiently and without too much drama. Cathy Hawkins and Roscoe Barnett are to be thanked for their coordination of the docking plan and taking care of all matters relating to boat management.

Boats ashore, including the model boats numbered 164, and again there were many new vessels for boat owners and festival-goers alike to admire.

The options for getting out on the water were increased this year with "mini boat paddling" for children as well as rowing with Mission Afloat. The "mini boats" were scale models of the "Feather" dinghy being made as part of the Community Boat Building. An on-water program for larger boats included rowing, a classic yacht rally and a closing sail past, all of which were coordinated by volunteer On-Water Manager, Peter Pangas. The amazing "18 Footers" - replicas of some of the historic Sydney racing skiffs – also raced twice a day and looked sensational preparing to leave Kings Pier as well as when racing.

As well as established features such as the Tasmanian Perpetual Trustees' Shipwrights' Village, the Maritime Marketplace and the ever-popular Quick 'n' Dirty, two new events – Community Boat Building and the Marine Insurance Australia "Ocean to Plate Food Theatre" added a new dimension to the on shore activities.

- 2 -

Participants in the Community Boat Building were all thrilled to get their boats completed by launch-time on Monday, and entries for the 2011 event have already been submitted! Ian Johnston, master of the Quick 'n' Dirty was also the coordinator for the Community Boat Building, with boat builder Mark Singleton being the tutor and mentor for all the participants.

Another special feature at the Festival was the Indigenous Watercraft marquee which housed a Tiwi Island dug-out canoe built specially for the Festival, an interpretive display, and a stringy-bark canoe which was built during the Festival.

The excellent music and entertainment program was a hit with every age-group and added to the vibrant atmosphere at Sullivan's Cove. Saturday was a beautiful evening, and one to remember as the Giant Hamsters got people up and dancing to old-time favourites. Terrapin Puppets were a hit in the Entertainment Tent, as was Captain Amy and the Good Ship Lollipop.

The Tasmanian Government have already confirmed funding will be available for the next two Festivals and the AWBF Committee are already talking to groups from Japan and other people who are interested in being part of the 2011 event.

Fast facts

- 2009 was the eighth Australian Wooden Boat Festival
- The festival site, including land and water was approximately 3 acres
- More than 550 boats afloat and ashore (end to end, a flotilla of over 4.5km)
- 72% of boats were from Tasmania
- The longest boat was the James Craig – around 230ft (70 metres)
- The smallest boat (not a model) was Eximious II – a baby cradle – 3ft 9½in.
- 17 of the 85 model boats on display were from interstate

Over 4 days there were:

- 200 entertainers including musicians, singers, Morris dancers, puppeteers and a magician
- 300 volunteers – docking boats, manning stalls and gates, providing site and admin support
- 34 marine trade exhibitors from anchors and antiques to propellers and paint
- 16 specialist display sites – from woodcraft and weather to whales and vintage machinery
- 15 food outlets, including the "Seataste" stalls, and 2 bars

Superb timbers

The number of different timbers on site over the weekend is anybody's guess, but 20 we know were there for sure are: Huon Pine; Beech; Teak, Ash; Cedar; Blackwood; Elm; Spotted Gum; Celery Top Pine; Cedar; Red Gum; Oregon; Mahogany; King Billy Pine; Swamp Gum; Yellow Tallow Wood; Jarrah; Kauri; Hoop Pine.

A very big thank you to all our sponsors and supporters

As most people now appreciate, the Festival is a massive undertaking, both from a resources and a financial perspective. The Festival would not continue without the generous support of the Tasmanian Government and the contributions made in sponsorship and in-kind support from a broad range of organizations, community groups and businesses, all of whom we acknowledge and thank for their involvement.

- 3 -

The Festival itself makes a huge contribution to the brand image of Hobart and Tasmania, and plays an important part in attracting not only visitors and their cash to the island, but presenting Tasmania as a thriving state which offers a lifestyle unmatched by others.

A closing note from the Chairman

To end the final edition of the 2009 Festival e-newsletter, AWBF Inc Chairman, Steve Knight writes:

The magnificent port of Hobart was host again to the 2009 Australian Wooden Boat Festival. Despite at times inclement weather, the festival was an outstanding success. Tens of thousands of people, many of whom were visitors from interstate and overseas, milled around the waterfront, with happy smiling faces; they were surrounded by a myriad of wooden boats, large and small, all glistening with pride. Traditional nautical skills were on display, to the wonderment of patrons. Nautical and maritime industries were there to support the festival, and to show their wares. Entertainers roamed around the waterfront, whilst the delightful smells coming from the food stalls enticed the happy patrons.

In my view, the festival was a showcase for those marvelous wooden boats, for the marvelous port and city of Hobart, and the beautiful State of Tasmania.

However, the success of the event was due to the hard work and contribution made by so many. There were many boats that came from far away, indeed, we had vessels at the festival from every State and Territory of Australia, and some from overseas. It was a major effort for many of you to come to the festival, and that effort is sincerely appreciated. We hope to see you next time!

There were hundreds of volunteers, many of whom had taken leave from their jobs, to help with the festival. They cheerfully rolled up their sleeves, and got struck in wherever and whenever was required. Each day, many turned up early, and many stayed until very late. Many volunteers worked for weeks before the festival, and again, after it. Thank you to all of you.

The marvelous contribution to the festival by our management team also needs to be acknowledged. Our festival manager, Rob McGuire, managed a great event; our media and marketing manager, Lois Ryan, and office assistant Bronnie Long, both worked tirelessly towards the success of the event. Thank you to you all and to all of the others who assisted to manage various aspects of the festival, from dock masters to entertainment, from the Shipwright's Village to the Maritime Marketplace, and everything in between.

I hope to see all of you, and as many of your friends as you can muster, at AWBF in 2011!

- 4 -

We would like to thank all our volunteers, supporters and sponsors for their contribution. Our major sponsors are acknowledged below.

