



Volume 5, Issue 1



January 2015

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN S.H.F.

G'day Shipmates, Members and Friends of the Cape Don,

On behalf of us all I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Peter King for his remarkable piece of engineering in the planning and construction of "Kings Bridge" over the air gap in the lower walkway.

Kings Bridge gives us a much-needed temporary safer crossing across the damage section of the lower walkway until the northern end of the walkway is repaired and access stairs constructed. Kings Bridge will then take on a new role as an access gangway to the ship whilst repairs are carried out on the Starboard gangway.

Peter has worked tirelessly over the last couple of months, both at home and down at the ship, in designing, procuring all the necessary materials, preparing all the materials and finally directing the constructing of the Bridge on site over the first working weekend for 2015.

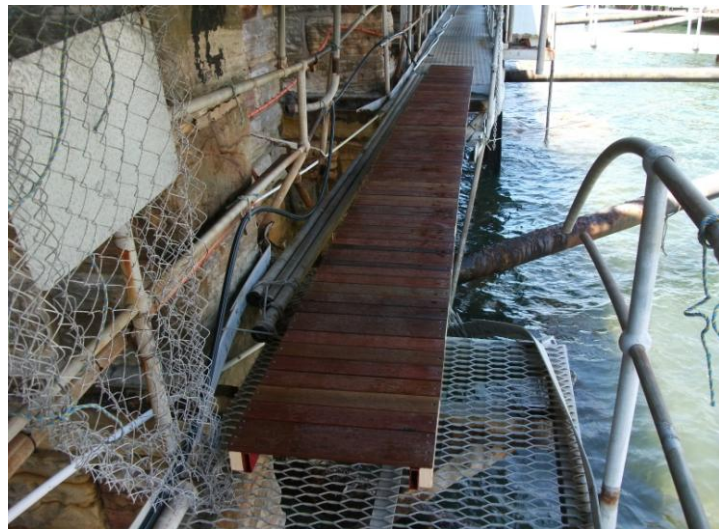
Peter's design and engineering skills were very much apparent as we mere mortals assisted in the construction of the Bridge, especially his method of tensioning the main support beams with chains tensioned by centre bolts of his design. Also the timber deck is made up of varying widths of timber and Peter had a spreadsheet which indicated precisely where the varying widths of timber were to be located along the frame. At various intervals, whilst laying the timber deck, Peter checked the measurement between the leading edge of timber and the first timber laid and low and behold, it was always spot on to his spreadsheet measurements!, (maybe half a mil out!!)

Peter's tenacious determination with our ship restoration project is an inspiration to us all as to what can be achieved with dedication and hard work against all the obstacles which have been placed in front of the MV Cape Don Society over the last 11 years.

Peter, - "Kings Bridge", a job well done shipmate!!

Calm Seas & Safe Harbour

Brian Hart  
Chairman  
Sea Heritage Foundation



"Kings Bridge"

## FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT.

Shipmates ...

January has gone already but we have managed to kick a goal of sorts. One of the more basic challenges we faced, was getting on board our ship in a safe manner. For some time we have had to tread very carefully over three water pipes lashed together that spanned a gap in the catwalk that runs along the base of the coal loader wall. The gap of some six metres was caused many years ago by the collapse of a gantry directly above that was part of the coal loader system. How to bridge this gap without spending months building a heavy structure ? It happened this way.

The bridge had to be light enough so that two or three people could manhandle it yet strong enough to support a larger person (say 120kg) carrying a load.

Rolled / rectangular hollow section (RHS) steel is supplied in 8 metre lengths making it ideal to span the six metre gap. 75 x 25 x 2 mm section was chosen by the writer in 'seat-of-the-pants' fashion. Angle iron was welded between these RHS sections to serve as cross members. Some very old light channel was found in the machine workshop of the Don; this was also welded in as cross members near the centre of the RHS lengths. Obviously these RHS lengths would need some kind of bracing so a strut of pipe was employed to hold lengths of chain away from RHS, forming a bracing triangle. Once the structure was welded and cleaned, two coats of Rustmasters Metal Master was applied. This was followed by three coats of Wattyl red spray paint.

This steel framework was topped with hardwood decking (forest red, spotted gum and jarrah); hardwood chosen over treated pine for durability. The decking was treated with tung oil and screwed with 232 stainless screws to lengths of painted radiata pine. The expression that 'a picture says a thousand words' would be entirely appropriate in this instance. The plans and photos are on the web site and of course explain better than any written script is able to.

A big thank you to Daniel Callendar, John Stokes, Warwick Whalley and Brian Hart for transporting, manhandling, assembling and placing the bridge. Best of all, this little project didn't drag on for months as some others have.

Cheerio for now, hope we can maintain the momentum.

Peter King  
President

*Photos on next page*

## FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

MEMBERSHIP.

Hello shipmates, excellent news about the improved access to the good ship MV Cape Don! On that exciting note I invite you all to renew your commitment to the restoration of the ship by paying your annual membership fee and if you're feeling particularly generous maybe a small donation?

Membership for one year is \$30.00 Single, \$20.00 Student, \$55.00 Family. Print off the membership form from the web site and submit it along with payment.

Full access to the ship is a little way off but rest assured the Committee is working furiously to make it happen ASAP, you'll be notified when Working Weekends are back on.

John

# KINGS BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION



*Work begins*



*Ready for painting*



*Primer on*



*Peter installing chains*



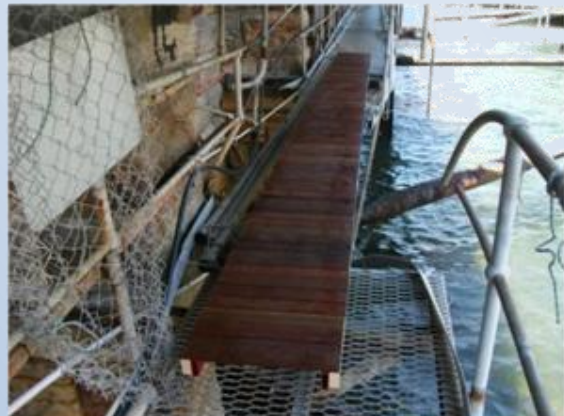
*Planking the bridge*



*Laying the bridge top*



*Very good job Peter, well done*



*Safe access stage one*

*Photos Peter King John Stokes*

## YOUR MEMORIES OF THE CAPE SHIP

This year being the 100th anniversary of the CLS and the museum would like to gather stories of life on board the Cape ships over the years. We have many photos in our photographic record but unfortunately little in the written record section.

Over the years we have received several emails from former crew-members with great stories of life on board the Cape ships. We had access to diaries which were scanned and returned to the owners. Time is moving on so if you could tap that keyboard or put pen to paper and get those stories to us it would be much appreciated and the stories will not be lost.

They can be emailed to the Curator [curator@mvcapedonsociety.org.au](mailto:curator@mvcapedonsociety.org.au) or sent to Curator CLS Museum PO Box 4194 Hawker ACT 2614

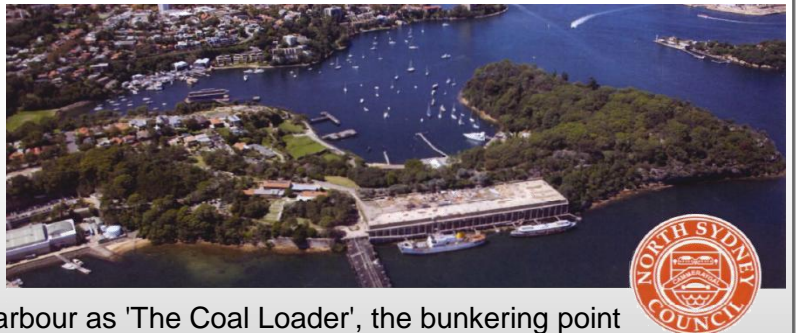
### MEMORIES OF LIFE ABOARD SS CAPE YORK AND MV CAPE PILLAR

Hobart-based writer, Geoff Heriot, has begun researching aspects of the history of the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service, with specific focus on the work and experiences of the lighthouse tenders. He is hoping to make contact with former crew-members or other persons with knowledge of the *SS Cape York* and *MV Cape Pillar*, in particular (potentially also those who served on other Cape vessels). In this centenary year of the service, Geoff has received archival documents and photographs from the family of his late uncle, Captain Stan Heriot who spent a total of 38 years in *Cape York* and *Cape Pillar*. He is assessing that and other available information as the basis of telling the story of the ships and their people.

Geoff Heriot is a former foreign correspondent and ABC senior executive whose recent published work includes the well-reviewed book, *In the South: Tales of Sail and Yearning*. More information about Geoff is available from his website: [www.heriotmedia.com](http://www.heriotmedia.com). He may be contacted by email - [gh@heriotmedia.com](mailto:gh@heriotmedia.com) - or phone, 0419 382739.

Warwick

This photo was lifted from a letterbox flyer from North Sydney Council advising residents of a community forum to be held in the Waverton precinct. You will note that the Cape Don is front and centre. Astern is the former Manly ferry Baragoola.



The mooring facility is known in Sydney Harbour as 'The Coal Loader', the bunkering point for all coal fired ships and tenders in Sydney. Ships loaded with coal from Newcastle (62 nautical miles north up the coast) would unload while moored where the Cape Don is now berthed. The coal was stored atop the structure and dispensed through chutes onto rail wagons which travelled out along the wharf and unloaded the coal into the waiting boats tied up alongside. The bay behind the coal loader is Berry's Bay, site of a controversial waterside development sponsored by the state government in spite of strong opposition from North Sydney Council and vehement protests by the local residents.

The headland to the right of the coal loader is known as Balls Head, named after Lieutenant Henry Lidgbird Ball who as master and commander of HMS Supply of the first fleet, explored the area extensively.

Also in the photo is HMAS Waterhen - bottom left. Goat Island is top right.

## Contact Us:

**Ships Location:** Old Coal Loader  
2 Balls Head Drive  
Waverton NSW

**Postal Address:** MV Cape Don Society Inc.  
PO Box 5759  
South Windsor  
NSW 2756

**Email:** [committee@mvcapedonsociety.org.au](mailto:committee@mvcapedonsociety.org.au)

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