

## Melbourne Branch

The Log  
The Monthly Newsletter of the Melbourne Branch of  
The Company of Master Mariners of Australia Limited

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## From the Branch Master



At the Branch AGM held on 29<sup>th</sup> March all members of the existing Branch Court were reelected unopposed. Our Treasurer Chris Noon wishes to be relieved of his position but to date nobody has offered to take the Job. This is very disappointing and does not bode well for the future of the branch

The meeting agreed to the closing of our CBA cheque account. This will mean that in future all our accounts will be with WESTPAC.

The Treasurers report showed that we returned a small surplus for the year. Our membership numbers fell by four during the year.

The Federal AGM was held in Sydney on the 9<sup>th</sup> April. During the last year our membership has dropped from 499 to 483. The only branch that continues to grow is Western Australia.

Financially the Company overall returned a surplus of \$16416 but most of this was due to WA's World Maritime Day which goes from strength to strength.

Melbourne and Brisbane had small profits but Sydney, Newcastle and South Australia had small losses. The cost of running the Federal Court continues to grow and as a result the Federal Levy has been set at \$80 for next year and the Membership Application Fee will rise to \$150 from 1<sup>st</sup> July.

The directors agreed to proceed with planning for a CMMA Congress in Fremantle in April next year.

A sub committee has been established in the WA branch to work with the event organizer INFORMA. Their first task will be to confirm that the proposal is both financially and logistically viable. The congress held in WA some years ago was very successful but that was during boom times and the economy in the west is not nearly as buoyant today.

The Directors bestowed life membership on Ted Van Bronswijk and Ian Dickson. Ted is the Sydney Branch Master and Federal Master. He was elected Branch Master in 2003 and is the longest serving Branch Master in the history of Sydney Branch.

Ian Dickson served as secretary of SA branch from 2000 to 2017. During this period he was also Editor of their newsletter. He is now the branch Treasurer.

Iain Steverson was awarded life membership some months earlier.

The Outstanding Achievement Award for this year has gone to Captain Warwick Norman the CEO of Rightship.

The major problem facing the Company is the increasing average age of the membership. 39% of members are 71 or older Attracting younger members is therefore a priority.

Next year the AGM will be held in WA hopefully in conjunction with the CMMA Congress.

*Capt. Ian French*



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## February Speakers Summary

The speaker at the February Meeting was Maurie Hutchison the President of the Peninsula Ship Society who spoke about the flight of a Japanese aircraft over Melbourne during WW2.

Japan entered the war on 7<sup>th</sup> Dec 1941 when it bombed Pearl Harbour. Japanese forces spread rapidly through Asia and the Pacific and on 15 Feb Singapore fell. On 19<sup>th</sup> Feb they carried out the first bombing of Darwin. To the people of Melbourne these events all occurred thousands of miles away and because Melbourne was not a major naval or military base it was considered an unlikely target for a Japanese attack. It came as quite a surprise then when on 26<sup>th</sup> Feb a Japanese aircraft flew over the Port of Melbourne. The Japanese wanted to know what naval forces there were in the SW Pacific so they sent Submarine I-25 on a mission to find out. I-25 left Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands on 5<sup>th</sup> Feb, arrived off Sydney 9 days later and used its float plane for a reconnaissance flight over Sydney Harbour. The I-25 continued south and from a position near

King Island launched its float plane for a flight over Melbourne. The aircraft was a Yokosuka E14Y, a small single engine float plane with a crew of two. The pilot was Warrant Officer Nobuo Fujita. The aircraft was stowed in a cylinder on the submarines fore deck. It had to be removed from the cylinder, have the wings attached and loaded onto a catapult which launched it into the air. Fujita flew to Point Lonsdale then along the western shore of Port Phillip passing over the airfield at Point Cook then over the Port of Melbourne. He returned to I-25 via the eastern shore of the bay. The aircraft then had to be lifted on-board, disassembled and restowed in the cylinder. I-25 continued on its mission and made flights over Hobart, Wellington, Auckland and Fiji before returning to Japan for a refit. The I-25 then made 2 voyages to the west coast of North America. On the second voyage Fujita flew two bombing missions during which he dropped 4 incendiary bombs into the forests of Oregon. His attempt to start a forest fire failed but Fujita had gained his place in history because they were the only enemy bombs to fall on the US mainland during the war.



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# April 2017

## February Speakers

### Summary Contd.

On the voyage back to Japan the I-25 sank two tankers and a Russian Submarine. Nobuo Fujita survived the war and died in 1997. The I-25 was not so fortunate and was sunk by a US destroyer in September 1943. Maurie Hutchison gave a very interesting talk on a little known chapter of WW2 history.

## March Speakers

### Summary

Captain John Carroll was the speaker at our March meeting. He gave us an update on the restoration of the Alma Doepel. John is a former Melbourne Branch Master, former

Federal Master and former Master of the Alma Doepel. The ship was built in Bellingen NSW and was named after the daughter of the owner Fredrik Doepel. In 1904 she entered service in the coastal trade carrying mainly timber and wheat. In 1917 she was acquired by Henry Jones and Co. and used to transport jam concentrate from Tasmania to the IXL Jam Factory in South Yarra. During the Second World War Alma Doepel was commissioned by the Australian Army as AK82 and used to carry stores and equipment to New Guinea. After the war she resumed trading across Bass Strait. In the 1960's with her rigging except for the fore mast removed she became a limestone carrier in Tasmania. In 1976 she was bought by Sail Adventure Ltd and the long process of restoring her back to a sailing ship began. This work was completed in time for Alma Doepel to take her place in the tall ships fleet for the Bicentenary Celebrations in Sydney. The next 12 years were spent as a sail training ship on Port Phillip.

## March Speakers Summary Contd



During this period thousands of people many of the youngsters undertook training voyages. In 2001 Alma Doepel was relocated to Port Macquarie and became a static display at Lady Nelson Wharf. The ship's condition continued to deteriorate and in 2008 it was decided to return her to Melbourne for a complete restoration. The voyage back to Melbourne took 9 days which included 2 days in Jervis Bay sheltering from bad weather. By 2011 funds have been raised to place the ship on a barge, the planking was stripped and restoration of the frames and beams began.

After over 100 years most of the timber was still in good condition. The ship was built of a variety of spotted gum. This timber is now in short supply but enough has been secured to complete the work. The next phase of the restoration is to re plank the hull.

While work on the hull was going on other volunteers have restored the ship's fittings. These are now in storage ready to be re installed when the hull work is complete.

At this stage it is hoped to have the Alma Doepel back in the water in 12 months and to complete the restoration in 3 years.

What is needed now is money to pay shipwrights and other skilled people to complete the work.

Restoring an old wooden sailing ship is a massive job and it will be a great day when Alma Doepel returns to work as a sail training vessel.





## Outstanding Achievement Award

The recipient of this year's Outstanding Achievement award is Captain Warwick Norman.

Following a successful career at sea with ASP, where he was the youngest officer promoted to the rank of Master in the company history, Warwick became a vetting officer for cargo owners. He became chief executive of Rightship. Rightship was awarded the Prime Minister's Australian Exporter of the Year award for 2013 and the Business Services Award. AMSA has, for more than a decade, worked cooperatively with Rightship Pty Ltd to ensure that a high standard of shipping is charted for the Australian trades. AMSA and Rightship routinely share data on ship inspection outcomes and have cooperated in relation to statistical analyses of the probability of individual ships being found to be unseaworthy. The significant contribution by Rightship in assisting charterers to select high quality ships has resulted in the company's expansion in recent years into the main international Centre's for shipping ,providing assessments to a wide range of clients in all continents on the merits of a high proportion of the world's commercial bulk cargo fleet.

Warwick is one of just six "Australian Export Heroes" honoured in 2014 by the Export Council of Australia. That award acknowledges the efforts of individuals behind the companies that have achieved outstanding export results. Under Warwick's stewardship , Rightship has become a global authority on maritime safety and environmental sustainability helping shippers, terminals and ports, ,ship owners, managers and maritime finance organizations across the world minimize their maritime and environmental risk.

Warwick has been CEO at Rightship since its inception in 2002. Rightship completes over 35,000 vets per year, supporting more than 3,000 users in over 250 organizations worldwide. In 2014 alone Rightship removed over 900 unsafe ships from customer supply chains.

Warwick has lectured in tanker safety at the AMC and served as a Board Member of the Seafarer's Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation Board and the Maritime Council. He is also the current chairman of the Australian Marine Environmental Protection Association. Warwick is indeed a worthy winner of the Outstanding Achievement Award.



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## Miscellanea



### George Cross Malta

On 9<sup>th</sup> April the Maltese Australian Association conducted the Commemoration of the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the award of the George Cross to the people of Malta.

The ceremony is usually held on the fore court of the Shrine of Remembrance and at the Shelter of Peace but due to the wet weather it was moved into the Sanctuary of the Shrine.

With the Branch Master and Deputy Branch Master both away in Sydney for the Federal AGM the branch was represented by Alex Evered who did one of the readings and laid a wreath.

The report suggests that the second port would be required before the expiry of the 50 year lease of the Port of Melbourne.

### Sewol Salvaged

What should be the final act in the tragic story of the South Korean Ferry Sewol occurred last month with the refloating and removal of the wreck. When the ferry capsized and sank on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014, 304 people were drowned, most of them high school students on a school excursion.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Container Port

Last month Infrastructure Victoria released its estimates of the costs of the two proposed sites for Melbourne's second container port. Building the port at Bay West would involve dredging 28 million cubic metres of sand and rock from Port Phillip and possibly involve widening the shipping channels. The cost is estimated at \$6.14 Billion.

The estimated cost of a terminal at Hastings is \$12.8 Billion which includes \$5 Billion to build a freight rail line to Melbourne.

## WANTED

### Branch Treasurer

This is an opportunity for someone to step up and do their bit to keep the branch functioning.

It is not a difficult job. Our accounting and banking system is simple and easy to use and plenty help is available should you need it.

