

## Melbourne Branch

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

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**NEXT MEETING 30th October 2019**

**Presentation on the profile of  
COMMA and future directions.**

## In this issue:

- From the Branch Master
- ANL Maritime Art Prize
- Speakers Summary
- Autonomous Vessels Forum

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## From the Branch Master

A Federal Court meeting was held on 11<sup>th</sup> October by telephone conference call.

The Registrar's report to the meeting showed that in the six months since the AGM in April the membership of COMMA has fallen from 421 to 397. All branch lost members including Western Australia which in recent years has been the only branch that has been growing.

WA recorded a reduction of 13 made up of 11 resignations, 5 terminations and offset by only 3 new members. During the same period Melbourne's numbers dropped from 105 to 99.

In response to its falling membership the WA Branch has contacted various government and private organisations that employ Master Mariners with the aim of getting them to encourage their employees to join COMMA. This has had some success and shows that we have to go out looking for members not just waiting for them to find us.

The Federal Secretary is in negotiations with a potential Editor for the Master Mariner Magazine. She is the wife of a WA member and is involved in publishing. On a related matter the Honourable Company of Master Mariners in London is interested in sharing news items and stories of interest with us. The Federal Secretary will look for any suitable items in the branch newsletters.

Initial contact with the Governor Generals Office regarding the continuation of Vice Regal Patronage of the Company produced no result so the Federal Master and the Federal Secretary will take the matter up again. Meanwhile there are a number of membership certificates requiring signing.

Membership applications by Johnathan Willes, Keith Hagen, Yazdi Khambatta, Brent Warhurst and Josh Gonslaves were ratified.

The next Court meeting will be in January where the agenda and arrangements for the Federal AGM will be discussed.

*Capt. Ian French*



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## ANL Maritime Art Prize and Exhibition



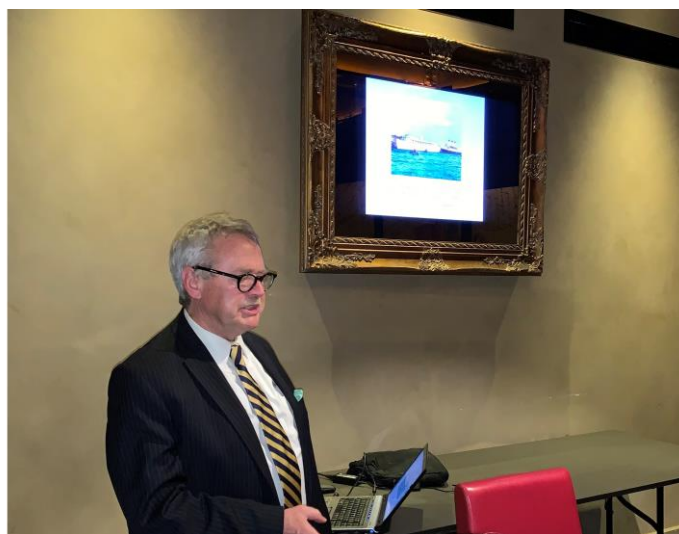
The Official Opening of the ANL Maritime Art Prize and Exhibition was held at the Mission to Seafarers on 3<sup>rd</sup> October. Artists used a variety of mediums to respond to the theme "The Relationship between Humanity and the Sea". 250 entries were received of which 90 were selected for hanging.

The entries showed an eclectic array of interpretations and ranged from traditional maritime scenes to abstract in the extreme.

The \$15,000 First Prize went to Maria Kontis for a Pastel on Paper entitled "Barely surviving and merely looking on". In her statement on the picture (shown above) the artist wrote "From the beginning seafaring was associated with humans not content with their limits. Despite all warnings humans brave the ferocious seas. The shipwreck fascinates us- it is the story of our transgressive passion".



## September Speakers Summary



The speaker at the September meeting was Tim Ryan who has spoken to us on a number of historic subjects the most recent being the history of McIlwraith McEacharn. This time his subject was “Operation Hannibal” and the loss of the “Wilhelm Gustloff” and “Cap Arcona”

In early 1945 Admiral Donitz ordered Operation Hannibal which was the evacuation of an estimated 1.2 million German soldiers and civilians from East Prussia as a result of the relentless advance of the Russian Army during the final stages of World War 2. The operation which lasted 15 weeks involved hundreds of ships ranging from fishing vessels to large passenger ships including “Wilhelm Gustloff” and ‘Cap Arcona’.

“Wilhelm Gustloff” had been built as the flagship of the Nazi “Strength through Joy” organisation in 1937.



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## September Speakers Summary Contd



The ship was carrying evacuees from Gdynia Poland when it was torpedoed by the Soviet Submarine S-13 in the Baltic Sea on 30 January 1945. An estimated 9,400 people died making it the largest single ship disaster in maritime history. By comparison the sinking of the “Titanic” resulted in the loss of 1514 lives.

“Cap Aruna” was the flag ship of Hamburg Sud and had been a luxury liner before being requisitioned for war duties. As part of operation Hannibal she evacuated 26,000 German soldiers and civilians from East Prussia. “Cap Aruna” was being used as an accommodation ship for Nazi concentration camp prisoners when she was attacked and sunk by the RAF as part of an operation against German shipping. An estimated 5,000 were killed making it the second highest loss of life behind “Wilhelm Gustloff”

Tim gave a very interesting talk on one of the largest, yet least known, humanitarian evacuation ever undertaken.



## Australian Autonomous Vessel Forum 19-20 September 2019



The source of the following notes on the forum is AMSA with additional notes by Capt. Francis Castellino who attended the Forum

Hosted by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and the Trusted Autonomous Systems Defence Cooperative Research Centre (TAS DCRC) on 19-20 September 2019, 135 industry, academic and government experts in automation and digitalisation, were invited to share their knowledge and learnings in this growing industry. The forum provided a valuable and timely opportunity for some great discussion and debate around the potential developments within Australia's industry in the near future.

It marked a positive step towards regulator and industry collaboration to ensure thorough testing, trials and safe use of the systems, infrastructure and technology gaining traction in Australia's maritime industry.

Among the operational issues that were highlighted (in no particular order):

- Autonomous vessels within inland or inshore waters is close to reality. Sweden has commenced trialling autonomous inter-island ferries. However, ocean navigation by autonomous vessels is still a dream. There would still need to be crew on board to intervene as required.
- Remote pilotage is also being looked at, and may become a possibility in the near future, especially with VTS digital capabilities improving. This will improve safety of pilots as most accidents occur when embarking and disembarking.
- So too, remotely operated tugs are close to reality with control centres now being trialled in Germany and Sweden.
- The implications of the above means that vessels may be manoeuvred in/out of ports by the pilots and tugs in control centres located in another part of the world.
- There is still no clear-cut legislation addressing the design and construction of autonomous vessels and their navigation. For a start, the Collision Regulations (eg Look-out) are written for a manned bridge and will have to be amended to look-out by detection equipment. Would autonomous vessels still require navigation lights or light and sound signals? Then there's also the indeterminate phase when crewed and autonomous vessels could be interacting in proximity.
- IMO legislation could take anywhere between five and ten years to be finalised and published. In the meantime, AMSA must develop their own legislation as we already have numerous remote operated vehicles and autonomous vehicles operating in Australia, doing surface and sub-surface survey work.



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## Autonomous Vessel Forum Contd.



The forum also reinforced the vital roles that professional seafarers will continue to have in Australia's maritime industry.

### Key forum themes

1. Success in automation and remote operation is achieved through continued **collaboration and partnership**. Shared learnings between industry and regulators enables success in industry and for regulatory development.
2. Uptake of automation and remote operation is **driven by environmentally- friendly solutions and commercial efficiency**.
3. Proven and assured technology offers **better safety for people** and protection of Australia's marine environment.
4. **Understanding risks and implementing risk controls** for remotely operated and autonomous vessel technology is crucial to safe operations.
5. Building **assurance in the behaviours and functions of a system**, rather than specific technology, will define a 'safe system'.
6. Regulators need to **enable testing, trials and safe failure** of both technology and regulation.
7. Australian and international laws don't recognise remote and autonomous operation. However, there is **flexibility and objective-based solutions** that allow remote and autonomous vessels to operate. These are often underutilised and present opportunities.
8. Automation and remote operation is happening today, and **seafarers are essential** to its success. Jobs at sea are changing, with new opportunities emerging alongside technology.
9. Cyber security is an industry issue, but it's important to **regulate the need to detect, respond and recover** from a cyber-attack.

### Next steps:

- AMSA will continue to rollout information, guidance and resources relating to automation and remote operation.
- AMSA is progressing its policy and regulatory work on remotely operated and autonomous vessels in line with its Autonomous Vessels Policy.
- AMSA will explore the implementation of policy for the trials and testing of automation and remote operation in Australian waters.



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