



It's Alma month! www.almadoepel.com.au

The Log

Newsletter of the Melbourne
Branch of the Company of Master
Mariners of Australia

May 2013

In This Issue:

Branch Master's Report	2
News	3
Events	4
Noticeboard	4
Court Minutes	5
Speaker Summary	6
Member's Lounge	7



Alma Doepel beautifully depicted in oils by Jack Woods

JACK WOODS

Master

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce,
Governor General of the
Commonwealth of Australia

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From the Branch Master

Hello again members.

It is with some relief I can report a somewhat quieter month on the CMMA front. Life is still very busy otherwise, but I am sure you are a little tired of hearing from me, so I'll keep it brief. Even if that means, as Joanna just pointed out to me, that she will have to make my photo larger to compensate... you just can't win!

As mentioned in last month's Log, I had to report back to the Melbourne court that the federal court had voted on a \$10 increase in the federal levy per member. The court was supportive of this move, given that there has been no levy increase for ten years. This does not automatically mean that your subscription will go up. The subscription is still set by individual branches, and next years' subscription level is yet to be discussed.

However the issue of whether subscriptions should be set at a universal rate by the federal court, or continue to be set regionally to match the local members' needs and means has already been placed on the federal agenda and is likely to be vigorously debated in upcoming months. The Melbourne court has already spent time on this discussion but has not yet set a position, so if you feel strongly about this either way, please let a member of your court know. In order to get a better idea of the implications of making such a change, I have asked the federal court to be provided with a list of all the different subscription values. I will keep you posted on how discussions proceed.

The winter months are almost upon us and with it our switch to lunchtime meetings. We do apologise for those who find it difficult to

make these meetings, but we look forward to seeing those members who can only attend during the day. As usual, we will endeavour to line up some speakers who will appeal to members of



our associated organisations, in an effort to swell our numbers, and help fulfil our 'relevance' charter!

I'd like to thank Captain Don Whelan for coming all the way from Bendigo to give us a powerful reminder of the need to be extremely diligent at all times when captain of a vessel in slightly-less-than-friendly-waters. Even with years of experience under one's belt, it is only too easy to be caught out by small things, and it is important to be reminded every now and then that the worst does sometimes happen to us, or someone we know. Don's talk was honest and direct and very sobering. Very much worth hearing.

Finally I'd like to welcome to the ranks of CMMA three former colleagues – the current harbour master of the Port of Melbourne, Captain Gary Wilson, deputy harbour master and projects manager Captain Glenn Santos, and VTS Manager Captain Stephen D'Souza. I look forward to seeing you all at a meeting very soon!

Wrap up warm to go around, and I'll see you at the next dinner.



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News

Sail & Adventure Aims to Raise Ten Thousand for Alma

Sail & Adventure has put out an ‘urgent call to action’ in order to raise ten thousand dollars towards the Alma Doepel’s restoration.

“We need to urgently raise \$10,000 at a crucial stage in the Alma’s restoration,” says Alan Edenborough, Sail & Adventure’s chairman.

“Please take a moment to read about the challenge we face at this very critical moment in the ship’s history.

“We cannot afford to miss this miraculous opportunity!”

The opportunity he refers to is an invitation to use the BAE graving dock in order to further critical restoration work. The Melbourne Branch recently purchased a plank towards this work, but more assistance is needed.

Tax deductible donations will be very gratefully received, and can be made using the following details:

How to Donate

Tax deductible donations - Please submit donations with the attached National Trust form

Donations which do not require a receipt for tax deductibility – bank account details:

- **Sail & Adventure Limited** - BSB No. 063 234 Account No. 1035 1061
- **Alma Doepel Supporters Club Inc.** - BSB No. 063 234 Account No. 1035 1168

Please enter your name on the deposit form.

In Memorium – Captain George Smith

Last month members were advised of the passing of former Branch Master Captain Peter Goodson, at age 92. Last year he received one of the first plaques the branch commissioned to mark 50 years of continuous membership. It was presented to him at Yarrowonga Hospital, where he kept up with world affairs via his Ipad! Around the same time we also presented a 50-year plaque to his old friend from Stevedoring days, Captain George Smith. Until the presentation, neither was aware the other was still alive. Sadly Captain Smith, at 97 years of age, has wasted little time following his old mate across the bar, passing away on May 10. He went to sea at 17 as a cadet with Bank Line and stayed with them until he returned to Australia at the start of the war. After a serving on the coast with Howard Smith, he joined The Victorian Stevedoring Company. It was through stevedoring that he met Peter Goodson. Both will be sadly missed by family, friends and the Company.



George Smith with his 50-year plaque.



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Events



May CMMA dinner

Place: CQ, 113 Queen St, Melbourne

Time: 18:00 for 18:30 hrs

Cost: \$40 members, \$50 non-members

Comments: This month's speaker is David Shennan, on the concept of port resource management, and why it's important if safety is to be improved in ports.



Melbourne Marine Insurance Forum Winter Warmer

Place: Saint & Rouge,

Time: Unknown

Cost: Unknown

Comments: Please direct enquiries to Simon Farmer at simon.farmer@qbe.com.



ISO Club Lunch Meeting

Place: Clare Castle, Port Melbourne

Time: Unknown

Cost: Unknown

Comments: To receive an invitation to these meetings, visit <http://www.isoclub.asn.au> and fill in the appropriate form.



Mission to Seafarers Sea Sunday Appeal

Place: Anglican churches

Time: Regular services

Cost: Donation

Comments: The Mission attempts to have donation envelopes in Anglican parishes, but will also thankfully accept direct donations for this major fundraiser

Noticeboard

ALMA DOEPEL UPDATE

The lifting of the ship onto the already prepared barge is a critical step in the restoration of 'Alma Doepel' back to full sailing & Survey condition. The offer for the use of the BAE graving dock to effect the transfer of 'Alma' onto the barge is extremely generous, but is time critical and one that cannot be extended. Once 'Alma' is safely up on the barge, the re-planking and other work can be done as funds become available. Much of the other work on the cabin, masts, spars etc has already been done. Visitors and volunteers are very welcome at the ship's berth at #2 Victoria Harbour.



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Court minutes (abridged)

Court Meeting 1 May 2013 1630 hrs (March meeting)

CQ Functions 113 Queen Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Attendees: David Shennan (Master), Ian French (Treasurer), Alex Evered (Secretary), Joanna Carson (editor), Peter Bosman (Registrar), Chris Noon. **Apologies:** Francis Castellino, Patrick O'Sullivan (Seagoing Warden), Nigel Porteous. **Absent:** John Carroll.

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as true and correct. *Proposed: Ian French. Seconded: Peter Bosman.*

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that are not covered elsewhere in the Agenda.

Secretary's Report

Readings and Applications

Alex reported that there were no new readings or applications.

Upcoming Events

2013

- 14 July – Sea Sunday Appeal, MTS (Date to be Confirmed)

The Institute of Chartered Shipbroker's Dinner Dance, planned for March, was cancelled due to lack of bookings.

Speakers

David will give his CMMA congress talk later this month. Chris Noon advised that new Hastings CEO Mike Lean had recently made a presentation to the community which had received good feedback, so it was likely he had a presentation ready to go. Alex said she would approach him about speaking at the June meeting.

Correspondence

A letter was received from Federal Registrar Wim van Alebeek, confirming that 'a person is eligible to become a retired member if he or she is 65 years of age or older and has been a financial member (ordinary or associate) for at least 15 years'. This was following a request for clarification during the Federal AGM.

The Outstanding Achievement Award

David announced that the recipient of the outstanding achievement award this year was Captain Michael Lutze, Regional Harbour Master at Maritime Safety Queensland, who was chosen after much deliberation based on his

record of providing mentoring to newer master mariners. The federal court was keen for recipients to have genuinely proven outstanding in the marine field and not simply to be a figurehead in the wider industry. The issue of whether it was reasonable for CMMA members to be ineligible for the award was discussed, and further discussion on this point will be had by the new federal court.

Treasurer's Report

Ian reported the following:

Membership

Membership currently stands at:

Ex Officio 00
Life Members 03
Honorary Members 01
Retired Members 36
Ordinary Members 70
Associate Members 16

Total 126

Finances

Cheque Account \$ 18,358.00. Term Deposit \$ 15,556.00
It is noted that the federal levy was, at the Federal AGM in April, brought forward to May, as a result of negative cashflow.

Branch Master's Report

CoMMA / IFSMA Conference.

David circulated a detailed report regarding the conference and other outcomes of the Federal AGM prior to the meeting. This report is available online along with the full version of these minutes.

Levy Increase

One of the issues in the report was the increase in the federal levy that was voted on by the new federal executive. The increase, the first for ten years, is \$10 per member. The court was reported it was comfortable with the increase.

meeting concluded at 6.20pm.

Next Meeting – 30 May 2013, 4.30pm, CQ Functions, 113 Queen Street.



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Speaker summary

Last month branch member Don Whelan travelled from Bendigo to give us a candid and frank account of how a small mistake by a tired captain can turn into a major headache in some jurisdictions. Speaking from the heart, his frightening experience proved a sobering lesson for seagoing members.

Don didn't need to refer to notes when describing his recent, but still ongoing, run-in with the Singaporean authorities... it is all too vivid in his mind.

Don, a captain of long standing with Farstad, had sailed into Singapore hundreds of times in the past, with no incident. He was used to his company's processes, which included obtaining a particular type of clearance (automatic) via their regular agents. He had never experienced any problem with that clearance type.

The day things went pear-shaped for Don was a very busy one, which started off with numerous interruptions, such as phone calls, and issues to sort. There was also a change in normal procedure... for some reason a different agent had been hired, and asked to obtain the relevant clearances. These clearances did not arrive on time; in fact they didn't turn up until the last minute. A somewhat harried captain took the paperwork and flicked through it, making a simple error of assumption that was to cause him a huge headache that will hang over the rest of his career.

The 'there but by the grace of God go I' error Don made was not to read in detail the small print of the clearance paperwork. Flicking

through the pages he saw it was there, and it looked like it normally did, so he signed it off with no time to spare. What Don did not know, was that the new agents had failed to obtain the automatic clearance, and the vessel did not actually have appropriate permission to enter Singapore.

When this fact was brought to his attention, Don fully expected it to be dealt with as a minor oversight; after all it was clear there was no intent to deceive. Wrong again.

His ordeal from that point included handcuffs, interrogation (including being denied toilet breaks etc) and the threat of a prison sentence – all on charges that were not disclosed. Eventually he

was released to return to Australia, on condition he would return to face charges at a future date.

Farstad was extremely supportive and was prepared to change his schedule to avoid his having to visit Singapore again, rather than have him face an uncertain fate. However he decided he couldn't avoid Singapore for the rest of his life, and did return to face the music. Don didn't end up in prison, but is excluded from entering Singapore for a year, and every time he enters in the future, will have to explain why he has a criminal conviction to the border officials.



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Member's Lounge



This is the place to escape to for a laugh, to share a memory or a good yarn, or perhaps an idea, opinion or even a gripe with your fellow members.

Not all members can attend meetings, so consider this your 'monthly catch-up on a page'.

Contributions are welcome... email joanna@northandtrew.com or phone me on **03 5250 6323**

Member Feedback

Hi All,

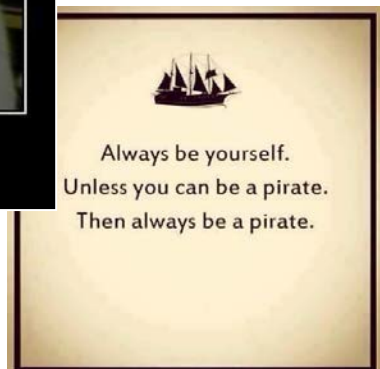
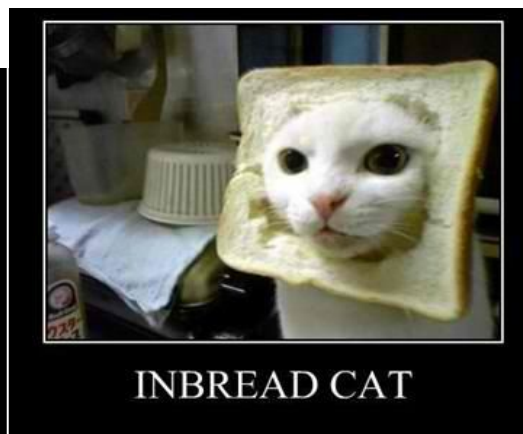
This is in appreciation of the excellent Congress last week. A lot of work goes into planning, organising and execution of such an event. Everything was done in a very professional and competent manner. Congratulations! I felt proud to be a member of the Company.

Thanks,

Best Regards

Ravi (Nijjer)

Thanks Ravi for taking the time to pass on your feedback. We are pleased you were able to attend the congress, that you got something out of it and that you felt it did CMMMA proud.



This month's three best
Funnies from
Facebook land...



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You don't have to be an engineer to appreciate this story!

A toothpaste factory had a problem. They sometimes shipped empty boxes without the tube inside. This challenged their perceived quality with the buyers and distributors. Understanding how important the relationship with them was, the CEO of the company assembled his top people. They decided to hire an external engineering company to solve their empty boxes problem. The project followed the usual process: budget and project sponsor allocated, RFP, and third-parties selected. Six months (and \$8 million) later they had a fantastic solution - on time, on budget, and high quality. Everyone in the project was pleased.

They solved the problem by using a high-tech precision scale that would sound a bell and flash lights whenever a toothpaste box weighed less than it should. The line would stop, someone would walk over, remove the defective box, and then press another button to re-start the line. As a result of the new package monitoring process, no empty boxes were being shipped out of the factory.

With no more customer complaints, the CEO felt the \$8 million was well spent. He then reviewed the line statistics report and discovered the number of empty boxes picked up by the scale in the first week was consistent with projections, however, the next three weeks were zero! The estimated rate should have been at least a dozen boxes a day. He had the engineers check the equipment; they verified the report as accurate. Puzzled, the CEO travelled down to the factory, viewed the part of the line where the precision scale was installed, and observed just ahead of the new \$8 million dollar solution sat a \$20 desk fan blowing the empty boxes off the belt and into a bin. He asked the line supervisor what that was about.

"Oh, that," the supervisor replied, "Bert, the kid from maintenance, put it there because he was tired of walking over every time the bell rang."

Caption this! It's clear that the promise of a good prize isn't going to get any of you rushing to the keyboard to enter our caption contests, so I'll take that as a hint and shelve the one I had ready for this month. Your loss, the prize was to have been most delicious, and personally baked by me! And the photo was a slightly embarrassing one that the Branch Master is quite happy to keep under wraps

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“That's it, I've had enough. I'm going to plant this flag and get that little sod who knicked my hat...”



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