

Basic Detail Report



Baragoola

Vessel number

HV000409

Date

1922

Primary Maker

Mort's Dockyard and Engineering

Description

BARAGOOLA was built at the Balmain yard of Mort's Dock and Engineering, a change from the previous five ferries for the Port Jackson and Manly Steamship Company which were built at Mort's Woolwich yard. It was launched on the 14th of February 1922 and entered service in August 1922. It was slightly smaller than the previous Manly ferries but wider and not as fast. It cost 80,000 pounds, over twice the cost of the previous ferries, and this signaled the end of local ferry construction on this scale. It was the last big ferry made by Morts Dock; the subsequent ferries up to World War II were built in the UK. Morts Dock had noted at the time that they never made much profit on the Manly ferries, but took the jobs for the prestige. The Manly ferry service was a highlight of Sydney's transport system and had an important social aspect. The journey and destination was billed as "Seven miles from Sydney, a thousand miles from care" and this created an aura of romance around the picturesque setting of Manly, the surf beaches and the ferries themselves, big enough to be ships in their own right. The ferry service had a long history dating from the 1870s, and local designer Walter Reeks pioneered the double-ended, sea-going configuration of the ferries with the first two propellor driven craft for the service, MANLY 1896 and KU-RING-GAI in 1899. He recognised the need for these craft to be capable sea going ships if they were to maintain a service across Sydney Heads in stormy conditions, as this short part of the passage open to the Tasman Sea was akin to operating out at sea. Subsequent ferries improved upon his designs and BARAGOOLA maintained the high flared bows and sturdy construction needed to suit the conditions. The name BARAGOOLA is an Indigenous word for 'flood tide'. It was built as a steel hull with wooden superstructure, a single funnel and had a wheelhouse at either end over the two main passenger decks. It was double-ended and launched as a steamer. Over the period of its working life BARAGOOLA underwent many minor and occasionally major changes or revisions. In the 1920s it was fitted out below the main deck aft with a cafeteria, and the enclosed upper salon was given upholstered seats in 1931- 32 to make it more comfortable in winter. During the 1930s pulverized coal was used for the engines, but the experiment was abandoned after it covered the ship with coal dust. In 1939 it was altered to be an oil burner and improved propellers were fitted, but they had to revert to coal during the war years when other supplies were unavailable. In 1948 Brown Bros electro-hydraulic telemotor steering was fitted. In 1958 BARAGOOLA was withdrawn from service to be converted to diesel-electric, using machinery intended for BALGOWLAH and kept in storage since 1949. The work was carried out at the ferry company's Neutral Bay facility. Other improvements

were made to the fitout and some of the hull plating was replaced. BARAGOOLA returned to service on 26 December 1960. Brambles Industries took over the Manly ferry operation in the early 1970s, but it was a short-lived ownership. When cuts to the service were announced in 1974, the NSW State Government moved to take over their operation late that year. BARAGOOLA, NORTH HEAD and SOUTH STEYNE were the only large ferries left in the fleet. BARAGOOLA's last run was in early 1983. Both BARAGOOLA and NORTH HEAD were withdrawn from service. BARAGOOLA was sold to private owners at the end of the year and they had plans for it to become a floating university. These plans did not eventuate. It changed hands in 1988 and again 2008 and BARAGOOLA has remained laid up on Sydney Harbour. In 2010 it is currently at a wharf in Waverton, NSW.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 60.8 m x 60.8 m x 10 m x 3.75 m, 498 tonnes (199.5 ft x 199.5 ft x 32.81 ft x 12.3 ft, 490.03 tons)