

Basic Detail Report



Kim

Vessel number

HV000312

Date

1958

Primary Maker

Streeter & Male

Description

In 1958 KIM was re-built in Broome to the standard post-war pearling lugger hull form, probably using moulds shared amongst a number of craft. In this way KIM is closely related to vessels such as the Australian National Maritime Museum's JOHN LOUIS (HV000050), and ANCEL, on display at the West Australian Maritime Museum. The hull is carvel planked with a heavy sheer strake and has the classic shallow, moderate deadrise hull shape used by Broome luggers to suit drying-out on the low tides at Broome. However it had one unique feature, the aft sections had a planked heel rather than a more abrupt exposed deadwood. It has been suggested that KIM was re-built to be used as a yacht as well as a working vessel. According to Kim Male, son of the owner at the time, the craft still has a large deadwood, and the concave shape formed by the planked heel construction was built over the original deadwood and planking to improve flow to the propeller, possibly around 1959. Like JOHN LOUIS, the raised sheer and deck toward the bow were later additions along with the wheelhouse, and came about around 1980, after some of its near sister vessels were altered with the same addition in the late 1970s. KIM also features the twin verandah platforms aft that can be raised and lowered, pivoting from the sheerline, from where the crew tending the divers handled the lines and hoses of two or three divers at one time. In 1953 the original KIM was owned by Arthur Streeter Male, a well known name in the pearling trade, but in 1954 it was sold to Louis Placanica. In 1958 it was sold back to Arthur Male. Placanica actually traded the craft as part of the payment for his new lugger JOHN LOUIS. Finally in 1976 KIM was sold to Pearls Pty Ltd which was later taken over by Paspaley Pearls. It began operating when the industry still concentrated on collecting mother-of pearl shell, but this came to an end in the 1960s and in its wake the industry collected live shell and began developing pearl farms with cultured pearls. More modern diving methods were also introduced. The part of its history from 1958 onwards is of course evident in the structure and layout as it now exists in 2009, but the story goes back to 1908, when a standard 40 ft lugger called KIM was built by Murray & Howson in Fremantle, and registered to owners George Streeter and Arthur Male of the Streeter & Company. From 1912 to 1927 KIM was sold or re-licensed to about seven different owners, changing its number on many occasions. In 1931 it underwent a major change with significant alterations, including having an engine fitted. To some extent these changes made it a new craft, and this was probably the object of the exercise, because by re-building an existing vessel some official restrictions and other details were avoided, and it was possible to claim the work as a tax deduction in the year the work was

completed. This was common practice in the pearling industry over many years where a large number of craft were lengthened or otherwise substantially altered virtually creating a new vessel, but they retained the identity of the original craft. Once re-built, KIM remained operating in the North West until it was taken over by the Royal Australian Navy in 1942. It survived its war service unlike many other luggers taken over by the military, and in 1948 KIM returned to the pearling fields on the North West, owned by Male and Company. It is not yet known if the 1958 changes described earlier retained much of the structure that existed at that point. Possibly only parts of the keel were kept and an entire new hull was built around those sections. Whatever the case, the vessel remained as KIM and despite becoming somewhat longer as a typical 56 footer of the period, most of KIM's registered dimensions curiously remained unchanged (apart from a dramatic rise in the registered tonnage) as it held on to its earlier identity. After leaving the pearling industry in the 1990s KIM worked as a charter vessel on Darwin Harbour until 2006. In 2009 it was laid up but in good condition and included the exact layout from its last use on the pearling fields.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 18.56 m x 4.45 m x 1.6 m, 17.7 tonnes (60.9 ft x 14.6 ft x 5.25 ft, 17.98 tons)