

Basic Detail Report



Beardmore

Vessel number

HV000305

Date

1914

Primary Maker

J G Pashley & Sons

Description

Built at Harwood in northern NSW in 1914 by J G Pashley and Sons, who came from Sydney, BEARDMORE is carvel planked in local hardwoods. It is heavily constructed with large rubbing strakes to guard against continual wear from shunting barges and coming alongside wharves. The original deck planking was pine, but this was replaced with hardwood covered by malthoid, a combination that has survived with minor repairs. BEARDMORE, AJAX, HEBE, and MARAMA belonged to the Colonial Sugar Refining Company (CSR). BEARDMORE, AJAX and HEBE remained in service until the Harwood mill transferred cane transport from river to road at the end of the 1975 crushing season. The MARAMA steam vessel was decommissioned Mid 50's. The name BEARDMORE was taken from the make of the vessel's original semi-diesel engine. The Beardmore engine was started by the use of a blow lamp to create a hotspot and former rivermen recall that it was kept running for days because of the difficulty of starting it again, should it stop. The engine had a distinctive loud sound which identified the tug's river passage to people for miles around. The engine was later replaced with a Gardner diesel. The Harwood mill on the Clarence River is Australia's oldest sugar mill and began operating in 1874, when cane was brought to the mill from properties along the river using heavily laden barges towed by the company tugs. After it was retired from service BEARDMORE was used for general transport by the Nungera Aboriginal Cooperative. In 1987 the vessel was acquired by the Maclean District Historical Society, thanks to the foresight of the Society's President, John Wells and Hon. Solicitor, Peter Bartley. The Harwood mill management agreed to put the vessel on public display as a reminder of the role played by river transport in the cane industry. BEARDMORE was located adjacent to the mill's car park on the Clarence River at Harwood. Mr Owen Kevin Shortt, ex tug-master of the mill fleet, devoted two years of work to the restoration and preservation of the vessel once it was taken over by the Maclean District Historical Society. After his death a committee was formed to maintain the craft and it was moved to a nearby shed for further work. The BEARDMORE is stored in a Historical shed on the Harwood Mill grounds, the only remaining vessel of its type in Australia.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 18.8 m, 31 tonnes (61.68 ft, 30.5 tons)