

Basic Detail Report



Berrima

Vessel number

HV000480

Date

1955

Primary Maker

CAM Fisher and Sons

Description

BERRIMA was launched from CAM FISHER and Sons yard as A.O.R.1, the initials for Australian Oil Refinery Ltd which was the name for the oil refinery located at Kurnell in Botany Bay. The refinery started operations in September 1955, and was more widely known simply as the Caltex Oil Refinery. The refinery had wharves and there were regular bulk oil tanker movements as part of the refinery's operations. A workboat was needed and this was ordered from CAM Fisher whose business was on the opposite shore at La Perouse. They were very well known in the region and had supplied workboats, ferries, yachts, launches and small skiffs for local use and elsewhere in Sydney and NSW for many decades. They were also known for building champion 18 foot skiffs that raced on Sydney Harbour. A.O.R.1 was launched late in September 1955, carvel planked, 11.6 m (38 ft) long, with a saloon cabin and wheelhouse forward that had the typical rounded front with drop down windows seen on many well-ferries and other similar small workboats of the period. It was powered by a 42 kW Lister Freedom Range diesel. Although owned by AOL, it was leased to Stannard Bros who had the contract to supply all marine services to the refinery. In addition to this Stannards had the contract from the Maritime Services Board of NSW to operate the Pilot Cutter service for the bay, and A.O.L.1 doubled in this role. The crew of Roy Kent (Master) Robert Lovell (Deckhand) and George Blundell (Relief Master) operated this service for 14 years. Eventually as the port became busier the MSB put their own Pilot Cutter into operation, and A.O.R.1 then continued to work only for the refinery until the late 1990s. During its working life the vessel was acquired from the refinery by Stannards in 1961 instead of being leased and they renamed it JANNELI, and then this was changed to BERRIMA in 1962. In 1964 they replaced the rounded wheel house front whose windows always leaked in the choppy waters of Botany Bay with a more conventional and higher wheelhouse. The engine was also replaced with a Fordson diesel, and later a Gardner which then gave BERRIMA its best performance. BERRIMA was acquired by the Sydney Heritage Fleet in 1990 from Stannard Bros Launch Services. SHF volunteers have continued to work on the vessel and the Fleet still operates the boat for its own use on Sydney Harbour. Prepared with assistance from the Register of Australian and New Zealand Ships and Boats compiled by Mori Flapan; www.boatregister.net

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 11.58 m x 3.35 m x 1.07 m (38 ft x 11 ft x 3.5 ft)