

Basic Detail Report



Monty

Vessel number

HV000760

Date

1953

Primary Maker

Royal Australian Navy

Description

A number of these craft were built for the RAN by their naval dockyards in different cities, and in the later period, they were known as three-in-ones being able to motor, row and sail. MONTY is an early post war example. It is not fitted with a motor and is clinker planked in New Zealand kauri, whereas later boats were double diagonal planked. It can be identified by its number engraved in the stem- REG NO 536, 27 Ft, BRIS 7-8-53. The whaler would have been put to use for a variety of support roles for this work however the overall duties of these seaboats were quite varied. At sea they performed man overboard rescues, transfer of stores and personnel between ships, transferring an armed boarding party, recovering practice torpedoes and passing towing lines. In harbour they would assist in securing a ship to a mooring buoy or laying out a kedge anchor, transferring mail, stores and personnel, or laying buoys for survey or salvage operations. They also had a recreational purpose as a pulling boat for naval regattas and if fitted with sail, for sailing races. Highly seaworthy, in emergencies the Montagu whaler could carry 27 persons and some were said to have covered voyages in excess of 2000 miles. Hundreds of Montagu whalers were built in dockyards, or under contract by local boat builders, around the world. In addition to their official use, the crews of visiting ships would often compete in pulling and sailing races on the harbour of their hosts. The Living Boat Trust in Tasmania has been gifted this example by the Wooden Boat Centre in Franklin. It came to them in a roundabout manner starting with its first recorded posting. Former sea cadet Tony Lee recalled the following history where it served with shore based cadet facilities in Tasmania: "I first became a crew member of a whaler in 1954 as a sea cadet. The whaler you have was originally issued to T.S. Leven. It was then sent to T.S. Mersey, was damaged there and sent to the channel via HMAS Huon, returned to Mersey, was later again damaged in flood waters and returned to Hobart. It was then shipped to Wynyard, where they were unable to repair it so it reappeared back with you." Martin Riddle wrote the following for its display at the 2017 AWBF. "This is one of the last Australian-built Montagu Whalers still afloat. The Montagu Whalers were a multi-purpose ship's boat, able to be rowed or sailed, for utility or rescue purposes. After decommissioning of the host vessel they often found their way to Naval Cadet units. This example had been with T.S.S Mersey before being restored by the Wooden Boat Centre in Franklin and then transferred to the Living Boat Trust, Franklin where it will be used as an expedition and training vessel. The Wooden Boat Centre, Franklin partnered with Colony 47 and Huonville High School to undertake the restoration which provided a training environment for a diverse group of women, men and

high school students. Cody Horgan, a very experienced shipwright from the Australian National Maritime Museum guided the restoration" MONTY has already proved to be ideal for expeditions when an important milestone was reached and cadets were able to sail the restored boat in 2017, testing out its features and capabilities. Fond recollections of sailing the whalers come from members or colleagues of the Living Boat Trust. From John Young (Founder of the Franklin Wooden Boat School): "These are sailing vessels that can be rowed, rather than rowing boats that can sail, like Swiftsure. They were used by survey vessels for the detailed inshore work required for the production of the Admiralty charts, but are also designed for the open Ocean when needed. Their yawl rig provides work when sailing for all members of the crew, which means they all understand sailing theory very quickly. They have built in buoyancy in the form of copper tanks at each end. Their steel centre-boards assist stability and sail carrying capacity, and make it easy for the crew to deal with a capsize by standing on the centreboard and righting her. The crew then climb aboard, bail her out and resume their voyage." From David Budd: Sometimes we had groups from the youth probation service and used two whalers, together with sea kayaks, for expeditions. Occasionally we sailed them, but usually rowed, since it tired the kids out more effectively. From Geoff Heriot: '... the most exciting boats he had ever sailed - 27 foot navy whalers. "I thought those whalers were the bees knees" he recalled, "especially when you got a real blow on Sydney Harbour". They were powerful boats, strongly built with gaff rigs, which seemed to clear the lanes of other sailing boats when they charged under full canvas.'

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 8.23 m × 8.08 m × 1.9 m × 0.46 m (27 ft × 26.5 ft × 6.25 ft × 1.5 ft)