

Basic Detail Report



Avon

Vessel number

HV000155

Date

1907

Primary Maker

C Blunt

Description

AVON was originally called VICTORY, until the name was changed in 1946. The carvel planked hull has a long overhanging counter which was the typical configuration until transom sterns became the preferred and practical alternative. The vessel also features a raised deck from the wheelhouse forward. Blunt had his yards in Williamstown on Port Phillip Victoria and this firm is still building vessels in 2007. AVON has had a variety of uses. Early on as VICTORY it was an explosives lighter, transferring explosives from the shore at Altona to ships or barges on Port Phillip. Explosives were one of Victoria's first export items and this is one of only three of the port's explosive lighters still in existence. A report in the Argus, 6 April 1907 notes a 'New Motor Lighter' has been completed for the Colonial Ammunition Company by Clem Blunt. The short description of a 'lighter on a small scale' suggests this could be AVON. The craft also handled general duties as a tug and workboat around Port Phillip. In 1934 it was to be scrapped, but had a reprieve and ended up doing similar general duties on the Gippsland Lakes in Victoria, under its new name AVON. This name was taken from one of the rivers that run into the Gippsland Lakes. During World War II the launch was taken over by the RAN and used as a support vessel in New Guinea. When no longer needed as a workboat on the Gippsland Lakes AVON became a private motor vessel. It was moved to Queensland where the present owners discovered it. They recognised the converted tugboat from its working days at Lakes Entrance, and were keen to become the custodian of this piece of the area's history. AVON was returned to Paynesville on the Lakes where the builders who had worked on it in 1970 took over the restoration. The original towing bits were found in a home in Paynesville and generously given back to AVON and its new owners. AVON is in good condition, powered by a replacement diesel engine and retains a lot of the original workboat configuration, with some revisions to suit its current recreational role. It is a reminder of the elegant style of workboat that could be found in all of the working ports around Australia in the early 1900s.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 15.85 m x 14.02 m x 4.27 m x 1.83 m, 29.53 tonnes (52 ft x 46 ft x 14 ft x 6 ft, 30 tons)