

# Basic Detail Report

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## Mollyhawk III

### Vessel number

HV000689

### Date

1945

### Primary Maker

Lars Halvorsen Sons Pty Ltd

### Description

MOLLYHAWK III is one of the 38 foot sea-plane tender designs built by Lars Halvorsen specifically for service in World War II. The design was adapted to other uses such as air-sea rescue, fast supply and patrol work. MOLLYHAWK III is understood to be AM2429, built in 1945 and believed to have been deployed to Darwin as a fast supply launch. As with all the 38s, the 11.58 m long hull is a single chine, vee section shape with double diagonal Oregon planking. Many were fitted with twin petrol engines, but this example is one of the single engine diesel versions. It is currently powered by a 6 cylinder Detroit from the 1950s or 1960s, and remains in the configuration it had as military vessel, but has additional bunks, settees and other fit out internally, and it also has had a canopy fitted over aft deck for shade. The design for the 38s was undertaken by Harold Halvorsen after the outbreak of the Second World War. It was prepared for the RAAF as a high speed air-sea rescue boat but it also became a standard defence boat with the ability to fulfil various roles. A production line managed by Trygve Halvorsen was established at the Ryde yard, and two craft per week were able to be completed. Sources differ on the number made, it is either 147 or 178, and they were built and served with the RAN, RAAF, Army and US Army Small Ships Section. Officers of the US Army section declared the design to be the most efficient craft they used during the war. Carl Halvorsen recalled the production line: "The initial work of building these 38 footers was carried out with the hull upside down. After planking had been completed the hull was turned and placed on a mobile cradle on rails which ran right thorough the building and extended to form slipways into the water. The boat moved along the track from one construction crew to the next as each section of the work was done and on completion rolled down the launching ways still resting on the original cradle." AM1477 and AM1478 shared a long patrol during 1944 in the Dutch zone of South West New Guinea. Lt Jesser-Cooper who was in command noted at the completion of the nine month patrol: "As officer in charge of this patrol, I cannot speak too highly of the Halvorsen 38. She was asked for the almost impossible from her kind of boat and never failed us at any time, except for minor engine breakdowns. I should like all to know who build and work at Halvorsens that the men who sail in their boats appreciate, as no other can, the strength and endurance of these small craft." After the war a number remained in service but eventually all were disposed of, and it is not yet recorded how many may still be extant. Two were built in 1943 as torpedo

recovery craft, and the twin engine version BINCLEAVES (HV000568) remains extant and is to be converted back to its military configuration. MOLLYHAWK III was on display at the 2015 SA Wooden Boat Festival in Goolwa and regularly cruises on the Murray River.

### **Dimensions**

Vessel Dimensions: 11.58 m × 3.35 m × 0.76 m, 12.2 tonnes (38 ft × 11 ft × 2.5 ft, 12 tons)