

Basic Detail Report



Fletcher Jones

Vessel number

HV000835

Date

1973

Primary Maker

Bill Clymer

Description

The following is an abridged history of the Fletcher Jones written by Adam McCosh president of the Port Fairy SLSC on May 7 2022: The Fletcher Jones is a 49 year old wooden moulded plywood surfboat made by Bill Clymer in Newport NSW. Originally built for the Warrnambool Surf Life Saving Club (SLSC) and christened in 1973, it was equipped with a surf line and belt, enabling it to be used in surf rescue work. The Warrnambool SLSC used this surfboat in competition with other surf lifesaving clubs within Victoria and nationally. In its maiden year it won the State Junior Surfboat Title. Fletcher Jones was an integral addition to the lifesaving and competition activities of that club up until 1990 when it was gifted to the Port Fairy Surf Life Saving Club. Secured for the Port Fairy SLSC in 1990 by Christine Quinn and the committee of the day and gifted to the club by Warrnambool SLSC. In 1991 it was found at the club unseaworthy by new members Paul Buchanan and Jim Chambers who took it on as a project to restore and row again. The Fletcher Jones was repaired by members of the Port Fairy club and was used in competition, most notably the 1993 Portland SLSC Admella Marathon where club members rowed a 17 km race with the original fixed seats. After being replaced by the lighter and faster fibreglass/foam sandwich surfboats, the Fletcher Jones was used as a training boat and rowed in the annual Port Fairy Wooden Boat Parade each New Year's Day. The Fletcher Jones is one of only a handful of timber plywood surfboats surviving, and the Port Fairy community with its strong maritime history, is behind the restoration and display of this craft. The Moyne Shire has generously stored the boat in its Railway shed while funds become available to restore the boat. The Fletcher Jones is a tuck stern surfboat, 25 ft in length and 5ft in width. It is cold moulded of ply construction, with cedar strip decking, and stem and stern stringers. The fastenings and adhesives are fixed with urea formaldehyde, copper roves and monel nails. It has a sweep oar, and all lifeline rescue equipment is kept aboard. This form of surfboat construction is now widely superseded by techniques that use fibreglass materials. The Fletcher Jones is a rare example of only two known examples of Clymer built cold moulded ply surfboats remaining, the other example part of the MAAS collection. As of 2022 new features on Fletcher Jones include fibreglass seats and an electric self-bailer. All other components of the vessel are original. Sir Fletcher Jones was the first president of the Warrnambool SLSC when it was established in 1930. He donated the vessel to the club and it was promptly named in his honour, Jones widely known in the community as a garment maker and philanthropist.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 7.62 m × 1.52 m (25 ft × 5 ft)