

Basic Detail Report



Ocean Spray

Vessel number

HV000242

Date

1937

Primary Maker

George Fest

Description

The designer and builder was George Fest, who came to Australia from Finland in 1905 and worked as a salvage diver. He started building the 10.67 m (35 foot) deep-sea fishing boat OCEAN SPRAY in September 1937 on a vacant block of land at Bulimba across the road from Crowleys' boatyard. He designed and built the boat with the help of his children Cecil, Alan, Betty and Daisy, and Daisy's husband, Bill Beatty (a foreman at Crowleys' boatyard). When finished it was moved across the road and down to the shoreline on old railway sleepers for launching. OCEAN SPRAY was moored at the foot of Crescent Road, Hamilton on the Brisbane River. Built at a cost of one hundred and fifty pounds OCEAN SPRAY was constructed of spotted gum. It had a single chine, veed hull shape, raised deck and a low cabin. George installed an old Buick truck motor which he had converted to run on old sump oil he cadged from local garages. OCEAN SPRAY was home to George ('Pop'), and his children, until just after WWII. George's marriage had broken down not long after the boat was launched. During the war most large boats were conscripted for the war effort, but because it was home to the Fest family OCEAN SPRAY was spared. The family used OCEAN SPRAY as a tuna boat in Moreton Bay and for charter taking fishing trips to Amnity Point. The boat was so popular that the captain of the much larger MIRRIMAR used to moan that OCEAN SPRAY always had more people on board than his charter boat. In 1943 George Fest met a young girl called Shirley Lahey who was 32 years his junior. They became the very best of friends. Shirley went on many fishing trips aboard OCEAN SPRAY. George fitted the launch with a mast (which it still has today) and with Shirley sailed to Townsville and among the many islands scattered along the north coast of Queensland. George Fest died after a long illness on May 15th 1961 and bequeathed OCEAN SPRAY to his best mate Shirley, after she and her mother nursed him through his final months. By this time the launch was in disrepair and Shirley put the boat in the hands of well known Brisbane builder Dick Tripcony for repairs. It was fitted with a new keel and bottom planking and a Chrysler Royal 94 kw (125 hp) marine petrol motor, then put up for sale. OCEAN SPRAY sold for nine hundred pounds. IN 2008 OCEAN SPRAY remained in use as a recreational motor launch, the original hull and cabin house still in place, but now with a flying bridge, added above the cabin by a previous owner.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 10.67 m x 10.67 m x 3.66 m x 0.91 m (35 ft x 35 ft x 12 ft x 3 ft)