

Basic Detail Report



Elvina

Vessel number

HV000341

Date

1942

Primary Maker

WH Goddard and Sons

Description

ELVINA is thought to have been built in 1942 by WH Goddard and Sons at Palm Beach, originally named FALCON. It is timber carvel construction, 7.79 metres long and is now powered by a Perkins diesel engine. It is not recorded who the first owners were but during World War II the Goddards bought the vessel and used it for transporting troops between West Head and Palm Beach. At West Head the men were picked up from a prominent rock adjacent to the submarine boom net. They jumped from the rock onto the cabin top. In rough weather they had to walk to Mackerel Beach, a few kilometres down Pittwater. Later in the 1940s it was bought by the Port Jackson and Manly Steamship Company to run tourist trips around Pittwater, and service the route across to the weekend houses at Currawong on the West Head shoreline of Pittwater. One of the ferry skippers was a Norwegian sailor Einar Holst Fredriksen (Fred) who had settled in Australia in 1928. Fred had been skipper on a couple of Halvorsen cruisers before the war, and during the war served with the American forces in Papua New Guinea where he contracted malaria. He was still suffering recurring episodes of the fever when he operated ELVINA. His daughter Sybil recalls ELVINA (when it was called FALCON) being tied up overnight to their home wharf in Wingi Jimmi Bay. Their house was called 'Gunalo' and the waterfront property was on Waterview Street, Mona Vale. Fred start the weekday runs from a public wharf at Newport just opposite their home. He ran a weekly timetable that included Church Point, Elvina Bay, Lovett Bay, McCarr's Creek, Scotland Island and sometimes Towlers Bay. Weekend timetables were more relaxed and included trips on Pittwater or taking people to cottages with no road access. Sybil would offer ride with her father on the ferry on Saturday afternoons, and recalls being allowed to steer ELVINA home on some occasions when the craft was empty. She knew how to navigate using the markers, while keeping on a heading for Bushrangers Hill above the wharf. Meanwhile Fred would fill out the logbooks, and apparently "It was a bit of a squeeze as the cockpit [wheelhouse] of ELVINA is not very big." They were friends with many people, and even had a key to Dorothea McKellar's house in Lovett Bay. It is thought that FALCON was purchased by E H Caldwell of Church Point in 1951 who changed the name to ELVINA, after the bay in Pittwater serviced by the Church Point Ferry Service. In 2009 ELVINA operated as a back-up vessel to maintain the integrity of the Church Point ferry schedule. It is surveyed to carry 27 passengers. In 2023 ELVINA is still in perfect working condition operating in Pittwater having now provided over 100 years of service. Prepared with assistance from the Register of Australian and New Zealand Ships and Boats compiled by Mori Flapan; www.boatregister.net

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 7.79 m x 2.92 m x 1.22 m (25.56 ft x 9.58 ft x 4 ft)