

Basic Detail Report



Wildflower

Vessel number

HV000656

Date

1889

Primary Maker

C Blunt

Description

WILDFLOWER is 26 feet long and built with New Zealand Kauri Pine. It has clinker sides and a carvel planked bottom. The builder was Clement Blunt the 3rd, and WILDFLOWER was launched on 11th July 1889 at a cost of £21. The Blunts had established their boatyard in 1858 and the present proprietor Greg Blunt, is a sixth generation boat-builder. Sister ship WILDWAVE was also built by Blunt. The Mouchemore family Henry and Mary, and their 6 children (3 boys, 3 girls) arrived in Albany from Queenscliff, Victoria, on the SS MARACURA in December 1895. Another son was born in Albany 1896. The family fishing boats WILDFLOWER and WILDWAVE were also shipped with them. Henry Mouchemore had been a 'couta' fisherman in Queenscliff and the family soon established themselves in fishing business again, mainly supplying visiting mail ships and also Kalgoorlie and Perth markets via rail transport each afternoon. They expanded their business interests into two fish shops in Kalgoorlie and also a plumbing and cold storage business in Albany, called Mouchemore & Co. The family purchased the Mouchemore Cottage in 1905, which was an ideal position for a fishing family to live because the boats could be anchored close by. WILDFLOWER was anchored in the same area of the harbour for 108 years and was in daily use by the family as a working fishing boat, undertaking net fishing for whatever was abundant and in season at the time. In 1938 after fifty-one years as a vessel that was either sailed or rowed with sweeps, WILDFLOWER received its first engine, a petrol Invincible, installed by Albany's celebrated boat builder and designer Lionel Austin. Installing an engine had been an issue. Henry Mouchemore was very much against the idea as he felt it would shake the vessel to pieces. However, As soon as he passed away the petrol engine was installed by the next generation in the family. WILDFLOWER was always moored just off Mouchemore Cottage, and to get out to it and start their working day, they made use of the family's twenty-foot flattie which was then towed and used in the fishing process to set the net. Ted used the sails as the main means of propulsion on WILDFLOWER right up until he retired her fishing licence in 1971. Five Mouchemore men from three generations have been the only men to fish professionally WILDFLOWER. Henry, Philip, Barnard, Les, and Edward (Ted) who is still fishing in the 21st century. It has been landmark for the locals and was something of a tourist icon. Tourists coming by bus would stop briefly in front of the Residency Museum and view the small grey boat moored beside the haul road, and see the old fisherman bringing in his catch on a drizzle-soaked morning, getting a sense that this is a small bit of life that goes back to earlier times. WILDFLOWER won the Albany Regatta in 1898 and featured in the inaugural regatta of the Princess Royal

Sailing Club in 1909. It was a regular competitor from 1913 to 1921 racing against other fishing vessels such as the Westerberg's IMG, Bill Busby's LITTLE TRUE (HV000618) , and Jack Schumann's ADA, as well as other famous racing yachts of the Princess Royal Sailing Club. WILDFLOWER had its last sail in 1998. In 2009, after over a century of use or quietly swinging on moorings off 'Mouchemore Cottage', Ted Mouchemore agreed that Wildflower was to be brought ashore to allow the WA Museum to document the lines and construction details, and under the new stewardship of the Albany Maritime Foundation, its legacy and that of her owners will become a permanent reminder of Albany's maritime heritage. Prepared from research material provided by Albany Maritime Foundation and the Western Australian Maritime Museum, Maritime History Department.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 8.53 m × 8.53 m × 0.82 m × 1.83 m (28 ft × 28 ft × 2.7 ft × 6 ft)