

Basic Detail Report



Wangadir

Vessel number

HV000278

Date

1940

Primary Maker

Watts & Wright

Description

Previously known as CALOPUS II when launched, the vessel was built in 1940 by the firm Watts and Wright at Bulimba, Brisbane, one of a group of yards in the same area which included Norman R. Wright's well-known business. Alec Wright was a brother of Norman Jnr, and the two had worked together for many years before Alec set up his own firm. The 17.98 metre (59 feet) long carvel planked hull has simple but elegant and well-proportioned styling typical of commercial craft of its type. WANGADIR has a wheelhouse just forward of midships, with its sole at deck level. The cabin over the saloon area is lower because the saloon sole is set down into the hull. This reduces the impact of the superstructure on the craft's overall appearance. Instead of a raised deck it has raised bulwarks over the forward hull, and a mast on the foredeck. Bob White, the son of a previous owner, noted the craft was beautifully fitted out with a polished wood interior, good lighting and ventilation, a copper sheathed hull and brass rubbing band at the gunwale. The mast carried an emergency sail, and it originally had a low revolution Scottish diesel engine, long range tanks and double battery banks. He recalls it handled big seas well with its high bows, and when he was aboard as a child, he commandeered the steamer deckchairs it carried, and sat at the stern trolling for mackerel. National Archive records show that the boat was operated by the Department of Health. It appears to have been renamed WANGADIR, an Aboriginal word for shooting star or meteor, but it is not known when this name change occurred. In 1943 the records indicate that it was released to the navy and saw service along the Queensland coast. After the war WANGADIR was again operated by the Commonwealth Government as part of the Quarantine Service, ferrying doctors to incoming ships and fishing vessels on the Queensland coast. Later it was based at Townsville where it became a survey vessel, and serviced navigation aids and lighthouses along the Great Barrier Reef. After its government service the vessel was sold at auction in the early 1950s to Mickey Watkins who used it as a fishing craft in the Gulf of Carpentaria. At this time it had a Gardner diesel installed. WANGADIR was later sold again and converted to a private recreational vessel. One of the only visible modifications to have been done recently has been to extend the cabin top over the side decks to increase the shaded area, now recognised as an important consideration in the tropics. WANGADIR remains in use as a recreational vessel.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 17.98 m x 17.37 m x 4.57 m x 1.73 m, 36.42 tonnes (59 ft x 57 ft x 15 ft x 5.66 ft, 37 tons)