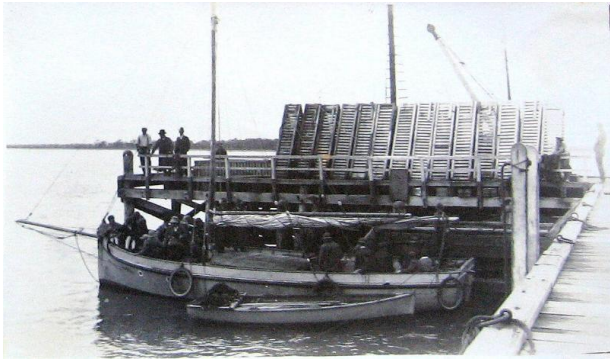


# Basic Detail Report

---



White Boatbuilders

## Janet Iles

**Vessel number**

HV000633

**Date**

1914

**Primary Maker**

## Description

JANET ILES was built in Williamstown, Victoria by White Bros. for Mr. W.B.M. Smith. It was launched on the 10th September 1914. It is carvel planked in New Zealand Kauri and was rigged as a gaff cutter. Mr. W.B. M. Smith pioneered the deep-sea fishing industry out of Port Welshpool, and put considerable effort into getting the railway to come to the region and developing jetties to make fishing viable. The Argus reported its first catch on Thursday 1 October 1914: "The ketch Janet Iles, owned by Messrs W.B.M. Smith and Sons arrived on Monday from her first fishing cruise. She brought in a total catch of eight and a half tons of mackerel." Gippsland Farmers Journal Tuesday 6 October 1914 had more to say: "Mr W. B. Smith, the enterprising fisherman of Port Welshpool, has commenced well with his new boat, Janet Iles, specially built for the deep-sea fishing. On Monday, 300 boxes of mackerel were landed, weighing 8 tons 6 cwt. also 25 cwt. of mullet and other fish." In 1925, Ritchie Smith saved his brother Arnie from drowning when he was washed overboard. Ritchie slashed the dinghy's lashings and quickly launched it off the deck where it was carried, then rowed to his brother's rescue, all carried out in darkness. The brothers were practical in their approach. A 1935 article from the Advocate Burnie, Tas. Thursday 2 May 1935 titled FEATHERED 'WIRELESS' FOR SMALL CRAFT notes how they carried carrier pigeons to send news ashore about their whereabouts, particularly in bad weather. They also had a simple wireless receiver, and listened to market reports. "The Janet Iles is owned by Messrs. Richard and Arnie Smith. When bad weather is encountered and the craft is forced to run for shelter those who await her return in port watch for one of the pigeons bearing news of the fishermen, and so anxiety is quickly allayed. The service performed by the birds is not only that of relieving anxiety and telling in advance of the boat's return to port. It has an economic aspect. On board the Janet Iles there is a handy and not very costly wireless receiving set. Using this fishermen listen in to the latest market reports and judge what demand there is for their catch. When that has been determined and the time for the return passage comes they know just how many boxes they will require at the water's edge when the Janet Iles runs into the harbour and the shore station is notified." The JANET ILES and the Smiths also shared in the social side of life, as reported in the Toora and Welshpool Ensign and South Gippsland Observer, Friday 5 April 1918 "A very enjoyable time was spent by a large party who went across the Inlet to Mt. Singapore on Easter Monday. The trip across and back was pleasant, there being just enough swell in the sea to add a little variety. Under the skilful steering of the skipper, Mr W. B. M. Smith, the picnickers escaped any unpleasant "duckings" by flying spray, and he and his two boys, and

Mr M. Anderson, did everything they could to make every one enjoy the outing, smiling faces are infectious and were the order of the day on the "Janet Iles." The spot chosen "Biddy's Camp" was ideal, being well sheltered from the wind and made cheerful by the large numbers of birds that apparently enjoy their immunity from the guns of sportsmen. Many of the party climbed to the cairn on the summit and were repaid by the fine view of the Inlet and surrounding seas. A small pier for landing is greatly needed, and it is to be hoped that the movement which was set on foot some time ago will be again set in motion when funds are available. The picnic was arranged in the interests of the Red Cross Society." The Welshpool Rifle club also made use of JANET ILES' hospitality, as reported in the Gippsland Standard and Alberton Shire Representative Friday 3 May 1918 "Next afternoon the "Janet Iles", sailed from Port Welshpool, and all spent a most enjoyable time. The visitors were pleased with the views obtained and the good haul of yellowtail and rock flathead and oysters got near the Promontory". " Monster Marine Picnic", Port Welshpool to Biddy's Camp, in aid of the Welshpool Football club, where Mr W.B.M. Smith was President, 1912. Many local families enjoyed a memorable day out on JANET ILES, it was decorated with coloured flags for the occasion and under the management of Mr W.B.M. Smith and his sons, Ritchie and Arnie as they raised money for local clubs, the War Effort or the Yarram Hospital. They were advertised as : "A Trip on the Briny", Will run trips from Port Albert Wharf on Regatta Day, Jan 1 or Trip on Janet Iles, Child 6 pence" . The tickets for these days out are on display at the Port Welshpool and District Maritime Museum. JANET ILES remained with the Smith family throughout its working life as a fishing boat. When Mr. W.B.M Smith died, his two surviving sons carried on fishing. In 1955, Ritchie died leaving brother Arnie, who kept fishing with hired help. In the late 60's Arnie had to retire due to ill health after many years running a charter fishing service. Parties travelled from near and far for the experience and now JANET ILES takes pride of place on display at the Port Welshpool and District Maritime Museum. On the 11th October 2014 a celebration will be held at the Port Welshpool & District Maritime Museum, Corner Turnbull & Townsend Streets Port Welshpool, Victoria 3965, to celebrate the history of this historic vessel.

### **Dimensions**

Vessel Dimensions: 11.28 m x 10.82 m x 3.35 m x 1.37 m (37 ft x 35.5 ft x 11 ft x 4.5 ft)