

**Feb - 13**

## **EDUCATION OF AN INNOCENT AUSTRALIAN**



### ***MASTER MARINERS AND THE SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA***

Fascinate yourself by reading the stories of the early days settlement of coastal Australia. The coast, which now is home to 90% of our population, was at that time, the domain of the Master Mariner. They discovered and mapped the nation, led the expansion and established export trades.

They were an uncompromising tough breed of men, capable of quick decisions, prompt action and unquestioned leadership, as their vessels and the lives of all on board depended on such a person.

They understood the weather and with poor charts and sail propulsion only, they instinctively knew the best places to anchor, to build a wharf, to careen a boat for repairs. Those places became our town and cities.

Master Mariners had to keep looking ahead with their panoramic scope of duties, the navigation, the weather, the crew, the stability, the cargo and the viability of the venture.

Masters understood the basic tenet that at the end of each week, everyone had to be paid and that there must still be money in the tin which hadn't been borrowed.

Immerse yourself in the role of one of these early Masters circa 1830 and enact the part - Master of a trading barquentine, not much bigger than a modern trawler, running from a storm front into a sheltered bay.

The assistant cook approaches. "Excuse me Captain I know you are thinking about dropping the anchor here, but I do have an environmental science degree and can tell you that the anchor may destroy some seagrass"

"BOSUN !, Cut his balls off and throw the rest of him overboard" I say, "and hang his testicles on that poor excuse of a Christmas tree nailed to the mast!"

The bosun acts quickly and the rest of the crew raise their eyebrows at my new level of leniency in not throwing ALL of this imposter to the sharks.

After anchoring, the storeman with a background in accounting, pulls me aside. "All due respect Cap'n, me being Price Waterhen trained an' all, I gotta remind you that the crew are eatin' too much and wiff all this bad wevver, we are behind budget so I'm gonna hafta report ya to the owners when we get back.

"BOSUN ! cut this bastards tongue out", and the bosun obliges, flinging the tongue into the soup for a much wanted flavour.

Struggling along the last 75 miles the next day, at 4 knots in a light southerly, the bosun drags out a stowaway.

"Captain Sir, I found this shrew hiding amongst the cargo". A redheaded mis-shapen woman, with unfortunate looks, stood dolefully staring at the deck.

I bark at her, "Stowaways have to work without wages, what's your story woman ?"

Her eyes narrow, and her lips purse in the pose of a poisonous snake about to spit venom. "Listen woman hater, Oi've been neegoshiatin' wiff the boys and we are gonna go on stroik unless you agree to pay us much more, for doin' much less!"

"BOSUN. You know the deal, on with it!"

The bosun promptly slits her throat, lashes a lanyard around her feet and hangs her over the side as a fender, in the vain hope that her head, now underwater, will stop talking.

The voyage ends, the settlement gets their cargo and the first sprinklings of exports move out. The Master Mariner once again is the catalyst for the Nation's growth.

The Nation in the analogy of a ship, is steaming a steady course, with good trim and good reserves of stability. She is in good hands with a spirit of invincibility to the ever present challenges.

Master Mariners were the backbone of the formation of the Spirit of Australia:-

James Cook – the founding father.

James Stirling – established the Swan River Colony.

Arthur Philip was the first Governor of NSW, succeeded by Captain John Hunter.

John Hindmarsh was the first Governor of SA.

Ships Masters and deck officers formed many of the early trading companies, using their wide and forward looking training to good effect.

However, over the last 30 years, the prominence of Master Mariners has disappeared and the Spirit of Australia is down by the head, engine power lost, and close to rocks.

The voyage has stagnated, a redheaded stowaway with all the negotiating skills of a rattlesnake, has taken over the bridge. She and her team have not grasped the basic tenet.

The fuel and stores supply incentives to the 5.3 million people employed in small business and mining, the engine room of the nation, have all been cut.

The 3 upper decks overcrowded with Federal, State and local bureaucrats are endangering the ship's stability. Their obsessions with empire building along with OH&S, process, permitting and political correctness to improve the ship's condition will never work. The Green CAVE (Citizens against Virtually Everything) cancer has infected them. They are enshrining coastal waters into Marine Parks. Idealistic nonsense.

If you are a Master or ex Master of any size or type of vessel, we need to see you at the Master Mariners conference in Melbourne April 17<sup>th</sup>.

We need to find the DNA of an old 1830's Master Mariner and his Bosun, and create a team with some spine, vision and leadership.

What we need to hear is "BOSUN !, cut these imposters heads off and throw the bastards over the side..... We have a voyage to resume."

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