

A day sail on the Duyfken



Jennifer Merigan on board the Duyfken

by Jennifer Merigan

I'VE CERTAINLY got the sailing bug in the last few months, with thanks to my good friend Ron 'Dingo' Reddingius who makes the local Channel 7 television show Home In WA.

Ron has sailed all his life and is an experienced skipper who loves racing yachts on the Swan River.

I'd been looking for a new hobby since my daughter finished school and at our Christmas Party last year he kindly offered me the opportunity to join him on an afternoon sail on the Swan

River.

I really didn't know that much about sailing, I'd been on a boat/s some 20 years ago when I did my obligatory Europe backpacking trip but nothing since.

So on this particular afternoon with just me, one other crewman and Dingo we set out for an afternoon of racing on the Swan.

I knew absolutely zip, so Dingo patiently gave me instructions and my love affair with sailing began.

I haven't experienced another activity, where for the few hours of racing on the water, I didn't think of anything else

but what I was doing at that exact moment and I love it.

Fast forward four months and with at least another dozen sails under my belt, I am happily addicted to crewing and sailing whenever I can.

And thanks to Dingo for his patience and guidance in teaching me this amazing pastime.

So now you have a little of my sailing background.

Dingo's love of sailing has catapulted him onto the 'board' of the Duyfken and my new found love of sailing means that I want to help promote the 'Little Dove' as a permanent fixture of the Western Australian tourism landscape.

The Duyfken Foundation is a non-profit organization and with help from the WA Government has a permanent berth in Fremantle just behind Little Creatures.

The ship is an exact replica of the Duyfken which discovered the Cape York part of Australia in 1606 and has become a proud member of the world's collection of replica ships.

The ship as you would imagine is not cheap to run and maintain, so we need help from the Western Australian public to get behind the Little Dove.

You can help by becoming a Friend of the Duyfken, as a volunteer guide or volunteer crew, or just come along to enjoy a day sail, as I did.

The day sail program commenced on the first weekend of May with the

Duyfken heading out to view the start of the Fremantle to Bali yacht race and I think she engendered as much interest from the flotilla as the spectacle of the race start.

There wasn't much wind around but it was still a beautiful day out on the water and watching the crew work hand in glove to get this ship sailing was a truly magnificent sight.

If you feel the need to 'get away' but don't have the time to do so, then a day sail aboard Duyfken is sure to satisfy a travel need without you leaving Perth.

And you may even have the opportunity to share the decks with sailor extraordinaire John Longley, who is acting Chairman of the Duyfken board. As with everyone who gets to know her, John is another who has fallen head over heels in love with this 'lady of the sea'.

Get on board with the Duyfken!

For more information visit www.duyfken.com

See the Have a Go News website for a video of the experience.

WIN WIN WIN

To be in the draw to win one of three double vouchers for a tour of the Duyfken valued at \$20 each then email win@haveagonews.com.au or simply send an envelope to Dufyken Tour – C/- Have a Go News – PO Box 1042, West Leederville 6901. Please include your name, address and phone number on the back. Only over 45s eligible and competition closes 31/05/13.