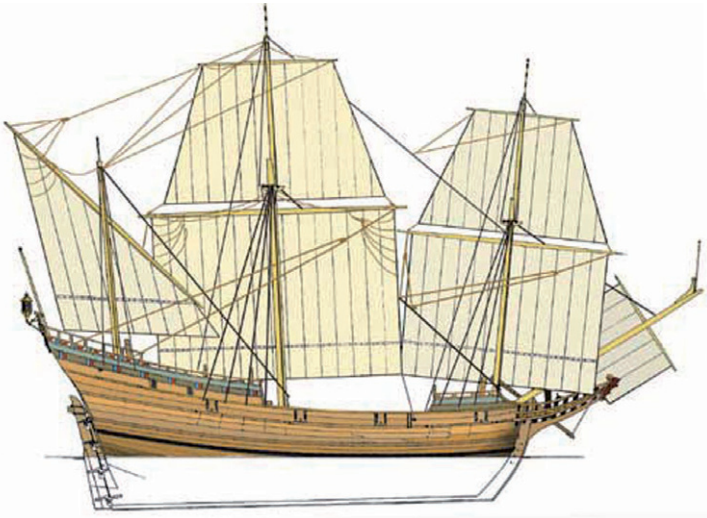


Tales from the Duyfken...



THIS YEAR we will bring monthly updates for *Have a Go News* readers. We've decided to call these Tales from Duyfken. Here's first our first contribution penned by John Longley, chairman of the Foundation.

Was replicating Duyfken a good idea?

Many people will have now seen Duyfken sailing on the Swan River and some have had the pleasure of actually sailing on her. She makes a great sight as she gracefully sweeps down towards Perth from Fremantle but there is always the nagging question – was building her worth the money and the huge effort involved?

Academics the world over love arguing the value, or otherwise, of replica ships. Some see them as valuable maritime archeology projects, while others would prefer that the funds used to build them were used for more traditional forms of research. Needless to say there is no definite answer but let's look at some of the pros and cons of doing these projects.

However, before doing so I would like to restrict the discussion to vessels that can actually sail and make significant voyages, because I think the case for replicating historic vessels is much harder to make

for static vessels like say the VOC vessel Amsterdam in Holland or even the Amity in Albany.

Cons

- They are very expensive to both build and run.
- The materials are often different and therefore the ship is not a true replica.
- Accurate information on the original ship rarely survives and therefore they are only a best guess.
- It would be better to use more traditional research methods to find out about the ships and to educate the general public as to the story behind the ship.

Pros

- They draw money from non-traditional sources of research funding.
- They keep alive traditional skills that otherwise would be lost.
- They capture the imagination of the public unlike any other form of historical research.
- Their performance gives valuable information as to what were their real capabilities.
- They engage the interest of the public and particularly children more readily than traditional media.

So what has been the experience of Duyfken?

She was expensive to build costing over \$4million in the mid to late nineties. Not much was known of the original ship but a lot is known about the class of vessel, a Dutch yacht, so although she may not necessarily be the same as the original Duyfken we are confident that she is true to class.

Well over a million people have visited her during construction and her voyaging to date. Last year 4,000 school children toured her and we expect that number to grow to over 10,000 in years to come.

She sails incredibly well and has surprised us all with

her performance.

But the most important point is that she has allowed us to tell the story of the first European ship to land on Australian shores and hence the starting point for the development of the Australia we know today. Prior to the construction of Duyfken the first landing was hardly mentioned by our education system whereas now it is in the national grade 4 curriculum.

Surely it is important that our children have an understanding of what is arguably the most important event that has shaped our land, when the 40,000 year history of the Aboriginal people was suddenly changed for better or worse by the arrival of Europeans.

The story of Duyfken does not start or end there. It allows so much other story telling and generates as many questions as it answers.

- Why the Dutch?
- What were they doing there?
- Why are we all speaking English not Dutch?
- What did the Aboriginal people think of this extraordinary event?
- Why did they not come back?
- Why was the next landing on the west coast not the north?

And so on and so on...

From my perspective, the construction has been a marvelous project that has generated so much story telling and given many thousands of people a lot of pleasure. Sure, it has been expensive and difficult but definitely worth the effort.

**John Longley
Chair - Duyfken 1606
Foundation**

You are invited to experience all the Duyfken has to offer. Sail aboard her on the Swan River any time until March 2015. Just visit www.duyfken.com/sailing