

Good evening,

My name is Dr CJ Manjarres-Wahlberg; I am the Sea Heritage Foundation Board of Governors Chairman.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on the Sea Heritage Foundation and the ongoing work with the MV Cape Don.

Peggy and Rob have kindly offered to relate the below information to the precinct meeting on my behalf. Unfortunately, my work takes me away. I am in the Timor Sea for another week before returning to Sydney.

Today we will discuss the following:

- Dry docking of the ship at the Naval Dockyard, Garden Island
- Ship access and Wharf replacement (like for like)
- Ship tours
- New webpage
- National Significance Assessment with the National Library of Australia
- ARIAM Hub Project
- Get into Maritime general purpose hand (deckhand) course
- Maritime Apprenticeship Program
- Establishment of a memorial to the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service
- Save Our Sydney Harbour

1. Dry docking of the ship at the naval dockyard, Garden Island

The board has been working with the Navy and Thales at Garden Island since December 2019 towards a 65-day refit of the Cape Don in the dry dock. This is a significant undertaking to dry dock a ship. The Foundation commenced a 3-phase dry docking preparation program as part of this process. With COVID, this caused some significant delays. However, we have already paid \$51k to Thales for work completed to date and we have successfully completed phase one with phase 2 underway. We have had three underwater surveys by navy divers, after which I am happy to report the ship's underwater hull is sound. The ship has had another three independent marine surveys for the dry-docking preparations. Although the ship is rusty on the exterior, her framework and internals are in good condition for her 62 young years.

Our commitment to preserving maritime history is unwavering. We are diligently working to ensure the ship goes into the dry dock as planned for a much-needed cleaning and repaint.

Over the coming months, you will see parts of her exterior freshened up, enhancing her appearance.

2. Ship access and Wharf replacement (like for like)

After maritime condemned our wharf in early June 2023 without warning we lost land access to the ship for over 11.5 months. During this period, we could only access the ship via the water via Tugboat. The board commenced discussions with the government (local and state) regarding access to the ship and the berthing agreement we had. After months of negotiations, with the help of the Mayor Zoe Baker and Felicity Wilson MP, NSW maritime returned access to the ship via a scaffold. Maritime has also committed to replacing the access catwalk at the coal loader like for like.

3. Ship tours:

With the return of land access, the ship has reopened to tours. Due to COVID and then the forced closure of the ship, the Foundation lost a significant amount of income. Finally, we can welcome members of the public and our volunteer crew back onto the ship. If you haven't seen Cape Don from the inside, I encourage you to come for a tour. The ship has a rich service history to the Nation and an inspiring future. She is also a time capsule to the 1960s and a window to our maritime past.

4. New Webpage:

If you haven't seen our new webpage, we are online at www.seaheritagefoundation.org.au

5. National Significance Assessment with the National Library of Australia

Last year, the Foundation was awarded a grant to assess the ship and archive for National significance. This has been a large body of work conducted by members of the board, our volunteer crew and a professional historical assessor. The assessor has spent time on the ship and in Canberra, where our archive is currently stored. We are awaiting the final report.

6. ARIAM Hub Project

The Australian Robotic Inspection and Asset Management Hub (ARIAM) is an ARC Research hub hosted by the University of Sydney and in partnership with the Queensland University of Technology and The Australian National University.

The ARIAM Hub Project is significant as it aims to transform the management of assets and infrastructure by developing intelligent robotic systems with new capabilities for inspection, monitoring, maintenance, and optimization.

The Cape Don is the test vessel facility during the five-year project, which involves the ARC, members of the maritime industry, Thales, and the Navy. This highlights how 1960s technology can still be relevant in the age of technology and AI.

7. Get into Maritime general-purpose hand (deckhand) course run in partnership with TAFE NSW and the Kings Trust Australia.

After research into how the Foundation could make a meaningful contribution to the community and Nation, the board discovered that out of 18,000 people employed in the Maritime industry, less than 399 were indigenous. This was an opportunity where we could make a difference. After further research, the Foundation redesigned the TAFE program to align more with Indigenous learning styles.

Since 2022, the Foundation has been delivering a general-purpose hand course in partnership with TAFE NSW, The Kings Trust Australia and several maritime industry partners.

The program is now more competency-based than theoretical. This holistic, immersive, human-centred approach to learning has been successful with two programs run with 16 graduates. We have also facilitated employment pathways with SERCO Defence Maritime Services, Heron Group New Zealand with other graduates awaiting enlistment with the Navy and entry into the Ferries.

Our third program with TAFE will start in October.

8. Maritime Apprenticeship Program

The Foundation is working on a Maritime Apprenticeship Program in partnership with the Merchant Navy Training Board, UK Chamber of Shipping and Shipping Australia Limited. This program is designed to increase engagement with industry and employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians within the maritime industry. Additionally, once the program is customised and embedded, the model can be replicated for the wider maritime industry.

I announced in NSW Parliament two weeks ago the partnership we are signing with the Merchant Navy Training Board in London on Wednesday, October 2nd. This is the biggest change to maritime training in Australia in over 50 years and a significant milestone for our volunteer board after 18 months of work with the UK.

9. Establishment of a memorial to the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service

The Foundation is starting to work with North Sydney Council to establish a small memorial to the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service, the people, ships and families who provided valuable service to Australia and our economy by ensuring ships' safe navigation and passage around our coastline. Currently no such government memorial exists to the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service.

10. Safe our Sydney Harbour

Over the past month several statements have been made in the media about the Cape Don being a wreck and a derelict vessel. Clearly this is not the case and these comments are inflammatory. On behalf of the Foundation, I would like to state that we are undertaking significant and costly works to ensure the preservation of the ship. As with all large complex projects, this takes time.

While it might look like nothing is going on, a great deal of work goes on in the background and confirmation of our status should have been obtained before statements were made in the public domain.

If you have any questions about the Foundation or the ship, could you please provide them in writing to Peggy who will pass them on to me for a reply.

Thank you for your time.

Kind Regards,

Dr CJ Manjarres-Wahlberg EDBA (Maritime), CRMgr, ProfNZISM, FCLP, FICPEM, AFIAMCS, MRSN, AFRIN
Chairman
Sea Heritage Foundation