

# AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL Maritime museum

N E W S L E T T E R

OCTOBER, 1986

NUMBER 1

**W**elcome to our first Newsletter. Inside are brief articles on the Museum's collection, management and budget, poster competition and more.

The Newsletter will be published

regularly to inform you and keep you up to date with all the latest developments.

Future issues will feature the development of the project until the Museum's opening in 1988.

Please contact us if you know someone who wishes to be added to our mailing list.

We welcome any letters, ideas and suggestions.

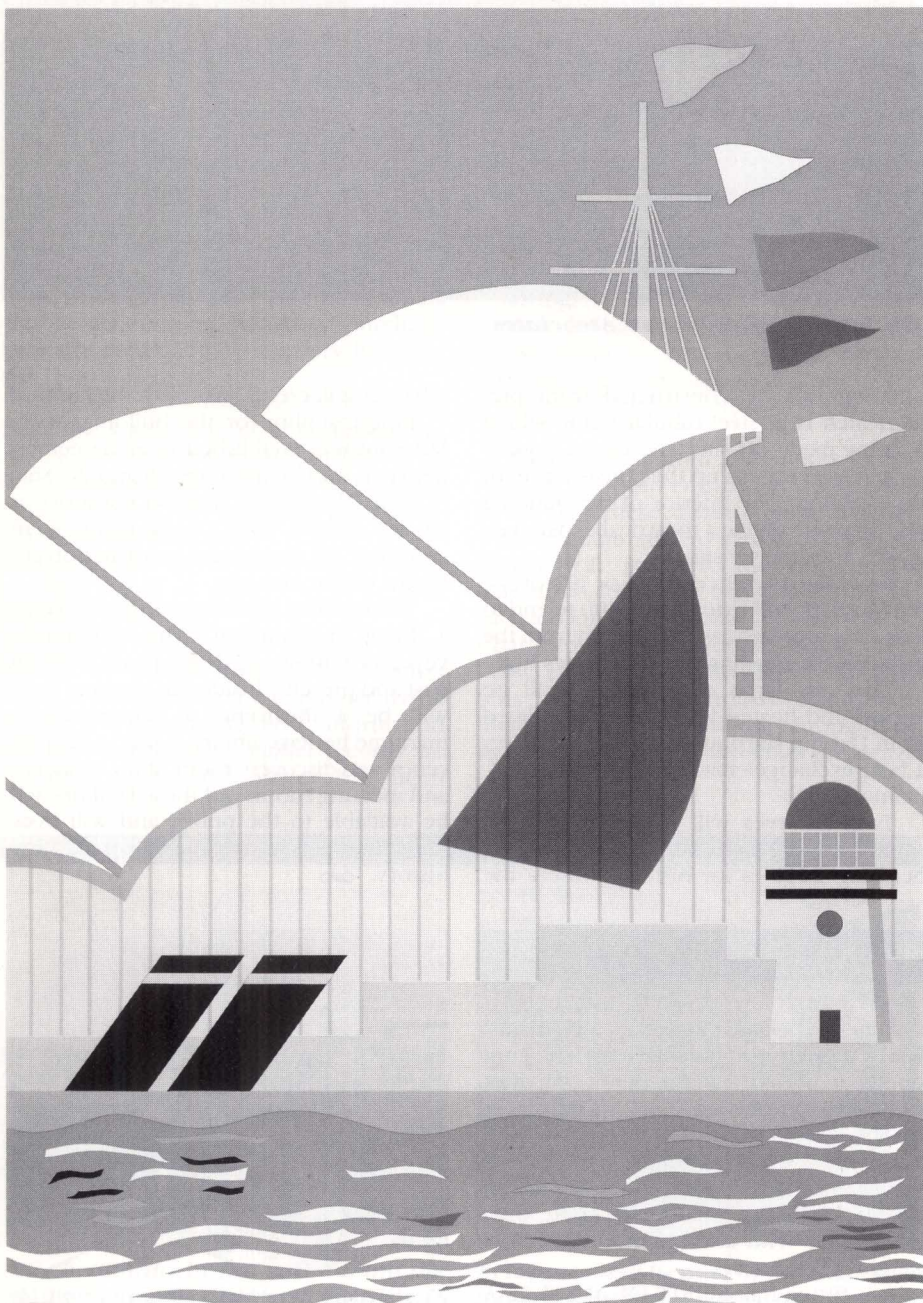
Sergio Sergi  
Director (Interim)

## POSTER COMPETITION

**T**he Museum is running a poster competition for school students. Media personality, Simon Townsend, says "The competition aims to encourage young people to get involved in the establishment of the Museum". Entrants will design a poster about one of the Museum's opening exhibition themes. Each entrant will receive a certificate and the winners will receive a beautiful Swiss made Raymond Weil watch. The school which submits the most entries will receive "The Seafarers", a 21 volume, leatherbound set of books from Time-Life. The prizes will be presented at a special media event in Sydney in November.

The best entries will appear on national television and will be put on public display later on. Entries close on 31 October 1986. ∞

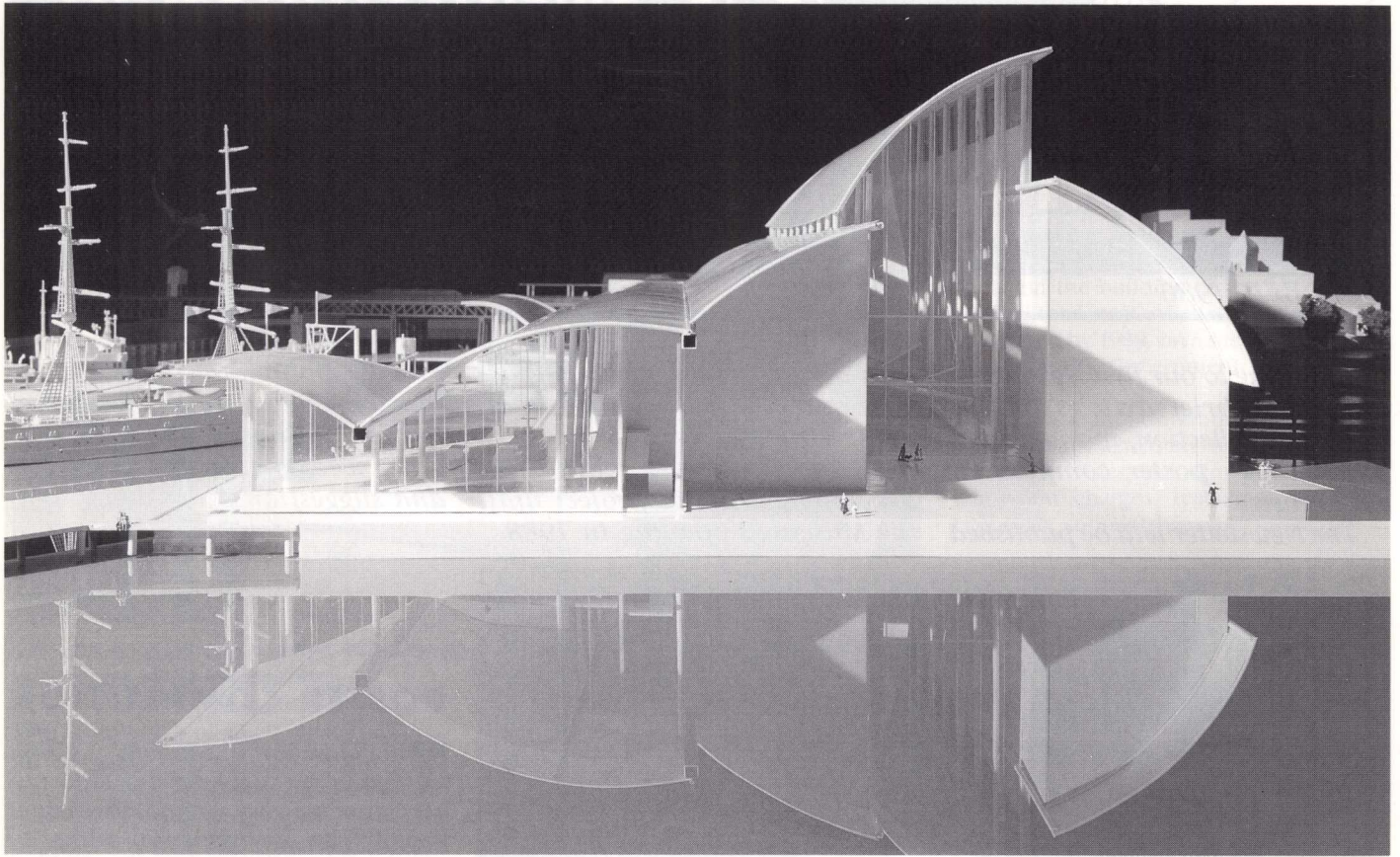
*This poster is a stylised symbolic representation of the Museum's building and its collection. Myriam Kin-Yee, the designer, has concentrated on the modern, clean and elegant style of the Museum's building and used bright, festive colours to reflect the image of the Museum. Full colour posters can be purchased directly from the Museum at \$4.00 each including postage (\$2.00 each for multiple copies).*



AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM



## THE BUILDING — SAILS IN STEEL



*A photograph of the model of the Museum by Max Dupain and Associates.*

**W**ork has already begun on the construction of the Australian National Maritime Museum.

Well known Australian architect, Philip Cox, has designed a dramatic and breathtaking building for the Museum.

The structure of the building is designed to complement the environment in Darling Harbour in an aesthetic and practical way.

It is a bold design — reminiscent of tall masts and billowing sails — in steel and glass. The Museum will be surrounded by walkways and parks. These surroundings will be open to the public 24 hours a day, and will enable the public to appreciate fully this wonderful location.

The mechanics of the building are innovative and already they have attracted interest from the architectural world. The

building will be constructed from prefabricated BHP steel tubular frame which is being made off site. The use of prefabricated steel speeds up the construction of the building. The interior of the building will be open, giving a theatrical experience to the Museum's visitors.

Reaching a height of 38 m or 10 storeys, the Museum will extend over 100 m end to end. The roof line cascades down from the gallery with a ceiling over 30 metres high.

The vast large open spaces will be cooled and heated by water re-circulated from Darling Harbour. To do this requires a heat exchanger made of the rare metal, titanium.

Twin wharves will reach towards the shipping and the city. As well as providing berthing facilities for historic vessels, the

wharves will create links with the harbour.

Responsibility for the building of the Museum was established in an agreement between the Commonwealth and the State of NSW. The Darling Harbour Authority, an agency of the State Government, is responsible for the design, construction and fit-out of the Museum.

The building has been designed to create a "living environment". This will be conveyed in exhibitions dealing with both the past and present. Inside the Museum there will be a theatre, a comprehensive maritime heritage library, public education centre and discovery room, shop, restaurant and meeting rooms. All these facilities will be available to the public and will assist them in understanding Australian maritime history. ∞

## "THE SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA"

**T**he world's fastest boat, SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA, has been purchased by the Museum with the assistance of Speedo Australia.

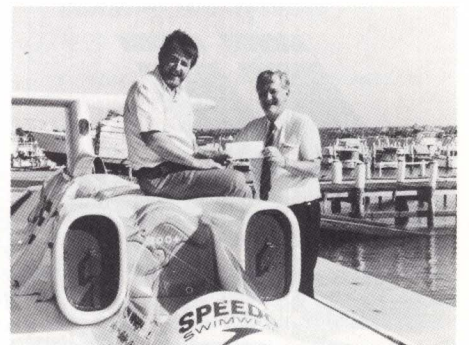
Ken Warby broke the world water speed record with the boat at Blowering Dam near Tumut, NSW on November 1977, averaging 464 km/h. Almost a year later, on October 8th, he raised his previous record to 511.11 km/h.

SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA was designed, built and tested in Australia with the help of the Royal Australian Air Force. Ken Warby is the first Australian to hold this world record.

Nine years later this record still stands. Warby's outstanding achievement is considered a milestone in the development of marine jet propulsion.

The boat is powered by a J B5 WE 34 Westinghouse engine from a Neptune anti-submarine reconnaissance aircraft. It develops 3,500 lb thrust on engine only (5,000 plus with after burner). The boat weighs 1.5 tonnes.

It is fitting that SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA is one of the first major objects acquired by the Museum. ∞



*Ken Warby accepts a cheque from the Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment, Barry Coben, for the Museum's first acquisition THE SPIRIT OF AUSTRALIA.*



## GETTING IT TOGETHER

**T**he Museum will tell the story of Australians and the sea. It will collect, conserve and display our maritime heritage. The story begins more than 40,000 years ago with the first human contact with Australia and it continues into the future.

Until now all the national collecting institutions have been located in Canberra — the Australian National Gallery, the Australian War Memorial, Australian Archives, the National Library of Australia and the National Film and Sound Archive. The Australian National Maritime Museum is the first to be located outside Canberra, because it had to be by the sea. Sydney, Australia's oldest and busiest port, will be its home.

Most of Australia's maritime heritage has never been exhibited on a large scale. How does the Museum plan to do this?

### COLLECTING

The Museum will not be a vacuum cleaner for maritime relics and objects — it will select items carefully, based on policies and broad directions now being decided. The Interim Council has already set the five themes for the opening exhibitions.

The Museum will select objects because they are historically significant or because they are pertinent to our display themes. Ships, boats, ship fittings, maps and charts, paintings, diaries, ship models, uniforms, films, photographs and other memorabilia will be acquired by donation, purchase, loan and eventually by recovery from the sea.

Because of its national emphasis the Museum is acquiring objects throughout Australia. Many items are already owned by the Commonwealth and they will be either lent to the Museum or transferred permanently to the Museum.

Special care will be taken not to duplicate the efforts of existing local or State maritime museums.

From the moment the Museum shows interest in historic material, information about it is recorded in a computer based registration system. As more information becomes available, the earlier records are updated. Once the object has been

acquired it is given a unique number, photographed and catalogued. It is then assessed by a conservator to determine storage conditions, special handling requirements and the need for expert conservation work to be carried out.

### DISPLAY, EXHIBITION AND INTERPRETATION

When the Museum opens in 1988 it will concentrate upon five themes.

The Interim Council of the Museum has decided that the five opening themes which best display Australia's links with the sea are:

- **The Discovery of Australia** — from the first human contact over 40,000 years ago through early European exploration to the voyages of Cook and Flinders.
- **Immigration by Ship** — from convicts through the gold rush of the 1850s to European and Indo-Chinese refugees over the last few decades.
- **Australia's Commercial Maritime History** — from early colonial shipping, whalers and 19th century wool clippers to the giant ore carriers and fishing boats of today.
- **The Royal Australian Navy** — life and training for navy men and women, ashore and at sea.
- **Leisure and Recreation** — 18 footers, surfing, 12 metre yacht racing, underwater diving, and Australia's transformation from a nation which banned swimming in the sea until 1908 to the hedonistic beach culture of today.

Tim Hobson from Exhibition Design Services has been engaged as a consultant to develop these themes. He is working with Museum staff to develop storylines which will interpret the objects the Museum is collecting. Maritime historians, such as Don Charlewood, are also helping. Charlewood's inspirational book, *THE LONG FAREWELL: SETTLERS UNDER SAIL* tells of the horrendous conditions immigrants had to endure during their voyages to Australia last century. ∞

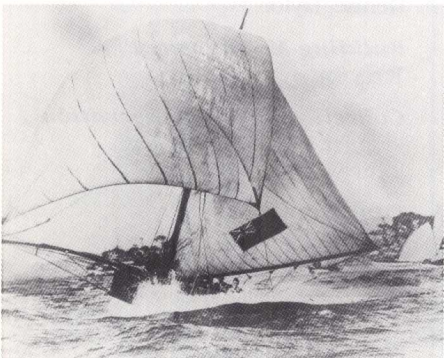
*Commodore Tom Fisher, former General Manager of Garden Island Dockyard, has recently completed a feasibility study which examines the possibility of using HMAS VAMPIRE as a floating exhibit at the Museum. HMAS VAMPIRE is a Daring class destroyer, built at Cockatoo Dockyard for the Royal Australian Navy and commissioned in 1959. The vessel is currently at Athol Bight. The report by Commodore Fisher, currently under consideration by the Interim Council, identifies and costs the work that would be required to prepare and maintain the ship as part of the Museum's fleet.*



*Sally Samins, official photographer for the America's Cup Defence, took time off from Perth to come to Canberra for the opening of her KEEP IT DOWN-UNDER photographic exhibition on 28 October by The Special Minister of State The Hon. Mick Young. The exhibition is a photographic coverage of the international preparation for the 1987 America's Cup Challenge. The exhibition in the Canberra Theatre Centre will close on 15 November. Honeywell Limited is sponsoring the exhibition. Sergio Sergi, the Director (Interim) of the Museum, will accept the donation of Sally's 1983 collection to the Museum from John M. McKim, the Chairman of Honeywell.*



*A set of elegant dinner menus from the MS TJIWANGI of Royal Inter-ocean Lines has recently been acquired by the Museum. The MS TJIWANGI, an ocean liner built in Holland in 1950, ran cruises throughout South East Asia and the Pacific from Australia during the fifties and sixties. Tuna Mayonnaise, Potage Windsor, Fried Rainbow Trout and Coupe Dame Blanche were chef Mok Yuen's suggestions for dinner on 27 January 1961.*



*Left: Britannia in full sail during the 1930's (courtesy of Bruce Stannard).*

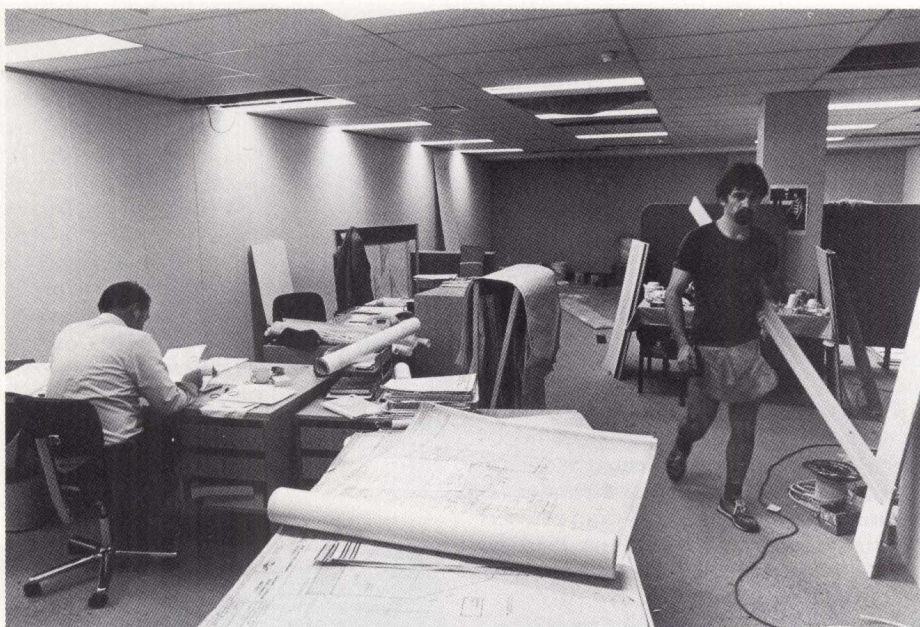
*Right: The Britannia being moved in 1986 by Museum staff to prepare it for restoration.*



*Britannia will be part of the Museum's leisure exhibition when the Museum opens. Britannia is a beamy 18 footer built of cedar in 1919 by "Wee Georgie" Robinson in Balmain. Britannia will be restored by the Museum.*



## STARTING UP



*The chaos of getting started. The Building Manager, Terry Lane, works on as the offices are built around him.*

**P**lanning and setting up a museum is a complex operation. Some large cultural institutions have taken decades to fully develop. A concentrated effort will be required to open the Australian National Maritime Museum on schedule in 1988, a task which has never been attempted before in Australia.

The original secretariat of six staff was formed only a year ago. Key staff have now been recruited to formulate detailed management policies, to gather the collection and to design exhibitions. It is envisaged that the Museum will have 115 staff members when it opens.

Prior to opening, the Museum will be working on the selection, movement and restoration of objects for the collection.

It will also be developing and designing integrated exhibitions for public displays.

## THE MANAGEMENT

**O**n 25 June 1985, the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, announced that the Australian National Maritime Museum would be established in Darling Harbour, Sydney.

A Bill passed by the House of Representatives and currently before the Senate will establish the Museum as a Statutory Authority. After the Bill is passed a governing Council and a permanent Director will be appointed.

Until the confirmation of these appointments, an Interim Council and Director have been appointed. Sergio Sergi, an

Education, sponsorship, public relations and marketing programs are now being developed to support these exhibitions.

Like all new projects, rapid growth creates a number of difficulties. A staff member recently said "our offices have been built around us. We have got used to the sounds of drills and electric saws and no longer expect the desks or the walls to be in the same place tomorrow as they are today."

An office complex on the 9th Floor, 189 Kent Street, Sydney, will be completed in late October 1986. In the meantime staff have been working with a makeshift telephone system and office space. We are looking for off site space for conservation facilities, storage and photographic laboratories. ∞

officer of the Department of Arts, Heritage and Environment, was appointed as the Interim Director of the Museum on 9 December 1985.

The members of the Museum's Interim Council are Alex Dix (Chairperson), Andrew Robertson, Bruce Stannard, John Evans, Kristine Klugman, Geoffrey Bolton and Ken Wreidt. Together they bring to the Museum valuable skills in management, scholarship, journalism and years of involvement with Australia's maritime history. ∞

For further information, please contact the Marketing Section, Australian National Maritime Museum, 9th Floor, ADC House, 189 Kent Street, Sydney, NSW 2000, GPO Box 5131 Sydney, NSW, 2001, Mike Lynskey. Tel: (02) 27 9111. Fax: (02) 27 3846.

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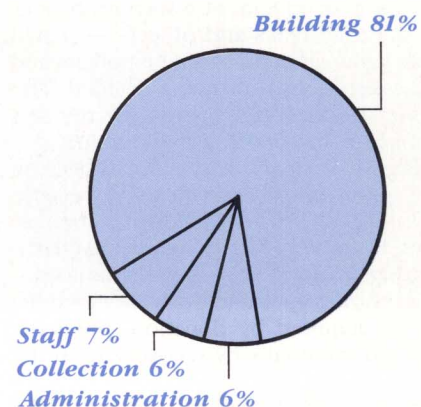
## FUNDING

**T**he Federal Budget was announced on August 19 by the Treasurer, Paul Keating. The Australian National Maritime Museum was allocated \$24 million for 1986/87.

A substantial amount of this allocation, \$18 million, will be spent on the Museum building. The balance will be spent on administrative costs, such as salaries and rental of premises, with the bulk being spent on the building of the collection.

The total cost of the building, to be completed by 1988, on a site made available by the NSW Government, will be \$30 million.

The Museum's Commonwealth funding will be supplemented by various commercial activities, including merchandising, admission charges, restaurant lease and corporate sponsorship.



## WHO'S WHO

Sergio Sergi is the Interim Director of the Museum. His personal secretary is Anne Sullivan.

Enquiries can be directed to the Museum by phone on (02) 27 9111, Fax (02) 27 3846 or write to GPO Box 5131, Sydney, NSW 2001.

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### **Media and Sponsorship**

Mike Lynskey  
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### **Personnel**

David Thompson