



The Traverse Board

Newsletter of the Friends Of The Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc

September 2026

Proudly Supporting the Paul McGuire Collection of The State Library of South Australia.

President's Report September 2026

Greetings to you, and I hope you are keeping well, eagerly waiting for the warmer days to arrive.

On the 18th of August there was the celebration of the life of the late Valmai Hankel, well-known and loved by so many people from all around. The gathering was held at the SA Wine Centre, appropriate really, as she was a respected wine judge among her many other interests.



About a hundred people were present, to hear of her life and times, as a long-time librarian, breeder with her late husband of arabian horses, outback traveller, often solo in her trusty Landcruiser, altogether a most amazing lady. Valmai was also a founding member of the Friends of the Paul McGuire Maritime Library, and she will always be remembered and spoken of with fondness by us all.

Today, September 6th, sees the start of the latest Golden Globe Single Handed Round the World Yacht Race, from Les Sables d'Olonne, and I'm sure Mark Sinclair will be there to see them off.

Our next meeting will take place at the Exeter Hotel, Exeter, on Tuesday, September 22nd, to enjoy dinner and watch a very interesting DVD on the development of the bluefin tuna fishery, based on Eden and Port Lincoln, quite a history, with some names familiar to some of us. I look forward to seeing a good number you there, it is always good to catch up with all of you when possible.

Meanwhile I wish you all the very best, stay safe 'til then, Regards, Julian.

September Meeting

Tuesday 22nd September

Those Were The Days

A History of Blue-Fin Tuna Fishing in Australia: A historical video and documentary project produced by Garry Kerr and local fisherman Ross Haldane, charting the rich history of the Port Lincoln tuna industry from the 1950s onward.

Dinner from 6:00pm followed by the video.

Please book with Neil (0418821331) or Julian (0414365294)

The saga of the two new Kangaroo Island ferries continues.

As I write this in early September the first, *Wanggami*, is safely in Port Adelaide, the other *Ruwi* is still at the Batam Island shipyard in Indonesia but due in South Australia later this month or October.

Wangammi has yet to visit Cape Jervis or Penneshaw.

"The 23rd October" is the current starting date after a 3 day shutdown for berthing modifications from the 20th.

DIT works are proceeding in Penneshaw to complete the jetty modifications. The Sealink works are to be completed as part of the switch to the new ferries.

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Vale Valmai Hankel AM PSM, a great friend, who died Saturday 1st August 2026.

The passing of one of our founding members and long time supporter Valmai Hankel on 1st August 2026 was a sad moment.

She was passionate about the State Library and its collections, and would introduce us to them as if they were her treasures, which indeed they were.

She bred horses, enjoyed a drop of fine wine and travelled in outback Australia camping under the stars.

Valmai spent the later years of her life in care at the Helping Hand Centre at North Adelaide having been cursed with Parkinsons Disease robbing her of mobility.

There was a Celebration of Her Life in the National Wine Centre on 19th August hosted by former ABC radio personality Carole Whitelock and with excellent addresses from Diana Gilbert (Valmai's cousin); Anthony Laube (friend and SLSA colleague); Mark Gilbert (friend and Friends of the State Library of SA colleague); RGSSA President Leigh Radford; and concluded with heartfelt words from Valmai's friend and collaborator Peter Goers.

A remarkable woman who will be missed by all fortunate enough to know her.



At the October 2016 Annual Dinner at the Watermark Hotel, Glenelg. From left: Julian Murray, Mark Sinclair, Valmai Hankel, Neil Waller

Here's to you Valmai. Photo Barons of Barossa

Gulf War Forces Antarctic Expedition Firm to Replace Historic Liner

Published Sep 3, 2026 7:04 PM by [The Maritime Executive](#)

<https://maritime-executive.com/article/gulf-war-forces-antarctic-expedition-firm-to-replace-historic-liner>

The start-up Terra Nova Expeditions announced this week that it has been forced to change plans for its inaugural expedition cruise season to Antarctica. The company had planned to bring back the historic liner *St. Helena* for a new career as an expedition ship, but was forced to replace the ship, creating an uncertain future.

St. Helena, built at the Appledore Shipyard in the UK and commissioned in 1990, provided a vital service to the island of the same name located more than 1,100 miles west of Africa and became one of the last RMS (Royal Mail Ships) in service.

She is 344 feet (105 meters) in length and approximately 6,800 gross tons. She plods along at 14 knots, but her service primarily between Cape Town and Saint Helena, and continued to Ascension Island, was vital to maintaining a link to the outside world before there was an airport. The introduction of air service was her death knell, and despite the protests of her loyal following, *St. Helena* was retired in 2018.

The historic ship cheated the scrappers, finding a repurposing. She was briefly used as a vessel-based armory in the Gulf of Oman and later sold to the car racing group Extreme E, which used her as a transport for materials and cars. The company extensively renovated the ship in 2022, retrofitting her engines, updating her systems, and refurbishing her cabins and public spaces.

Terra Nova Expeditions emerged in 2025, saying they had chartered the quirky little ship and were refitting her to commence Antarctic voyages in 2026-2027. The first voyage was planned for December 2026.

The company reported this week that *St. Helena* is currently unable to reposition from the Persian Gulf in a safe and timely manner for the start of the 2026/2027 Antarctic season due to the ongoing situation in the Middle East. According to her AIS transmissions, the ship, which is currently registered in Djibouti, has been caught in the Dubai area and last reported near Port Rashid in the United Arab Emirates.

Terra Nova Expeditions said it spent several months working to secure an alternate vessel and has been forced to abandon plans for *St. Helena* and proceed with an alternate ship. It reports it secured a three-year season charter for the vessel that formerly operated as the *Expedition* and *G Expedition*, which it will rechristen *Terra Nova Adventurer*.



Terra Nova Adventurer will be a suitable replacement but is not the quirky St. Helena (Terra Nova Expeditions)



St. Helena transported passengers and cargo till 2018 as the last long-distance RMS vessel and sailing to the remote British outpost in the middle of the South Atlantic (Burgh House photo)

The replacement ship has a long history as well, and Terra Nova has the advantage of having an extensive history of expedition cruising in Antarctica, the Arctic, and other remote destinations. She had been sailing for the Canadian company G Adventures since being rebuilt for expedition cruising in 2008. The 6,333 gross ton ship started her life as a passenger car ferry in the Baltic, built in 1972. Currently, she appears to be laid up as the *Vestland Adventurer*, registered in Liberia.

Terra Nova Expeditions says it will undertake a series of enhancements ahead of the vessel's first season with the company. Alongside new soft furnishings and décor throughout the ship, the project will include the remodeling of the bar and lounge areas and the addition of a Jacuzzi and new sauna on Deck 5. It reports, "The result will combine the vessel's established expedition credentials with a refreshed onboard experience aligned with Terra Nova Expeditions' approach to small-ship polar travel.

The company says that its Antarctic itineraries and expedition program will continue as planned aboard Terra Nova Adventurer. Under the charter, the ship will remain with the company through the 2028/29 season

The fate of the historic St. Helena, however, appears uncertain at best.



Aberdeen, Hong Kong Island

Babcock, Saab score \$117.5M deal for Australia's Anzac frigates

Fatima Bahtic Naval Today September 2, 2026



Babcock Australasia (Babcock), in partnership with Saab Australia (Saab), has been selected as the Frigate Capability Life Cycle Manager (CLCM) for the Royal Australian Navy's Anzac-class frigates.

As informed, the team will provide critical asset management, engineering and supply chain services to ensure the Royal Australian Navy's Anzac-class frigates remain seaworthy, materially ready and available into the future.

The new, five-year contract is valued at around \$117.5 million. Babcock and Saab will work closely with defense to manage the critical Anzac capability through the remainder of their lifecycle as the RAN transitions to a new fleet of surface combatants.

"We are delighted to be continuing our long-standing support for critical maritime sustainment for the Royal Australian Navy from Henderson, Western Australia, in partnership with Saab," Babcock Australasia Acting CEO Leah Grantham said.

"Babcock is proud to deliver this vital work uplifting sovereign capability, creating local jobs, strengthening the economy and ensuring the Anzacs remain operational, seaworthy and ready to meet Australia's defence needs now and into the future."

"This contract reflects the strength of our partnership with Babcock, bringing together complementary capabilities to deliver sovereign and future-focused sustainment outcomes for the Royal Australian Navy," Saab Australia

Managing Director Andy Keough CSC stated.

Both companies have supported Anzac-class sustainment as key members of the Warship Asset Management Agreement (WAMA).

Babcock has also supported the New Zealand Defence Force as its Strategic Maritime Partner, maintaining 100 per cent of the Royal New Zealand Navy fleet, while serving as the Regional Maintenance Provider West (RMP-West) for the RAN's Anzac-class fleet and other critical vessels.

<https://www.navaltoday.com/2026/09/02/babcock-saab-score-dollar1175m-deal-for-australias-anzac-frigates>

Australian company to build first 3D-printed uncrewed surface vessel

May 28, 2026

Australian company Hyperion Systems has unveiled the southern hemisphere's first 3D printed uncrewed surface vessel (USV), marking a major milestone for advanced manufacturing and autonomous maritime capability in Western Australia (WA). Australian company Hyperion Systems has unveiled the southern hemisphere's first 3D-printed uncrewed surface vessel (USV), marking a major milestone for advanced manufacturing and autonomous maritime capability in Western Australia (WA).

Designed by Western Australian marine architect Versatile Marine and equipped with autonomy software from Greenroom Robotics, the ASTRA 460 will be built by Hyperion Systems in Henderson, Western Australia. The project highlights an approach aimed at faster and more cost-effective vessel production while supporting domestic industrial capability.

It was officially presented at the Indian Ocean Defence and Security (IODS) conference by WA Defence Minister Paul Papalia, alongside Hyperion's deployable "factory in a box" system, TitanCell, shown publicly for the first time.

Subject to successful completion of sea trials beginning later this month, the fully autonomous vessel will be capable of speeds of up to approximately 40 knots, with a cruising speed between 20 and 30 knots and a range of around 180 to 200 kilometres. It will be designed for multi-mission operations, including surveillance, security tasks, and the covert transport of small teams, with modular payload options and the ability to operate in a range of sea conditions.



The ASTRA hulls will be produced using large-format additive manufacturing (LFAM) and recycled polymer waste. The program is being delivered by a consortium led by Hyperion Systems, with integration support from Australian stakeholders.

The vessel's autonomous navigation and control system will be provided through Greenroom Robotics' GAMA platform, which is designed to be scalable and adaptable across different unmanned surface vessel configurations.

Hyperion CEO Joshua Wigley said the hull can be manufactured in around 40 hours using LFAM 3D printing, compared with approximately four to six weeks required for traditional boat-building methods.

He added that this significant reduction in build time demonstrates the potential of additive manufacturing to accelerate maritime capability development and strengthen sovereign industrial capacity.

Greenroom Robotics co-founder and COO Harry Hubbert stated the company's autonomy stack is well-suited to rapidly reconfigurable, 3D-printed USV platforms.

He noted that in contested environments, the ability to quickly adapt vessels to changing mission requirements could provide an operational advantage, enabling near real-time customisation for specific operational needs. He also said that vessels could be printed, equipped with autonomy systems, and deployed within a matter of days, supporting faster and more scalable maritime capability delivery.

The ASTRA 460 is expected to be among the first LFAM 3D-printed unmanned surface vessels of its kind, with a larger 8-metre prototype planned for delivery to a European navy for use in a major naval exercise in 2026.

<https://www.navaltoday.com/2026/05/28/australian-company-to-build-first-3d-printed-uncrewed-surface-vessel>

Norway To Help Russians Stranded In Arctic After ship Seizure

Reuters

September 5, 2026

OSLO, Sept 4 (Reuters) – Norway will provide necessary assistance to Russians in the Arctic Svalbard islands following the arrest of a ship transporting passengers and supplies to the archipelago, the Nordic country's foreign ministry said on Friday.

A Norwegian court this week ordered the seizure in Svalbard of the *Professor Molchanov* cruise ship on behalf of a Ukrainian company involved in a legal dispute, stranding its passengers and crew and leading Moscow to accuse Norway of "piracy."

"Norwegian authorities are doing what we can to protect Russian citizens who have found themselves in a difficult situation in Svalbard now," Norway's foreign ministry said in a statement to Reuters, adding that it was complying with its international obligations.

The town of Barentsburg, where the ship is being held, is one of two Russian settlements on Svalbard which have a combined 392 residents out of a population of 2,914, according to Statistics Norway.

Russian companies are regularly given sanctions relief to ensure the import of food and other necessary goods to the islands, the ministry said.

The 71-meter (233-foot) *Professor Molchanov* can carry 32 crew and 52 passengers and has a library, sauna, bar and two restaurants, according to the Cruisemapper website. It is used for scientific expeditions and commercial cruises.



A screengrab from an archive video shot in July 2022 shows *Professor Molchanov*, a Russian ship afloat in Arkhangelsk, Russia, which, according to officials, was seized by Norway in the Arctic. Alexander Ermolin/Handout via REUTERS

The court-ordered seizure was made on behalf of Ukrainian energy company Naftogaz, which seeks to enforce a \$4.22 billion compensation award for assets Moscow took when Russia annexed Crimea in 2014.

Russia has said it plans to appeal the ruling.

(Reporting by Terje Solsvik, Editing by Timothy Heritage)

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<https://gcaptain.com/norway-to-help-russians-stranded-in-arctic-after-ship-seizure/>



World's Largest Battery-Electric Ship Loaded For Journey To South America

Australian shipbuilder Incat has completed one of the most complex maritime operations ever undertaken in Tasmania, successfully loading Hull 096, the world's largest battery-electric ship, aboard the heavy-lift vessel Black Marlin ahead of its delivery voyage to South America. The vessel departed on 5 August 2026, and it is expected to spend around 40 days in transit before arriving in South America.



The operation on the River Derwent marks a major milestone for the vessel, which is destined for ferry operator Buquebus and is expected to enter service following final commissioning in South America.

The highly coordinated loading process involved the semi-submersible heavy-lift ship Black Marlin ballasting down below the waterline, allowing Hull 096 to be manoeuvred over its submerged cargo deck. Following the positioning of the vessel, Black Marlin began the refloating process, gradually lifting Hull 096 clear of the water in preparation for final sea-fastening arrangements.

The successful transfer concludes years of planning, design, engineering and construction at Incat's Hobart shipyard. Hull 096 has attracted international attention throughout its development due to its scale and its role in advancing battery-electric technology within the maritime sector.

The vessel is regarded as a landmark project for both Incat and the global ferry industry, demonstrating the growing viability of large-scale zero-emission ferry operations. Its construction has been widely viewed as a significant step forward in the transition towards more sustainable maritime transport.

Hull 096 will remain aboard Black Marlin while final preparations are completed before the heavy-lift vessel departs Hobart in the coming days. Upon arrival in South America, the ferry will be offloaded and undergo final commissioning before entering service with Buquebus on routes across the River Plate region.

The project represents the most ambitious vessel built in Incat's history and highlights Tasmania's role in the development of next-generation maritime technology. Once operational, Hull 096 is expected to be one of the most significant examples of battery-electric propulsion in commercial ferry service anywhere in the world.

<https://shipsmonthly.com/news/worlds-largest-battery-electric-ship-loaded-for-journey-to-south-america/>