The Traverse Board

Newsletter of the Friends Of The Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc

November 2026

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

President's Report November 2026



Greetings to you all, now that Summer is here, good to feel warm again, hooray!

After a few weeks in Adelaide, Mark Sinclair has flown back Coconut, on the hard in South Africa, waiting for a fresh coat of antifouling, then off to the northern hemisphere for a while.

At our meeting in September, at the Exeter Hotel, nine of us enjoyed a very interesting DVD,the subject being the development of the Southern Bluefin tuna fishery, first around Eden, NSW, then later also in Port Lincoln, which transformed that town. We saw great footage of the crew poling for the tuna, with live bait and barbless hooks.

Sadly, we lost Evelyn Wallace-Carter, on September 26th, just one month short of ninety. There was a memorial gathering at Brighton &.Seacliff Yacht Club, and she was a keen historian, and wrote the book, *For They Were Fishers*, about the SA fishing industry.

She is survived by long time partner, David Ryan.

Time to prepare yourselves for our annual lunch, at a new venue, the Duck Inn, at Coromandel Valley.

Neil has given directions to help you find your way there, on November 22nd.

Bye for now, and I look forward to seeing you all then.

Regards, Julian.

November Meeting

Sunday 22nd November

Lunch at The Duck

Join us for a relaxed lunch at Coromandel Valley's Duck Hotel.

We will gather from 12:00 noon.

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

Movements on the Ferry Front

At Last! *Wanggami* has commenced service across Backstairs Passage, firstly with *Sealion 2000. SPOKI* has been retired and reputedly sold overseas.

Its sister, *Ruwi,* is currently on its way from Batam Island, Indonesia. It is due in mid November and should enter service by the end of the month.

It is heading to Adelaide via the Western Australia coast and the Bight.

Meanwhile in Tasmania their two new ferries, *Spirit of Tasmania IV* and *Spirit of Tasmania V* have finally both entered service after several years of delays.

The Traverse Board
Published by:
The Friends Of The Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc
President: Julian Murray
Secretary/Treasurer Neil Waller
Patron: Stan Quin
Postal Address: PO Box 3144
ABERFOYLE PARK 5159
Email: *neil@fpmml.org.au* Web*: http://www.fpmml.org.au*
Phone: 08 71274563

China to Build Self-Propelled Floating Marine Research Island



China concept for a first deep-sea floating island to be self-propelled and used for marine research (CSSC)

By **The Maritime Executive** 2026-10-23 14:33:38

The construction order was signed this week in China for what is being called the world's first floating deep-sea island. Designed for ocean research, it will be a self-propelled vessel, a catamaran designed for long-term residence at sea with the ability to change positions.

The ship will be built by Shanghai Waigaoqiao, which highlights that it will leverage its experience building the world's largest sixth-generation 3,000-meter-deep-water semi-submersible drilling platform. The yard also highlights that China is the first shipbuilding nation to build aircraft carriers, LNG carriers, and large passenger vessels, as well as specialized vessels such as this research ship.

Shanghai Waigaoqiao won the bidding for the research vessel, which is being built at a cost of $413 million. It will be operated by Shanghai Jiao Tong University and is scheduled for delivery in June 2030. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2028.

The shipyard will be responsible for the design and construction using a catamaran base, which is known for good seakeeping capabilities. The main platform will have a semi-submersible twin hull.

China's research vessel will measure 138 meters by 85 meters (453 feet by 279 feet) and have a main deck height of 45 meters (148 feet). It will have a displacement of 74,000 tons and a speed of 11 knots. It is designed to sustain a sea state of 7 (20- to 30-foot waves) and survive a category 17 typhoon (maximum sustained winds exceeding 165 mph).

The main facility will include six shipborne laboratories for marine heavy equipment and systems technology. It will also make observations and conduct research on marine disaster meteorology and long-term marine ecosystem observations. The ship will accommodate 238 crew and researchers.

The reports describe it as a pioneering concept that combines long-term residence with the ability to rapidly move to new locations.

https://maritime-executive.com/article/china-to-build-self-propelled-floating-marine-research-island

Australia unveils new payloads for Ghost Shark and Speartooth UUVs

Fatima Bahtic Naval Today



Illustration; Credit: Australian Government/Defense

Australia is integrating mission-specific payloads into its Ghost Shark and Speartooth uncrewed underwater vehicles (UUVs) and BlueBottle uncrewed surface vessels as part of efforts to expand the Royal Australian Navy's autonomous undersea warfare capabilities.

The Australian government unveiled the development during preparations for Exercise Maritime Big Play Pacific in San Diego, a multinational activity under the AUKUS Pillar II framework. Some of the payloads will be tested during the exercise, which builds on three years of collaboration with AUKUS partners on autonomous undersea systems.

The modular platforms are designed to carry different payloads depending on mission requirements. Examples include systems for delivering supply caches remotely, sea mines and uncrewed aerial vehicles.

The integration effort aims to support a range of naval missions, including undersea warfare, seabed operations, sea denial and the protection of critical undersea infrastructure.

The latest development also advances the first AUKUS Pillar II Signature Project, announced by AUKUS defense ministers in May, which focuses on developing payloads and enabling systems for the partners' uncrewed undersea vehicles.

Under its 2026 National Defence Strategy and Integrated Investment Program, Australia has allocated up to A$5.8 billion over the decade for autonomous and uncrewed undersea warfare capabilities. The investment includes A$1.7 billion to acquire a fleet of Australian-designed and built Ghost Shark vehicles for the Royal Australian Navy.

The announcement was made at Anduril's facility in New South Wales, where the company is involved in developing the Ghost Shark autonomous undersea vehicle. The program is part of Australia's broader effort to develop and field domestically designed autonomous naval systems.

“In an increasingly complex strategic environment, the Albanese Government is committed to delivering practical outcomes that strengthen Australia's defence capability and build our sovereign defence industry," Deputy Prime Minister **Richard Marles** said.

“The development of advanced, cutting-edge payloads under AUKUS Pillar II is a critical part of our work alongside the United States and the United Kingdom. Australia will again have the opportunity to showcase its sovereign developments at Exercise Maritime Big Play Pacific this week, and our work behind the scenes means we can be more open about our work to deliver these important technologies.”

"Ghost Shark is a flagship Australian success story that showcases the ingenuity of our defence industry and the value of investing in sovereign capability. Our Government opened this factory less than a year ago and Ghost Sharks capable of a range of complex missions operating far from our shores are now rolling off the line at an increasing rate into the hands of the Australian Navy," Minister for Defence Industry, **Pat Conroy**, commented.

“The Albanese Government is committed to building a strong sovereign industrial base that delivers advanced capability for Defence while creating highly skilled jobs for Australians."

https://www.navaltoday.com/2026/10/19/australia-unveils-new-payloads-for-ghost-shark-and-speartooth-uuvs

AUKUS partners test next-gen underwater surveillance tech

The navies of the UK, Australia and the US have tested personnel and advanced underwater technologies during Exercise Lanternfish, demonstrating...

Fatima Bahtic Naval Today

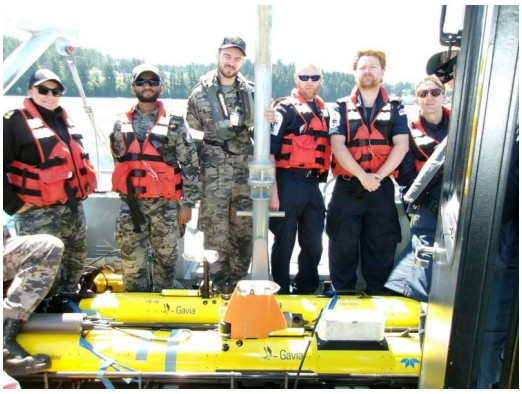
The navies of the UK, Australia and the US have tested personnel and advanced underwater technologies during Exercise Lanternfish, demonstrating how the three AUKUS partners could work together to protect critical undersea infrastructure.



Credit: Royal Navy

Royal Navy divers and hydrographic specialists joined U.S. and Australian personnel during the six-week Exercise Lanternfish, which took place in Virginia, Washington and waters off southwestern Australia, to operate and evaluate remotely operated and autonomous underwater systems.

During the exercise, the Royal Navy's Diving and Threat Exploitation Group deployed the VideoRay Defender, a remotely operated vehicle designed to detect mines and other underwater explosive devices. Meanwhile, the Hydrographic eXploitation Group (HXG) used the Teledyne Gavia autonomous underwater vehicle, a modular platform that can be configured with different sensor payloads for a range of missions.



Credit: Royal Navy

The systems were employed to conduct surveillance of critical undersea infrastructure and support training scenarios involving potential subsea threats. They operated alongside other sensors and underwater vehicles to improve situational awareness and underwater domain monitoring.

The goal was to improve how nations detect, monitor and respond to potential threats below the surface, allowing participants to share expertise, collaborate and develop common operating procedures.

The exercise was conducted under the AUKUS Pillar 2 trilateral defence agreement, which concentrates on collaborative, accelerated deployment of advanced military capabilities by the three partner nations.

https://www.navaltoday.com/2026/07/29/aukus-partners-test-next-gen-underwater-surveillance-tech

RUWI departs Indonesia for South Australia as Kangaroo Island ferry transition progresses



The Australian ferry operator SeaLink's second of its two new Kangaroo Island ferries, RUWI, has departed its builders in Batam, Indonesia, and is now making its way to South Australia.

RUWI departed Batam at approx. 8.15am (11.45am ACDT) on 24 October 2026, embarking on a 4,200-nautical-mile voyage travelling down Australia's west coast and across the Great Australian Bight before arriving in Port Adelaide. Its journey is expected to take around two weeks to complete, subject to weather and operational conditions.

SeaLink's Acting Chief Operating Officer Phil Boyle welcomed RUWI's departure and acknowledged the significant effort involved in getting it underway.

"Seeing RUWI depart Indonesia and begin her journey to South Australia is a significant moment for everyone involved in delivering the new Kangaroo Island ferry service. Securing the vessel and arranging her departure and delivery has taken a mammoth effort from our team, and we're delighted to see her finally on her way to Adelaide and another step closer to commencing service for the community of Kangaroo Island, " Phil Boyle said – and continues:

"We know the Kangaroo Island community has been eagerly awaiting both new ferries, and we do sincerely appreciate their patience as we have worked around the clock to bring RUWI into service alongside her twin sister WANGGAMI as quickly as possible."

The ramp infrastructure works at Cape Jervis and Penneshaw were completed on 22 October following the planned three-day ferry service shutdown, which included the installation of new vehicle ramps and the supporting infrastructure to accommodate the two larger ferries.

Ferry services resumed as planned on Friday, 23 October 2026, with SEALION 2000 currently operating on a limited timetable while the first new vessel, WANGGAMI, completes its final in-harbour testing and crew preparations before commencing service.

WANGGAMI will commence service on Tuesday 27 October 2026 alongside SEALION 2000 on the current standard ferry timetable. A new expanded ferry timetable will commence when RUWI has arrived and starts service with WANGGAMI.

When RUWI arrives into Port Adelaide it will undergo final preparations before it enters service, expected by the end of November. This will also see the commencement of the expanded ferry timetable. SeaLink will confirm a start date for RUWI after it arrives.

Mr Boyle said the identical, purpose-built ferries are 10 metres longer and two metres wider than the existing vessels, offering around 65% more vehicle lane length capacity per sailing, nearly doubling the number of departures a day.

“The drive on and off in the same direction will make boarding and disembarking quicker, safer and easier. Gone are the days of reversing vehicles onto the ferry and passengers will be able to board and disembark in their vehicles,” he said.

Passengers will also enjoy spacious lounges with comfortable booth-style seating, panoramic windows, a larger café and outdoor sundeck seating. Both vessels feature a lift connecting the vehicle deck, passenger lounge and sundeck, accessible toilets on every level and a dedicated air-conditioned pet lounge.

The two newbuildings, built by Karimun Marine Shipyard, have a length overall 60 metres, a beam of 20 metres, and gross tonnage of 2,962. The two conventional RoPax ferries have catamaran hulls.

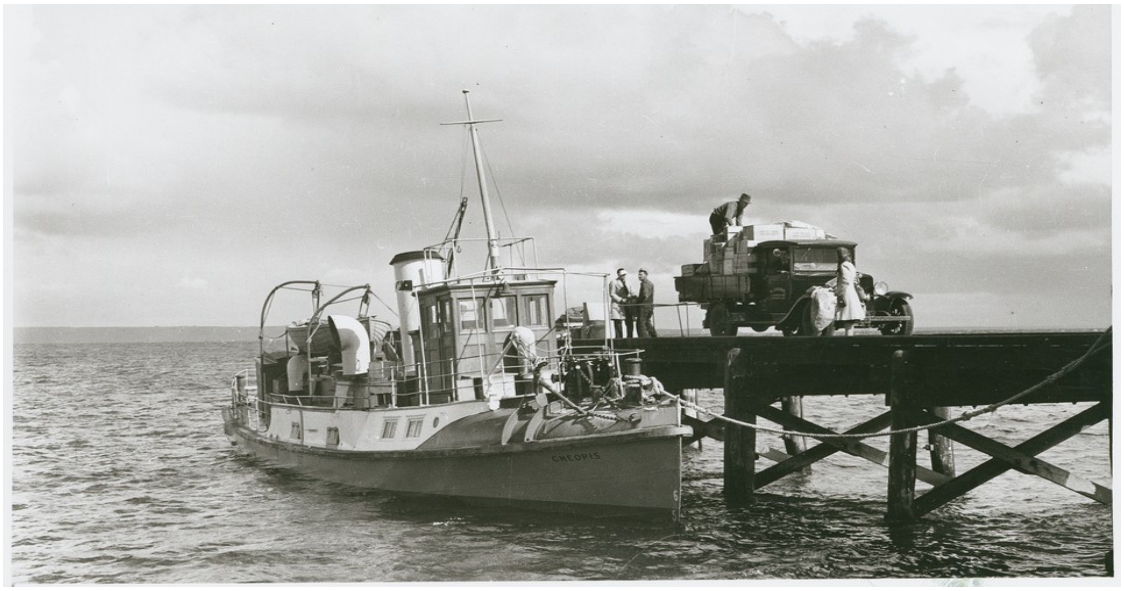
© Shippax *https://www.shippax.com/en/news/ruwi-departs-indonesia-for-south-australia-as-kangaroo-island-ferry-transition-progresses.aspx*

Observations on the new arrangement at Cape Jervis and Penneshaw.

Cape Jervis has gained a tall dolphin right in the middle of the swing basin which made *Sealion 2000*’s docking a bit tricky. No longer could it head into the basin and do a starboard turn and then swing the port bow onto the jetty to secure a line to hold the bow while the stern was swung around to meet the loading ramp. Instead it had to run past the dolphin the back around it which was proving tricky when I travelled on their 2nd day of the interim schedule with *Sealion* only (25th October). The 9:00am ferry was already late into Cape Jervis and lost more time. A couple of English tourists on a day trip were to catch the 7:30 pm ferry back which looked like it might be closer to 8:30pm.

All was in readiness with the berthing arrangements save that the was a bit of work to do sealing the approaches to the loading ramps. The Cape Jervis checkin area was in the process of being revamped.

Foot passengers travelling on the *Sealion* are obliged to enter and leave the vessel via the vehicle ramp since the new passenger airbridge (yes that’s what Sealink call it) can’t be lowered far enough to meet the door on the port side of the ferry.



The 'Cheopis' at Cape Jervis jetty near Talisker Mine SLSA [B 17640/9] The Cheopis traded between Cape Jervis and Penneshaw for many years in the 1930s and 40s.