

# Soundings

EDEN KILLER WHALE MUSEUM

Established 1931

Newsletter March, 2024

## EKWM SALUTES MATTHEW FLINDERS

On the 6th March, it being the 250th anniversary of the birth of Matthew Flinders, EKWM invited the public to join us to mark this notable date. The "house full" sign was soon hung with the response gratifying for the organisers.

Flinders' naval career was quite spectacular, cut short by his time of incarceration on Mauritius, and then by his early death at 40 years of age. He had crewed with William Bligh, who himself had sailed with Jas. Cook, and of whom Flinders had no warm affection.

It is with Australia, the name of which he was first to apply, is where our interest lies. Twofold Bay in particular. Items pertaining to T.F.B were read from M.Ts' journal to the gathering during the afternoon.

Some of the mapping and soundings of that time in the Bay, stood the test of time and were still being used, 150 years later. Not a bad testimony to a twenty-four year old, who had not even a chronometer at hand. to help with bearings while being hindered by fog on more than once on his explorations of the area .

His ten days here was not part of his exploration brief but rather, a bi-product of the vagaries of the weather, (climate change?). Flinders' journal tells the story; "From the centre of the mountain bore N.N.W four leagues; but the haziness of the weather prevented observation being taken for latitude, as it had been before done, when passing in the *Francis*. We then hauled off the coast, with the *Nautilus* company, and being near the latitude of Cape Howe, at ten o'clock, lay to until daylight, for the purpose of obtaining a

good departure; but on the 9th, the wind had veered to south-west, and the weather having a bad appearance, we bore up for Twofold Bay. The course after passing Green Cape, was N-16-W. seven miles to Haycock Point, and N.- 44- W. three or four miles from thence to the south point of entrance to the bay; the shore being all along bold, and for the most part rocky. From the south point known by its reddish appearance and having a steep rock lying off it. We steered for Snug Cove, on the north-west side of the bay; and there anchored in 31/2 fathoms / sandy bottom, at something more than a cable's length from the small beach, and the same distance from the two points which bound the cove....."

The story of Flinders is never complete without mention of his cabin cobber, Trim the cat. Trim cruised the world with his master and sadly. ended his/her days, unceremoniously, incarcerated with its master on Mauritius.

Around Trim, Dr Jodie Stewart, no stranger to EKWM, came to impart some of her in depth knowledge of the famous cat and the species, generally.



Jodie highlighted her address with some great cat sea going moggies , across a wide selection varying from working, to service and pleasure craft.

## Three cC

The Museum shop has been an integral part of the operation, contributing in no small manner to the ongoing costs in keeping “the show” relevant while moving forward.

Its geneses was certainly humble. Berti Egan was aware that to EKWM as a selling point was desirable.

When I arrived on the scene Bert had on offer two of Harry Wellings booklets, @ a retail price of \$1.50. Harry had passed on by then. His niece, Mary Mitchell, was the supplier. I think there was a third booklet in print at the time. The author had produced other titles as well. An early copy I have was printed by a Sydney firm, I seem to remember that Magnet printers produced some editions. Mary, herself, was to produce. a small volume later.

These books were obtained in about half dozen lots. They were on show, exposed on the top of Bert’s small stand. No doubt some walked out without having been paid for.

It is easy to walk through the shop and being too familiar with it, nary a second thought as to its operation. We used the glass showcase that had come from Ramsey’s sore, which business had moved from what is now the former Fishermen’s club to the site where Ramsey’s continued retailing, sans the grocery section.

Mrs Bowler took over obtaining the books, pricing and putting them on display for sale. It was a familiar sight to see Beryl sight c/w shopping basket with stock and Dino the French poodle heading for the Museum and Bert. It was real olde worlde, with each calling the other by their correct form of address.

That was the acorn of EKWM retailing. It was with the arrival of the first major building extension in 1983 that we able get serious about the shop and what it might do to help the bottom line.



2018 Makeover

The old Museum space became the shop. We commenced trading using some old counters and continued that way until we saw our way clear to have some custom-made units fitted. These served us well until another make over was done in 2018.

Hardware, as important as it no doubt is, is secondary to the faces behind it.

The people who service our visitors in the shop are, as I refer to them, as our front line troops.

We are fortunate to have the great crew that we have as the meeters and greeters. They serve us well.

That first smile can remain as the image a visitor carries away with them passing the good shared to others.

If I can indulge in a short yarn: I don’t pry into the affairs of others. What I do often, is ask people is how they chose to come to Eden. When they came to that fork in the road that said Eden this way, Elsewhere that.

I asked it of an ex Melbourne friend of about twenty years, a few weeks ago. I quote “We could see retirement not that far away. We agreed on a sea change and a bit further north. If possible no more than a day’s drive from the grandkids. Got Eden. Unhooked the van. Mum set about getting things in order and I was despatched to get meat and groceries. Went into the butchers. Max Brown was behind the counter. I went out absolutely flabbergasted. It was if he’d known me all my life. Happy frame of mind, went to IAG and was met by Ross Chester. It was a carbon copy of what happened in the butcher’s. I went back to the park, related what had occurred and said. If this is the friendliness of this town, I’ll do me alright’. We went home, sold up and moved here. Certainly no regrets.

Our crew members daily send a similar message for us. ....I raise a glass to them!

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## LET'S ANCHOR IN TWOFOLD BAY

Was sitting here thinking on what to write; a difficult task when I am C.B. most of the time. Being the 22nd March and the time of the autumn equinox, with which comes the longer nights and cooler temperatures. The fact that the interminable daylight saving finishes in matter of days, jogged me out of that lethargic state, but the date lingered. Then it hit that the significance of it was the anniversary of the World Premiere of the stage presentation of the stage play, at Eden Fishermen's Recreation Club (where????), of "And Tonight We Anchor in Twofold Bay", by Theatre South, a Wollongong drama group.

It came about in no small manner through Theatre South's association with EKWM.

In 1983/4 we in thrall of the recently completed major extension of the building c/w a set of toilets after which we would be relaxed if we knew somebody from our growing clientele, "wanted to go.. We had space. You beauty! We had a storage area. Wow! The storage space was soon accounted for as it was not long before Marie Hall and husband Norm, soon brought some semblance of order into the chaos, having been brought back on site after their holiday, mostly at Beryl Bowler's. Alex McKenzie came later.

The yet unnamed Bowler gallery was the space that issued the challenge to the green horn displays and remained empty for a while. I will write a bit more about this another time.

At this time, with my partner, I traded in second hand household items.

A bloke walked in and was having a good look around. Soon after we passed the pleasantries, he introduced himself as Des Davis, Director of Theatre South, Wollongong Drama Group. They were planning to bring a show to Eden. He gave no other details. I was pretty excited at this news of live theatre and offered any help we could any suitable props he chose to borrow from us, we would oblige

"By the way, you wouldn't know of a bit of

office space we could use?" In a matter of seconds my mind turned to the now Bowler Gallery and its, so far, emptiness. Answering in the semi positive, I said "Pop in tomorrow. I think I can put you on to something". A quick catch up with Board members and thus the our relationship with Theatre South was born. We were soon to learn it was not only to be played in Eden but was **about** Eden, "And Tonight We Anchor In Twofold Bay" was born.

We next met writer, performer, and general theatre person Katherine Thompson. We set up a table in the now Bowler Gallery. Katherine penned initial notes and planned her daily interviews and her acquainting with the community. She stayed about 2 1/2 months during which time got to know many local personalities and the measure of the town. Asking if we might have the tapes afterwards, with a wry smile and a glint in her eye the answer was in the negative.

Early in the century Jen Drenkhahn liaised with the drama teacher at Eden Marine High, the subject being for students to re-live the play and present it to the public. It happened, very successfully, with Katherine's enthusiastic support. There were still surviving interviewees whose story was included. The Friends arranged a wonderful morning where the young actors met the real life personalities

I thought; Wouldn't it be great if this could happen again in 2025, for a fortieth anniversary, with the current bunch of bright students following in the steps of earlier alumni.

Again. Wouldn't it also be great if some of those same, bright young people (or in fact anyone) could write a play on the short life of Matthew Flinders with emphasis on TFB. It's all there; romance adventure relationships, incarceration, disappointment. All life's happenings in one



Tom Bobbin with student actor (name not known to me), at the morning .tea. Another participant, Jean Whiter, in the background. I regret. Best photo I had.

It was great to hear that Valma Barber paid a flying visit to the town. She hitched a ride with her daughter who had business to see to in the town, hence the short time here.

We remember Val's time with fondness and the time she shared with the Friends and the great efforts on many fronts.

On hearing of the coming visit, Marg Sheaves, soon got the word out among the old gan for tea and talk at her home. I understand neither were in short supply. Would have liked to caught up with Val but sadly, the planets didn't align.

It's wonderful to see Jennie Burdett back on deck and doing well.

### Flinders Exhibition

Angela George and her small team got together a mni exhibition to commemorate., the 250th anniversary of Matt Flinders' birth. Naturally, we do not enjoy artifacts on the subject but the researched text and images make for an interesting and educating. exhibition which will, hopefully, wet the curiosity of our visitors to find out more of this important person in link of those of early settlement exploration'

To photograph any wall mounted, glass covered item in our galleys can be quite difficult.



The reflection of ceiling lights hard to deal with. Attached is a sample of what to see.

### Henry Lawson also ran for Twofold Bay.

Did you see her flying past, past, past.

On a Friday afternoon?

Did we seem to be flying all to fast

From the grave of the Lye-e-moon?

We'd raced the glass from Gabo

To save an autumn day;

We dared not run for Disaster Bay

So we ran for Twofold Bay

*Stay*

*Safe*

*Jack*



### Calendar

#### April

The autumn equinox has passed Stack the firewood

1st Easter Monday

6th Pacific Venture Arr. 7AM

7th Daylight saving ends

15th Back to school this week

25th Anzac Day

#### May

Tom makes the **BIG** move