

Parappa



NEWSLETTER

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Sails, engines and wheelhouses



Scotty Jager on *Parappa*, in 1988. Scotty worked on *Parappa* for most of his life, and modified her extensively to make her more workable. In this photo he is shown at *Parappa*'s second wheelhouse, which he added in 1964.

Photo taken at the Dover wharf by Jeanette Field

Parappa is a Tasmanian fishing boat built by Ned Jack in Launceston in 1915. For most of her working life she was used for crayfishing around southern Tasmania. She was owned by the Jager family at Southport and Dover from 1936 to 2004, when she was bought by Des Beechey, who is working to maintain her as an excellent example of a working boat with a long and rich history.

This edition of the *Parappa Newsletter* concentrates on the modifications that have been made to *Parappa* to keep her in working order and to keep her viable for earning a living from fishing.

Parappa shows within her hull and fitout a record of 89 years of maintenance and improvement. To keep the boat afloat and serviceable, maintenance of the fabric was ongoing, made possible to a large degree by the remarkable durability of the huon pine hull. The hull, engine, mast, sails and rigging, and the various winches and equipment all needed constant attention, or, at worst, the boat would sink. And to keep the boat viable to make a living from fishing, it was necessary to keep up with the competition by adopting technological advances: more powerful engines, better communication and navigation gear, powered winches, electricity generation, and eventu-

ally, hydraulics for steering and winches. Without keeping up to date and competitive, the business would go under, even if the boat didn't.

When preserving a boat such as *Parappa*, or any large heritage object such as a building or a vehicle, there are two alternative strategies available. One is to go back to as-new condition, to produce the look and feel as the object was when it came out of the factory, or off the builder's slipway in this case. This approach suits some types of objects better than others, particularly those that have not changed much. It is the choice usually made for old vehicles, or old steamrollers or railway engines, as the basic structure usually has not altered with use over time, and the vehicle can be made to look like new with replacement parts and new paint. This "as-new" approach is sometimes taken with old buildings, where additions can be removed and changes can be undone to produce a restored object. But the restored object is never wholly original, and often far from it - there is always some new materials or component introduced to make a restoration.

The other approach for managing a historical object is to accept it as it is in its changed state, leaving all the changes and alterations, and just stabilize it to prevent further deterioration. The resultant product will not look factory new, and may even look messy and unkempt, but the object is in a way more genuine - no new materials or replica parts are introduced. This approach is best when the object has been substantially changed, and when there is no hope of going back to the original because the basic structure has been changed so much, or original components or materials are not available.

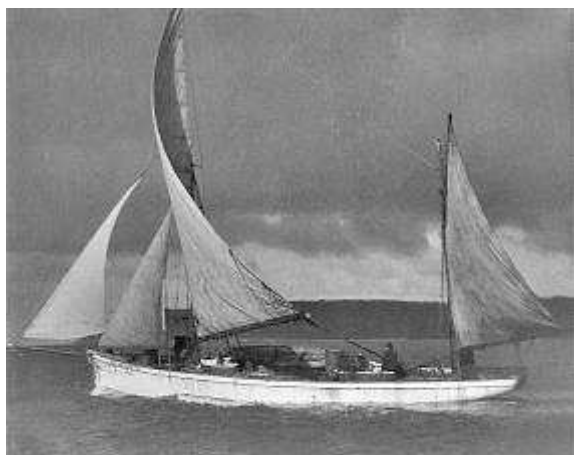
The difficulty with the first approach, of restoring to "as-new", is that it erases the history built in by the changes that were made, and consequently the history of the people who made the changes and why they made them. In an object that has had a narrow range of use this may be no great loss, but

if the use of the object is long and varied, and tells a story worth recording, the history may be of more significance than the bare object.

The approach taken with preservation of *Parappa* is the second one outlined above, preserving the record of changes that were made since she was built in 1915. As far as possible, the effect of changes have been left open to view. For example, the hull has not been lined inside, so the ribs broken through collision or decay are on view. This records the fact that the limestone barge *Victoria* crushed *Parappa* up against Ocean Pier and nearly sank her, as the broken ribs are still visible in the fo'c'sle. To a large degree this was the only choice possible, as the materials to return to as-new condition are long gone. *Parappa* now has her 10th or 11th engine, and the first engine was used as ballast in another boat! The original deck and deck beams were replaced in 1964 when the deck was raised, and there is no hope of retrieving them. And the original tiller "kicked around the back yard for a long time, and was probably burnt in the 1967 fires", according to Stephen Jager.

However, there is a continuing need to preserve the fabric of the boat into the future, and this has to take into consideration her changed role from fishing boat to recreational boat. As a fishing boat there was frequently seawater washing over the deck and the engine was exercised often, but the environment in retirement is different. The best strategy to ensure long-term preservation is to ensure that she is a functional, useful recreational boat, so that someone will be inspired to continue to care for her. So the approach being taken is to preserve the old while developing new facilities in a way that does not destroy the old structures, and intrude on the appearance and fabric as little as possible.

More about last issue's cover photo



Bob Jager has provided more information about the photo at left, which was shown on the front of Newsletter No. 6. The photo was taken by him in the late 1940s, from the "C & J". Scotty Jager is at the tiller and Jack Jager (junior) is putting the jib over. The mizzen mast and sail shown here are not the original; these came from the *Turua*, which was wrecked at Deadmans Bay, and were sold to Jack Jager (senior) by Clyde Clayton.

The boat is heading in an easterly direction. The land above the stem is the point outside Mouldies Hole; the beach in the background is Planters Beach.

Making the basic boat more workable

Parappa was built in 1915 as a basic fishing boat, powered by sails, with a low horsepower engine as an auxiliary. She would have been built to meet the needs of the time, and to fish with the methods of the day - crayfishing in shallow water with rings, hand line fishing, and working with small nets. I suspect that no-one expected her to last for 94 years, as most wooden boats succumb to rot, fire or shipwreck well before that age. Engines were just being introduced when she was built, and no boatbuilder would have foreseen the rapid development of engines and the way they were to take over from sail. But *Parappa* has lasted beyond expectation, and undergone a transformation that would have been unimaginable to her builders.

The hull has been modified extensively by raising the deck, and wheelhouses have been added. The photo at top right shows the original configuration. The hull and deck were the same height all round, quite low to the water. There was a raised deckhouse forward just behind the main mast, with sliding hatch to give access to the fo'c'sle below. Another raised deckhouse was between the well and mizzen mast, with a sliding hatch to give access to the engine room. The well was in its present position, between the deckhouses. Steering was by tiller, and engine controls were on the engine, not on deck.

The deck was raised in 1964 by Scotty Jager to give more freeboard and more internal headroom; one plank on the main deck and three planks, or 18 inches in the fo'c'sle. Stephen Jager said that his father raised the deck so the boat could work in rougher water; he had found a good piece of cray bottom off Maatsuyker Island, where conditions were more severe than around the coast.

The photo at right shows the interior of the fo'c'sle today. The original deck beams sat on the top stringers - the old deck beam notches are still visible. The three new top planks are attached with short ribs that reach down over five original planks. New deck beams were installed, and a new deck of celery top pine planks was fixed to the beams with iron dumps.



Parappa between 1915-1921 showing the original hull and rig configuration



The forward deck was raised by three planks in 1964



Inside the fo'c'sle, showing new ribs to support the raised deck

Another change that has made a big increase in functionality to the boat has been the addition of a wheelhouse. She was built without a wheelhouse, as shown in the top picture on the previous page. Life must have been wet and sometimes cold, as there was no shelter from the elements at all while working. When the Jagers bought the boat in 1936 there was still no wheelhouse, but sometime after that a tall, narrow wheelhouse was added, as shown in the top photo at right, which was taken in December, 1963. It is likely that the steering was changed from tiller to wheel when the first wheelhouse was built.

When the deck was raised in 1964, a larger wheelhouse was added. The middle photo at right shows Scotty Jager at the door of the wheelhouse he built, apparently with hands on the wheel. This wheelhouse was twice the width of the previous one, but about the same height. The steering was by wheel at this stage.

The third photo at the right shows the aluminium wheelhouse which was built in about 2002 - it didn't improve the appearance of the boat, but is luxurious in space and protection from the weather. This structure is about 3.5 m long, and 2.5 m wide at the front, with room for a helmsman's bunk, a table, cupboards, an instrument console and the wheel. At the rear, half the width is used for a shower, with its own entry from outside.

The new wheelhouse provides dry, spacious accommodation for the electrical and navigation gear that was added in the 2002 upgrade. The console houses about 20 meters and controls: engine starting switch and gauges, genset starting switch and gauges, bilge pump switches, and 240V and 24V light switches. Housed below the console is the electrical wiring and controls for the 24V and 240V systems, as well as hydraulic lines for the steering. Also below the console is the modern computerised bilge pump monitoring system, that sends an alarm via mobile phone if the mid level bilge pump or high level bilge alarm is triggered.



This photo taken in 1963 shows the first wheelhouse, modest in size, but a great improvement over helming in the open.



This is the second wheelhouse, built in 1964, wider than the previous one.



The third wheelhouse, built in 2004, is much more luxurious than previous versions.



The original rig in 1921



The gaff, mainsail and boom of the original rig



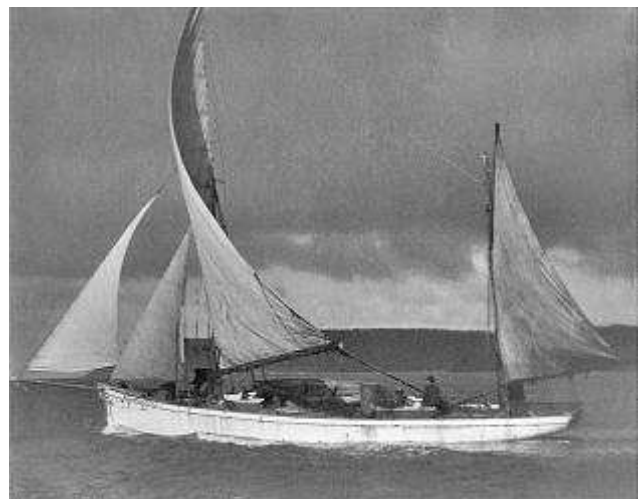
Parappa in 2001, without bowsprit.

Over *Parappa's* 90-year working life fishing boats saw a transition from sail to engine. When she was built in 1915, she was sail powered, supplemented by a 10 hp auxiliary engine. As the power and reliability of engines increased the importance of sail decreased, and sails were gradually removed. In 2004 she was equipped with a 100 hp engine, and the sails had been removed completely.

The photo at top left shows *Parappa* in full gaff rig when she won the fishing boat race in the Hobart Regatta in 1921. There are five sails. The mainsail has a heavy wooden boom at the bottom, and the gaff, another timber spar, at the top, this needing to be hauled up the mast with the sail. Above the mainsail is a jacksail topsail, with a topsail yard (a timber spar) at the top and a shorter one, the jacksail, at the bottom, the lower one extending the topsail out beyond the end of the mainsail gaff. Two headsails are set, one from the bow and another from the end of the bowsprit. The mizzen mast carries a single gaff sail, with a light boom and gaff. On a later photo (not shown), the jacksail topsail has been replaced with a smaller sheet topsail, which does not have a yard at its bottom.

The photo at middle left shows the gaff and sail lowered onto the boom, and wooden blocks and ropes for raising the sail.

In the photo below right, taken in about 1946, the mainsail has been converted to Bermudian rig. Handy Jager told me *Parappa* was the first vessel in southern Tasmania to be converted, which may be so. The mast was lengthened to accommodate the taller, triangular sail by joining on a section 12 feet long with a steel sleeve. The bowsprit and two headsails are still in place. The mizzen mast is quite tall, still carrying a gaff sail. Gaff rig went out of favour because of the difficulty of raising the heavy gaff, being replaced by the more easily handled Bermudian sail.



Parappa in 1946, converted to Bermudian rig, still with bowsprit

The photo at left was taken in 2001, before the major upgrade was commenced. The bowsprit had disappeared, and there was not a sail in sight. The mizzen mast was fairly short, because, according to Stephen Jager, at that stage it was used only for holding lights and aerals.

Lets have a new Bedford

On a working fishing boat, engines wear out and need to be replaced. *Parappa* was built in 1915 with a 10 hp petrol engine, Union brand, made in USA (described in detail in Newsletter 2). This was definitely an auxiliary engine, used for manoeuvring in close quarters, but not useful for travelling. In size and weight it was comparable to modern diesel engines, which was fortunate as it filled a space that was later occupied by more powerful engines. The Union lasted until 1937, a period of 22 years, during which time engine technology developed tremendously. It was replaced with a Junkers 25 hp diesel engine (described in Newsletter 4). Since then, there have been about 10 more engines in *Parappa*, with an average life span of about 8 years.

When I talked to Steven Jager in 2006, he told me about some of *Parappa's* engines: "She's had 4 or 5 Bedfords in her. We used to work on a principle of about 8 years of life out of a Bedford. We religiously pulled them down every year whether they needed it or not; stripped them down, checked rings and bearings and if they needed any attention we would pull them out. ... The reason Dad [Scotty Jager] went to Bedfords was because he got a cheap motor - it was a bad year - off the Thorn boys, and he got marine conversion stuff for her from a Clae and put it on and got it to work. He had an SJ model first and



Bedford engine in *Parappa* in 2010

Parappa's engines

<u>Year</u>	<u>Engine type</u>	<u>Information source</u>
1915	Union 10 hp petrol, installed when built	
1937	Junkers 25 hp diesel	Bob Jager
	Sterling petrol engine	Bob Jager
	Perkins 6 cylinder diesel, made 1946	Survey report, 1955. (MAST file) "Pretty old when installed" (Bob Jager)
	Perkins L4	Purchased new, broke crankshaft (Bob Jäger)
	Bedford/Clae diesel, 48 hp	Application for survey, 1961 (MAST file)
	Bedford/Clae diesel, 85 hp	Application for survey, 1968 (MAST file)
	Bedford 96 hp	Application for survey, 1969 (MAST file)
	Diesel 145 hp (Leyland 466)	Application for survey, 1973 (MAST file)
	Diesel 120 hp	Application for survey, 1974 (MAST file)
	Bedford 96 hp	Application for survey, 1975 (MAST file)
1980	Bedford 96 hp	New Bedford 330 cu. in. 96 hp installed 20 Nov 1980.
		Replaced one of same model (MAST file)

then he went for the B model. He just virtually wore them out, even though we maintained them. They were not very heavy, adequate for all she needed, would run on an oily rag, he said they will go any time he wants, he knew them inside out".

The table above shows an approximate list of *Parappa's* engines. In most cases we don't have the exact year of installation; much of the information comes from MAST survey application forms, which show the engine details when the survey was being requested, but not the year of installation.

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