



Whaleboat for the Pilot Station, Moruya

The NSW Government Gazette of 1860 has the full specification for the tender to build a whaleboat for the Pilot Station at Moruya. The tender letter is dated 23rd August 1860.

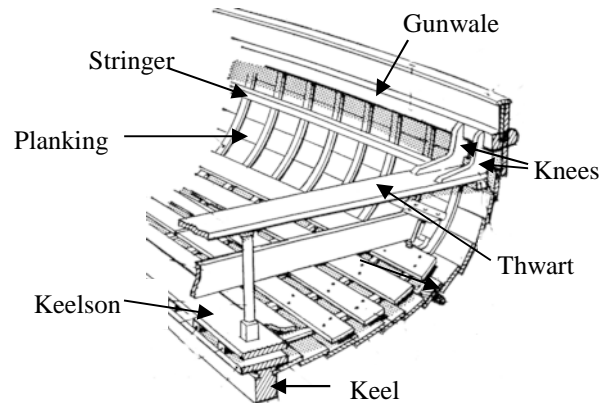
A whaleboat was the commonly used term for a rowing boat built to a design similar to the boats used by the whalers. In the same year as the Moruya boat was to be built a slightly larger whaleboat of 24 feet was to be constructed for the Richmond River Pilot Station. A tender was also called for repairs to the light ship "Bramble" which apart from the repairs was to have a new lifeboat built. The lifeboat in the specifications was called up as a whaleboat with the same specification as that of the Moruya Pilot's vessel with the exception it did not need "a rolling chock in bows to take a 3 inch rope." The design was considered good for rough conditions and had been tried and tested over the years. The history of the modern surf boat can be traced back to these whaleboats.

Specifications for Moruya Pilot boat

Length, 21 feet; breadth, 5 feet; depth, 2 feet; keel, 5 x 3 of blue gum; flat in floor; stringer round the boat; the thwarts to be dovetailed, and doubled kneed, and double bolted with copper bolts; planks to be of cedar, not more than 5 inches wide, and copper-fastened throughout, nails not to be more than 3 inches apart; thwarts to be of pine or cedar, four in number, and to be 7 inches board and 1¼ thick; mast thwarts to be 9 inches broad and 1½ thick; timbers to be of oak, 5⁄8 x 7⁄8 at head, 7 inches apart, and floors of watergum notched solid, 7⁄8 x 1 inch; breast-hook half-way down stem and stern; sternposts and knees of honeysuckle; chocks in bows, fitted with a 1½ inch roller, bilge pieces and battens round gunwale to be of blue gum; hoisting ring at each end; keelson board to be fastened down with screw bolts and plates of copper in keel, with wood toggles to keep the keelson down; lining boards not to be nailed, but fastened down with wood toggles; stem-band to be of copper; boat to have two coats of varnish throughout; one mast, and a lug sail of no. 5 canvass; to be provided with rowing crutches, and brass sockets, one rudder, with copper hangings; to be fitted with cork bags under thwarts fore and aft, in midships not less than 10 inches thick, and tapering at each end; covers to have two coats of paint; the boat to have a good spring in keel, and a rolling chock in bows to take a 3 inch rope.

The whole to be finished to the satisfaction of the Harbor Master, Sydney.

Below - Section illustrating some of the terms used in the specification.



The genealogists in our midst will appreciate the ancestral chart of the whaleboat, it is part of a larger family tree of the boats of Sydney's Harbour and beaches in *Forgotten Fleets* by Daniel Hardie.

