

Probus Neutral Bay Guest Speaker – Tues. 12th. March 2024

NOEL PHELAN– Aust. National Maritime Museum



“THE GOLDEN AGE of STEAM”

In the mid-1900s the dominance of sailing ships in global trade and warfare culminated when the steam engine became the iconic invention of the industrial revolution 1760 – 1840. [The latter was previously powered by water wheels.] This was the transition from man-made goods to machines.

Experiments in steam production in the 17th century turned, by the middle of the 19th, into a technology which powered ships and trains, drove factories of the industrial world, ran mining drills, carriages, water pumps and many other applications.

Steam ships and steam boats were a huge provider of people and goods transportation, but by the 20th century, trains, planes and automobiles made steamboats all but obsolete. In the 1950s many shipping companies switched to more efficient and powerful diesel engines. Eg. Large cruise ships. However, some large naval vessels and submarines continue to be operated with steam turbines, using nuclear reactors to boil the water.



Our Guest Speaker Noel Phelan. We first met Noel with his previous presentations to us on “The Halvorsen Story” and “The Sinking and Salvaging of The Costa Concordia”. He was excellent.

Noel is a Team Leader at the Australian National Maritime Museum and has had a close connection with the water all his life.

Noel's first career was as a science and mathematics teacher. He then moved into IT with IBM where he spent 25 years in various technical and management positions.

Noel is a Past President of Northbridge Rotary and is an active volunteer in retirement. Noel also spent several years with Marine Rescue and the Rural Fire Service. A very special bloke.

His Presentation Noel will cover all of the above. Undoubtedly, he will highlight and encourage us to visit The Sydney Heritage Fleet’s two steam vessels – LADY HOPETOUN and the steam tug WARATAH. In addition, the ANMM’s steam yacht ENA in Darling Harbour.



Steam Launch "LADY HOPETOUN"



Steam Tug "WARATAH"



Steam Yacht "ENA"