

WORDS THAT CAME ASHORE.

A lot of our everyday English language has been brought ashore by sailors and absorbed into our normal speech. Here are some examples

Slush Fund.

When the cook on a sailing ship boiled the salted meat for the crew's meals, he skimmed the fat from the top of the water and kept it in a barrel. We would call it "dripping" but on a ship it is called "slush". It was used as a substitute for butter and to grease the machinery and to make a cheap sort of candle, called a "slush lamp".

He kept as much of the "slush" as possible and sold it at the end of the voyage, (to be used in the manufacture of candles), and kept the money for himself. This was his "**Slush Fund**".

Junk Food.

Junk is the sailor's term for old rope that is "worn out" (grey, stringy with broken fibres). Sailors saw the similarity between the old rope and the meat in their meals and referred to it as "salted horse" or "salted junk" This term came ashore and came to mean any food with little or no nutritional value.

There was still some use for the "old rope" and it was collected and at the end of the voyage it was sold to make "oakum" (the fibres wedged between planks to fill the gaps). The money was kept by the officers and is the origin of the old term "**money for old rope**" when you get something that has not cost you anything

A wife in every Port.

In the English Navy during the times when they at war with France and Spain, sailors were often not allowed to leave the ship when it returned to port in case they deserted, but, their wives could come out to the ship and stay onboard until the ship sailed again. This meant that when a ship came into the harbour, boatloads of women would come out to the ship to be with "their husbands". When the ship left port the women would go ashore. At the next "port of call" this charade would be repeated and so sailors "**had a wife in every port**"

While the women were on the ship they didn't have to get out of the hammock in the morning, along with the rest of the crew, but then had to prove that they were female. This was done by "dangling one leg over the edge of the hammock", and from that, we get the old saying, "**to show a leg**" to get you out of bed.

To turn a blind eye.

When Rear Admiral Horatio Nelson (later Lord Nelson) was fighting at the Battle of Copenhagen, it looked like the British might lose, so a message was signalled to Nelson with instructions to break off the engagement with the other fleet. Nelson still thought that he had a chance to win but could not ignore the signal and risk being charged for disobeying the order. Nelson was a quick thinker and came up with this solution. Nelson had lost his right arm and right eye in previous battles and when told of the signal he held the telescope up to his blind eye and said "I can't see any signal" and continued on fighting and won the battle. This is why we "**turn a blind eye**" to something that we don't want to know about.

Tours for your enjoyment

Fish and Ship Tour These tours are conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays and include morning tea on the James Craig, a conducted tour of the ship followed by a trip on one of our historic ferries (with full commentary) into the upper harbour and to Rozelle for a tour of the restored ships and the others undergoing restoration. Afterwards the ferry will drop you off, over at the Fish Markets, and all this for only **\$25**.

(Minimum 15 passengers, maximum 30 passengers)

Sydney Harbour Secrets This tour is conducted on Sundays using our histories steam ships, VIP launch **Lady Hopetoun** or the steam tug **Waratah**. The tour starts at Rozelle shipyard at 12 noon (car parking is available or you can arrive by light rail from Central Station). After boarding the ship at Rozelle, you steam down the harbour to Garden Island and then back under the Sydney Harbour Bridge then up the Parramatta River past Cockatoo Island, whilst your guide tells you the hidden history of the surrounding area, before returning to Rozelle at approximately 3.15 pm. **Cost Adult \$39. Seniors \$35**

Afternoon tea with coffee and cake is included in the price.

The James Craig sails every second weekend to allow you to experience the thrill of sailing through the Heads of Sydney Harbour and out to sea to view the magnificent coastline from the deck of a square rigged sailing ship. The tour begins at 9.30am and you return to Wharf 7 at approximately 4pm. Morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and entertainment is included with your ticket and a bar is also available to purchase Liquid refreshments. The James Craig also participates in Harbour celebrations, Australia Day, New Years Eve fireworks and the start of the Sydney to Hobart race.

A “sleep on board’ adventure for children, on the “Craig”

The minimum age for children to “sail’ on the James Craig is 12 years. To allow younger children to enjoy and learn how sailors lived, we conduct “**overnight sleepovers**” where schools, church groups and other children’s organizations can spend the night, eating ship food, learning how to tie knots, sing sea shanties and sleeping in a hammock. The following morning after breakfast they return ashore as “jolly jack tars”.

Charter a boat

You can also charter a vessel (including the crew) and plan your own tour.

The small ferry “**Harman**” can accommodate 30 passengers. The VIP steam launch, **Lady Hopetoun**, (circa 1902) has a maximum of 27 guests.

The 1902 steam tug, **Waratah**, will carry a party of 49.

The James Craig can be chartered for day sails and also makes a wonderful setting for weddings, corporate functions and parties while still moored alongside at Wharf 7.

You can join us and become a member of the S.H.F.

You don’t have to be a welder or a boilermaker. We need people to share the fun of being part of an organization that is helping to save our maritime history, so that future generations will also enjoy these ships. We need people to assist in the office, guide people around the ships and to act as stewards on day sails. The list is endless. We all have some skills that we could share. To allow you to consider becoming a member we regularly conduct **Fleet Discovery Days**. No pressure, just come along and see if you would like to be “part of the family”.

Further information can be found at www.shf.com.au or phone Lynelle on 9298 3888.