

# The Traverse Board

Newsletter of the Friends Of The Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc

January 2020

## News From The Friends

*Proudly Supporting the Paul McGuire Collection of The State Library of South Australia.*

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT January 2020

Here we are, leaping into a New Year, and I hope it will be a good one for the Friends, and all our friends, too. The weather is kind at present, but we must all be saddened by the terrible bushfires around the country, and look forward to an early recovery.

Our annual lunch was a fairly quiet affair in terms of numbers, but very pleasant, and we did manage to sell a few more books, still plenty left, by the way.



On February 4th we will be meeting at the Maritime Museum at 6 pm, for a presentation about the "South Australian", wrecked at Encounter Bay early in the colony's existence. The plan is to proceed to the Railway Hotel for dinner, at which time the business of our AGM will be conducted, and I trust we will have a good gathering there.

Time to close this now, so I wish you all well, see you at the AGM meeting.

Regards, Julian.



Cape Borda Light, fortunately not damaged in the recent fire which destroyed the rest of Flinders Chase National Park and the Ravine De Casours Wilderness area,

*The*  
**RAILWAY**  
*Hotel*  
ESTABLISHED 1858

### Next Meeting

**The next Meeting is our AGM and will feature a talk on the *South Australian* wreck in Encounter Bay.**

**Date: Tuesday February 4th 2020**

**Time: Talk 6:00pm**

**Venue: SA Maritime Museum, Port Adelaide.**

After the talk we will head to the Railway Hotel for dinner and the AGM.

Please book dinner with Neil 0418 821 331 or Julian 0414 365 294 by 2nd February 2020.



This Cray Boat is anchored in Tasmania's Wineglass Bay.

The water has not always been so clear, nor the sands so white. The bay is named for the blood colour of the water after whales had been flensed at the nearby whaling Station. From nearby lookouts it looked like a wineglass being filled with wine.

Shore based whaling ceased by 1840.

#### *The Traverse Board*

Published by:

The Friends Of The Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc

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## Wirrina marina lease to be terminated over \$276,000 dredging bill, District Court hears

A marina operator accused of misappropriating more than \$1 million in berth fees is facing potential eviction over a \$276,000 taxpayer debt, a court has been told.

Renato Castello, Urban Development Editor, The Messenger



A marina operator accused of siphoning off more than \$1 million in berth fees is facing potential eviction over a \$276,000 dredging works debt, a court has been told.

The District Court has heard that Infrastructure Minister Stephan Knoll has issued notices to Marina St Vincent operator New Wave Aerospace to terminate its lease of the Wirrina Cove facility.

Sarah Mitchell, acting for the Crown Solicitor's office, told Judge Patrick O'Sullivan that New Wave Aerospace owed DPTI \$276,000 for dredging works.

"My present instructions are to seek orders for possession (of the property) in the Supreme Court," she said.

DPTI had charged New Wave Aerospace \$524,355 on initial dredging of the marina, according to invoices lodged with the court.

The Advertiser revealed in January 2018 that DPTI told berth owners it would dredge the marina because New Wave Aerospace had breached its lease by failing to undertake the work.

Dredging of the marina is critical to remove build up of silt and sand and ensure safe passage of boats. Part of the \$524,355 bill was paid with a \$150,000 bank guarantee and berth owners' fee.

The lease termination threat was raised during the most recent court hearing in a class action brought by 73 berth owners in 2017, who allege New Wave Aerospace and its director Stephen Marks misappropriated \$1.25 million of their fees for their own purposes. At the hearing late last week Mr Marks, who has denied any misconduct, sought to have DPTI joined as a party to the proceedings in a bid to help recover outstanding dredging funds from berth owners.

Ms Mitchell told the court she strongly opposed the application, which Judge O'Sullivan adjourned to a further hearing on December 10.

Judge O'Sullivan also expressed his displeasure with the plaintiffs in the class action he said were acting with a "contumacious disregard" to a June 28 order instructing them to pay money into a court fund.

"You've got some \$73,000 owing, I'm not particularly happy about that," he told Duncan Basheer Hannon's Peter Pedler, acting for the plaintiffs.

"I made orders and I expect them to be complied with. I don't think it's acceptable there are plaintiffs who haven't paid."

Judge O'Sullivan further ordered that \$21,100 be paid out of a marina sinking fund to go towards DPTI's bill.

As previously reported, DPTI has raised repeated concerns with Mr Marks about the Wirrina Cove marina's finances and lack of fuel.

# UniSA partners with defence sector to deliver innovations in communications

20 December 2019

<https://www.unisa.edu.au/Media-Centre/Releases/2019/unisa-partners-with-defence-sector-to-deliver--innovations-in-communications/>



The University of South Australia has secured two out of four grants designed to boost South Australia's defence industry capability by applying new research knowledge and innovation and working partnership with industry, to help solve some of the real challenges facing the defence sector.

The successful projects - Narrative Visualisation of Simulations for Force Design and Optimal Target Detection for Marine Radars Using Waveform Diversity – each receiving \$150,000 - were announced today in the latest round of the South Australian Defence Innovation Partnership Cooperative Research Grants.

UniSA Director Defence and Space, Matt Opie says the results are a strong endorsement of UniSA's defence research expertise.

“Not only are we leading two of the projects, but we are also a key partner in the other two defence industry projects,” Opie says.

“We undertake world-class research in virtual reality systems led by some of the leading experts in that field and our signals processing research expertise dates back 40 years – so we have the capacity to deliver the Australian Defence Force critical advanced capability.

“We are also highly experienced at working with industry and bringing together research teams that are outcomes focussed.”

A relatively new field – narrative visualisation – brings data to life both qualitatively and by presenting a visual story about meaningful trends that can be rapidly understood and acted upon.

The process reveals trends, casual relationships and decisive events and has the potential to be applied in real-time combat situations to ensure better and more informed decision-making.

“UniSA's world-leading research in narrative visualisation will allow defence analysts to explore and analyse information and quickly make sense of what can otherwise be overwhelming amounts of data,” Director of the Australian Research Centre for Interactive and Virtual Environments, Professor Bruce Thomas says.

In the second project, the optimal target detection for marine radars, researchers will address the challenge of what is known as ‘sea clutter’ or the interference that waves on the ocean's surface cause to the detection of targets on or above the sea surface, particularly an issue for small targets.

“This important research will advance high performance navigation radar systems for future marine platforms for both the Royal Australian Navy and the Royal Australian Air force,” UniSA's associate head of engineering research and innovation, Professor Kutluyil Dogancay says.

UniSA researchers will also contribute to a project to devise conducting carbon coatings for naval vessels to deter marine creature growth on vessels and the development of a large-scale submarine model that will allow for simulator-based training for next generation submariners.

Industry partners for all of the projects will provide a vital pathway for the commercialisation of the research outcomes and the transfer of technology.

“As Australia's university of enterprise, UniSA has long experience working with industry to bring innovations to commercial reality and these projects will help to develop high-functioning industry partnerships and deliver the State increased defence sector capability,” Opie says.

UniSA is a foundation member of the Defence Innovation Partnership, designed to generate defence-related research and development activity in South Australia between industry, universities and government. It also boasts one of the longest running formal relationships with the Australian Defence Science and Technology Group of any Australian university.

## Details of the Mallacoota evacuation by sea

Published on 04 January 2020 LCDR Des Paroz (author), POIS Helen Frank (photographer), LSIS Shane Cameron (photographer)

Evacuation of residents and visitors of Mallacoota, Victoria, has commenced with over 1000 civilians embarking in *HMAS Choules* and *MV Sycamore* on 3 January.

Since arriving offshore of Mallacoota on 2 January, ships' companies of both vessels have been preparing to receive the people who chose to accept the opportunity to evacuate the area that has been devastated by the recent bushfires.

*Choules'* Commanding Officer, Commander Scott Houlihan, said that the embarkation was a key milestone achieved through close coordination with various government and non-government agencies.

"Since arriving we have quickly and effectively integrated with counterparts from Emergency Management Victoria, Victoria Police, the CFA, the local council, Red Cross and other agencies," Commander Houlihan said.

"The embarkation process started at around 8am, with people being moved from the community centre to the pier by buses provided by community members, and then moved across to the two ships using five landing craft embarked in *Choules*.

"Some 1000 people were welcomed on-board, and by early evening we had completed the embarkation and were underway heading towards Western Port.

"A key counterpart from one of the partner agencies described the process as being 'organised and structured, without being sharp and brutal,' and I think this describes perfectly the attitude, flexibility and welcome demonstrated by *Choules'* and *Sycamore's* ships' companies.

"I could not be prouder of their efforts and the results achieved."

Executive Officer Lieutenant Commander Arron Convery oversaw the welcome of all evacuees on-board *Choules*.

"The general spirit among of our guests has been one of appreciation mixed with relief to get away from the devastation, and the heavy blanket of smoke that has engulfed the region," he said.

"Of course, there was some level of worry, but there were many hugs of appreciation throughout the day."

In addition to the human evacuees, hundreds of pets accompanied their families.

"There are 135 dogs on-board, some cats, even a rabbit and a bird," Lieutenant Commander Convery said.

"The pets and their humans are comforted by being able to stay together for the transit, and we are pleased that we can facilitate this."

During the short visit to Mallacoota, Defence personnel were also able to support the local community by transferring some 10,000 litres of fuel from a rig tender to two service stations ashore.

"This made a big dent, allowing the service stations to open and provide fuel, allowing power generators to operate," Commander Houlihan said.



Evacuees from Mallacoota, Vic are transported by landing craft to MV Sycamore. (photo: LSIS Shane Cameron)



Royal Australian Navy: <https://news.navy.gov.au/en/202001/Operations/5669/Details-of-the-Mallacoota-evacuation-by-sea.htm>

# Choules makes first delivery of evacuees to Western Port

Published on 05 January 2020 LCDR Des Paroz (author), POIS Nina Fogliani (photographer), POIS Helen Frank (photographer)



Lieutenant Harry Rees escorts an evacuee from Mallacoota, Victoria as she disembarks HMAS Choules with her baby at Western Port. (photo: POIS Nina Fogliani)

The Royal Australian Navy amphibious ship *HMAS Choules* arrived in Western Port, Victoria on 4 January 2020, having evacuated 1117 residents and holidaymakers from Mallacoota, following the devastating New Year's Eve bushfires.

The transit to Western Port took about 20 hours, during which time the evacuees had the opportunity to gain an insight into life at sea in a Navy ship, and enjoy some of *Choules'* hospitality.

Mr Mark Vos of Maffra was three days into a planned three-week holiday in Mallacoota when the bushfires devastated the local area.

"We've been visiting Mallacoota every year for a long time, and we have come to know many of the locals, many of whom lost their homes," Mr Vos said.

"On New Year's Eve we took shelter at the wharf, and it was horrific - it was difficult to breathe.

"What sticks in my mind is the sound of the explosions every time a gas bottle went off - you knew that each one was another house lost."

Mr Vos was impressed with evacuation experience.

"Navy has been great - we were all well looked after and very well fed under what were very challenging conditions," he said.

After arriving at Western Port, the 1117 evacuees, 135 dogs, four cats, a bird and a rabbit disembarked to meet a combined force of Defence and emergency services personnel standing by to assist the evacuees as they moved towards reuniting with family and friends.

Among the many personnel on the wharf were members of the Victorian Police, the Metropolitan Fire Board, Ambulance Victoria, the State Emergency Service, the Australian Red Cross and the RSPCA, as well as Navy members from HMAS Cerberus and members of the Australian Army.

*Choules'* Commanding Officer Commander Scott Houlihan noted the significance of having such a wide range of support services on hand to assist the evacuees.

"The response to the East Gippsland bushfires has been and continues to be a massive effort lead by Emergency Management Victoria," Commander Houlihan said.

"From our initial arrival offshore of Mallacoota, the success of this mission has been based on the cooperative planning and coordinated execution by so many organisations.

"A number of Victorian Police and Red Cross personnel travelled with us to support the evacuees en route, and we appreciate the efforts of all parties involved from start to finish.

"Of course, I am very proud of *HMAS Choules'* ship's company, who came together at very short notice to sail on New Year's Day to support fellow Australians in a time of need."

Following the completion of the disembarkation, *Choules'* got straight back to work, working into the night to prepare the ship and load essential supplies and equipment that will be transported back to Mallacoota to assist in recovery efforts.



# Mahogany Ship legend promised to rewrite Australian history, but is it just 19th-century fake news?

By Matt Neal ABC South West Vic

With its promises of lost treasure and the potential to rewrite Australia's history, the story of the Mahogany Ship is one of the country's most enduring and fascinating legends.

For more than 150 years, the tale of a ship that pre-dates Captain Cook supposedly buried in the sand dunes of south-west Victoria has intrigued treasure hunters and academics alike.

From Spanish and Portuguese caravels to 15th-century Chinese junks, the origins of the wreck have been speculated on by historians for decades.

But, like many legends, it appears to be one built on half-truths, mistakes, exaggerations and even out-and-out lies.

According to detailed research by at least two amateur historians, it's probable the so-called Mahogany Ship was not a pre-colonial ship of discovery, and even more likely there never was a wreck in the dunes between Port Fairy and Warrnambool to begin with.

## The wreck in the dunes

The popular version of the story told by early settler Hugh Donnelly goes that, in 1836, three whalers sailed from Port Fairy to nearby Warrnambool in search of seals, but their vessel capsized and one man drowned.

The two remaining whalers walked back to Port Fairy — a distance of about 25 kilometres — and along the way they reportedly saw "an ancient wreck" high up in the sand dunes.



Photo: A full size re-creation of the 15th century Spanish caravel, *Notorious*, was built by a Warrnambool district man inspired by the legend of the Mahogany Ship. (ABC, file photo)

## And thus a legend was born.

Such was its popularity that, in 1992, the Victorian Government offered \$250,000 to anyone who found the wreck, leading to waves of treasure hunters trekking and digging in the dunes.

If you visit Warrnambool today, you can walk the Mahogany Ship Walking Track, visit a display about the legend at the local maritime museum, stay in the Mahogany Motel, and drive past the housing estate called Mahogany Gardens.

But the celebration of the legend goes further, particularly the Portuguese theory.

A scenic lookout in Warrnambool boasts a memorial called a padrao which commemorates Portugal's great navigators, and a Portuguese festival is held in the city every two years, despite the region having no visible Portuguese community.



A painting of a shipwreck on a beach near limestone cliffs. Photo: Thomas Clark's painting *The Mahogany Ship* possibly helped fuel the legend. (Supplied: Warrnambool Art Gallery)

This story wasn't recounted until many years later, but it was one of many stories that emerged in the latter half of the 19th century of a supposed ruined ship on the shores of Armstrong Bay.

Theories about the wreck's origin abounded. One witness suggested the ship was made of mahogany, which strengthened the idea it was a Spanish or Portuguese caravel that had wrecked in the region prior to the arrival of the British.



Photo: A monument to Portugal's great navigators, which was erected in Warrnambool on the strength of the Mahogany Ship legend. (ABC South West Victoria: Matt Neal)

## 'Evidence is zero'



Photo: Dr Murray Johns says the legend was based on "reproducing suppositions year after year". (ABC South West Victoria: Matt Neal)

The Portuguese theory regarding the Mahogany Ship was repopularised in the late 20th century by renowned lawyer and mathematician Kenneth McIntyre in his 1977 book — *The secret discovery of Australia: Portuguese ventures 200 years before Cook*.

McIntyre's book was on school reading lists for a time, giving the idea Portuguese sailors may have reached mainland south-eastern Australia before the British a new level of credence.

While some scholars backed McIntyre's ideas, many at the time did not.

Amateur historian Murray Johns, who has studied the Mahogany Ship legend for 60 years, said "there was never any evidence" the ship was Portuguese or Spanish.

"There was so much theorising and very little, if any, analysis of the data — that's what surprised me," Dr Johns said.

"It was just reproducing suppositions, year after year after year."

Even the name is a mistake, he said.

"The evidence that it even involved mahogany is zero," Dr Johns said.

"One Captain Mason in 1876 wrote a letter suggesting that he'd seen the wreck and initially he said the wreck could have been mahogany. Fourteen years later he denied that, and said 'No, it wasn't mahogany', but the mahogany story stuck."

Dr Johns said the suggestion of a mahogany ship fuelled the theory it would be Spanish or Portuguese, whose shipbuilders used the wood for centuries.

But none of the supposed pieces of wood that came from the wreck were mahogany.

"The scientific analysis of pieces of timber said to have been cut from the wreck have all been Australian timbers [with] two of the three ... specifically identified as timbers coming from northern NSW and southern Queensland," Dr Johns said.

Dr Johns said this meant the wreck in the dunes was more than likely an Australian-built ship.

At a Mahogany Ship symposium held in Warrnambool in 2005, he suggested the wreck was actually that of *Unity*, a boat built in New South Wales in 1808, stolen by convicts in Tasmania in 1813 and never seen again.

"My story's been out for 20 years — very few people have taken it up," Dr Johns said.

'Seeking something more from their lives'

The vast majority of "eyewitness" accounts of the Mahogany Ship conveniently emerged after the wreck had been supposedly swallowed up by the sand dunes around 1880.



Photo: Historian Jenny Fawcett says myths persist so strongly because "the voice of reason is never heard". (ABC South West Victoria: Matt Neal)

Local amateur historian Jenny Fawcett wrote that "by 1890 there were some 50 people who claimed to have either seen the old wreck, or claimed to be able to provide evidence of the wreck from someone who had seen it".

"Of these, there are only four reliable accounts, and only two of these were ever verified by others," Ms Fawcett wrote.

After digging back through the primary sources and investigating the eyewitnesses, she said she was now "98 per cent" sure there was never a wreck in the dunes between Port Fairy and Warrnambool.

One of the key eyewitnesses was Hugh Donnelly, who claimed in letters and a journal to have visited the wreck three times in the late 1830s and early 1840s.

However Donnelly was not even in Victoria at the time he said he was — a fact only uncovered by Ms Fawcett's research.

"Even to this day, I'm particularly appalled at academics who will grasp at some information and they don't go back to the primary sources," she said.

"The people who repeated those stories or who embellished them, a lot of them were not even here at the time.

"[They] were seeking something more from their lives."



Photo: The Warrnambool housing estate of Mahogany Gardens is just one of the mahogany-themed aspects of the city. (ABC South West Victoria: Matt Neal)

## Mahogany Ship legend promised to rewrite Australian history, but is it just 19th-century fake news?

Donnelly's original story of the two sailors walking back to Port Fairy in 1836 was true but he added the bit about an ancient wreck, which helped sell the mystery.

Ms Fawcett said many witnesses, including Donnelly, were criminals with histories of dishonesty and fraud-type offences, while other accounts were second- or third-hand retellings said to have come from people who never claimed to have seen the wreck themselves when they had the chance to in their lifetimes.

"Any accounts from the 1880s are tainted [by Donnelly]," she said.

The first recorded account of the "ancient wreck" appeared in a Portland newspaper in 1847, but Ms Fawcett dismissed this article as the misinterpreted ramblings of "some drunken [sailors] in a pub".

She said the so-called wood samples were also questionable.

"Unless you find a whole ship, any wood is superfluous because it could come from anywhere and from any time," she said.

But the myth that there was a 16th-century Portuguese caravel lost in the dunes near Warrnambool persisted because "the voice of reason is never heard", Ms Fawcett explained.

"Nobody wants to hear it because there's no excitement, there's no glory that surrounds it," she said.

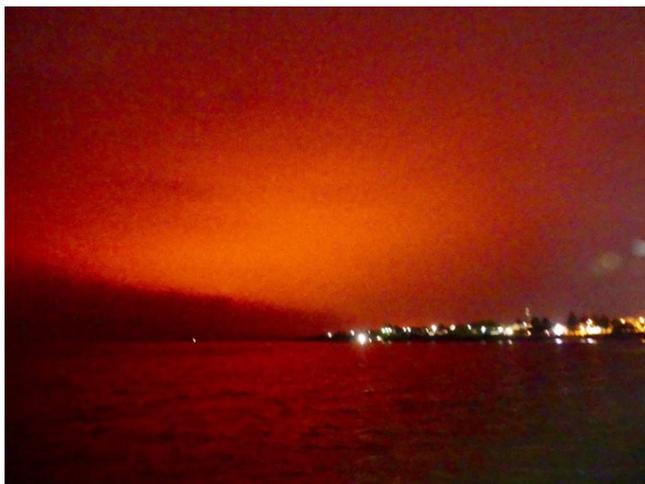
Dr Johns agrees.

"Of course it would be fun if we could find a Portuguese caravel on the southern coast of Victoria," he said.

"The chances of doing so are very slim indeed in my opinion."

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## Kangaroo Island Fires



Looking west from Kingscote Jetty towards Cygnet River at 3:12 AM · Jan 10, 2020  
Photo: Stan Gorton, The Islander

I am writing this at 10:30 am on the 11<sup>th</sup> January, in Kingscote. Fortunately things have abated considerably from yesterday.

When the photo at left was taken Kingscote was isolated; the only way out would have been from this jetty.

There were a couple of days since 2<sup>nd</sup> January where things were pretty scary; the following day, or rather evening, when a Bushfire "Watch and Act" was declared for that part of the island not already under at "Emergency" level; and the 9<sup>th</sup> when basically all but Dudley Peninsula was under a "Watch and Act", then later a large part of that area under an "Emergency".

It is a relief that things have more or less returned to normal. Fires continue, but these are being dealt with in more benign weather. Some may burn for months.

Sealink Kangaroo Island have been working overtime both to get people off the island and assistance onto the island. At the height of the evacuation they operated 14 return ferry trips from Penneshaw to Cape Jervis, with only a 2 hour break until the first ferry of the next day.

The fishing and holiday village of Vivonne Bay has been badly impacted.



The Army loading APC's onto the *Spirit of Kangaroo Island* to assist on the island. Left is the lineup at the Cape Jervis terminal, and right loading is about to start. The vehicles already on the ferry are water tankers.  
Photos Leon Bignell MP.



**The Friends Of The Paul Mcguire Maritime Library Inc  
Income Statement  
For Period Covering 01/01/2019 to 31/12/2019**

Revenues		
Events		\$0.00
Raffles, Supper Tickets		\$0.00
Grants		\$0.00
Donations		\$0.00
Interest Income		
Term Deposit	\$643.58	
Working Account	\$0.71	\$644.29
Membership Subscriptions		\$390.00
Other Income		\$0.00
Total Revenue		\$1,034.29
Expenses		
Award Scholarship		\$1,150.00
Bank Service Charge		\$2.85
Donations to the Library		\$500.00
SA Maritime Museum Visit		\$100.00
Total Expenses		\$1752.85
Net Loss for Period		\$718.56

**The Friends Of The Paul Mcguire Maritime Library Inc  
Balance Sheet 31/12/2019**

Current Assets		
Term Deposit Account	\$33,113.78	
Working Account	\$2,068.55	
Total Assets		\$35,182.33
Liabilities		
Library Donations	\$224.65	
Total Liabilities		\$224.65
Equities		\$34,957.68
Total Equities and Liabilities		\$35,182.33

Membership subs are now due. Your \$30 pa membership of the Friends supports the Paul McGuire Maritime Library Collection in the State Library of South Australia.

Included are 6 issues of the newsletter, *The Traverse Board*, and other notices concerning the Friends.

There are three ways to join or to pay your membership:

In person to the Treasurer at one of our meetings

By post to

The Treasurer  
The Friends of the Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc  
2 Quigley Court  
Aberfoyle Park 5159

By bank transfer:

Peoples Choice Credit Union  
Account 805-050 61338546  
Friends McGuire

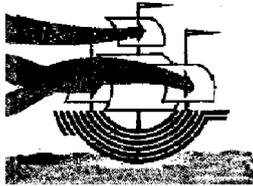
Please include your name as a reference and send us an email with your details.



The Army loading its vehicles onto the *Spirit of Kangaroo Island* at Cape Jervis on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020 for fire cleanup service on Kangaroo Island.  
Photo: Leon Bignell MP



Fire Fighting reinforcements from Strathalbyn and Lameroo unloading from the *Sealion 2000* at Penneshaw on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2020. Photo: Stan Gorton, The Islander



## The Friends Of The Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc.

### Membership Renewal

Ordinary Memberships are all due for renewal in January each year. Please send your \$30 to

The Treasurer,  
The Friends Of The Paul McGuire Maritime Library Inc.  
2 Quigley Court  
ABERFOYLE PARK 5159

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Contact phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternative Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

We can send *Traverse Board* via email. Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Every member: if your contact details have changed please fill in the new details above and send the form to the Treasurer.