



# PS INDUSTRY

The P.S. (Paddle Steamer) Industry built in Goolwa, commissioned in January 1911 as a workboat for the S.A. Engineering and Water Supply Department spent her working life keeping the river open for navigation by removing snags and in the construction of locks weirs and barrages. When the larger locomotive style "Perry" boiler was installed in 1933 she boasted the largest boiler on a River Murray steamer.

During the 1956 flood she "stood by" with steam up ready for an emergency total evacuation of Renmark which appeared imminent.

The P.S. Industry was decommissioned in 1969 after 58 years of service. A submission backed by 100 guarantors by the Corporation of the town of Renmark presented to the Premier, Hon. Don

Dunstan saw the steamer allocated to the town for preservation as a Historic Museum. A basin was excavated to house her where she opened as a static museum in 1975.

A submission from the Apex Club of Renmark for restoration to full steam working resulted in a public meeting to gauge support for the project. Through this meeting a Friends of the P.S. Industry was formed in 1990 to oversee the restoration.

Following the long awaited restoration to full steam working the P.S. Industry starred as the Lady Mabel in the television series, 'The River Kings'. She has since travelled extensively along the river visiting ports from Mildura to Goolwa. In 1997 she participated in P.S. Marion's 100th

birthday celebrations where she won the first and only organised paddle steamer race.

Extensive work aided by an interest-free S.A. government loan enabled the P.S. Industry to be registered as an historic passenger carrying vessel. She was recommissioned by Transport Minister Ms Diana Laidlaw on the 16th of July 1995.

April 2nd 2011 saw the P.S. Industry celebrate her 100th Birthday supported by many boats from all along the River.

It will be largely, thanks to the efforts of the dedicated "Friends of the P.S Industry", volunteers & community sponsors that the P.S. Industry will remain able to be enjoyed by future generations.

# CAPTAIN PEARL WALLACE 1911-2005

Pearl Royal Collins was born in 1911 in Renmark. Her father William and brothers Norm and Bill were well-known shipwrights and captains. Her early years were on the steamer "Alpha" as the family traded their wares along the Darling. In the wheelhouse she had her first school lessons with her father, who also taught her about the river.

In 1919 the family returned to Renmark and transported supplies to new soldier settlement areas. They delivered firewood to the Renmark pumping stations and materials for the construction of Locks 5 and 6. In 1931 Pearl married Neil Wallace, an engineer at Lock 8, where they lived in a hessian house, with kerosene box chairs and a carpet made from flour bags.

In 1947, Pearl travelled to Melbourne with Neil and their 10 year old son Leith to sit for a River Master's Certificate. After an intensive three day exam, the strict examiners said "You are as good as any man we have put through and better than some", and Pearl became Australia's first female certified skipper.

In 1948 Pearl was given the PS "Kookaburra" by her father, which she operated with Neil. Taking what contracts they could find, they carted firewood to Berri pumping station from the flooded Pike River. At the height of the 1956 flood she was at the helm of the Vega barge loaded with a huge cargo of wool on the Darling River towed by PS "Success". Later, after overhauling the "Kookaburra" herself, Pearl worked at Murray

Bridge, clearing the irrigation sluices after the 1956 flood. Here she met the author Nancy Cato, who subsequently wrote "All the Rivers Run", inspired by Pearl's life. This river romance became a popular television mini-series filmed at Echuca.

Pearl's last job on the river was in 1977 as skipper on the pleasure cruiser "Canberra" at Echuca, before she retired to her home at Balhannah in the Adelaide Hills. The home's nameplate read "Alpha".

Captain Pearl Wallace was a regular attendee at the Murray Skippers Association to which she was awarded Life Membership. In 2005 Pearl passed away peacefully, aged 94.



Pearl Wallace is pictured with Alan Smith at a Murray Skippers Association function in 1991 representing a transition of riverboat captain eras. Alan, a Paringa resident with his wife Davia successfully operated the 'MV (Motor Vessel) Barrangul' a cruise boat and floating restaurant in the Riverland from 1976 to 1986. He then relieved on boats such as PS Pyap, Oscar W and MV Proud Mary until 1992 when he became captain of the PS Industry until his retirement in 2018. Alan instigated the Murray Skippers Association in 1988 and was president for 16 years.