

Provenance *Punto*

Punto is a 10 '1" long X 4 '6" beam, clinker, Huon Pine dinghy. The boat was 'found' in the gardens of the Kermandie Hotel many years ago by maritime legend Bern Cuthbertson. Bern subsequently gave the vessel to Craig Dixon to restore, which was completed over a 13 year period.

Bern identified the dinghy as the Captain's going-ashore vessel for the *Kermandie*, but other verification has not been undertaken.

Kermandie, ON 133,495, was a four-masted twin-screw auxiliary schooner of 340/249 grt/net (440 tons deadweight), 141.65 x 34.4 x 9.65 ft., built at Kermandie by C.H. McKay in 1920, and was registered at Melbourne in the name of the Kauri Timber Co. Ltd. She was powered by two dissimilar engines, a 1949-vintage six-cylinder (110 mm bore x 130 mm stroke) General Motors diesel and a four-cylinder (205 mm bore by 275 mm stroke) Ruston & Hornsby diesel made and fitted in 1936.

On 6 September 1957 the *Kermandie* left Stanley for Melbourne with a cargo of grain, but shortly afterwards hit rocks off North Point in heavy weather. The rudder was torn off and the vessel was run ashore near Western Plains. She ended up high and dry on the shingle bottom, and tractors were able to get alongside to recover most of the cargo. Considerable damage was done to the hull near the keel, but shipwrights were sent from Devonport to make her watertight preparatory to refloating.

More than a fortnight of frantic efforts failed to budge the *Kermandie*, which lay in eight feet of water at the highest tides. Finally, she was written off as a total loss, and sold for scrap to D.W. McCulloch of Launceston during the last week of September for £750. He announced that his main interest was in the engines, a General Motors diesel fitted in 1949 being valued at £3000 and the other, although much older, was also considered to have some value. A large hole was knocked in the hull to remove them. On 24 October an extensive auction of salvaged gear and fittings was held at Stanley, these including the anchors, chain, winches, a quantity of paint, the ship's wheel and her 'figurehead.' This last, actually a carved stem-head, is currently on display in Stanley's local history museum. Finally, the hull was burnt where it lay on 17 February 1958 to prevent it from drifting off and become a hazard to shipping. Part of the bottom was still visible in the 1980s.

At the time of her loss the *Kermandie* was under the command of Captain D. Driscoll, who was soon transferred to the auxiliary ketch *Merilyn*. Her engineer, W. Newport, had been a crewman on the vessel almost continuously since she had been built in 1920. He reported that it had originally been intended to name the vessel *Huon Belle*, but this was not possible as there was another vessel of that name on the British Register. She cost £18,000 to build, and had spent most of her career in the timber trade between Tasmania and southern Australian ports.

REFERENCES: HM 9, 10, 11, 23, 25, 28 September, 3, 14 October 1957, 18 February 1958; LR 1957-58; Reg. Melbourne 5/1948.



Kermandie



Kermandie aground at Stanley

It ran aground near North Reef Point on September 6th 1957. The 340 tonne schooner was headed for Stanley after sheltering at Three Hummock Island. The captain and the twelve crew lived on board while efforts were made to refloat her but to no avail. Three weeks later the schooner's four masts were brought down with gelignite and the hull made a spectacular blaze when it was burnt to prevent it being a shipping hazard.

Ref: http://eheritage.statelibrary.tas.gov.au/resources/detail5f5be.html?ID=CHH_00631