

TALE OF TWO SHIPS

The Clan MacLeod and City of Adelaide

International Maritime Heritage Trust

Award No. 23 - To vessel **James Craig**, presented on 7th March, 2003, by the Governor General of Australia, His Excellency the Rev. Dr. Peter Hollingworth, AC, OBE, to Mr. Chris Stannard, President, Australian Heritage Fleet, in Sydney.

Built in Sunderland, England, and launched in 1874, she was originally named **Clan Macleod** and had a working life of nearly 60 years. She first entered Australian waters in January 1877, and for 26 years she plied the trade routes of the world carrying general cargoes. In 1905 she was re-named **James Craig** after the son of her then owner, and six years later, in 1911, she was laid up because increasing competition from steam ships made sailing vessels uneconomical. For some years she was used as a copra hulk in New Guinea and after the first World War, when there was an acute shortage of cargo ships she was given a new lease of life when she was towed from New Guinea to Sydney for refitting. But her return to service was brief and in 1925 she was reduced to a coal hulk and moored in Tasmania. In 1930 she was beached and abandoned in Recherche Bay, where she remained until 1972 when volunteers from the Australian Heritage Fleet refloated her and bought her first to Hobart and then, in 1981 to Sydney where restoration work commenced. 20 years and \$20m later, the James Craig's restored hull was relaunched in February 1997 and she is now re-rigged and sailing regularly, taking members of the general public on trips on the open ocean.

The **Clan MacLeod** was a relatively small ship, 197 ft overall and 31 ft at the beam. Beneath her graceful bowsprit she carried an unmistakably Scottish figurehead, a larger than life –size carving of the red-bearded Chief of the Clan MacLeod, a studded targe on his left arm and in his up-thrust right hand, the glistening blade of a highland claymore
Poet Laureate wrote “Earth will not see such ships agen”

Now the lofty white topsails appear like ghostly apparitions, canvas piled up like clouds in a web of spars, masts and rigging, as she slips silently out of the early morning fog, the sleek black hull nosing into the green Pacific swell
In Feb. 2005 she made the return voyage from Sydney to Hobart,



While the **James Craig/Clan MacLeod** was being reborn, another magnificent vessel was being allowed to die.

The **City of Adelaide**, one of the most magnificent clipper ships on the UK-Aust. Run, is at the point of complete destruction. The Teak and iron hull has been on a Clyde slipway for 12 years, without a sponsor to save her, and is designated for recorded demolition after which no amount of regret or “ifonlys” will bring her back. Built in Sunderland in 1864, she made annual passage to the antipodes for 23 consecutive years. No expense had been spared to fit her out. After her sailing life was over, she was fitted as a hospital ship, and later became an Admiralty training ship **HMS Carrick**, moored in Glasgow. In 1990 she was gifted to the Clyde Ship Trust, then to the Scottish Maritime Museum, which doesn't have the means to undertake restoration. It is a shame to allow time and neglect to dispense of icons of a time, but while it is on the slipway, such an opportunity for revival will rarely reoccur.



Such is the burden of Scotland and other ancient lands, where aged relics and symbols of the past, are in desperate need of restoration, but the State cannot financially support the heritage of millennia

So, we appreciate the parallel dilemma facing Scottish Heritage Trust and Chief John MacLeod over the future of Dunvegan Castle, for centuries, the home of Siol Tormod, MacLeod. The castle is perhaps not as graceful as the sail ship Clan MacLeod, but more resilient, and a vessel for the lives and culture of hundreds of thousands of Highlanders and their descendents around the world

