

About Enterprize

Enterprize was built so that a significant part of Melbourne's history would be preserved and accessible to the people of Victoria. She is a replica of the ship that brought the first settlers to Melbourne in 1835. [Click here to read more about the history.](#)

Enterprize Ship Trust is a non-profit organisation, with a Board of Trustees and a Volunteer Steering Committee. There are also numerous dedicated volunteers, without whom the ship would never have been built nor would it continue to operate. Particular acknowledgement is given to Erik Eriksson for his years of dedication to the building and operation of the Enterprize.

Financially, Enterprize Ship Trust is funded mostly by operational income, but partly by the generous gifts and donations of individuals and organisations. Donations to Enterprize are tax deductible and anyone interested in supporting our maritime heritage and Melbourne's founding ship are welcome to contact the Enterprize office. Organisations may also be interested in the range of sponsorship opportunities available.

Enterprize specifications

Enterprize is the first square rigged commercial sailing ship built in Melbourne for over 120 years. From keel laying to launch took six years of dedication by a small team of craftsmen assisted by many volunteers. The final result is a tribute to their enthusiasm and the generosity of all the people and organisations who contributed time, money and materials.

Planning of the 27 metre vessel began in 1989. Her keel was laid at the Polly Woodside Maritime Museum in 1991 and she was completed in the old Ports and Harbour's yard at Williamstown. The 2.5 million dollar vessel was launched by Felicity Kennett on Sat. 30 August 1997 at Hobson's Bay. Enterprize is an all timber carvel planked, two masted, topsail schooner. She has been traditionally constructed using Australian grown timbers, including Jarrah, Huon Pine, Kauri, Celery Top Pine and Ironbark - much of it recycled. Her masts are local Californian Redwood. Her sails are hand-sewn flax, her rigging tarred hemp.

Length over deck 16.1m (53'); Height - mast to deck 17.7m (58'); Length overall 27m (88'); Height - mast to waterline 19.1m (62'); Beam 5.4m (18'); Displacement 68 tonnes Draft 3m (10'); Sail Area 2,000 sq ft Engine Cummins 6BT Diesel

History of Enterprize and the Settlement of Melbourne

The topsail schooner Enterprize is a replica of the ship that brought the first settlers to Melbourne. The original ship, built in Hobart in 1829 by William Pender, carried cargo such as coal and, on at least one occasion, over 300 sheep.

In April 1835, John Pascoe Fawcner purchased Enterprize to search for a suitable settlement site in the Port Phillip District. When Fawcner himself was forced to remain behind by creditors, Enterprize departed George Town, Tasmania on 4 August 1835 under Captain Peter Hunter. Also on board were: Captain John Lancey, Master Mariner (Fawcner's representative); George Evans, builder; William Jackson and Robert Marr, carpenters; Evan Evans, servant to George Evans; and Fawcner's servants, Charles Wyse, ploughman, Thomas Morgan, general servant, James Gilbert, blacksmith and his pregnant wife, Mary.

Initially a settlement site was sought around Western Port and on the eastern side of Port Phillip. However, on 15 August 1835, Enterprize entered the Yarra River, and after warping upstream (hauling on ropes attached to the river bank), she moored at the foot of the present day William Street. On the 30 August 1835 the settlers disembarked to build their store and clear land to grow vegetables. Settlement at Melbourne had begun.

After the settlement voyage, Enterprize continued operating as a coastal trading vessel. She eventually disappeared from the shipping register in 1847, having been wrecked on the bar of the Richmond River in northern New South Wales, with the loss of two lives.

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