



MEDIA RELEASE

PS Oscar W to celebrate 115th birthday ahead of relocation to Hector's Jetty

26 September 2023

The P.S. Oscar W paddle steamer, Goolwa's symbol of the region's proud maritime heritage, is celebrating its 115th birthday this Sunday, 1 October, ahead of a temporary relocation to Hector's Jetty in the Goolwa Wharf Precinct.

The birthday milestone will be marked with a twilight cruise on Saturday, 30 September, and special one-hour cruises on Sunday, 1 October, at 11 am, 1 pm, and 2.30 pm.

After the birthday celebrations, the wood-fired paddle steamer will move on 20 October to Hector's Jetty, located just south of the vessel's usual dock.

The relocation will allow for the long-awaited restoration of the historic Goolwa Wharf.

The paddle steamer will return to its permanent dock at Goolwa Wharf in front of the Wharf Shed once the redevelopment is complete.

Alexandrina Mayor Keith Parkes expressed excitement about the upcoming celebrations.

"It will be great to get out on the water to mark the P.S. Oscar W's 115th birthday, and it is wonderful to see the Goolwa Wharf restoration moving forward. The work done now to improve the Wharf will support the P.S. Oscar W for many years to come and preserve Goolwa's rich history for future generations."

Since its construction in Echuca, Victoria, in 1908, the P.S. Oscar W has been an integral part of Australia's river trade history.

Originally servicing the Murrumbidgee River and Upper Murray trade, the vessel has called Goolwa home since 1942.

Alexandrina Council acquired the P.S. Oscar W for a symbolic \$1 in 2001. In 2008, the paddle steamer was brought back into survey for its 100th birthday.

Today, the P.S. Oscar W stands as a testament to the hard work of a dedicated group of volunteers who play a vital role in its maintenance and operation.

Council's commitment to a five-year Wooden Boat Strategy underscores its dedication to preserving the boat, promoting regional heritage, and supporting the traditional shipwright industry.



The P.S. Oscar W also serves as an educational opportunity, allowing visitors and locals to engage with the rich history of Goolwa, the Alexandrina region, and South Australia. This living relic continues to be a source of pride for the community.

Alexandrina Council expresses its gratitude for the support of retired and skilled professionals who maintain their qualifications for the P.S. Oscar W's maintenance and operation. These dedicated individuals, with diverse skill sets and qualifications, help preserve not only the paddle steamer but also an essential piece of South Australian history.

Alexandrina Council invites the public to join in the festivities.

For cruise bookings, contact the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre on 1300 466 59, or visit visit@alexandrina.com.au, or visit www.visitalexandrina.com.

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