



**Adrian Pederick MP**  
Member for Hammond

## HANSARD

House of Assembly  
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### PS MARION

**Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (15:15):** On Saturday 15 June I was proud to attend at Mannum to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the PS *Marion's* time in Mannum. I was joined by my colleagues the Hon. David Ridgway MLC and the member for Schubert, Ivan Venning MP, in what was a terrific celebration of this historic paddle steamer.

The PS *Marion*, built in 1897, is one of the last original operational paddle steamers in the world. She was used as a trade and passenger steamer and is still powered by the original engine imported from Gainsborough, England in 1900 by William Bowring. Designed and built in the Murray-Darling river system, she has spent all her life on the river and has become recognised as a part of it. Her continuing and intimate link with the Murray River is of great significance.

The PS *Marion* is one of the flagships of river transport and is the third-oldest Australian vessel on Lloyd's Register. The vessel reflects the evolution of the economic, trade, transportation and social development of the Murray-Darling system and its regions during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In her time the PS *Marion* has hosted a range of notable Australian political figures and dignitaries, including prime ministers, premiers and attorneys-general.

The vessel was used as the setting for the ceremonies which marked the initiation of the locking on the river and marking one of the first unified acts of the states under the commonwealth. The PS *Marion* was best known during her days as one of the passenger steamers of Murray Shipping Ltd, and in December 1934 she left Morgan for the first of what became regular summer cruises. She went upstream as far as Renmark, then down to Goolwa and back to Morgan.

In 1963, after being sold to the National Trust, the PS *Marion* made the trip from Berri to her new home in Mannum, where she would sit in the Randall Dry Dock at Mannum for over 30 years, serving as a memorial and museum. This was going to be her last ever trip. The five-day trip 50 years ago captained by Captain Bill Drage created much public interest with many dignitaries, including the Hon. Sir Thomas Playford (premier of South Australia), the Hon. Sir Edward Morgan and the Hon. G.A. Bywaters MP on board from Bow Hill for the last leg of the historic voyage.

The PS *Marion* sat in dry dock from 1963 until 1994 when, thanks to over 100 dedicated volunteers and thousands of hours of labour, the PS *Marion* was fully restored and recommissioned. To celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the PS *Marion's* trip down the Murray River to Mannum, the Mannum Dock Museum organised a re-enactment cruise of that historic journey.

The PS *Marion* left Berri on 6 June with the trip expected to take a little over a week, ending with a grand celebration on Saturday 15 June on the banks of the Mary Ann Reserve in Mannum. Along with my wife Sally I joined a small number of the original crew and families of those who have since passed on. We were on the trip from Bow Hill to Mannum. Thankfully, it was a lovely sunny winter's day and it was terrific to spend the day taking in the majestic surroundings of the mighty Murray River. The PS *Marion* was followed by a large flotilla throughout the day, and those on board were met by thousands welcoming the PS *Marion* at Mary Ann Reserve. A family fun day had been organised, with the local community out in large numbers enjoying the river festivities and live entertainment. To keep

with the entire theme of the 50-year anniversary celebrations, the arrival of the PS *Marion* included a re-enactment of the unloading of the original cargo, and original crew members had arranged for a shipment of brandy to again be sent to the Queen. A similar gift had been forwarded back in 1963 to commemorate this milestone in river history. I note that Buckingham Palace is going to accept the half dozen bottles of brandy, once again, for the 50 years since the last lot.

**The Hon. T.R. Kenyon interjecting:**

**Mr PEDERICK:** Absolutely. For the surviving members of the original crew of the journey 50 years ago, the families of those who are no longer with us, and the many volunteers that continue to maintain this historic paddle steamer, it was an historic day which brought about a great deal of emotion and celebration. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Mannum Dock Museum and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary committee for a terrific day. It was a great showcase of the river, its history and the times of yesteryear.

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