

English

SOS - THEN AND NOW

If *Rapid* hit the reef today the crew could instantly send a message to rescue authorities.

In Captain Dorr's day the news could only travel as fast as the vehicle carrying it, which meant news of the shipwreck travelled at a jogging pace as the crew made their way Indonesia in small boats.

Find out ways in which news travelled from place to place in the days before telephone, radio and television.

REPORTING THE STORY - We interrupt this program...

Dateline: 7 January 1811 off the coast of New Holland...

You are a reporter and have rushed down to the harbour to meet a group of shipwrecked sailors who have just reached safety after their long journey. How did they survive? What happened to the ship?

Tell their story using the style and technology of today.

Choose your medium (do you work for TV, radio or a newspaper?)

Don't forget to include eyewitness accounts and other interviews. Remember there is plenty of competition out there so make the story as dramatic as possible.

If you have access to video equipment or audio gear, record your program.

If you are making a radio report don't forget to consider music and sound effects.

CREATIVE WRITING

Look at the passage on pages 62 and 63 describing what the last evening on board *Rapid* may have been like.

(a) Continue the story through to the safe arrival of the crew in Batavia

(b) Write the story as the log of Captain Dorr, or you may like to choose another member of the crew.

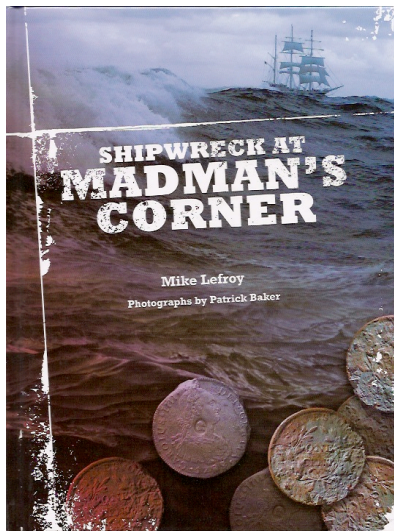
This story ends with a question and the statement "There are some things we may never know." Write an alternative ending in which you solve the mystery of the missing 165,000 silver coins.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
AUSTRALIA

CONCEPT MAP (option 1)

Shipwreck at MADMAN'S CORNER Mike Lefroy



The Arts

PHOTO MOSAIC

An important way of recording the site and the timbers of the ship is building up a mosaic made up of many different shots and then putting them together. (Read page 39 to see how photographer Patrick Baker tackled this problem.)

Create a photographic mosaic of an area around you:

Take a series of overlapping pictures, which can be joined together to form a complete picture.

Place the class in a single line and photograph in sections, and then join them together to create a long class photo. Photocopy a number of times and make a frieze that can go right around the classroom.

If you have access to digital camera and computer programs for stitching images together you can create your montage electronically. This is the technique that Patrick Baker currently uses for creating some of his photographic montages.

YOU CAN'T TELL A BOOK BY ITS COVER...OR CAN YOU?

Any object for sale in a crowded market place must stand out from the competition

Look at the front and back cover of the book and identify the elements of design that are used to catch the buyer's attention.

Consider:

- Use of colours
- Choice of font - size, colour
- Choice of text
- Selection of objects
- Composition and other design elements

TRY THE SAME EXERCISE FOR THE LAYOUT AND DESIGN OF THE INSIDE OF THE BOOK

Research another shipwreck and create a cover design, which will help to 'sell' your book.

Before you begin your design you will need to identify the dramatic elements of the story and decide on your market (who is it written for?)

Is it going to be fiction or non-fiction?

If you would like some information about a specific shipwreck - maybe one close to where you live - investigate the WA Museum website.

<http://museum.wa.gov.au>

Humanities

MAPPING - Sea voyages

Soon after discovering the shipwreck, the maritime archaeologists came up with a possible name for the ship based on evidence they had found.

On a world map draw the intended route of this ship *Mercury*

(Refer to page 31 for information about this voyage)

As more clues were found the scientists' attention moved to the east coast of America and a ship *Rapid* leaving from Boston to trade in the Indies via the Atlantic Ocean and Indian Ocean.

On the world map draw the intended route of this ship and show where the voyage suddenly ended on the Western Australian coast

(Refer to pages 28 and 60 to get some hints about their route between South Africa and Australia)

RESEARCH - How did they find their way around?

The key to survival at sea was to be able to know where you were. You need to be able to calculate your latitude and longitude. The problem sailors faced in the past was finding longitude, and so keen were the authorities to come up with a solution that a prize of several million dollars was offered.

Find out about the struggle to discover a solution to the Longitude Puzzle and about the life of Englishman John Harrison who came up with the eventual solution, a chronometer (clock) that worked with great accuracy at sea.

(See the Bibliography for research ideas)

RESEARCH - a history of money

When the shipwreck was found in July 1978 the most exciting discovery was a large number of Spanish coins or pieces of eight (check the index for references in the text). These coins provided vital clues about the time the ship was wrecked. They also reflected the medium of exchange for international trading at the time.

Find out about the history of money as a medium of exchange.

Health & Physical Education

RESEARCH - What did they eat?

A key clue in solving the identity of the mystery ship was the discovery of a barrel of salted meat with vital information burnt into the lid. What else did sailors eat at sea?

A good starting point is the book *Cross Sections of a Man o War* (more details in the bibliography)

Diseases at sea

One of the greatest threats to life on board ship during long ocean voyages was the disease scurvy. What is it? What did it do to you? What is the cure?

Maths

Ships biscuits (or hard tack) used to be an important part of a seaman's diet. At sea, normal bread would go stale and mouldy very quickly.

Try making some 'hard tack'.

You will need:

- a round biscuit cutter
- 500 gms of plain flour – strong Bakers flour is best
- 200 mls of water
- teaspoon of salt

- Place the flour in a bowl and make a well in the middle.
- Pour in the water into which the salt has been dissolved. Work the flour into the water until it forms a hard dough (this is tough work). Add a little flour if the mixture is too wet or a little more water if the dough is too dry.
- Rest the dough for about half an hour.
- Roll into a sheet about 1 cm thick.
- Cut into circles
- 'Dock' the dough with a regular pattern of holes at about 2 centimetre centres using a flat-ended pin, not a sharp one. This lets the air out while baking.
- Place on a greased steel-baking tray with the biscuits about 1 cm apart.
- Bake at about 150°C for 45 – 60 minutes on a low shelf in the oven

If you really want to get the full experience of eating hard tack as they did on the old sailing ships leave in an uncovered container for a couple of months and then try them.

Knock them on the bench first to disturb the weevils and insects that may be lurking inside.

Science and Technology

RESEARCH – A DATE WITH SCIENCE

Read about the barnacles on **page 46 and 47** and how they were used to help determine the direction in which the ship was travelling. What other methods of recording and dating are there?

Find out about carbon dating and DNA testing to start with.

CONSERVATION – THE SCIENCE OF PRESERVING THE PAST

Throughout the book are numerous references to the role conservator's play in preserving the past. Describe the importance of conservators during the excavation of the *Rapid* site. How are artefacts preserved?

RESEARCH – HOW THINGS CHANGE?

The shipwreck was discovered in 1978 and many things have changed since then. Find the modern technologies that have improved or replaced these techniques used in 1978:

Typewriter

Cine cameras

Theodolites

Cameras with photographic film

Doing archival searches (**p43**) by writing letters

Any others you can think of...

The shipwreck was a direct result of Captain Dorr not knowing exactly where he was. Find out about modern navigation systems such as the GPS and explain why these are far more accurate than the techniques available to the crew on *Rapid*.

RESEARCH – Searching for Shipwrecks

Most shipwrecks on our West Australian coast, like *Rapid*, have been found by accident. But the most famous shipwreck of all, *Titanic*, was found by a combination of using sophisticated modern technology and researching the archives to predict its final resting place.

Compare the discovery of *Titanic* in 1985 with the discovery of *Rapid* in 1978.

Compare the discovery of the *Kormoran* and HMAS *Sydney II* off the Western Australian Coast in 2008.

(refer to the book HMAS *Sydney* – The Mystery of Australia's Greatest Naval Disaster, Mike Lefroy, Black Dog Books 2009 to find out how it was done)

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY - An Archaeological dig

How do you locate where things are in relation to each other underwater? Design a plotting exercise, which introduces students to the use of a grid system as a technique to plot features of a wreck's structure and the position of artefacts.

Hint: As an introduction suggest the students read [pages 21/22](#) and [34 - 39](#) and then design an exercise using an atlas or road map to practice locating places on a grid.

Try a dig at an old school rubbish tip or an old council tip using these newly acquired skills of girding. You could also create one outside in a sand pit by 'salting' an area with a series of artefacts for the students to discover.

Read the section on [pages 42 - 44](#) about raising a cannon and then create a simulation in the classroom.

You will need:

- An aquarium with sand in the bottom
- a "cannon" (a large metal bolt will do)
- a plastic bag (the size will depend on the weight you are lifting)
- a length of plastic tubing (about 1 metre)
- rubber bands, paperclips, string

Poke the plastic tube into the bag a seal tight with elastic bands

Attach the plastic bag to the cannon

Place the cannon and bag at the bottom of the aquarium (for dramatic effects bury the cannon in the sand)

Blow down the tube and watch what happens...

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Books

- Biesty Stephen (1993), *Cross Sections Man o War*, Viking
- Henderson Graeme (1986), *Maritime Archaeology in Australia*, UWA Press
- Kemp, Peter ed (1988), *The Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea*, Oxford University Press
- Lefroy, Mike (1988), *Cooks Endeavour*, Endeavour Foundation (Teachers notes and student activities based around James Cook's historic voyage in Endeavour. Available from WA Maritime Museum)
- Lefroy, Mike (2010) *Captain Cook and the Endeavour*, Black Dog Books
- Lefroy, Mike (2009) *HMAS Sydney – The Mystery of Australia's Greatest Naval Disaster*, Black Dog Books
- McIntosh J (1994), *Archaeology* Harper Collins, (Collins Eyewitness Guides)
- Macarthur, Antonia (1997), *His Majesty's Bark Endeavour, Angus and Robertson*
- Rodger, N A M (1986), *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy*,
- Sobel, Dava (1995), *Longitude*, Fourth Estate

Internet Addresses

- Endeavour Foundation <http://www.anmm.gov.au/whats-on/vessels/hmb-endeavour>
- The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich England.
<http://www.rmg.co.uk> Look under Visitor Information for links to other Maritime Museums and sites with a maritime theme throughout the world.
- Western Australian Maritime Museum <http://museum.wa.gov.au>
- Duyfken Foundation <http://www.duyfken.com>
- National Maritime Museum of Australia <http://www.anmm.gov.au>