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42 Australian Wooden Sailing Boats

LAUNCHED: 1933
DESIGNER: Alfred Mylne
BUILDER: R.T. Searles and
Sons

Vessel Dimensions: 45 ft x 33 ft x 11 ft x 6
ft, 16 tons x 6 tons, 1105.13 square feet

NERIDA is the first South Australian on my list built by the exceptional yard of Searle and Sons who were one of the premier boat builders in Port Adelaide for many decades.

She is carvel planked and rigged as a gaff cutter. NERIDA was designed by Alfred Mylne in England who, along with compatriots Wm Fife and George Watson, were the most acclaimed yacht designers internationally.

At 13.7 metre long the yacht was initially built for Tom Hardy. Hardy was a prominent figure in his home state and keenly supported yachting but was tragically killed in an air crash in 1938 and NERIDA left the family for a period of time. She was refitted into a yawl and her tiller was replaced by a wheel. It was in this configuration that she won the 1950 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. Amongst winning offshore she was also raced and cruised regularly in the Spencer and St Vincent Gulfs.

Thomas Hardy & Sons purchased her in 1971 and Sir James had her restored to her original configuration, with tiller. In 2007, during a severe storm, a yacht moored near NERIDA broke loose and hit her, leaving a gaping hole. In a second storm one week later, she slowly sank. Sir James was devastated.

The NERIDA was raised and once again restored to her former glory. The only change to her original design was the addition of electric winch-halyards for the main sail, making her easier to operate. Sir James' son David Hardy continues the family tradition by sailing NERIDA.