



MEDIA RELEASE

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Goat Island's crane to be recognised by the National Trust

An 85-year old crane, still performing sterling service in Sydney's Harbour, is about to be recognised by the National Trust through entry on its Register.

The Goat Island Shipyard Crane is a rare surviving example of an early Twentieth Century dockside tower crane of the type which was characteristically installed in shipyards around the world. It is the only known surviving example of its age and type in Australia and would be a rare survivor world-wide.

After a long and colourful history, the crane now has a quiet and honourable life assisting a small private ship repair business, attached to the Sydney Harbour National Park on Goat Island.

Graham Quint, Advocacy Manager, said, "As such a vital part of Sydney's Working Harbour, the crane is a worthy landmark and testament to Sydney Harbour's twentieth century history. The listing will recognise the significant heritage value of the crane to Australia's maritime history."

This crane started life as part of the biggest private dockyard in Australia and was, when built, the epitome of modern British machinery. Located at the head of the Dry Dock that is now buried under Mort Bay Park, it helped in the construction of dozens of ships, including many notable Sydney Harbour ferries, and the service and repair of many hundreds of others, both local and international.

In World War Two, Mort's Dockyard and Cockatoo Island Dockyard between them maintained and repaired battle damage to naval ships, cargo vessels and troop carriers for the Australian, British and American Navies and they built, converted and/or repaired many ancillary boats, (boom defence vessels, minesweepers, patrol boats and the like) that were needed during the war years.

The once important Painters and Dockers Union had its glory days between the wars, fighting for workplace safety and conditions that we take for granted today (like toilets and tea breaks), and many a defiant word would have been spoken in the shadow of this crane's jib.

When Mort's Dockyard closed, it snapped up this crane for its own shipyard, to assist in keeping the Board's fleet of pilot boats, fire floats, dredgers and barges running.

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Notes to Editors:

The Trust maintains a Register of landscapes, townscapes, buildings, industrial sites, cemeteries and other items or places which the Trust determines have important heritage significance and are worthy of conservation. Currently, there are some 12,000 items listed on the Trust's Register. They are said to be Classified.