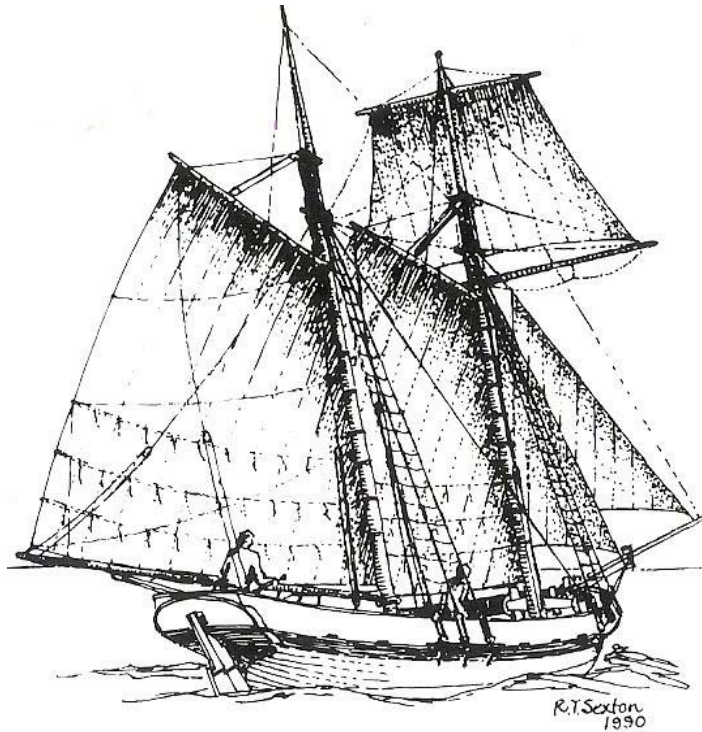




**REBUILD INDEPENDENCE
GROUP INC.
AMERICAN RIVER
KANGAROO ISLAND**



THE PROJECT PLAN

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1. MISSION STATEMENT

Members of the community of American River propose to build a replica of the 45ft Schooner “Independence”. Built in 1803 by Captain Isaac Pendleton and his crew of the American Brig “Union”, from Stonington, USA, she was the first vessel built in South Australia.

The project will:-

- * Promote the distinctive seafaring history of American River.
- * Construct a useful legacy to the pioneering spirit of the men who built the “Independence” and founded the site of the present township.
- * Establish a lasting relationship with the ancestors of the sealers and this community.
- * Provide an opportunity for the community as a whole to be involved in the practical application of a working project of great historical significance to Kangaroo Island and South Australia

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

The harbour township of American River attracts visitors for sailing, fishing, and its wildlife and seaside recreation. It lacks a major draw card to extent their stay and attract new visitors to the town. The town is steeped in maritime history, skills and enthusiasm, which can be developed for economic and community benefit. The town needs to attract more visitors as it is not on a main tourist route. The vessel would provide such an attraction and also highlight the historical nature of this sea port.

In parallel with this idea was the notion that the town should draw on its historical link with the New England area of the USA, to build a mutual relationship and to increase visitor contact between Kangaroo Island and the USA.

It was then mooted we should build a replica of the first vessel build in South Australia – the US Schooner “Independence”.

“Independence” could be the centre piece of an historical port setting, a **Historical Maritime Precinct**, utilising the area between the wharf and the jetty.

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The town of American River had its origins in the early 1800s when American sealers from the Brig Union made a base here, some 30 years prior to the arrival of the first official South Australian settlers on the Duke of York in 1836, It was arguably the first settlement in South Australia, albeit, at the time, of a temporary nature. The Brig Union was commanded by Capt Isaac Pendleton from Stonington, Connecticut, USA. He had come to harvest the abundant fur seals in the area and to this end decided to build a schooner to assist him. This he, and his crew, did in 1803 and named her “Independence”. She was of 35 tons and approximately 45 feet long. She became therefore the first vessel* to be built in South Australia and therefore of great historical significance. The vessel was used for sealing locally, but travelled also in New Zealand waters. Under the command of Isaac Townsend she went sealing in the Antipodes, south of NZ. In 1805 on her second voyage to that area she disappeared in the Southern Ocean with all hands. (A fuller account by Anthony Brown is contained in the follow website:- http://www.heritageaustralia.com.au/pdfs/Heritage%200606_Issac%20Pendleton.pdf

This vessel is an historical link that joins American River with Stonington and the New England area of the USA. This connection also builds on the fact that American River is the only town in Australia with America in the name.

*Note: Macquarie Dictionary – Vessel - a craft for travelling on water.... one larger than an ordinary rowing boat.

4. WHO ARE WE?

a. THE GROUP

The Rebuild Independence Group Inc. (RIG) formed from a committee of the American River Progress Association Inc. The committee, including a high percentage of yachties, met for the first time in May 2012. The committee was charged with the task of examining the feasibility of building a replica of the Schooner “Independence”. Among many other issues the committee considered whether or not to have a static or working replica. The committee decided that a working replica would be more of a tourist attraction to the town, both during its construction and after launching.

After considering a number of other issues it was decided that the project was indeed feasible and would bring great benefits to the town, and the Island, in the way of increased tourism numbers and therefore more employment opportunities in hospitality as well as in small boat building. The group received encouragement from many Islanders, some of whom were ex shipwrights or had other useful skills.

In discussion with the American River Progress Association it was decided that the committee should become an independent incorporated body.

b. THE TOWN

American River sits on the shores of Eastern Cove at the entrance to the salt water tidal Pelican Lagoon, which is a fish sanctuary. It has a population of approx 200 and a large number of the houses are holiday homes. It has a very low social economic grouping due to a lack of employment opportunities and a high rate of retirees.

It was the birth place of tourism on Kangaroo Island (KI), but now it is off the beaten track of the main tourist routes through the Island. It is, however, the centre of Kangaroo Island yachting, with a large number of visiting yachts using its sheltered anchorage every year, particularly during the summer months. The annual Ballast Head Yacht Race, (believed to be the first Australian yacht race of the year), is held in Eastern Cove on New Years Day and the town is home to the Strawbridge Pointers – a popular local sailing group. Eastern Cove is a popular fishing area and the town does attract those interested in fishing for the famed King George Whiting. The town is surrounded by bush and is home to many species of birds, both on the water and in the bush. Native mammals also abound, both on land and in the water.

In this modern world of tourist attractions the town needs its “Independence” as a focus to build on its history as an old sea port, where sailing ketches plied their trade and fishing vessels over the years have dropped their catches.

5. AIM

The aim of the project is to build a full size working replica of the US Schooner “Independence” and use it as a tourist attraction at American River, both as a static display along side and also as a sailing vessel giving visitors, school children and other groups the opportunity to experience life under sail.

The project was considered feasible, in part, because of the size of the vessel. At only 45ft LOA on deck, she is no larger than the old cray fishing boats and similar in size to the modern yachts that some local persons and group members own. Being relatively small, she can be easily crewed and maintained locally and can even be slipped on Kangaroo Island.

We believe that such a small vessel will bring benefits to Kangaroo Island far in portion to the size of the project.

During the building stage there will be opportunities for the unemployed to learn wood working and boat building skills. Opportunities will also exist for disadvantaged people to also learn to craft the dozens of smaller items that will be needed – deck fittings and blocks, etc.

When “Independence” has been finished and launched, the boat shed would provide the means to continue a small community based boat building industry, building small classic wooden (and even GRP) boats, dinghies, canoes, etc. This would give on going opportunities to the unemployed and disadvantaged, particularly the youth of the town, who have few openings for employment. The Boat Shed may also do small repair and maintenance work for the growing fleet of local yachts and visiting yachts and boats. A portion of the shed will be dedicated as a museum/interpretive centre to the maritime history of the town, which would compliment any future on water display.

6. OBJECTIVES

A. Tourism.

The main objective is to increase the number of visitors to American River and also Kangaroo Island.

The existing boat festivals at Goolwa and Hobart show the incredible interest in old sailing vessels. These two events attract visitors from all over Australia and abroad. “Independence” and the Historical Maritime Precinct will do the same for American River and K.I.

We believe that the historical link with the USA needs to be fostered. Initial contact with Stonington shows that they, also, are interested in this shared history. The Stonington area of the USA is steeped in maritime history and the possibilities of a two way flow of visitors between South Australia and New England are endless.

We will achieve this objective by immediately promoting the building of the vessel in the media – local, State, Interstate and USA. “Independence” will be a tourist attraction from the outset of construction. Visitors, for a small donation, will be able to view the boat being built from a safe visitor viewing area in the boat shed and on display will be historic details of the vessel and also souvenir items that can be purchased to assist in the fund raising effort.

Once launched she will be berthed along side the American River wharf or a purpose built berth, where visitors will be able to participate in guided tours for a fee and have photo opportunities on board.

The vessel will be built to survey standards and maintained in survey. This will allow fare paying passengers to be carried on trips around Eastern Cove to experience the handling of old sailing vessels. Short outings within the confines of the sheltered waters of American River could also be undertaken, under power, during times when weather conditions are adverse in the Cove.

B. Employment.

Secondly to create on going work experience and employment to the unemployed and disadvantaged - particularly the youth of American River and Kangaroo Island.

It is envisaged that the project, during the construction phase, will create work experience opportunities for the unemployed and disadvantaged to learn boat building, carpentry and other skills. After completion of the vessel it is anticipated that these skills can be put to economic use by the creation of a community based small boat building enterprise that will provide on going employment or work experience opportunities. The Boat Shed could also provide maintenance, not only to the “Independence”, but also to the local and visiting yachting and boating fraternity.

As “Independence” will be used commercially, opportunities will exist for the unemployed to gain valuable work experience and gain experience as deck hands and

also gain time towards higher maritime qualifications, thus improving their chances of gaining employment with Sealink and other companies.

C. Education

“Independence”, the boat shed and its museum/interpretive section will be available to schools and other educational groups to visit and learn of the important part of Kangaroo Island’s history and have first hand experience of an old style sailing vessel. It is hoped that this historic aspect could be expanded to an on water display of old vessels in the same area. Youth adventure type sail training could also be made available.

7. REQUIREMENTS AND COSTS

(See Annexure “B” for costs details)

A. PREMISES

The most important and costly, single item required is a shed in which to build “Independence”. The ideal place for such a shed would be on the edge of the wharf area near the old slipway. Here the vessel could be built and later could be launched by wheeled jinker down the old slipway.

The wharf area is central to the town and is an area where visitors always gravitate. It already houses the Oyster Shed and has the boat ramp and caravan park nearby. It is also next to the basin where a future boat harbour may be constructed for on water display of historical vessels, including “Independence” and for the local yachting fraternity - a Historic Maritime Precinct. It will be ideally suited to the sheds future use as a small boat building entity, maintenance workshop and museum. (Planning approval will be need from KI Council and various State Departments.)

It is estimated that the shed should be approximately 27 metres in length; 10 metres in width; with a height of 6 metres. It would be of steel frame and “Colorbond” TM cladding, with a concrete floor.

After the vessels completion, the shed would also have a section dedicated as an interpretive/museum area, which will detailed the history of the vessel and also the history of the Port of American River, including the sealing, fisheries, and the shipping of salt and general freight. This could be expanded later to form a full maritime museum.

B. PLANS/DRAWINGS

The Plan currently being used is one drawn up by Bob Sexton, a South Australian historian of old sailing vessels. His drawing is of an American schooner of that period. It appears that plans of the “Independence” do not exist and it was probably built by eye, using the experience of the Captain and crew, and frames carried on the Brig Union. However, it is likely that the vessel would have been very similar to one depicted. (See Annexure A.)

Using Bob Sexton plan, (which he has kindly allowed us to use), as a starting point, the Group will engaged a Naval Architect/Shipwright to draw up a full set of working plans;

this will also satisfy survey requirements. It may well be that the original Sexton Plan will be altered in some way to accommodate both stability and survey requirements.

C. TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT.

A complete list of the required tools will be drawn up in conjunction with advice from qualified shipwrights. It is envisaged that the vessel will be built using a mix of traditional boat building tools and also modern power tools; drills, circular saws and planes, etc.

D. MATERIALS

The vessel is of wooden construction. It is not known for certainty what type of wood formed the main hull and deck timbers of the original. It is known that large vessels of that period often carried timber with them so that they could build small support vessels or ships boats. This sometime extended to carrying the frames for such vessels. It is therefore likely that the Brig Union carried such “lumber” and frames. It has also been speculated that the local Native Pine was used; however, there is strong local opinion that this timber is not suitable for boat building; particularly the hull, although some may have been used in other parts of the vessel. Sheoak, Sugar Gum and Mallee were also available.

Taking into account price and availability of Australian timbers it appears that the best option is to build the vessel from Spotted Gum – a wood known for its boat building suitability. However this will be investigated further with the shipwright.

The two masts and spars will also have to be sourced from suitable timber. Both standing and running rigging will be of traditional fibres and as much of the deck fittings as possible will be hand crafted on site.

Sails will also be of traditional canvas and a source for this will have to be found. The drawing shows her as a top sail gaffed rig schooner with a full compliment of sails. This being a large mainsail and fore sail; a staysail and jib. She is shown with a square topsail on the foremast and also a gaff topsail on the main. A fisherman’s staysail between the masts could be considered an option – as shown.

For practical, safety and survey requirements Independence, unlike the original, will have a diesel auxiliary engine. Being below decks the engine, gearbox, etc will not detract from the visual effect of the original. Again for safety reasons the vessel will also have modern navigation, wind instruments and safety equipment. All these modern additions and controls on deck can be suitably screened at the helm.

Below decks the vessel will have a small galley, head and a small number of bunks for crew.

E. LABOUR

The construction of the vessel will need to be overseen by a qualified shipwright. It is envisaged this can be achieved through the services of one of the local (retired) shipwrights; or by securing a grant to employ a full time one. Discussions will be had with the Departments of Employment, and Education and Training with a view of using

the building of the vessel as a training and work experience facility. Unskilled and semi skilled, and some skilled, labour will be provided by the local volunteers of the group and others who have expressed an interest to help, It is also hoped as mentioned above that this project would be considered a chance to train unemployed and disadvantaged persons.

F. OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

As stated the aim of the project is to attract more visitors to KI and particularly American River. The vessel will act as a catalyst for tourism in American River. It will be an attraction when along side as visitors will be able to see the vessel at close hand and for a fee will be able to tour the vessel. The vessel in this state will be run by volunteers of whom we have a considerable number.

As the vessel will be built to survey it is planned to take paying passengers for shorts trips around Eastern Cove. These trips would be no more than a couple of hours – allowing for a number to be conducted each day. They would be run on days that demand warranted. This might be daily during summer holiday periods and at long weekends and at other weekends when demand warranted. The vessel will need to be manned to survey requirements and it is thought that this would be a coxswain and one or two deck hands. Discussions will be held with the relevant authority on this matter. It is envisaged that the coxswain may be a volunteer or a casual paid position (hourly rate) and the deckhands would be volunteers from local yachties and boating enthusiasts.

The vessel could also be used at off-season times as a goodwill vessel, visiting other parts of the State to promote Kangaroo Island and its seafaring past.

The interpretive part of the Boat Shed would continue after launching and visitors will be able to see plans and photos of the construction of the vessel; the history of the original and also see the on-going work of the boat shed with other small boats being built.

It is considered that money raised from the operation of the vessel will more than pay for the on going maintenance and if demand warrants it could fund a paid coxswain.

Maintenance of the vessel would be carried out by volunteers of the Group and/or persons employed in the on going Boat Shed part of the project. The vessel being only around 45ft LOA it could be slipped at Kingscote, as are the cray and fishing boats in the present fleet. It could also be taken out of the water at American River using its original launching jinker. It would be relatively easy to maintain, compared with much larger vessels, such as the One and All or Falie.

It is important to note that the Project is self-supporting, even if Independence runs fewer trips, or indeed, for some unforeseeable reason does not sail with passengers at all. With only boat viewing; visits to the boat shed and souvenir sales it is a sustainable venture.

8. TIME FRAME

RIG is aiming at the following time frame:-

- By December 2013 attract investment and support of key organisations and companies. Finalise design with consultations with the US and marine architects.
- Erect a boat shed; rebuild, launch and commission the “Independence” at American River, by December 2015
- Create an associated community tourism business during the construction phase by December 2013 and for full operation by December 2015.
- Identify and support education and training activities as they arise

9. FUND RAISING.

It is calculated that the project will require total maximum funding of \$350,000. The project could commence with approximately 50% of the funds raised; providing that the remaining funding was feasible to raise.

It is considered that funding would come from private donations, donations of materials and equipment, State and Federal government grants, local fund raising events and souvenir sales.

10. COMMUNITY BENEFITS

a. SHORT TERM

Once the building of the vessel has started it will immediately be a tourist attraction and will draw visitors to American River and Kangaroo Island, who may not otherwise have visited. It will act as a catalyst to the history of the town. An increase in numbers of visitors will have a flow through effect in the local economy. As the project becomes more widely known it will attract wooden boat enthusiasts to the Island, who might well stay longer and become involved.

In addition it will create work opportunities for the unemployed and disadvantaged. This is particularly important as American River is a town with a very low social economic profile. It will also provide opportunities for retired persons, to contribute to a worthwhile project, by giving their time and expertise.

It will give the town a focus and a sense of pride and achievement.

b. LONGER TERM

The long term benefits are exciting and are boundless. To have a working replica of South Australia's first vessel, as the centre piece of a Historical Maritime Precinct, will be an enormous pull in attracting visitors, not only to American River, but to Kangaroo Island as a whole. The replica will represent the strong historical link with the Stonington area of the USA and as such will be of interest not only to those travellers from that area, but of interest to USA visitors as a whole. The fact that American River is the only town in Australia with America in the name adds to the attraction.

Links could be established between the New York Yacht Club and other New England Clubs and the Royal Yacht South Australian Yacht Squadron and Cruising Yacht Club of SA, based on this early maritime link.

A strong link could then be forged at local government level between American River, and Kangaroo Island in general and Stonington and also at State level.

This historical link could be expanded upon into other fields like festivals and regatta events. An annual wooden boat regatta could be held for sea going vessels, which would draw crowds in the same way that Goolwa draws wooden boat enthusiasts to its wooden river boat festival and Hobart to its Wooden Boat Festival.

The replica will achieve the aim of acting as the major draw card that attracts visitors to leave the main tourist route and pay a visit to the town, which will help rejuvenate the tourism industry within the township, and in turn rejuvenate the town as a whole.

In regard to the Boat Shed, the facilities would still be used for the development of skills for the unemployed and disadvantaged in the production of small craft like dinghies and canoes, etc. As previously mentioned it could also be used for small boat maintenance tasks within the local and visiting boating community. There is currently a lack of boating facilities at American River and no repair workshop.

“Independence” and the boat shed would be a catalyst to build a maritime museum in and around the area depicting the interesting seafaring history of American River and Kangaroo Island. If this could be expanded into an historical “harbour” with on water display of old wooden vessels (already seven in number) the tourism future of American River would be assured.

c. ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO KANGAROO ISLAND (See Annexure “C”)

During construction and certainly once the vessel is complete our aim would be to increase the stay of 5% of visitors by half a day. During the first three years after completion we would hope to attract at least 5% more visitors to the Island, as an added incentive to visit or as a sole reason to visit. This will, we estimate, (using TKI and TOMM figures) would be worth over six million dollars to the Kangaroo Island economy each year. (As the TOMM figures are based on survey of 2009/10 this could be conservative.)

11. SUMMARY

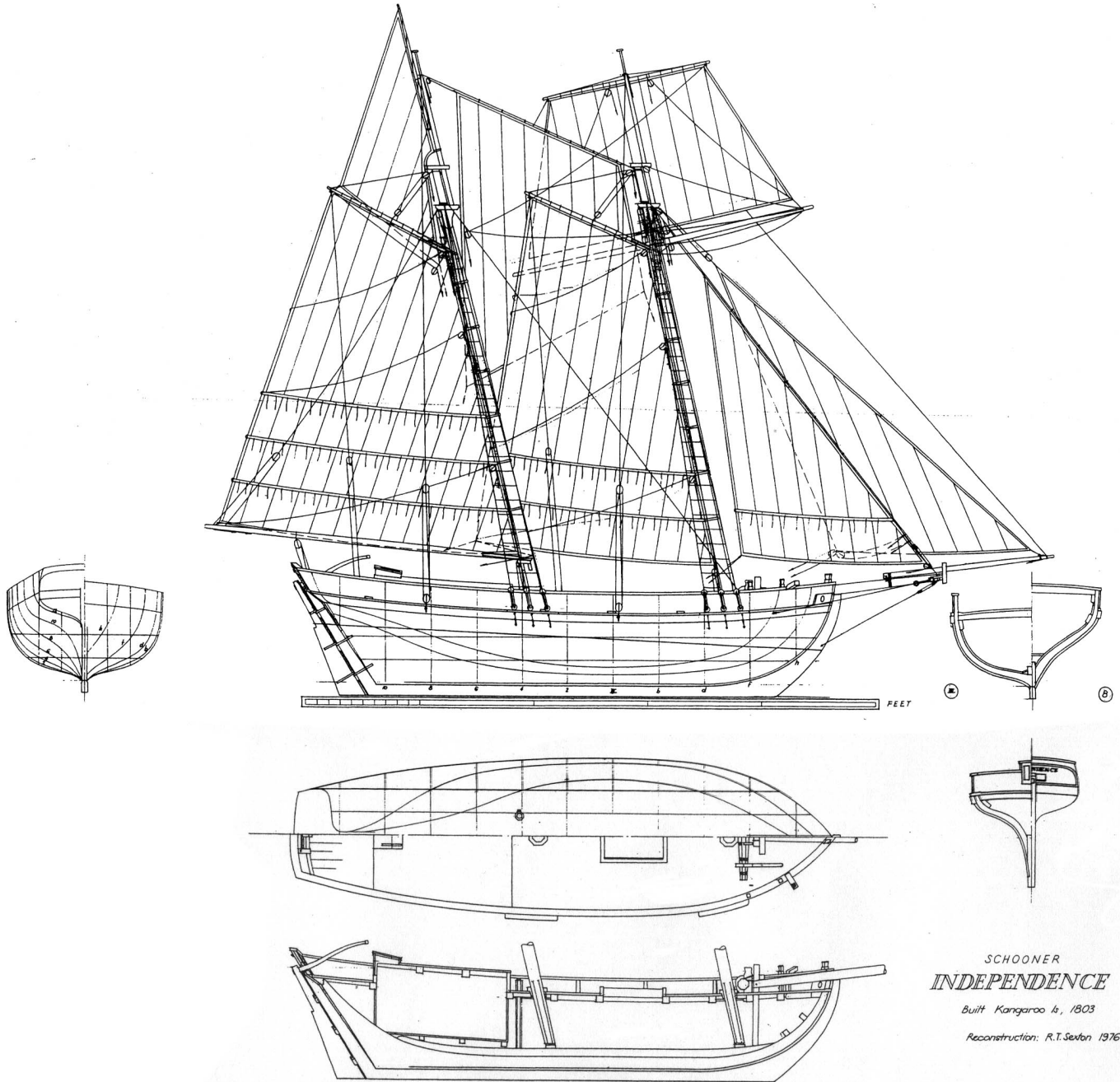
This project has the capacity not only to lift the fortunes of the township, but has much wider implications for tourism within Kangaroo Island and the State by developing the historical connection with the USA. The three prongs of tourism, employment and education will, combined, provide a catalyst to enhance the future of arguably South Australia’s first settlement.

12. ANNEXURES:

- A. Drawing by historian Bob Sexton of the Independence.
- B. Estimated Project Costs
- C. Economic Benefits to Kangaroo Island
- D. Project Logo

ANNEXURE "A"

DRAWING OF THE INDEPENDENCE



SCHOONER
INDEPENDENCE
Built Kangaroo Is., 1803
Reconstruction: R.T. Sexton 1976

ANNEXURE “B”

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST

NOTIONAL COST OF MATERIALS, ETC

ITEM	QUANTITY	COST
Drawings	Several	6000
Survey	As required	15000
Wood	3000lm	100000
Fastenings	5000+Bolts Etc	20000
Caulking		2000
2 Masts and Sprit @ \$2000 each	3	6000
Steering	1	2000
Cordage	1000m Various	3000
Sails	7	12000
Anchor, Windlass and chain	1	12000
Engine, gearbox, shaft, propeller	1	30000
Cabin	1	4000
Electrical (circuits, breakers, lights, etc)		5000
Electronics (depth, radio, gps, etc)		7000
Dingy and outboard	1	5000
Paints, bottom and topside	30 gal	1500
SUB TOTAL		230500
OTHER ITEMS		
Ballast/Lead		1000
Tools		10000
Shed		30000
Deck Fittings		5000
Safety		
Equipment/liferaft(s)/floats/lifejackets/rings/light		20000
Administration/mail/stationery/printing		750
Initial Promotion/souvenir cost		3500
Insurance		1000
TOTAL (Before contingency)		301750
Contingency 10%		30175
TOTAL		331925

Note: The above figures will be adjusted as more research and product availability and costs become available.

ANNEXURE “C”

ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO KANGAROO ISLAND

ECONOMIC BENEFIT TO KANGAROO ISLAND

NUMBER OF VISITORS (EST 2012)	196,000	Source TKI
NUMBER OF NIGHTS AVERAGE STAY	4	Source TOMM 9/10
AVERAGE SPEND PER VISIT	611	Source TOMM 9/10
AVERAGE SPEND PER NIGHT	139	(Rounded for clarity)

SHORT TERM

DELAY STAY OF 5% OF VISITORS BY .5 DAY

NUMBER OF DELAYED VISITORS	9,800	
INCREASED SPEND	680,432	PER ANNUM

LONG TERM (WITHIN THREE YEARS)

INCREASE NUMBERS OF VISITORS BY 5%

NUMBER OF VISITORS INCREASE	9,800	
INCREASE SPEND	5,987,800	PER ANNUM

DELAY STAY OF 5% OF INCREASE

INCREASE OF DELAYED VISITORS	490	
INCREASED SPEND	34,022	PER ANNUM

TOTAL VALUE TO KANGAROO ISLAND AFTER THREE YEARS

6,702,253	PER ANNUM
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NOTE:

The direct economic benefit to American River is difficult to isolate. However with more visitors to the town and in particular those visitors staying longer, all businesses will benefit. In particular the Oyster Business on the wharf will see a large increase in persons through the door, with resulting higher sales. The KI Council owned Caravan Park will also see increased patronage.

ANNEXURE "D"
LOGO



REBUILD INDEPENDENCE
American River

DESIGN BY NICK PIKE

