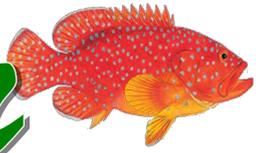




The Islander



Christmas Island Community Newsletter

Berita 高筒
Masyarakat
Pulau Krismas 民讯

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UPCOMING EVENTS



**Harmony Day
TONIGHT!**
**FRIDAY 18th MARCH
2016**
6.30PM
**POON SAAN
COMMUNITY HALL**



**MINTOPE
COMMUNITY
FIELD WALK
SATURDAY**
19th MARCH 2016
4.00pm

**UCIW
Union Day
Celebration**



Sunday
20th March 2016
Union Office
6.30pm

**EASTER
CELEBRATIONS
SEE PAGE 35**



**Birthday of the
Goddess of Mercy
Guan Yin**

**Goddess of Mercy
Temple**
Sunday 27th March
4.30pm

Closing In On The Fortuyn Project The Search for a Lost Dutch Shipwreck Off Christmas Island

Graeme Henderson and Andrew Viduka are part of the 'Closing In On The *Fortuyn* Project', a team of Australian and international marine archaeologists on the island, trying to piece together what happened to the ill-fated ship the *Fortuyn*. The *Fortuyn* was a merchant ship built in Amsterdam in 1723 by the Dutch East India Company. The Dutch East India Company was in its day, the largest trading company in the world, commanding hundreds of ships that made their way from Europe to Asia and back again around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa. This route took them through the Indian Ocean perilously close to the Cocos and Christmas Islands on their way to Batavia (modern day Jakarta), a Dutch possession at the time.

The *Fortuyn* was manned by 225 sailors and left the Cape of Good Hope with three other Dutch East India ships also bound for Indonesia, the *Hogenes*, *Anna Maria* and *Doornik*, on the 18th January 1724. A fourth company ship, the *s'Graveland*, which had travelled in convoy with the *Fortuyn* from the Netherlands to the Cape of Good Hope, left from the same port also bound for Indonesia on February 3rd.

The other ships made it to Indonesia around three months later.

The *Fortuyn* however, was never seen again.

The *s'Graveland* reported upon landing in Jakarta that they had seen wreckage near the vicinity of what historians think might have been the Cocos Islands or more likely Christmas Island. Despite a search and rescue effort by the Dutch East India Company, nothing was ever found.

One Company report listed the ship as 'Lost on her outward bound journey around the Island Monij.' On Dutch maps, Christmas Island was known as 'Monij Island.'

And so, 292 years later, the 'Closing In On the Fortuyn Project' comes to Christmas Island to search for the missing ship, learn about the fate of the crew and her cargo purportedly of 200,000 Dutch guilders in silver bars and silver coins. The *Fortuyn* also carried 36 cannons, ammunition, 8 swivel guns and multiple anchors which, it is hoped, will help lead to her discovery.

It is a collaboration between Wreck Check Inc, the Maritime Programme of the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands, the Dutch Embassy in Canberra, the Silent World Foundation, Parks Australia, the WA Museum and the Australian Government Department of Environment.

Following fieldwork from January to February in 2015 which used magnetometers to examine the ocean floor around Cocos and Christmas for metal anomalies, the team will spend the next few weeks reviewing and searching areas of interest from last year's initial scoping.

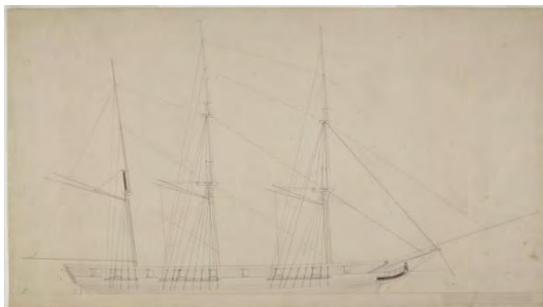
Dutch museum researchers informed the team just before their arrival on the island of another Dutch ship that was known to have been lost on Christmas Island cliffs - the *Vice Admiraal Rijk*, which was lost in 1852. It was known to have sunk off South-West Point. Four men held onto wreckage and tried to make it ashore; one died trying to scale the cliffs. What transpired next was the most amazing tale of shipwrecked survivors the island has ever had.

The three survivors made it ashore and for 57 days, they reportedly ate birds and drank water collected in the limestone rocks. They made their way from North West Point to South Point and in a stroke of Dutch ingenuity, fashioned wooden soles for their shoes from their ship's flotsam. The passing Dutch vessel the *Amicitia* rescued them, the crew were awarded medals for their efforts.

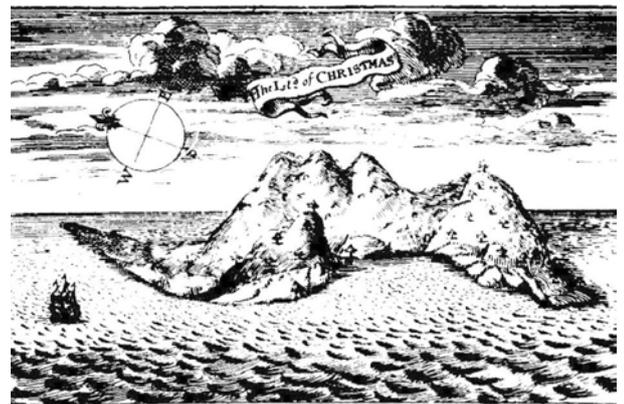
The search for these Dutch shipwrecks continue, with the team heading out to Cocos on the 8th March to explore metal anomalies detected in last year's initial scoping.

The team also found time to meet with local students and made a presentation at CIDHS. Graeme Henderson presented a copy of his book 'Unfinished Voyages' for the local library. Perhaps the next great ship wreck explorer will come from Christmas Island District High School. We wish the team 'veel success!', which is 'good luck!' in Dutch.

You can follow the team's research and adventures on their blog at <http://wreckcheckinc.org/> and Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/FortuynProject>.



Above: Sketch of the Vice Admiral Rijk - Marine Museum of the Netherlands



Above: Daniel Beekman's illustration of Christmas Island in 1714. It was known as Monij Island to the Dutch.

Article written by SOCI



International Women's Day



Thank you to all who attended the dinner at the CLA to mark **International Women's day on Tuesday 8th March 2016.** Our Administrator, Barry Haase gave a speech, followed by our dynamic and active ladies in our community, Lewi Chan, Secretary of the Seniors Club, Faridah Bahrom from the Islamic Community and Regine Andersen, **Secretary of the CI Women's Association.**

The ladies spoke of the importance of women's rights. Guest singer Allen Carlsson entertained the ladies with a few songs. All guests that attended received a gift specially prepared for them.



Article and photos from CLA.

Chinese Literary Association
Christmas Island

華人公會

