

# Conserving Carpentaria



The Queensland Maritime Museum chose Feronite Rusty Metal Primer for its program to conserve “Carpentaria”, a light ship which was built in 1917 and was in service until the early 1980’s as a light ship near the tip of Cape York.

After almost 100 years, Carpentaria is in very poor condition, with rust holes completely through its 15mm thick steel hull in many places around the water line. To add to the problems, it floated and capsized when the dry dock filled with water during the 2010 Brisbane river flood.

The Queensland Maritime Museum has very little government funding and relies almost completely on volunteer labour to maintain and conserve its exhibits.

The museum’s objective was to reduce the rate of deterioration as much as possible, and to make the vessel into a presentable and attractive exhibit. This had to be done with volunteer labour, and at minimal cost. The close proximity of residential apartments also precluded very noisy or dusty operations. This ruled out the use of sand blasting, or other complicated or expensive systems and methods. Based on 10 plus years experience with the conservation of HMAS Diamantina, a paint system based on Feronite Rusty Metal Primer was chosen.

The work is being done by volunteers, so the skills needed to be reasonable. Also the project would be interrupted and undertaken as and when volunteers were available. Additionally, many volunteers are retired so that work needing great physical exertion is out of the question.

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One of the many waterline rust holes.



Flaky rust which is removed by chipping and needle gunning

## Conserving Carpentaria continued

Even though Carpentaria is in poor condition, Feronite RMP does not require the metal to be prepared to a high standard. The hull is chipped and needle gunned to remove loose flaking rust, and then wire brushed to remove any residual loose material.

Once a section has been prepared, it is coated with 2 coats of Feronite Rusty Metal Primer, applied using a brush. When dry, it is then over-coated with 2 brushed coats of a high performance universal alkyd primer (Interprime 198 Grey in this case), and finally a brushed top-coat with a general purpose high gloss enamel (alkyd) suited for steel structures (Interlac 649 Red and Black). Currently the work is being undertaken by a single (retired) volunteer on a 2 day a week basis



After 2 coats of Feronite Rusty Metal Primer

This preparation and painting schedule has been used very satisfactorily to keep HMAS Diamantina in very good condition over the last 10 or so years. Head of maintenance, Alan Bibbi says that the Feronite RMP makes a huge improvement in how long the coating stops new rust appearing. The outcome is a good looking exhibit, which has had the rate of deterioration greatly slowed for little more than the cost of the paint.



**Feronite RMP** is manufactured by

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