

The Active II



- The Active II is a replica ketch. It has been built with exactly the same measurements and features of a real ketch. This means that if it was taken out on the Port River, it would float and sail just like a real ketch.
- The Active II took 8 months to build and was built 26 years ago inside the museum.
- Ketches are small **cargo vessels** that were used in South Australia up until about 40 years ago. They were most commonly used about 100 years ago in the 1880s and 1890s.
- They carried wheat, wool, live animals, gypsum, salt, firewood and many other cargo around South Australia's ports. They were also used to carry cargo to larger vessels for the overseas trade.
- About 100 years ago there were about 70 ketches working in SA waters.
- The ketches travelled all around South Australian waters and were called the Mosquito Fleet because when you looked out at the horizon from the beach, they looked like a swarm of mosquitos.
- Ketches were the semi-trailers of the sea. We no longer use ketches to transport cargo because we transport goods by air, rail and road.
- Life was hard on the ketches and the pay was not very good.
- The crew was made up of a skipper and 1 or 2 ketch deck hands. The deck hands were usually 14 year old boys who worked hard on the ketch to get sea time. They would have to do lots of jobs, cooking, loading and unloading cargo, cleaning and hoisting and lowering the sails. This would then the boys an opportunity to get sea time and eventually qualify as crew on overseas ships.
- Ropes and pulleys were used to load and unload the cargo (show). It was hard work lifting the heavy sacks and loads. The cargo was lifted and placed into the hull of the ketch (show).