



ROBERT FREDERICK CLIFFORD, AO, Chairman, Incat Tasmania Pty Ltd

Robert Clifford, founder and Chairman of the Incat group of companies has been credited with pioneering the world's high-speed vehicle/passenger ferry industry.

Robert built his first boat as a teenager, sailing yachts at an early age. He operated fishing boats for several years before developing a river cruise business which became Hobart's commuter service carrying millions of passengers. Robert's experience moving boats and passengers quickly was put to good use when designing and building high speed craft.

Over more than five decades he has steered the company to progress from boats to small commercial ferries through to very large ocean-going vehicle carrying wave piercing catamarans for which Incat is now world renowned.

Robert holds an honorary doctorate in Engineering. He stepped down as CEO more than a decade ago but as Chairman still oversees the direction of the organisation, and remains very actively involved with the marketing, design and construction teams of the business.

Given Incat's global customer base Robert Clifford spends a large part of the year outside Australia. From his residence in the UK he spends any leisure time exploring the English canal network on his 70 foot narrowboat, certainly rather slow compared to the high speed vessels built by Incat.

As skipper of the yacht "Tasmania" Robert won line honours in the 1994 Sydney to Hobart yacht race and remains interested in sailing. He is a keen Grand Prix racing fan and when time permits enjoys restoring vintage Rolls Royce cars.

Robert holds an Order of Australia award for services to industry, was Honorary Consul for Denmark in Tasmania from 1998 to 2016, is a founding member of Interferry, and former member of the Council of the Australian National Maritime Museum.

His story is documented in a "biography" entitled "The Bastard's a Genius" by Alistair Mant, the title a reference to a cheeky but affectionate comment made by his father recognising Robert's talents as a teenager when building that first boat.