Maja was built during WW1 at G. Boot van Alphen, one of the many shipyards along the river Rhine in Holland. Initially the ship – of a type called a “sail logger” - was 26 metres long and had a very tall mast in the front and a lower at the back. The keel was laid in 1916, but she was not finished until 1919, probably because of lack of steel during the war. A sail logger was a very strong build with sharp lines designed for the rough sea of the North Sea. At that time Maja was called Hans KW 56 and, with the Rhine as base, she went herring fishing in the North Sea.

Fishing, however, was not profitable, and Hans was therefore laid up for some years. The ship got a new owner in 1921, but it was not until 1930 that things took an upturn. On July 7 of that year Hans was sold to a new owner in Hamburg and was converted from a sail logger to a coaster. The ship was extended by 7 metres; got a new rigging with three masts instead of the traditional logger rigging of two; and had a 30HP one cylinder “Oberursel” two stroke engine installed. At this time too she was given the lovely name – Maja. She sailed out of Hamburg until 1957 with dry cargo such as grain, coal, granite, wood, fertiliser and similar loads, which could be stored down below. Her sailing area was the North Sea and the Baltics, which meant that the ship was often in Danish waters, and probably also visited many Danish ports.

In 1957 there was more change for Maia as she was sold to a Danish ship owner from the island of Thurø, which happens to be the same island where the Walsted shipyard is located today. The ship owner was nicknamed “Thurømadsen”, and at a point he owned 5 smaller ships, which all included Thurø in their names. Maia was no exception as at this time she was called Thurøsund. This little fleet plied its trade in Danish waters and the Baltics.
Next *Maja* was sold a new owner in the Danish town Horsens. Here she was worked by Ceres Breweries, and, once again, re-named. Under the name *Top* she transported many loads of barley to the brewery’s location in Århus.

When *Maja* first became Danish registered, in Thurø, the rigging was reduced considerably and she became largely engine-driven. Now the new Danish owners in Horsens, gave *Maja* an even bigger engine, a B&W Alpha producing 210 HP. From then until today, sailing under the Danish flag, *Maja* has been used for freight around the local waters of Denmark. During this time hardy entrepreneurs both lived and worked alongside *Maja*. For example, at one time, while she was named *Leo*, her owner Leo F Peters and his wife, Gyda Petersen, brought up their family of three sons on board.

Until the restoration work of *Maja* commenced in 1997 she was still busy in the local Danish sea, but economic conditions deteriorated. The ship became too small and outdated for the freight business. Her last load was granite from the island Bornholm to Copenhagen in December 1996.

The following winter was the ship re-rigged to the current three masts, which are copies of the original, so that from the outside she looked more or less as she did in photos taken in the 1930s in Hamburg. Below however, you won’t find many traces of the storerooms where grain and fertiliser were loaded. Today there is a sleeping/dining area and a galley, and 24 people can live onboard on longer trips. In the deck house around 20 people can enjoy the views from indoors. For shorter trips, *Maja* can accommodate up to 70 people and serve dinner below for 60.

Now, once again, *Maja* is a family owned vessel – run and loved by the Bøllehuus family. And as we all know, as part of that ‘deal’, the maintenance and improvements continue. So during the winter of 2005-06 *Maja* underwent another change receiving an increased the rigging to become a three masted ‘bramsøjlskonnter’.