

High and mighty thrill



HIGH THERE: Lindfield businessman David Warne atop the mast of his restored tall ship, Southern Swan.

Picture: ELENOR TEDENBORG - PP470187

Anyone from Crows Nest want to climb to this crow's nest?

FIONA BRADY

THERE are several ways to scare yourself silly in Sydney if you don't like heights.

There are the BridgeClimb and the Skywalk, for starters.

And now Lindfield entrepreneur David Warne has dreamt up a new thrill - climbing the 15m mast of a tall ship.

Mr Warne, chief executive officer of Sydney Harbour Tall Ships, bought the 1922 Danish ship *Southern Swan* five years



BIRD'S EYE VIEW FROM THE TOP BY OUR BRAVE PHOTOGRAPHER

I'M terrified of heights but knew it would make for a better photo if I went up. Rigged up in my safety harness and after instructions from the crew, I'm feeling very secure - as long as I don't look down. David Warne is shimmying up the opposite mast while I take it slowly, one rung at a time. When I reach the

crow's nest I get cheered by the passengers below. Finally, I feel confident enough to look around, with a bird's-eye view of the Harbour, the bridge and the Opera House. Coming down isn't nearly as scary and even when I reach the bottom, I'm still on a high.

ELENOR TEDENBORG

ago. He and skipper and co-owner Marty Woods have spent more than \$1 million restoring it.

Now they take 35,000 visitors a year on day trips on the harbour.

Mr Warne, who coaches the Linfield Colts rugby team got the idea to expand the business after doing his own "life-changing" mast climb.

"Number one - I realised that I'd accomplished something I thought I was never going to accomplish," he said.

"And two, when I saw the view,

I realised that it was something that the world would love to do," he said.

It took Mr Warne 12 months to build the crow's nest and safety system and complete all the legal and insurance requirements.

Now, for \$59 plus the cost of the cruise, anyone (provided they haven't been drinking) can climb after a short safety talk and being fitted with a harness.

"There's no better place to do this than Sydney harbour," Mr Warne said.