



THE BOSUN'S CALL

NEWSLETTER OF THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



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ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY



A design has been proposed for an ACT Section Challenge Coin. The design features the two swans from the coat of arms of Canberra either side of the anchor from the HMAS Canberra Memorial

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The coat of arms of Canberra owes its existence to the Royal Australian Navy. When HMAS Canberra was constructed, the Commonwealth Department of Defence asked Canberra for a coat of arms for use as the ship's badge.



Naval Association of Australia (ACT Section)

Founded 1 July 1944
Patron The Hon Sir William Deane AC KBE

Office Bearers 2026 - 2027

Executive Committee Members

President David Manolas
0427 504 564
stbdstayportgiveway@gmail.com

Vice President Alex McGown
0428 301 187

Secretary Darren Rush
0435 911 607
darren.rush@navalassoc.org.au

Treasurer Alaric O'Neill

Committee Members

Tiger Lyons
Pauline Gribble
Heather Milward
Sue Wheeler

Welfare Alex McGown
0428 301 187

Membership Darren Rush
0435 911 607
darren.rush@navalassoc.org.au

Social Sec Bev Joce

Bosun's Call Darren Rush
wem@navalassoc.org.au

Happy
Birthday!

October Birthday List

Tony "Irish" Vickers
Pauline Gribble
Robert Drew

Upcoming Events

- 11 Oct 25th Anniversary of the commencement of Operation Slipper
- 17 Oct Last Post Ceremony - Sub Lieutenant John Stuart Ryder WWII
- 20 Oct Last Post Ceremony - Able Seaman Harold Charles Koy WWII
- 19 Nov Anniversary of the sinking of HMAS Sydney (II)
- 19 Nov Last Post Ceremony - Stoker 2nd Class William Cecil Pastoors WWII
- 27 Nov 85th Anniversary of the sinking of HMAS Parramatta
- 27 Nov Last Post Ceremony - LCDR Percy William Forwood WWII

Meeting Dates & Locations

Tables are normally booked for drinks and lunch in the host club from 1200 prior to the meeting.

- | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|------|
| 1 Oct | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | Committee Meeting | 1100 |
| | General Meeting | 1330 |
| 5 Nov | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | Committee Meeting | 1100 |
| | General Meeting | 1330 |
| 3 Dec | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | Christmas Lunch | 1200 |
| 4 Feb | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | Committee Meeting | 1100 |
| | General Meeting | 1330 |
| 4 Mar | Eastlakes Club Gungahlin | |
| | Committee Meeting | 1100 |
| | General Meeting | 1330 |

Social Program

Fish & Chips - held at Snapper & Co.
(Canberra Yacht Club)
Mariner Pl, Yarralumla ACT 2600



- | | | |
|--------|------------------------------------|------|
| 15 Oct | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co) | |
| 19 Nov | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co) | |
| 17 Dec | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co) | |
| 18 Feb | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co) | |
| 15 Oct | Fish 'n Chips | 1200 |
| | Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co) | |

Bev Joce
Social Secretary

The coat of arms of Canberra: A City Emblem Born from a Warship

Canberra's coat of arms exists because a warship needed a badge. In 1927 the young national capital had a Parliament House but no emblem of its own. It took a request from the Department of Defence, on behalf of the Royal Australian Navy's new heavy cruiser HMAS Canberra, to set the heraldic process in motion. The result, granted by King George V in 1928, remains the ACT's oldest official symbol.

A ship in search of a badge

HMAS Canberra was a County-class heavy cruiser built by John Brown & Company at Clydebank, Scotland. Princess Mary launched her on 31 May 1927, the first RAN ship launched by a member of the Royal Family. Naval tradition called for every ship to carry a badge, and for a ship named after a city, that badge normally drew on the city's arms.

Canberra had none. Parliament had only moved to the capital that same month, when the Duke of York opened the provisional Parliament House on 9 May 1927. So in July 1927 the Department of Defence asked for a coat of arms to be created, one the Navy could adapt for the cruiser's badge.

From competition to royal grant

On 9 September 1927 the Department of Home Affairs and Territories launched a design competition on behalf of the Federal Capital Commission. It drew 35 entries, but none was adopted as submitted. The design that went forward was the work of Sydney heraldic artist Charles Roxburgh Wylie, in modified form.

Wylie's draft was sent to the College of Arms in London. His original had two black swans as supporters, but the College had recently approved a pair of black swans for Perth. To avoid duplication, one was changed to a white swan.

King George V granted the arms by royal warrant on 8 October 1928, three months after HMAS Canberra commissioned on 9 July. The supporters, crest and motto followed in early November 1928. Crucially, the grant named the "City of Canberra", not the wider Territory.



Left: the original design for the coat of arms of Canberra
Right: the modified version currently in use



Reading the arms

Every element speaks to Canberra's role as the seat of national government:

- Crown: the authority of the Sovereign.
- Sword of justice and parliamentary mace, crossed: the shared authority of the executive and Parliament.
- Three-towered castle: the dignity of the great city Canberra was expected to become.
- White Rose of York: the Duke of York, later King George VI, who opened Parliament in 1927.
- Portcullis before a gum tree (crest): a link to the Palace of Westminster, and the growth of Australia's garden city.
- Black and white swans (supporters): Aboriginal Australians and European settlers.

The motto was first rendered in Latin, Pro Rege, Lege et Grege, then in English from 1929: "For the King, the Law and the People". It read "Queen" from 1952 and reverted to "King" in 2022.

From ship to city

The cruiser that prompted the arms served until 9 August 1942, when she was crippled at the Battle of Savo Island and scuttled in Ironbottom Sound. The emblem created for her outlived her. When the ACT gained self-government in 1989, the new government adopted the 1928 city arms as its own.

That inheritance has raised questions. A 2019 inquiry noted the arms legally belong to the City, not the Territory. In 2024 the ACT Government admitted the swans had long been shown the wrong way round on public buildings, and opened consultation on a separate territorial coat of arms. Nearly a century on, a badge commissioned for a warship still frames the debate over how Canberra represents itself.

Sources

- coat of arms of Canberra – Wikipedia
- Canberra's Capital Flags – Flags Australia
- Symbols of the ACT – ACT Legislative Assembly
- HMAS Canberra (D33) – Wikipedia

Attendees: David Manolas (Chair), Alex McGown, Darren Rush & Dennis Lyons.

Meeting opened at 11:25

1. Need to vote again for Public Officer

The Chair announced that due to a tie in the previous vote, the ACT Section was requested to vote again to establish whether it chose to continue supporting Mr David Manolas as Nominee for the position or change support to Mr John Jacobi.
The vote needed to be recorded that day and the result communicated to the National Secretary to be tabled at the National Council meeting in Launceston in October.

2. Crossed the Bar - Peter Cullinan

The Chair announced with sadness that Peter Cullinan had Crossed the Bar unexpectedly. A comemorative service was advised for Saturday 5 September at 10am in the Chapel at Duntroon RMC.
After the service Lynn and family were providing refreshments at the Marion on the Lake.
Later in the meeting, members discussed support already being provided to Lynn, including assistance with Peter's records and contact with Legacy.
It was also noted that Lynn had been put through significant difficulty dealing with administrative and veterans-related processes after Peter's death.
The Chair advised that Lynn had been asked to prepare some notes on her experience to take to the next ESORT (Ex-Service Organisation Round Table).

3. Veterans' medical support cap/scrap the cap campaign

The group discussed the campaign against the proposed \$5000 cap on medical support.
It was noted that petitions were circulating and that the issue remained active. One member said that the deadline was believed to be the end of September, though this was not fully confirmed.
The Chair noted concern about anxiety among veterans regarding the cap. Discussion also covered the idea that TBI-related cases were said to not be affected, while other gold card holders might be.
Pat McCabe was mentioned as having done submission work on behalf of the TPI Association in Canberra. The Chair said that some of the material could be included in the Bosun's Call.

4. HMAS Canberra Memorial Service planning (2027)

Members reviewed the recent HMAS Canberra memorial service and discussed plans to make next year's event larger as it would be the 85th Anniversary.

The Chair said the aim would be to invite kindred spirits again, including representatives from the USA, Great Britain, New Zealand and Canada.
It was noted that the invited politicians did not turn up or confirm attendance.
The Chair described the approval process as difficult, involving multiple agencies and authorities including:
o ACT Roads & Traffic
o ACT Fire Brigade
o ACT Policing
o ACT Ambulance
o ACT Environment
even the 2 coffee vendors around Lake Burley Griffin
The Chair suggested that the future event may require a subcommittee to help run it.

5. Minutes

The Chair asked if anyone wished to add anything to the minutes of the previous meeting.

6. Print design software

Members discussed the software used to produce the Bosun's Call newsletters and the WEM.
Denis Lyons had been using Microsoft Publisher to compile the cards that are used at the Last Post Ceremonies, however Microsoft is now longer available. Darren Rush advised that Affinity (the software currently being used to put together both the Bosun's Call Newsletters and the White Ensign Magazine could certainly do the job for the Last Post Ceremony cards.
The printing cost (such as the cardstock used) were to be passed on for reimbursement.
Denis Lyons advised that he planned to hand the cards to the members volunteering for the Last Post Ceremonies at the meetings to encourage attendance.

7. Welfare

The mainwelfare update was that Graeme Quinn had phoned to give apologies and was "not doing too well".

8. New Member Pack

A proposal was made for a New Member Pack to be given to new members.
A prototype pack had been prepared for the ACT Section's newest member, Stephen Rowley.
The pack contains:
• A welcome card (with Member Badge) signed by David.
• Contact details for the Section President, Vice President, Secretary, Welfare and Membership Registrar.
• A Calendar of Events
• Details for the monthly Fish & Chips gathering, ANZAC March & the HMAS Canberra Memorial Service.

• A copy of the (ACT) Bosun's Call
• A copy of the White Ensign Magazine
It was proposed to remove the words "New Member Pack" from the folder so that they could be used for other purposes as well.

9. Update on Honorary Members (Defence Attaches)

Darren Rush advised that both British and New Zealand Defence Attaches had accepted the offer of Honorary Membership with the Association. Both Officers have received a copy of the New Member Pack as described above.
Colonel Brown (NZ) asked if she needed to register to join us at a meeting and was advised that she was most welcome to "drop in" but giving advance notice would allow for a proper welcome.

10. Support for bereaved members & Legacy assistance

Denis Lyons shared an example from the HMAS Sydney Association of a member who had died of cancer and whose wife had been helped by welfare staff. The point was made that bereaved spouses should be connected with support to help with pensions and post-claim matters.
Darren Rush shared that Lynn Cullinan had phoned asking for help with Peter's records. It was advised that one of the ACT Section members is a Legacy Volunteer and Legacy was helping Lynn with this.
A suggestion was made to invite a Legacy representative to a meeting so that members could learn more about what they can do to help.

11. ACT Section Challenge Coin

The Chair and Darren Rush discussed the growing trend of Challenge Coins. The Chair had recently attended a model (train) show in Goulburn as part of the Task Force 72 group where a train related challenge coin was seen.
For the Section's own coin design, the group wanted to avoid using anything that did not belong to the NAA. The Chair explained that while a ship silhouette could be used, anything in more detail would need to be approved by Navy.
It was noted that Sections elsewhere had used local symbols; an example shown used the NAA Badge and motto on one side, and a NSW Centenary design on the other.
The ACT Section proposal was to use the black and white Swan (similar to the ones used on the ACT coat of arms). The Chair explained that the design was intended to connect with the Section's identity and the anchor linked with the HMAS Canberra Memorial.
The Chair said the design had historical significance because the ACT coat of arms originated when Navy

requested a badge for the commissioning of HMAS Canberra.

12. National Challenge Coin

Separate from the Section design, the Chair said he intended to speak to the National Council about a National Coin.
The idea was for the National Coin to have the NAA Badge and Motto on one side, and the Ode to the Naval Veteran on the other.
The Chair said that the ACT Section could "dip its toes in the water" with the local ACT design first.
If the membership agrees to proceed, the proposal would come back at a future meeting with:
• the cost of making the die
• the cost of producing coins
• an estimate of the per-member price for a coin
The Chair emphasized that initial discussion would not commit funds.
It was acknowledged that some coins could be set aside for formal occasions such as the HMAS Canberra Memorial Service, where VIP guests would receive one.

13. CN / CDF Plaques

The Chair advised that an email had been sent to Captain Nikki Mann in Navy Office asking when the plaques could be presented.
The Chair also asked if the artwork on the cover of the latest WEM could be reproduced on canvas for CDF and advise that it could.

14. Navy Branding MOU

The Chair said he intended to recommend that the current memorandum of understanding with Navy be renewed in perpetuity rather than simply renewed again in 2027.
He argued that this would better protect the Association's access to Navy branding and related material.
A prior issue was recalled in which an overseas organisation was producing an item which used the phrase "Once a Sailor, Always a Sailor" and an altered Navy badge, which the Section considered too close to the NAA Motto.
This had been reported to Navy, and Navy Branding issued a cease and desist notice.
The Chair framed this as evidence that the Association was doing its part to protect Navy Intellectual Property and Branding.

Meeting closed at 11:56

Attendees: Committee, Pauline Gribble, Peter Gillin, LS Fred Gillin, Jeff Wolford, Bev Joce, Stewart Gordon, Tony Vickers, Joe Slaats.

Apologies: Graeme Quinn, Alan Masters, Alaric O'Neill, Veronica Heard, Heather Milward, Sue Wheeler & John Small.

Visitors: Stephen Rowley, Chris Rowley, Mary Slaats & Deb McGown.

Meeting opened at 13:32

1. Welcome

David Manolis opened the meeting, announcing that a Membership Application had been received from Stephen Rowley. His service background was discussed, including that he had served in an instructional role.

The motion to accept his application was moved by Denis Lyons, seconded by Tony Vickers and approved. He was presented with a New Member Pack which included his Membership Badge, meeting information, a Bosun's Call Newsletter and White Ensign Magazine.

2. Welfare

Members were asked to share names of anyone from the Section who was unwell or had Crossed the Bar so they could be remembered in thoughts and prayers. Sad news was reported that Peter Cullinan had Crossed the Bar. It was announced that a Memorial Service was being held at Duntroon Chapel on Saturday at 10am.

3. Recital of the Odes

Naval Ode, Ode to the Naval Veteran and the Ode of Remembrance.

4. Birthdays

The September birthday List included Harry Badstow, John Coomb, Ian Holmes, Robert Kendall, Michael Taylor & Stephen Ewell. The Secretary noted that the day marked the 125th anniversary of the Australian National Flag.

5. Minutes

Minutes from August Meeting. No corrections or business arising. Minutes accepted unanimously

Mover: Joe.

Seconded: Pauline.

7. Committee Reports

President's Report

The Chair turned to a proposed challenge coin for the section. The coins would be presented to VIP guests at events such as the HMAS Canberra memorial service, including military and diplomatic guests such as the Chief of Air Force or representative, Royal Navy officers / Defence Attaché, and US Navy visitors. The design discussion included the use of the NAA crest and motto on one side and the black and white swans plus anchor imagery on the other, drawing from the HMAS Canberra memorial and the coat of arms of Canberra.

It was noted that the design must avoid improper use of Navy-owned insignia, so any final design would need to be cleared with Navy before proceeding.

The membership agreed to proceed to the next stage and have Darren obtain costings for:

the die to make the coins,

and the per-coin production cost.

The meeting noted that this was only a concurrence to gather information; no final purchase decision was made yet.

David asked Darren to give a detailed update on the association website and membership database work. He explained that when the former webmaster left, both the website and database were in poor shape. He has been rebuilding the website from scratch because the old architecture was outdated and unsupported.

A key improvement is that the new website will be disconnected from the membership database, improving security and reducing vulnerabilities.

He stated that this decision has removed approximately 2,500 potential points of failure/security leaks, and reduced database access to about a dozen people rather than broad access.

The new test site is available at naval.asn.au.

He is still waiting on updated information from many Sub-sections, but the rebuild is underway and he hopes to finish it this year. He invited members to review the test site and provide feedback.

The chair added that the ACT section's page should avoid unnecessary personal information, and should instead contain only core information such as:

who the section is,

when and where it meets,

who to contact,

and possibly a few representative photos, such as from the HMAS Canberra Memorial Service or Anzac Day.

The chair emphasised that any section page design would be shown to the members before publication.

Vice President's Report

There are Last Post ceremonies scheduled in December and January.

One of the December ceremonies falls on 24 December, and members were reminded that many would likely prefer to be with family that day.

A volunteer was already identified for that one.

Secretary's Report

Both the British Defence Attaché and New Zealand Defence Attaché accepted honorary membership and have received badges. Colonel Brown, the New Zealand Attaché, has asked whether she may attend a meeting, and the answer given was yes.

A widow had provided ship's badges from her late husband's Navy service, and these were available for members who might want one.

Some bullion badges were also available for purchase at \$35 each, with the funds going to National.

Membership Report

The section's membership total was reported as 46, broken down as:

33 financial full members,

1 financial club member,

6 honorary members,

2 unfinancial club members,

4 unfinancial full members.

With Stephen's acceptance, the membership count increased to 47.

Welfare Report

There was a brief mention that welfare matters remained as previously discussed.

Social Events Report

The previous social gathering was successful, with 8 or 9 people attending.

The monthly social lunch remains fish and chips at Snapper's at the Yacht Club, on the 3rd Thursday of each month from 12:00 pm.

Reports accepted unanimously

Mover: Tiger

Seconded: Peter

Meeting closed at 14:06

The design being proposed for the NAA (ACT) Challenge Coin is shown below



Front of Coin
NAA Badge and Motto



Rear of Coin
Stylised combination of the two swans from the coat of arms of Canberra and the anchor from the HMAS Canberra Memorial



Australian Government

Department of Veterans' Affairs

DVA Contact Numbers

Provider invoicing & billing enquiries: 1300 550 017

Provider enquiries: 1800 550 457

Transport bookings: 1800 550 455

Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre (VAPAC): 1800 552 580

Hearing or speech impairment assistance

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service (NRS):

Talk To You (TTY) users phone 1800 555 677 then ask for 1800 838 372

Speak and Listen users phone 1800 555 727 then ask for 1800 838 372

Internet relay users connect to the NRS then ask for 1800 838 372

Information on health services may be obtained from DVA. The contact numbers for health care pro-viders requiring further information or prior financial authorisation for all States and Territories are listed below:

TELEPHONE: 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)

INTERNATIONAL CALLERS: +61 2 6289 1133

POSTAL ADDRESS FOR ALL STATES AND TERRITORIES:

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Health Approvals & Home Care Section

GPO Box 9998

BRISBANE QLD 4001

DVA WEBSITE: <http://www.dva.gov.au/providers/allied-healthprofessionals>

DVA EMAIL: For prior financial authorisation: health.approval@dva.gov.au

The appropriate prior approval request form can be found at: <https://www.dva.gov.au/providers/servicesrequiring-prior-approval>

CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

For information about claims for payment visit: www.dva.gov.au/providers/how-claim

CLAIM ENQUIRIES: 1300 550 017 (Option 2 Allied Health)

Claims will take a variety of times to complete based on whether or not the claim is prioritised for allocation to a decision maker and the complexity of the claim itself. For example, if the service of the individual crosses two or more Acts or contains a lot of health conditions and injuries or both. This results in some claims being decided faster than the average time, while some claims take longer.

For any condition, to make the claiming process smoother, follow these 3 steps:

- Step 1: Get your medical practitioner to con-firm your diagnosis.
- Step 2: Supply the documents you need to;
- Step 3: Check if you are already eligible for free health care and treatment.

CLAIMS PROGRESS

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) continues to process outstanding claims as quickly as possible, to deliver much needed help to veterans and families sooner.

As part of our commitment to routinely, publicly, and meaningfully reporting on claims processing progress, each month DVA releases updated data via the claims processing page.

A snapshot of May 2026:

DVA received 8,979 claims in May bringing the total for the financial year to date (FYTD) to 98,799 claims – 7.3 per cent higher than the same period last year.

DVA made 7,042 determinations and has finalised 85,573 claims in the FYTD, 8.6% per cent less than the equivalent period last year. 70,344 claims were with an officer for processing, and 31,316 claims were yet to be allocated for processing.

The average time taken to process a MRCA IL claim was 361 days in the 2025-26 FYTD (1 July 2025 to 31 May 2026), compared to 311 days in the corresponding 2024-25 FYTD.

OPEN ARMS

Veterans & Families Counselling

Open Arms provides mental health and wellbeing support to anyone who has served at least one day of continuous fulltime service in the ADF and their immediate families.

1800 011 046

SAFE ZONE SUPPORT

Free and anonymous counselling line for all current and ex-serving ADF personnel, veterans and their families. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

1800 142 072

DEFENCE FAMILY HELPLINE

Available 24/7 or online at www.defence.gov.au/members-families/defence-helpline.asp. Staffed by qualified human services professionals including social workers and psychologists.

1800 628 036

DEFENCE ALL HOURS SUPPORT LINE

24/7 confidential telephone service for Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families to facilitate access to ADF or civilian mental health services.

1800 628 036