



GREENBANK NAA NEWSLETTER

GREY FUNNEL DITS



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GREENBANK NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Sub Section

Events for April and May 2020:

Due to the Coronavirus hitting the country at the present time the following events have been cancelled.

1. Sub Section Normal Meeting 07 April 2020
2. Anzac Day Services at Greenbank RSL
3. Sub Section Executive Meeting Wednesday 29 April 2020
4. Sub Section Normal Meeting Tuesday 05 May 2020.

The Sub Section Executive will be monitoring the situation and will keep everyone informed of any further changes.



Editors Request:

Articles for the newsletter can be handed in at meetings, or by email: articles may be edited to fit the newsletter.

The contents of this edition of the newsletter have been obtained from information provided from Len Kingston-Kerr whom I thank greatly, various publication publications and NAA information emailed in.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY - Naval Personality

Captain D.J. Hamer:



David John Hamer was born in Melbourne on 5 September 1923 and educated at Geelong Grammar School. He joined the RAN College in 1937 and graduated in 1940 with his colours for rugby and the prizes for mathematics and navigation. He also came first in his class for English and history and was awarded the grand aggregate prize for academic studies and awarded maximum time (four months) for early promotion to Lieutenant. He was promoted to Midshipman in January 1941 and posted to the heavy cruiser HMAS *Canberra* which served in the Indian Ocean. In November 1941 he joined the destroyer HMAS *Napier* and served in her in the Mediterranean.

In February 1942 he was appointed to the battleship HMS *Revenge* operating in the Indian Ocean. Hamer was sent to England to undertake further training courses in May 1942 and was promoted to Sub Lieutenant in August 1942. He excelled on these courses gaining five first class certificates for gunnery, torpedoes, navigation, signals and seamanship. He was awarded the Beaufort and Wharton Prize for navigation and pilotage and the Ian Macdonald Memorial Prize for the signals course. In January 1943 he was appointed to the destroyer HMAS *Norman* and again served in the Indian Ocean as part of the British Eastern Fleet. He was promoted to Lieutenant in August 1943 and in May 1944 was posted to the heavy cruiser HMAS *Australia*. He served onboard *Australia* as the Air Defence Officer, during her operations in the Philippines at Leyte Gulf in October 1944 and at Lingayen Gulf in January 1945, where he directed the ships anti-aircraft guns against frequent and multiple enemy air attacks. *Australia* was subjected to repeated suicide aircraft (kamikaze) attacks and despite putting up a heavy barrage of anti-aircraft fire she was hit four times; losing three officers and 41 ratings killed and one officer and 68 ratings wounded. Hamer was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross 'for gallantry, skill and devotion to duty whilst serving in HMAS *Australia* in the successful assault operations in the Lingayen Gulf, Luzon Island'. There is some suggestion in naval circles that Hamer was originally considered for the award of the Victoria Cross for his gallantry at Lingayen Gulf



Lieutenant DJ Hamer, RAN was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for gallantry, skill and devotion to duty whilst serving in HMAS *Australia* during the successful assault operations in the Lingayen Gulf, Luzon Island

In August 1945, Lieutenant Hamer was sent to England to undertake the long gunnery course at HMS *Excellent* and also saw service at the Royal Naval Air Station (HMS *Goldcrest*) in Wales during September 1945-January 1946. Upon return to Australia in June 1947 he was posted as Flotilla Gunnery Officer and served in the destroyers HMAS *Bataan* and HMAS *Warramunga*. In September 1948 he returned to England to complete the Advance Gunnery Course at HMS *Excellent*.

He returned to Australia in September 1949 and was sent as an instructor to the gunnery school at HMAS *Cerberus* where he served until December 1950. In January 1951 he was posted to the destroyer HMAS *Tobruk* and served in her until March 1952 as the Flotilla Gunnery Officer. In April 1952 he was posted to Navy Office, in Melbourne, and served as the Flag Lieutenant Commander to the Naval Board until January 1954. Hamer was promoted to Lieutenant Commander in August 1951.

Lieutenant Commander Hamer joined the cruiser *Australia* in early 1954 as the Fleet Gunnery Officer and transferred to the aircraft carrier HMAS *Sydney* in June 1954, in the same role, after *Australia* was decommissioned. In March 1956 Hamer attended the Royal Navy staff course and was promoted to Commander in June 1956. Upon successful completion of the staff course he was posted on a two year exchange to the Joint Service Amphibious Centre at Poole in southern England as the Senior Naval Instructor. Upon return to Australia in early 1959 he served at Navy Office in Canberra before being appointed as the Operations Officer to the Flag Officer Commanding the Australian Fleet (serving in the aircraft carrier HMAS *Melbourne*) in early 1960. In early 1962 Hamer was promoted to Acting Captain and appointed as the Director of Naval Intelligence in Navy Office and was also an honorary Aide-de-camp to the Governor-General. He was confirmed in the rank of Captain in June 1962. On 2 December 1963, Captain Hamer was posted as the Commanding Officer of the destroyer HMAS *Vampire* and also commanded the Australian Destroyer Squadron during 1963-65. In July 1965 he took up his final appointment in the RAN as the Director of Project Coordination in Navy Office. Captain David Hamer resigned from the Navy on 1 February 1968 in order to pursue a career in politics.

In 1969, David Hamer was elected to the Australian House of Representatives as the Liberal member for Isaacs (Victoria). He was narrowly defeated by the Labor candidate, Gareth Clayton, in 1974 and became a political columnist for *The Age* newspaper and undertook a Master of Arts at Monash University in Constitutional Law, studying the historical role of the Australian Senate. He was re-elected to Isaacs in 1975 but contested the Senate in 1977. He was successful, and remained a Liberal senator for Victoria until his retirement in 1990. A strong supporter of improving the function of the Senate as a house of review, he was Chairman of Committees as well as Deputy President of the Senate (despite being a member of the Opposition) under the Hawke and Keating Labor governments from 1983-1990.

Hamer was also interested in promoting the arts in Australia, helping establish the Arts Council of Victoria, and serving as President of the Arts Council of Australia and of the Australian Film Institute. He was a keen supporter of the establishment of the National Film and Sound Archive as a way to collect and make accessible Australia's rich audio-visual history. He was also a keen researcher and writer and his publications include: 'The Australian Senate 1901-1918, An Appraisal' (1976), 'Can Responsible Government Survive in Australia?' (1994 and 2004) and 'Bombers versus Battleships - The Struggle between Ships and Aircraft for Control of the Surface of the Sea' (1998).

David Hamer died of leukemia on 14 January 2002. Hamer was also awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977 and was posthumously made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in June 2002 'for service to the Parliament of Australia, to the recording of Australian military and political history as a researcher and writer, and to the community through arts organisations'.

Hamer had two brothers - Sir Rupert Hamer who was the Premier of Victoria 1972-81, and Alan who was a Rhodes Scholar, chemist and businessman. His sister Alison Patrick (née Hamer) was a historian at Melbourne University. In 2004 the Hamer Family Fund was set up in honour of all four siblings and its aims include projects that advance the arts, the environment and good government in Australia.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY ADMIRALS

RADM M. Hammond:



Rear Admiral Mark Hammond joined the Royal Australian Navy in 1986 as an electronics technician. He was commissioned as a naval officer in 1988 and is a graduate of the RAN Recruit School (1986); the Australian Defence Force Academy (1990); Australian Command and Staff College (2004); and the Centre for Defence Strategic Studies (2014).

Rear Admiral Hammond completed seamanship and navigation training in various ships then volunteered for submarine service. Qualifying in Oberon class submarines in 1994, Hammond joined HMAS *Collins* as Navigating Officer in 1996 (during First of Class Trials), and was selected as Flag Lieutenant to the Chief of Navy. He subsequently completed the Principal Warfare Officer's Course and Submarine Warfare Course in 1998, and served as the commissioning Operations Officer in HMAS *Waller*. In 2001 Rear Admiral Hammond instructed the Submarine Warfare Officer Course and assumed duties as Executive Officer in HMAS *Sheean*. In 2003 Hammond completed the Netherlands Submarine Command Course (Perisher) and the US Navy's Prospective Commanding Officer Course.

Rear Admiral Hammond served as Staff Officer Future Concepts at Naval Headquarters in late 2003, and graduated from Command and Staff Course in 2004. Hammond then deployed on operations with the Royal Navy Submarine force, before assuming command of HMAS *Farncomb* and completing two years of demanding operations in the Indo Pacific region.

Subsequent shore postings included Assistant Naval Attaché - Washington DC, USA; Director Future Submarines - Operational Requirements; Joint Exercise Director (J75) at Joint Operations Command; Director Submarine Sub-Program (Collins and Future Submarines); and Chief of Staff to the Chief of the Defence Force, performing the latter role for General Hurley from November 2012 to December 2013.

In late 2014 Rear Admiral Hammond was appointed as Director General Maritime Operations, exercising OPCON of the Navy's ships, submarines and detachments, before relocating in 2017 to the United States for duties in the Pentagon as the Chief of Defence Force Liaison Officer to General Joseph Dunford, the Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Rear Admiral Hammond returned to Australia in March 2018 to assume duties as the Deputy Chief of Navy.

Rear Admiral Hammond has sea experience in French, British and US nuclear attack submarines, Australian and Dutch conventional submarines, and multiple surface vessels. Academic qualifications include Bachelor of Science (UNSW, ADFA, 1991); Masters in Management (Defence Studies, UCAN, 2004); and Masters in Maritime Studies (UoW, 2005).

NAVAL BATTLES - Battle of Java Sea

The Japanese invasion of the Dutch East Indies progressed at a rapid pace as they advanced from their Palau Islands colony and captured bases in Sarawak and the southern Philippines.^[4] They seized bases in eastern Borneo and in northern Celebes while troop convoys, screened by destroyers and cruisers with air support provided by swarms of fighters operating from captured bases, steamed southward through the Makassar Strait and into the Molucca Sea. To oppose these invading forces was a small force, consisting of Dutch, American, British and Australian warships—many of them of World War I vintage—initially under the command of Admiral Thomas C. Hart.

On 23 January 1942, a force of four American destroyers attacked a Japanese invasion convoy in Makassar Strait as it approached Balikpapan in Borneo. On 13 February, the Allies fought unsuccessfully—in the Battle of Palembang—to prevent the Japanese from capturing the major oil port in eastern Sumatra. On the night of 19/20 February, an Allied force attacked the Eastern Invasion Force off Bali in the Battle of Badung Strait. Also on 19 February, the Japanese made two air raids on Darwin, on the Australian mainland, one from carrier-based planes and the other by land-based planes. The destruction of Darwin rendered it useless as a supply and naval base to support operations in the East Indies.

The Japanese amphibious forces gathered to strike at Java, and on 27 February 1942, the main Allied naval force, under Doorman, sailed northeast from Surabaya to intercept a convoy of the Eastern Invasion Force approaching from the Makassar Strait. The Eastern Strike Force, as it was known, consisted of two heavy cruisers (HMS *Exeter* and USS *Houston*), three light cruisers (Doorman's flagship HNLMS *De Ruyter*, HNLMS *Java*, HMAS *Perth*), and nine destroyers (HMS *Electra*, HMS *Encounter*, HMS *Jupiter*, HNLMS *Kortenaer*, HNLMS *Witte de With*, USS *Alden*, USS *John D. Edwards*, USS *John D. Ford*, and USS *Paul Jones*).

The Japanese task force protecting the convoy, commanded by Rear-Admiral Takeo Takagi, consisted of two heavy (*Nachi* and *Haguro*) and two light cruisers (*Naka* and *Jintsū*) and 14 destroyers (*Yūdachi*, *Samidare*, *Murasame*, *Harusame*, *Minegumo*, *Asagumo*, *Yukikaze*, *Tokitsukaze*, *Amatsukaze*, *Hatsukaze*, *Yamakaze*, *Kawakaze*, *Sazanami*, and *Ushio*) including the 4th Destroyer Squadron under the command of Rear Admiral Shoji Nishimura. The Japanese heavy cruisers were much more powerful, armed with ten 8-inch (203 mm) guns each, and superb torpedoes. By comparison, *Exeter* was armed only with six 8-inch guns and only six of *Houston's* nine 8-inch guns remained operable after her aft turret had been knocked out in an earlier air attack.

The Allied force engaged the Japanese in the Java Sea, and the battle raged intermittently from mid-afternoon to midnight as the Allies tried to reach and attack the troop transports of the Java invasion fleet, but they were repulsed by superior firepower. The Allies had local air superiority during the daylight hours, because Japanese air power could not reach the fleet in the bad weather. The weather also hindered communications, making cooperation between the many Allied parties involved—in reconnaissance, air cover and fleet headquarters—even worse than it already was. The Japanese also jammed the radio frequencies. *Exeter* was the only ship in the battle equipped with radar, an emerging technology at the time.

The battle consisted of a series of attempts over a seven-hour period by Doorman's Combined Striking Force to reach and attack the invasion convoy; each was rebuffed by the escort force with heavy losses being inflicted on the Allies.

The fleets sighted each other at about 16:00 on 27 February and closed to firing range, opening fire at 16:16. Both sides exhibited poor gunnery and torpedo skills during this phase of the battle. Despite her recent refit (with the addition of modern Type 284 gunnery control radar), *Exeter's* shells did not come close to the Japanese ships, while *Houston* only managed to achieve a straddle on one of the opposing cruisers. The only notable result of the initial gunnery exchange was *Exeter* being critically damaged by a hit in the boiler room from an 8-inch shell. The ship then limped away to Surabaya, escorted by *Witte de With*.

The Japanese launched two huge torpedo salvos, consisting of 92 torpedoes in all, but scored only one hit, on *Kortenaer*. She was struck by a Long Lance, broke in two and sank rapidly after the hit.

Electra—covering *Exeter*—engaged in a duel with *Jintsū* and *Asagumo*, scoring several hits but suffering severe damage to her superstructure. After a serious fire started on *Electra* and her remaining turret ran out of ammunition, abandon ship was ordered. On the Japanese side, only *Asagumo* was forced to retire because of damage.

The Allied fleet broke off and turned away around 18:00, covered by a smoke screen laid by the four destroyers of U.S Destroyer Division 58 (DesDiv 58). They also launched a torpedo attack but at too long a range to be effective. Doorman's force turned south toward the Java coast, then west and north as night fell in an attempt to evade the Japanese escort group and fall on the convoy. It was at this point the ships of DesDiv 58—their torpedoes expended—left on their own initiative to return to Surabaya.

Shortly after, at 21:25, *Jupiter* ran onto a mine and was sunk, while about 20 minutes later, the fleet passed where *Kortenaer* had sunk earlier, and *Encounter* was detached to pick up survivors.

Doorman's command, now reduced to four cruisers, again encountered the Japanese escort group at 23:00; both columns exchanged fire in the darkness at long range, until *De Ruyter* and *Java* were sunk by one devastating torpedo salvo. Doorman and most of his crew went down with *De Ruyter*; only 111 were saved from both ships.

Only the cruisers *Perth* and *Houston* remained; low on fuel and ammunition, and following Doorman's last instructions, the two ships retired, arriving at Tanjung Priok on 28 February.

Although the Allied fleet did not reach the invasion fleet, the battle did give the defenders of Java a one-day respite.

Allied Casualties

2 x Light Cruisers sunk
3 x Destroyers sunk
1 x Heavy Cruiser damaged
2,300 sailors lost

Japanese casualties

3 x Destroyers damaged
1 x Light Cruiser damaged
36 sailors lost

Result

Decisive Japanese victory

HAVE A LAUGH

THE SENILITY PRAYER:

Grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway,
The good fortune to run into the ones I do, and
The eyesight to tell the difference.

A child asked his father, "How were people born?" So his father said, "Adam and Eve made babies, then their babies became adults and made babies, and so on." The child then went to his mother, asked her the same question and she told him, "We were monkeys then we evolved to become like we are now." The child ran back to his father and said, "You lied to me!" His father replied, "No, your mum was talking about her side of the family."

Reaching the end of a job interview, the Human Resources Officer asks a young engineer fresh out of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "And what starting salary are you looking for?"

The engineer replies, "In the region of \$125,000 a year, depending on the benefits package."

The interviewer inquires, "Well, what would you say to a package of five weeks' vacation, 14 paid holidays, full medical and dental, company matching retirement fund to 50% of salary, and a company car leased every two years, say, a red Corvette?" The engineer sits up straight and says, "Wow! Are you kidding?" The interviewer replies, "Yeah, but you started it."

Three police officers were standing in line at the Pearly Gates. Saint Peter asked the first officer, "What did you do with your life?" "I was a police officer," he responded. "What kind of police officer?" Saint Peter asked. "I was a vice officer. I kept drugs off the streets and out of the hands of kids." "Welcome to heaven. You may end the gates." He asked the second man what he did as a police officer. "I was a traffic officer," said the man. "I kept the roads and highways safe." "Welcome to heaven. You may enter the gates." He asked the third man what he did as a police officer. "I was a military policeman, sir," replied the man. "Wonderful! I've been waiting for you all day!" replied Saint Peter. "I need to take a break! Watch the gate, will you?"

Two women staggered into the pub, dragging their extremely drunk mate with them. When they reached the bar, they let him go and he collapsed in a drunken heap on the floor. "We'll have two beers," one of them slurred to the bartender.

"What about him?" asked the barkeep, pointing to the unconscious chap.

"No more for him - he's driving," his pal replied.

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY - SHIP HISTORY

HMAS *Parramatta* (II)



The RAN's second *Parramatta* was laid down at Cockatoo Island Dockyard, Sydney on 9 November 1938. The Grimsby Class sloop was launched by Mrs Evora Francis Street, the wife of the Federal Minister for Defence on 10 June, 1939. As the slip was required by another hull, *Parramatta* was unusually launched prior to her engines being installed.

HMAS *Parramatta* commissioned at Sydney on 8 April 1940 under the command of Lieutenant Commander Jefferson H Walker MVO, RAN a 39 year old officer who had entered the Royal Australian Naval College in 1915 at the age of 13½ years. She was his first command.

Following a brief period exercising with the 20th Minesweeping Flotilla, *Parramatta* sailed from Fremantle on 29 June 1940 enroute to the Red Sea where she reported for duty to the Senior Officer, Red Sea Force, at the end of July. Except for a visit to Bombay in December 1940 *Parramatta* spent the next nine months in one of the world's most torrid zones escorting, patrolling and minesweeping. It was monotonous work in the worst possible conditions relieved only by occasional futile Italian air attacks against the convoys under escort.

In April 1941 she took part in the British operations against Italian Eritrea, East Africa. One of her last tasks as a unit of the Red Sea Force was towing the cruiser HMS *Capetown* from Eritrea to Port Sudan after she had been torpedoed by an Italian 'E' Boat during the night of 7/8 April 1941.

In May 1941 *Parramatta* transferred to the control of the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean Station, beginning with three weeks based on Port Tewfik at the head of the Gulf of Suez. On 3 June she reached Alexandria where Walker commented that at last after 'months of monotony in the Red Sea' he was pleased that his 'rather young and developing Ship's company' would be stimulated by contact with the battle scarred Mediterranean Fleet. Soon afterwards *Parramatta* was assigned to duty on escort in support of the campaign in Libya (Western Desert). She sailed from Alexandria on her first run to the battle area on 15 June carrying a Naval Port Party to Mersa Matruh.

After dark on 22 June 1941 *Parramatta* left Alexandria on her first run to beleaguered Tobruk, escorting in company with the sloop HMS *Auckland*, the small steamer *Pass Of Balmaha* carrying a cargo of badly need petrol. The warships were to leave her off Tobruk and wait to seaward while she discharged her cargo and then escort her back to Alexandria.

Steaming close inshore to gain the benefit of fighter protection from the land, the ships made slow but steady progress. For 36 hours there was no sign of the enemy but at 8:40am on the second day out a single reconnaissance plane was sighted high up a few miles westward. Half an hour later the first of three fruitless attacks developed, the last from a single aircraft at 1:45pm. Then at 5:30pm *Parramatta* received a warning from *Auckland* and Walker, scanning the sky, sighted three formations each of 16 dive bombers manoeuvring to attack.

As they worked round in order to dive straight out of the blazing westerly sun both ships opened the heaviest barrage they could muster. Then they came in, diving in twos and threes. Tall fountains of water rising from the sea marked near miss after near miss. *Auckland* was hit in the stern and disappeared from view in a cloud of thick brown smoke. She emerged out of control, guns still firing, and heading straight for *Parramatta* who had to swing away to avoid a collision. 'As she passed', wrote Walker, 'I saw that she was an utter wreck abaft the mainmast, with no stern visible.' After fifteen minutes the last of the bombers was droning eastwards. Miraculously both *Parramatta* and the petrol carrier had escaped damage. *Auckland*, stopped and listing heavily to port, began to abandon ship and Walker closed her to begin the work of rescuing her crew. She was barely cleared when a heavy internal explosion lifted the stricken ship 'slowly and steadily about six or seven feet into the air. Her back broke with a pronounced fold down the starboard side.' Slowly as if reluctant to go she rolled quietly over and sank.

At 6:30pm the enemy returned, machine gunning *Auckland's* survivors as they drifted in boats and skiffs, on rafts and some still afloat in their lifebelts. *Parramatta* was forced to withdraw to gain sea room until darkness fell. For two hours the bombers kept coming so that according to Walker 'there seemed always one formation falling about like leaves in the zenith and then diving in succession, one moving forward into position and one splitting off and coming in at 45 degrees.' But at last after the enemy had done his futile worst and failed to sink either *Parramatta* or her charge the attacks ceased 'as the sun's lower limb touched the horizon at 8:25pm.' In the deepening dusk of the Mediterranean night Walker turned his ship towards the scene of *Auckland's* loss. There she was joined by the Australian destroyers HMAS *Waterhen* (I) and HMAS *Vendetta* (I). While the destroyers circled her she picked up 164 survivors before setting out for Alexandria. *Pass Of Balmaha*, damaged in the bunkers, was taken in tow by *Waterhen* (I) to Tobruk with *Vendetta* (I) as escort.

After cleaning ship and making good minor damage, *Parramatta* resumed escort duty to Tobruk. Enroute to Mersa Matruh on 27 June she was attacked by a submarine. Fortunately, however, although the enemy's aim was good his torpedo ran too deep and passed harmlessly underneath the ship. From Mersa Matruh the Australian sloop picked up the *Pass Of Balmaha* off Tobruk and on 30 June again entered Alexandria Harbour where she remained making good defects until 18 July. Thereafter until the end of the month she operated as one of the escort vessels covering the reinforcement of the British forces in Cyprus.

In September *Parramatta* operated as Duty Sloop at Attaka in the Suez Canal zone where, said Walker, 'it was intended that my presence should inspire confidence in the crews of American merchant ships loaded with military stores.' October was spent in the Gulf of Suez on survey work with which Walker was well acquainted, having served in the survey ship HMAS *Geranium* as a young lieutenant in 1923/24.

At dawn on 18 November 1941 the British Eighth Army under General Auckinleck launched its long planned offensive in Libya. The value of the toehold held in Tobruk and maintained entirely by the Navy was immediately demonstrated. It was an invaluable feeder port for reinforcements and supplies for the Army advance. A few hours after the British Army began to move HMAS *Yarra* (II) and *Parramatta* left Alexandria escorting a slow convoy to Tobruk. It arrived without loss in spite of enemy attacks from the air and undersea. Their charges delivered safely the two Australian sloops were back in Alexandria on 23 November. Meanwhile, fierce assaults by the Tobruk garrison against the besieging enemy had reduced their ammunition to a dangerously low level. To relieve the situation *Parramatta* and the destroyer HMS *Avon Vale* sailed from Alexandria on 25 November escorting the deeply laden ammunition ship *Hanne* to Tobruk.

About midnight on 26 November the three ships were about 25 miles north of Bardia off the Libyan coast. It was pitch dark and raining with a heavy surging sea running. *Hanne* was confused as to her route into Tobruk and Walker closed to hail by megaphone. Half an hour later the two ships lay close alongside one another steaming slowly at about three knots. *Avon Vale* was lost in the encircling blackness, a blanket which had not prevented the Commanding Officer of *U559* sighting the convoy nearly two hours earlier as lit by a flash of lightning it stood silhouetted to the north east of his prowling submarine.

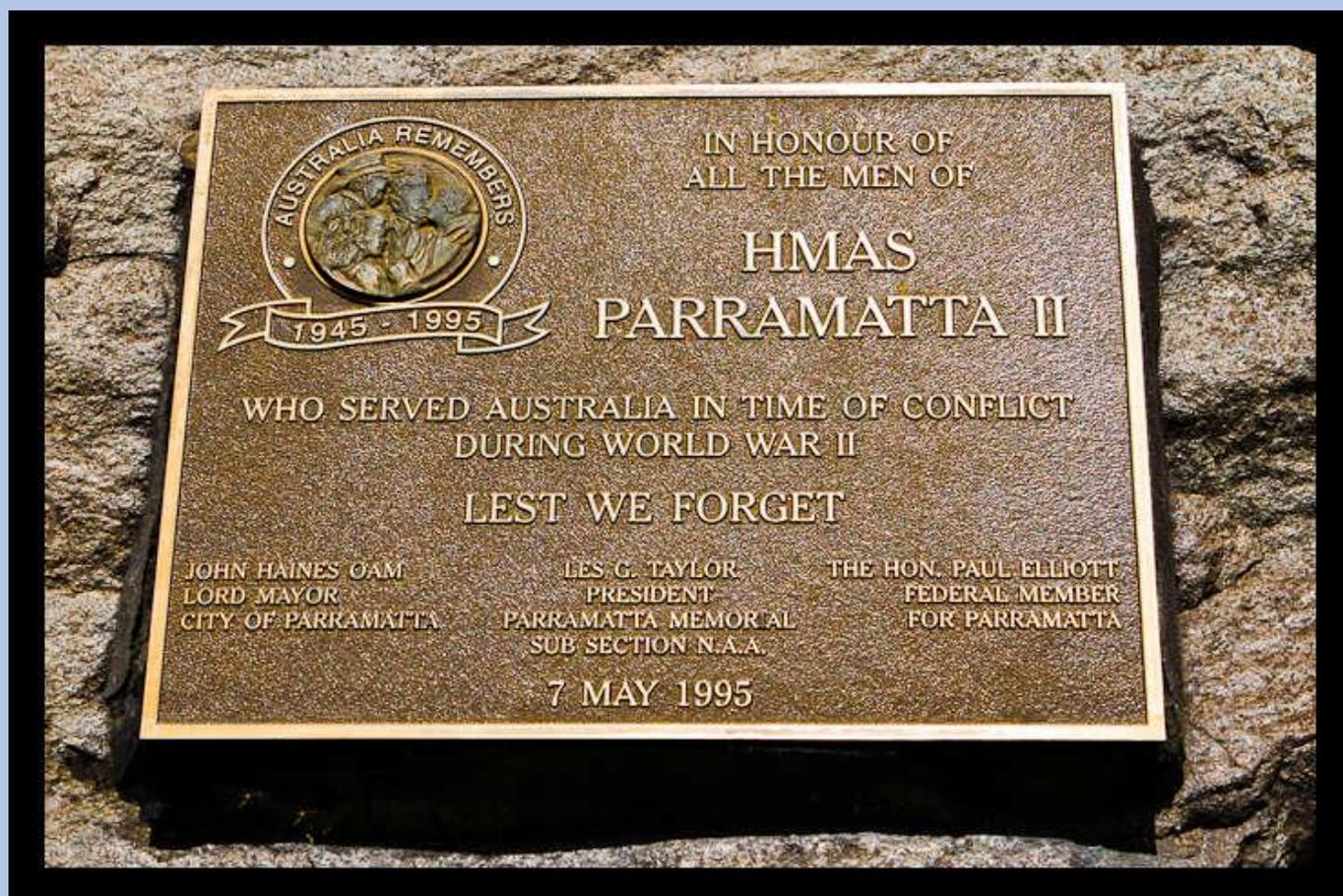
Biding his time the German quietly stalked his prey, manoeuvring for a favourable position. At 12 minutes past midnight at a range of 2200 yards, he fired a spread of three torpedoes at a 'merchant ship behind which a small vessel was visible.' All three torpedoes missed. Disappointed and puzzled by his failure the German submarine closed in. 'I cannot wait', he wrote, 'because the convoy is just off the Tobruk approach route.' Then, at 12:45am on 27 November 'I fired a single torpedo at a range of 1500 metres using the same estimations. The target is a destroyer with one funnel. Hit! Two explosions one after the other. The destroyer breaks up and sinks. Shortly afterwards another heavy explosion. Probably her depth charges. I make off towards the south east.' *U559*'s torpedo hit *Parramatta* amidships. There were two almost simultaneous explosions, the second probably in the magazine. She was torn apart, all lighting failed and Walker standing on the bridge had only time to issue the order 'abandon ship' before she rolled rapidly to starboard and sank.

Only those on deck had a chance to escape. About 30 including two officers clung to an Oropesa float among a mass of debris. They could hear shouts close by in the darkness. Suddenly as if she were reluctant to take the final plunge, *Parramatta*'s stern broke the surface. Some distance off a vague black shape was visible. Two seamen decided to take a chance and swim towards it. After three quarters of a mile and near exhaustion they were picked up by *Avon Vale* at 3:05am. The destroyer had by then already plucked nineteen survivors from the wreckage strewn sea. No others were found and although she searched a wide area the destroyer could find no trace of the Oropesa float nor any of its human cargo. Three more, however, reached the Libyan coast unaided, to be rescued by advancing British troops, making in all twenty-four survivors. One hundred and thirty-eight lost their lives, including all officers.

Ordinary Seaman, Harold Moss, the last surviving veteran of the sinking, recalled later in life the moment his ship was torpedoed:

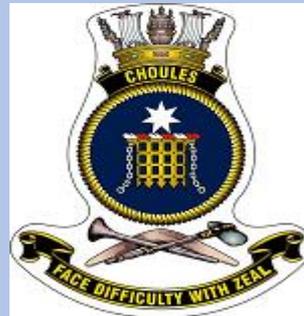
“When the ship was hit, it blew me over the [mess deck] table into the ship's side. I somehow knew it was a torpedo and had to get out. Near that mess was a ladder going up behind the funnel and I was up there like a flash, right opposite me, as I got on the deck was the whaler and I thought I will get into that and as the ship wet down I would float of, silly me forgot that it was all tied down and as the ship turned over I was washed out. I was not a strong swimmer, but a good dog paddler and luck again was with me, there was a Carley raft right next to me, I got in and helped the other guys in. I was sitting on top of the raft on the rope handles and it was mighty uncomfortable, also, I had my hands gripped around that rope because it was a bit rough and cold too. When the Avon Vale came alongside they yelled out 'you have two minutes to get up the net!' Everybody went except me. I couldn't get my hands off the rope, they were clenched tight around it, so I yelled out 'I need help' and someone came down the net, undid my hands and threw me over his shoulder and took me up on the deck. I was covered in fuel oil and had a couple of scratches on me. The Doc cleaned me up, gave me a tot of something and they wrapped a blanket around me and took me away.”

In a twist to this story, the U-boat responsible for sinking *Parramatta*, U-559, was itself sunk on 30 October 1942 by ships of the Royal Navy. After being depth charged for 16 hours, and with a cracked pressure hull, it surfaced and her crew abandoned her. Three British seaman then boarded the sinking vessel seizing its Enigma coding machine and code books. Two of the seaman were lost when the submarine sunk, but their sacrifice enabled the Allies to break and read the German naval signal traffic, saving the lives of countless other Allied seaman.



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY – New Ships

HMAS Choules



Class	Bay Class	Displacement	16,190 tonnes
Type	Landing Ship Dock LSD	Length	176 Metres
Builder	Swan Hunter Walls End	Beam	26.4 Metres
Laid down	28 January 2002	Draught	5.8 metres
Launched	18 July 2005	Speed	18 knots
Commissioned	13 December 2011	Crew	158 Officers and sailors
		Machinery	Diesel Electric System 4 x main diesel generators 2 x Wartsila 8L26 engines 1 x auxiliary stand by diesel
Helicopter	X 2		

HMAS *Choules* is a highly operational 16,000 tonne ship, 176 metres long, 24 metres wide, and capable of carrying over 300 troops, 23 Abrams tanks, 150 light Trucks, LCVP, Landing Craft Mechanised (LCM8) and is also capable of operating Navy helicopters including the [MRH-90 Taipan](#) and [Sikorsky MH-60R Seahawk](#) and the Australian Army's S-70A Black Hawk. *Choules* is an amphibious Landing Ship Dock which originally served with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. She was commissioned by the Royal Australian Navy in December 2011.

Commissioning

The ship originally entered service with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary on 28 November 2006 as RFA *Largs Bay* (L3006). The Bay Class is a proven capability with *Largs Bay* having provided humanitarian relief as part of the international response to the Haiti earthquake in 2010.

At the end of 2010, *Largs Bay* was marked as one of the vessels to be removed from service under the UK Strategic Defence and Security Review.

On 17 March 2011, the Department of Defence announced that the Royal Australian Navy would be bidding for *Largs Bay*. This was followed on 6 April by news that a A\$100 million (£65 million) bid had been successful.

ADF Ship *Choules* was formally handed to the Australian Defence Force in October 2011 following extensive sea trials to confirm the condition of the vessel. The ship also underwent a major refit to make her suitable for RAN service. This work included:

- Overhauling the main propulsion system, including diesel generators and azimuths
- Repainting the hull and flight deck
- Upgrading the tropical cooling system
- Upgrading and maintaining the salt water system
- Overhauling the stern ramp
- Extending the bridge front walkway
- Various safety enhancements
- Supplying and installing mexeflotes pontoons
- Installing temporary aircraft shelter

ADFS *Choules* arrived in Western Australia in December 2011, and was commissioned as HMAS *Choules* on 13 December 2011. The ship is named after the late [Chief Petty Officer Claude Choules](#).

Capability

Choules is designed to operate using helicopters and landing craft to get landing forces and equipment ashore. *Choules* has a large flight deck aft which can accommodate two large helicopters and a docking well in the stern capable of operating a LCM-8 or two LCVP landing craft. She has had a great amount of experience working with Blackhawks, MRH-90 and Seahawks, so much so that on 10 April 2014 *Choules* Ship's Aviation Officer (SAVO) clocked up 1000 deck landings in one twelve month period.

The military lift includes the capacity to load and transport up to 32 Abrams tanks, or 150 light trucks. HMAS *Choules* can carry a normal load of 356 troops, or overloaded with 700. Depending on the situation *Choules* can operate either close in shore or over the horizon using helicopters and landing craft, to get men and equipment ashore.

Employment of HMAS *Choules* in the Australian Defence Force

Choules provides a significant capability to embark a sizeable group of people and vehicles, transport them to a destination, land them safely ashore without relying on the availability of shore infrastructure, and sustain the group for a period of time. The force might include a mix of military vehicles, cargo and support vehicles, as well as Navy and Army helicopters.

The amphibious capability is a key element of future Australian Defence Force's military operations, and provides the ability to conduct Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) throughout the region.

An amphibious capability involves both amphibious warfare and Humanitarian Assistance and/or Disaster Relief:

- Amphibious warfare is where a military operation is characterised by tactical missions launched from the sea by naval and landing forces.
- HADR includes the material or logistical assistance provided for humanitarian purposes, typically in response to humanitarian crises included natural disaster and conflict.

The ADF presently has an amphibious platform capability able to provide rapid maritime humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) response.

In 2013, the accomplishment of amphibious mission essential tasks during the training continuum for HMAS *Choules* and via a trial certification process was a significant step towards realising the full amphibious capability.

The ADF provides a significant amphibious capability with the Canberra class LHDs, HMA Ships *Canberra* and *Adelaide* and the Bay class LSD, HMAS *Choules*. The amphibious capability part of the HADR range of options the Government has to activate in the case of emergency or natural disaster.



Bushfire Assist 2019/20 WATER

Most Navy ships employ a phenomenon called reverse osmosis to turn the saltwater they sail through into fresh drinking water.

Osmosis is the process of water moving from an area where it is relatively pure, across a semi-permeable membrane, to an area where the water contains impurities such as salt. The process is passive and therefore doesn't require the input of energy.

To reverse this process and make fresh water, energy is applied to the saltier water. This energy pushes the water through the membrane, leaving the salt behind and therefore desalinating the water.

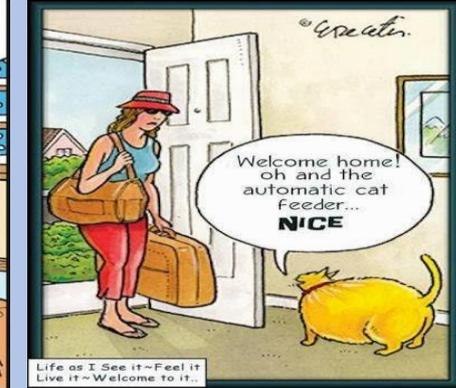
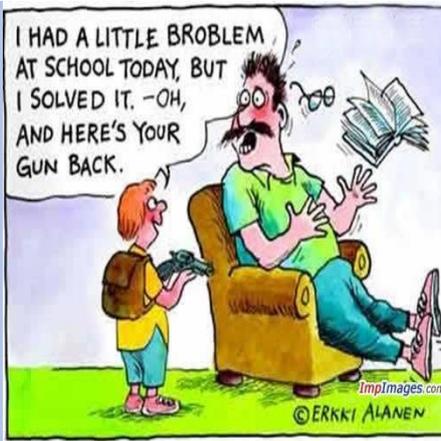
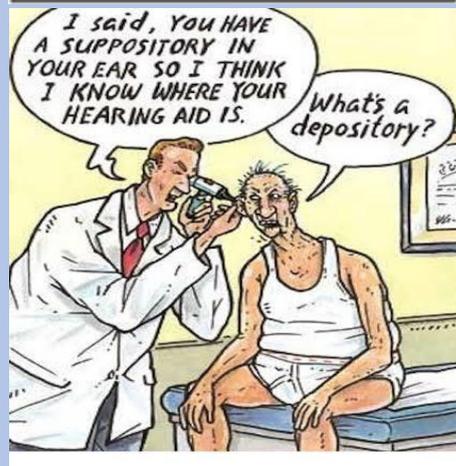
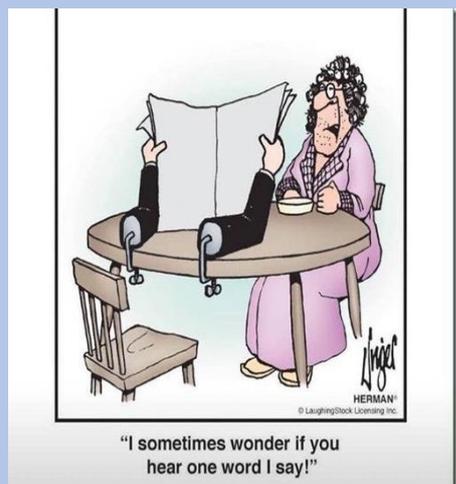
Reverse osmosis can remove up to 99% of salts, particles, organics and bacteria from sea water.

Choules has two reverse osmosis (RO) plants, which can each produce up to 60,000 litres of drinking water per day.

The daily usage of water on board *Choules* is approximately 37,000 litres.

With 1100 evacuees on board, the daily usage peaked at 67,000 litres, but with a total capacity for 1.5 million litres: there was still plenty to go around.

PICTURE FUNNIES



NAVAL TRADITIONS

Naval Uniforms (I) a brief history of our naval uniforms



Introduction

In November 2008, disruptive pattern navy uniform (DPNU) was officially introduced in the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). A practical rig, it is far removed from the more traditional naval uniform popularised throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries. Today customary 'sailor suits' are reserved chiefly for ceremonial occasions, however, on those occasions when they are worn, they serve to remind Australians of the longevity of their Navy, its traditions and its consistent contribution to our nation's maritime and economic security over more than 100 years. This article traces the origins of Australian naval uniforms following a process of continuous evolution as shifting social attitudes, new technologies, wars, and even religion have all influenced changes to the apparel worn by members of the senior service.

Origins Australian naval dress descends directly from that worn by the Royal Navy (RN) in the late 19th century. When the *Colonial Naval Defence Act 1865* was passed, which permitted the Australian colonies to raise their own naval forces, officers of the RN had been wearing a standardised form of uniform for over one hundred years. In the case of men, uniform for petty officers, seamen and boys, collectively known as ratings, was formally established in January 1857. Both officers and ratings of the RN, dressed in their smart blue or white uniforms, were recognisable the world over as belonging to the most powerful navy afloat and it was hardly surprising that the Australian colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and Queensland each decided that their infant naval forces should be similarly attired.



The Admiralty, however, concerned about certain legal aspects surrounding Australia's new naval forces, was adamant that colonial naval officers and men were not to wear uniforms that could not be distinguished from those of the RN. Consequently, the colonies adopted RN uniforms but with minor alterations to rank lace, buttons and cap ribbons which satisfied the Admiralty's requirement. These minor differences also served to distinguish one colonial naval force from another and before long a number of distinctive buttons, cap ribbons and a variety of rank lace featuring triangles, diamonds, crossed-anchors and stars began to appear throughout the colonies.



By the early 1880s the uniform that stylised the 'sailor suit' had evolved with seamen generally appearing in blue serge or white duck (heavy cotton) jumpers, frocks and bell-bottomed trousers. On frocks and jumpers a blue jean collar decorated with three rows of white tape was worn. Contrary to popular belief the white tape did not commemorate Vice Admiral Lord Nelson's victories at the Nile, Copenhagen and Trafalgar for even the United States and German navies made use of this distinction from a very early time. Both jumpers and frocks were worn over a white, square cut flannel shirt, the neck of which was also bound with blue cotton tape. A black silk scarf worn around the neck and secured to the front of the jumper with blue or white tape tied in a bow added a certain amount of panache to the appearance of the wearer. The addition of a white lanyard, also worn around the neck and tucked inside the jumper completed the ensemble.



The rig was designed to be practical. The voluminous cut of the bell-bottom trousers enabled them to be removed rapidly, irrespective of footwear, and discarded to improve the chance of survival should a sailor go overboard. The seven horizontal creases ironed in each trouser leg enabled the garment to be concertinaed and rolled, inside out, so that they remained clean, taking up little room in lockers or kit bags. This method also prevented them from further unwanted creasing. The number of horizontal creases in each trouser leg was incidental although a popular belief emerged that the number was chosen to represent the seven seas.

The origin of the blue jean collar stems from the days of sail when it was popular for sailors to plait and tar their hair in a ponytail, the intent of the collar being to prevent the tar from staining the uniform beneath it. The black headscarf, that was once used to absorb sweat in crowded gun decks, is today worn only as a decorative feature comprising a strip of black silk secured by tapes and a bow to the front of the jumper. Also now decorative in nature is the white lanyard to which a seaman's knife was once secured. In days gone by the knife would sit snugly in a pocket stitched to the front left breast of a seaman's jumper. The pocket was later moved inside the jacket and out of sight remaining there until well after World War II. If the knife was required for use, the lanyard was slipped from around the neck and looped around one's waist providing ready access.

Headwear for seamen consisted of either a peak-less round blue or white cloth cap, or a straw sennet hat for use in hot weather. From 1868, all caps and hats worn by seamen had black hat ribbons with gilt wire lettering bearing the name of their ship tied around them. The position of the bow securing the ribbon, however, moved variously and during World War I & II could often be found positioned over the left eye. Eventually it was decreed that all cap ribbons would be tied with the bow sitting neatly above the left ear.

Chief petty officers (CPO) were dressed in double-breasted long jackets fastened with gilt buttons, matching trousers and peaked caps of the same design as officers. The caps were embellished with a gilt wire badge depicting the sovereign's crown above a rope-fouled Admiralty pattern anchor on a black background. For CPOs of the seaman branch, the crown was of gold and the anchor was of silver. For all others, both were of gold. Engine room artificers had one further distinction; the background on which their anchor was affixed was purple instead of black.

To be continued