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THE NAVY IN FOCUS

RAN Recruit School
Celebrates 100 Years Pg 8

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BOOK REVIEW

OPERATION CLEEVES

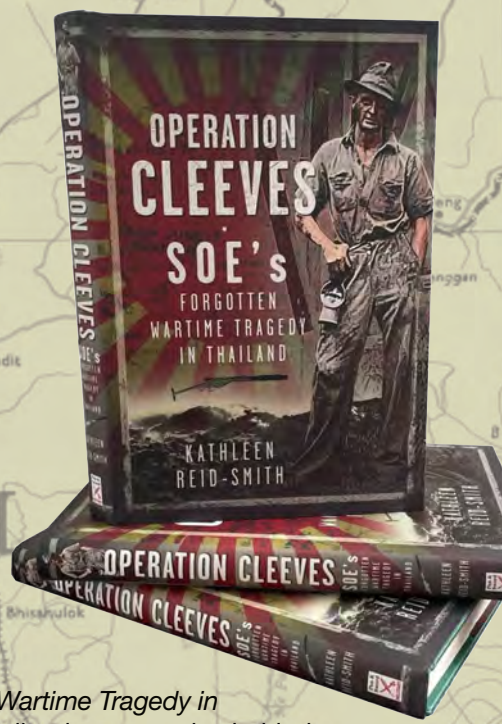
SOE'S FORGOTTEN WARTIME TRAGEDY IN THAILAND

BY KATE REID-SMITH

An informative read

In "Operation Cleeves, SOE's Forgotten Wartime Tragedy in Thailand", Kate Reid-Smith provides a well-written narrative behind a forgotten-about Special Operations Executive (SOE) mission on the eve of World War Two in Southeast Asia. Using declassified documents, recently discovered records, and extensive research, Reid-Smith reveals what happened to a collection of European civilians, mostly tin miners, and Indian soldiers stranded in southern Thailand during Japan's invasion of the Malay peninsula and their drive on Singapore. While uncovering, and presenting, the bravery of these victims, most of whom the SOE recruited to deny the Japanese access to Thailand's vital tin mines as a form of economic, and irregular, warfare, Reid-Smith skillfully explores the reason behind the tragic loss of those civilians and Indian soldiers. That reason, centered around the hesitancy of the British traditional military hierarchy in southeast Asia to receive, properly execute, and use a new concept of warfare. Kate Reid-Smith's work is an informative read, and a must-have for any reader, researcher, or historian intent on understanding the beginnings of British special, or irregular, warfare operation in World War Two.

Wayne Abrahamson
US Navy (ret.)
Author of Black Silver, Sergeant Dooley and The Submarine Raiders,
and The Martian Sentence



COVER STORY

General Entry 430 Taylor Division

The Graduation Parade for General Entry 430 Taylor Division was hosted on the Recruit School Parade Ground on Thursday, 24 October 2024. The Reviewing Officer for the Graduation was Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Mark Hammond, AO, RAN.

The Royal Australian Navy Band Melbourne was honoured to provide the music for the graduation parade and Ceremonial Sunset.

Photo Credit: Royal Australian Navy Band



From the Editor

Greetings Shipmates,

As we approach the end of 2025, we have put together another interesting edition of the White Ensign Magazine (WEM). We have the usual historical and news articles from across the Association and from the Navy. Our efforts to engage with all of the various sectors of our readership can create an interesting challenge for the Editorial Sub-committee. However we believe we are up to the task and continue to enjoy bringing everyone our concerted efforts to make the WEM both topical and interesting to the readership.

Things are changing with the publications of the NAA and a recent change of style for the National Bosun's Call reflects that impetus. If you have not seen the new newsletter, have a look on the NAA website. It builds on the long and dedicated work of its former publisher – Peter Cooke Russell – and now takes a further step forward whilst still maintaining its relevance and naval content.

An important notice has been placed into this edition advising all members that a constitutional review of the NAA constitution and By-laws has started at the request of the National Council. The first phase is to seek input from the members as to what they want in the governing rules of the NAA. It is important to record your comments if you want things to change.

On a similar note, the WEM editorial committee would be interested in your feedback regarding any changes or new directions for stories. Remember it is your magazine and we want it to satisfy the needs of the members.

Finally on behalf of the President, National Council of the NAA and Editorial Committee of the WEM, may I wish all members a very Merry Christmas and a Safe, Happy and prosperous New Year.

Russell Pettis
Russell Pettis AM, Editor

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	Rear Cover

Above: Recruitment poster from 1948 featuring a shoulder-length depiction of five Australian sailors and two Naval officers, standing together and smiling broadly, with text which reads "JOIN THE NAVY"
Below: Recruitment campaign from 2010 hundreds of Navy recruits standing together to form the shape of a large naval ship inside a warehouse. This example depicted a Frigate, while variations included a transport ship and a submarine and the tagline "NAVY - THE TEAM WORKS".

PROUDLY NAVY. PROUDLY MORE.

**Navy is where we started,
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**Our name is our history,
but our cover has always
reached further. We're
proud to keep serving
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More ease
We make healthcare navigation a breeze.

More care
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what benefits our members. That shows up in our
pricing, our products, and our member-first culture.

More affordable
We offer exclusive discounts to ADF members*.

* Terms and conditions apply.

^ Based on Navy Health's CSAT surveys conducted
from 1 Jan 2025 to 30 June 2025.



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ANNOUNCEMENT OF A REVIEW OF THE NAA CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

At the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the National Council of the Naval Association of Australia (NAA), the Council approved the establishment of a Sub-committee to **review and modernise the NAA Constitution and By-laws**. The sub-committee is made up of the following members of the association:

Russell Pettis (Chair)
Bruce Kafer
Gordon Fuller
Cheryl Fittock
Kaye Morgan
Lorraine Grey

- Victoria Section
- New South Wales Section
- Tasmania Section
- South Australia Section
- Queensland Section
- New South Wales Section

The sub-committee held its inaugural meeting on 21 October 2025. It was agreed at that meeting that the group's first action would be:

- Advise all NAA members that the Constitution Review has commenced, and
- Seek input from all members regarding their opinions of the current constitution, its strengths and weaknesses, where it can be improved or where it should be reduced in content or coverage.

The consultation period will last until the end of February 2026. The sub-committee would appreciate comments from all elements of the NAA – Section Executive Committees, Sub-section Executive Committees and individual members. Feedback should be sent to the State Section Secretaries for collation and submission to the Constitution Review Sub-committee.

Russell Pettis

Chair, NAA Constitution Review Sub-committee

Once Navy, Always Navy



Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Mark David Hammond AO cuts a cake to celebrate 100 years of the Royal Australian Navy Recruit School at HMAS Cerberus

Establishment

Settlers started arriving on the Mornington Peninsula in 1840. At that time, Alfred Mayrick, from whom the township of Merricks takes its name, took up the Coolart 'run' which included the present site of HMAS Cerberus. In 1846, the property was bought by a man named Payne, who, in 1853, passed it on to Joseph Hann, after whom Hann's Inlet was named.

The site for HMAS Cerberus was first recommended by Admiral Sir Reginald Henderson KCB RN after an extensive search of the Australian coastline to find suitable locations for major naval bases. He proposed that a base be established on Hann's Inlet between Sandy Point and Stony Point on Westernport Bay.

The base was to include a Torpedo School, a Destroyer Base and a Submarine Base and was to be capable of accommodating up to 2000 personnel. This site, covering over 1500 hectares (nearly 3600 acres), was purchased in 1911. The first sod was turned in 1913. The old wharf and hospital were erected first, followed by A, B and C Blocks. The Wardroom, Warrant Officers' Mess, Captain's and other Officers' residences were built between 1915

and 1917. The Drill Hall, Gunnery School and Torpedo School (now part of the Technical Training Centre) were built 1917 at the height of building activity. The powerhouse and other residences were built between 1918 and 1920.



The base was officially opened in September, 1920 under the command of Commander F.C. Darley RN. The idea of using it as a Fleet Base was soon abandoned and it became known as Flinders Naval Depot in 1921. The Depot was commissioned HMAS Cerberus on 1 April that year.

History

The RAN Recruit Training School had its beginnings in 1912 when the Clipper Ship SOBRAON was Commissioned as the 'Boy's Training Ship' HMAS Tingira in Sydney. Since the formation of the RAN a vigorous recruiting campaign had been carried out. Recruits for the Royal Australian Navy were trained exclusively onboard TINGIRA until 1925 when a New Entry School was established at the Flinders Naval Depot, Western Port, HMAS Cerberus.

The Recruit School as it became known has been an integral part of HMAS Cerberus since 1925 and for a period between 1996 and 2000 was renamed Sailors Initial Training Faculty (ITF).

The school was set up in the buildings which are now the Museum and the Museum Administration building between the main parade ground and the Catholic Chapel. LEUT F. Bolt, RAN was the first Officer-in-Charge.

Recruits were then required to be over the age of seventeen years. Those up to eighteen years became Junior Entry while over eighteens became Adult Entry. When the RAN College moved from Jervis Bay to HMAS Cerberus in 1930 the New Entry School study block was given over to the Cadet Officers as an Academic Block until their own block was built in 1936. The same building has also been used as the wartime Drafting Office and as the Supply School from 1946 to 1979.



In the depressed conditions of the late 1920s and early 1930s the Navy could be very selective about who was recruited. Of those who applied to enter as Recruits only 10% were usually successful. With the outbreak of WWII the numbers required rose dramatically. From September 1939 to January 1946 some 26505 recruits were trained by the New Entry School. From 1941 Recruits were entered for wartime service only in the RAN Reserve and after 20 weeks training went directly to the Fleet.

In 1944, a Recruit School Library and many wooden accommodation huts were constructed behind the location of the Junior Sailors Dining Facility and the Main Galley. The sudden wartime expansion was more rapid in its coming than the related construction and much of the re-siting work was done by the Recruits themselves. Their Parade Ground, then situated near the wharf, was made by the Recruits themselves, using gravel carted from near the old coal wharf. Recruits also demolished the old Chief Petty Officers' Garage and re-erected it near the wharf for Seamanship training.

At this time the Recruit School was commanded by the First Lieutenant. This position was later changed to Officer-in-Charge (OIC). These officers were then responsible to the Training Commander who was in turn responsible for recruit and seamanship training including Petty Officers' seamanship. The OIC of Recruit School was responsible to the Commodore Superintendent of Training, the Commanding Officer of HMAS Cerberus.

After World War 2 Recruit School staff were required to carry on for a number of years using wartime facilities. The temporary accommodation erected during the war, complete with hammock bars, continued to be used for a further fifteen years after the war. In 1951, the RAN Reserve National Service Recruits began to arrive for full time training periods consisting of 124 days including two, three week sea training periods in the First and Second Training Flotillas (Minesweepers GLADSTONE, COLAC, COWRA and LATROBE). At this time the First Lieutenant of Recruit School was LCDR Rance RN. 3255 National Service Recruits were trained.

In 1959 work commenced on two modern recruit accommodation blocks: Rankin and Moran, named after the Commanding Officers of two RAN ships, who were killed in action during WWII. The

temporary, 20 year old, accommodation blocks were progressively demolished. An armoury and classrooms were built in 1956 and two more accommodation blocks, Waller and Getting in 1961. Today the RAN Recruit School occupies the block bounded by Phillip, Bass and Cook Roads and consists of the four accommodation blocks, a new (1992) recreation mess for recruits and a new (1993) administration building that includes classrooms, and an undercover parade ground.

Mission

To induct men and women into the Royal Australian Navy, to enable them to think for themselves, work with each other, have the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct basic duties within the fleet and progress to a specialised career in the Royal Australian Navy.

To enable sailors to think for themselves and work with each other the school provides them with the many skills needed to pass onto a Naval career. Teamwork, self discipline and professionalism are the key attributes developed within recruits undertaking recruit training. Recruits are expected to adopt and display in their behaviour and their attitude the Navy Values, Honour, Honesty, Courage, Integrity and Loyalty.

The Recruit Course is 11 weeks duration. Much of the training is conducted within Recruit School but elements of the course are conducted in other areas of Cerberus such as the Seamanship and Combat Survivability Schools. Recruit training is also conducted on board the Seahorse Spirit. Seahorse Spirit is a 72 metre long ocean going vessel operated by Defence Maritime Services. Seahorse Spirit is employed solely to provide a week of Sea Familiarisation Training to recruits. The training cruises conducted in Bass Strait and Western Port Bay operate over 40 weeks of the year.

The Navy recognises the important role that the Recruit School plays in the development of its future sailors. Recruit School staff undergo an interview process and undertake a six week selection course to equip them with the additional skills needed for their demanding role as Recruit Instructors.

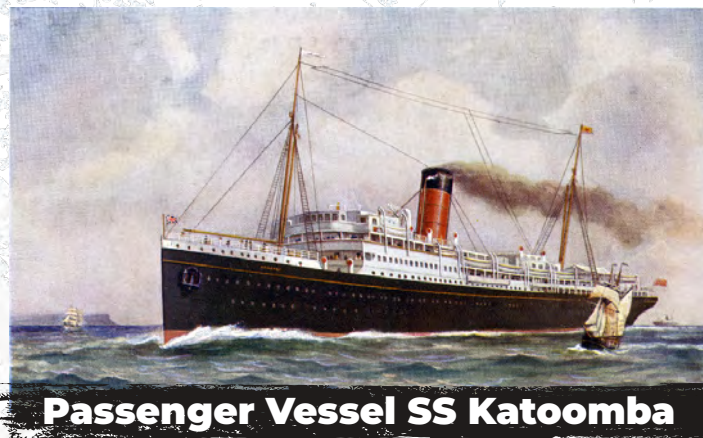
Ongoing NAA Connection

The Naval Association of Australia regularly present awards to recruits at the passing out ceremony for graduating Divisions.



Russell Pettis presenting Sportsman of the Intake Award

James Steel Doran McGuffog was born on 9 April 1889, at Walcha New South Wales, the second of four children of John McGuffog, a ship owner from Scotland, and his Australian born wife Mary Jane, (nee Steel). The family resided at Chatsworth on the Clarence River, near the town of Yamba. Educated at the local state primary and secondary schools, McGuffog then served his apprenticeship as a Fitter and Turner at the Harwood sugar mill, owned by Colonial Sugar Refining Company Limited (CSR). Having satisfactorily completed his apprenticeship, McGuffog then went to sea in CSR ships. In 1911, after qualifying for his second engineer's certificate, he joined McIlwraith, McEachern and Company Pty Ltd, which operated a fleet of coastal steamers. McGuffog was awarded his chief engineer's certificate in 1915 while serving as a junior engineer in the passenger vessel SS Karoola. He then served in SS Katoomba another of McIlwraith's passenger vessels as second engineer.



Passenger Vessel SS Katoomba

In 1920 McGuffog was appointed as chief engineer of Katoomba. Having qualified as chief engineer in both steam and diesel engines, in 1934 he was sent to Harland and Wolff's shipyard at Belfast to stand by the construction of the company's new motor liner MV Kanimbla. He returned to Sydney in May 1936 as her chief engineer. As the war clouds gathered over Europe, Kanimbla was requisitioned

by the Royal Navy (RN) on 5 September 1939 and converted in Sydney as an Armed Merchant Cruiser and fitted with seven 6-inch guns, two 3-inch anti-aircraft guns, and two Lewis light machine guns. Commissioned into the RN on 6 October 1939 as HMS Kanimbla, she was crewed mainly by members of the Royal Australian Navy Reserve (RANR), under the command of Commander Frank Getting, RAN. McGuffog was appointed as a Temporary Commander (E) RANR (S), and assigned Service No. 1104629, under the terms and conditions of what was then known as the T.124X Agreement. This was a special wartime contract utilised by the Admiralty to bring merchant seamen and engineers into Royal Navy service while allowing them to technically remain civilians.

The T.124X Agreement

The main purpose behind this agreement was to enable professional merchant navy officers, engineers, and sailors to serve in naval or requisitioned vessels without formally enlisting for the duration of the war. Signatories still came under naval discipline regulations while serving. They retained their merchant service status and could return to civilian employment when the agreement expired. This agreement was used extensively in both World Wars for ships taken into Admiralty service; armed merchant cruisers, troopships, colliers, and Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) vessels were included. The agreement was tied to a specific ship or voyage. If the ship returned to merchant service, the T.124X contract ended. Wages and salaries were usually at merchant service rates, sometimes with naval allowances. All were entitled to naval rations, accommodation, and medical care. However, while under T.124X, all signatories were subject to naval law, including court martial.

The T.124X system was a pragmatic solution to a manpower problem. It allowed the Admiralty to rapidly crew auxiliary and requisitioned ships with experienced mariners. It preserved the merchant mariner's ability to return to peacetime service quickly after hostilities had ceased. However, it blurred the line between military and civilian service which had implications for pay, discipline and postwar entitlements and benefits.

Wartime Service - HMS Kanimbla (1939-1943)

Armed merchant cruisers were employed on long ocean patrols looking out for enemy raiders and blockade-runners. HMS Kanimbla departed Sydney on 13 December 1939 for Hong Kong where she would be based. As part of her duties, she kept a constant patrol of the South China Sea thereby ensuring that a goodly number of large German passenger liners and merchant ships were left stranded in Japanese ports. In June 1940 Kanimbla was despatched to Singapore where she performed patrol and escort duties around Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, then eventually extending her patrols out into the Indian Ocean hunting German raiders and escorting Allied convoys. Despite falling ill, McGuffog kept his department running smoothly. For his sterling efforts McGuffog was awarded the Mentioned in Despatches (MiD). The Citation/Recommendation for which reads thus:

For outstanding zeal, patience and cheerfulness and setting an example of wholehearted devotion to duty whilst serving in HMS Kanimbla. This officer displayed outstanding qualities of zeal and devotion to duty and possesses great powers of leadership. The marked success of Kanimbla's sixteen months of steaming on war service is almost entirely due to this officer's zeal. On every occasion, repairs have been

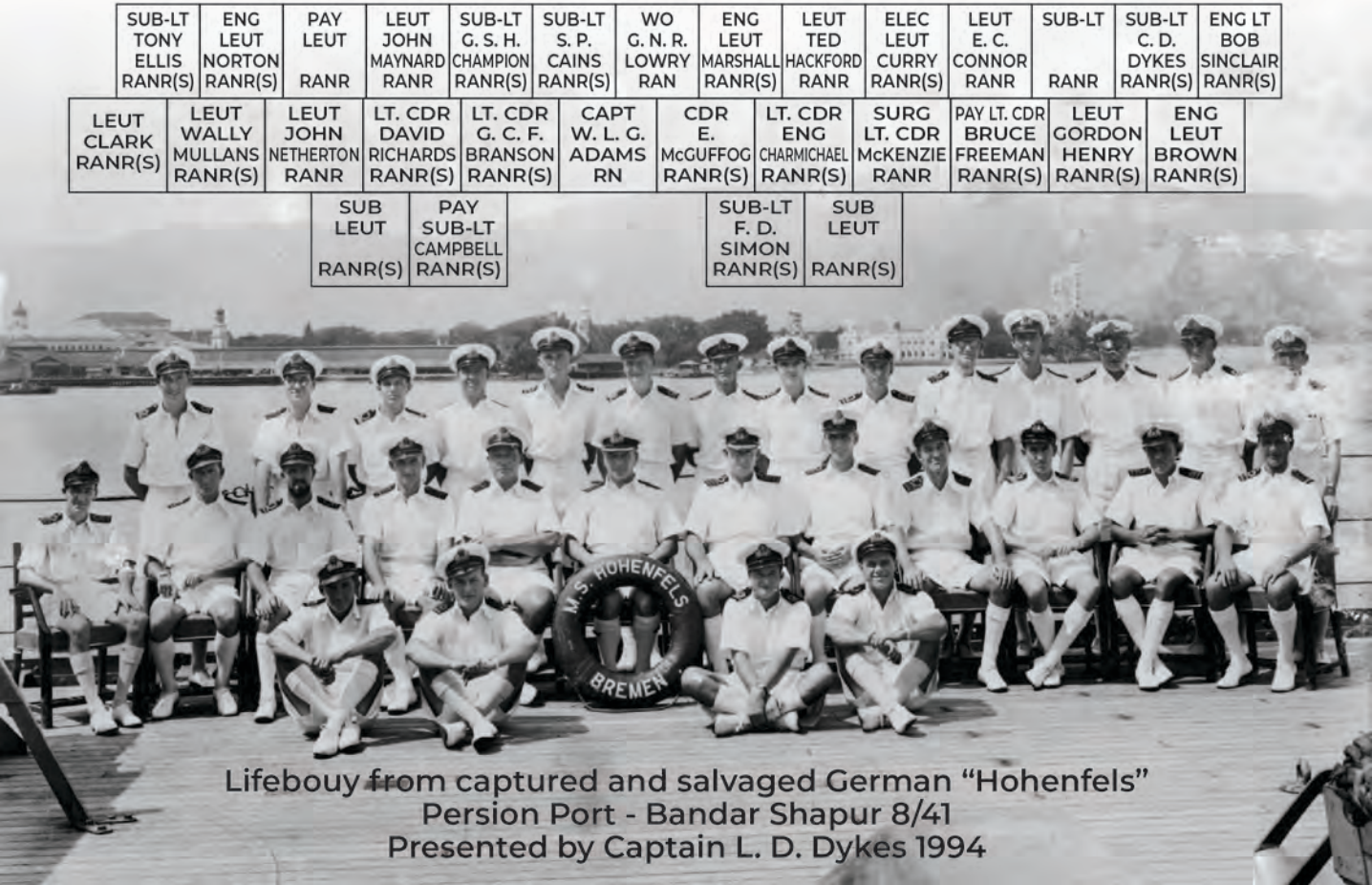
ahead of schedule, and he has handled his officers with marked success and not one has become disgruntled. He has continued his duties in spite of illness. (1 July 1941)

In August 1941, Kanimbla was deployed to the Persian Gulf and prepared to lead an Allied flotilla against the Iranian port of Bandar Shapur. The purpose of this operation was to seize enemy merchant ships at Bandar Shapur. In doing so the Allied force managed to capture eight Axis merchant ships, two Iranian gunboats and a floating dock. However, when the crew of the German vessel Hohenfels scuttled their ship, she had to be beached to prevent her from sinking. McGuffog was designated engineer in charge of salvaging the German ship, and in doing so he improvised some ingenious gear, worked indefatigably, took risks when deemed necessary and succeeded in saving the prize. Hohenfels was later pressed into service for the Admiralty and renamed Empire Kamal. For his continuing efforts McGuffog was awarded a second MiD The Citation/Recommendation for which reads thus:

For good services in operations in the Persian Gulf whilst serving in HMS Kanimbla. He has contributed in no small measure to the cohesion and high morale which permeated and activated the whole Force throughout the training and during the operation for the capture of Bandar Shapur, Persian Gulf on 25 August 1941. (10 March 1942)

Kanimbla remained in the region until 11 October 1941, supervising activities in the port and carrying out salvage work on the seven captured vessels. After further work in Indian waters during the latter part of October and November, Kanimbla proceeded to Singapore and was subsequently charged with

H.M.S. KANIMBLA 1941 - Captain W.L.G. Adams R.N. and Officers



escorting the first convoy out of that city after the Japanese attacks on Malaya. She arrived in Melbourne on Christmas Day. Kanimbla then carried out further convoy escort duties off the Australian coast and in both the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

Conversion from AMC to LSI

On 2 April 1942, Kanimbla arrived in Sydney to be converted to a Landing Ship Infantry (LSI) for forthcoming operations in the Pacific Ocean and South-east Asian areas of operation. The conversion involved the removal of her seven 6-inch guns and augmentation of the anti-aircraft armament with the addition of a 4-inch gun, a 2-pounder and 20mm close range weapons. Radar was also installed. She was then fitted out to carry 16 to 24 landing craft which could be raised or lowered by davits positioned either side of her superstructure. Scrambling nets were also rigged to enable troops to board the landing craft once they had been lowered. Metal sheeting replaced the ship's interior timber panelling, and all available

space was converted to make way for the carriage of troops.

In June 1942, McGuffog was appointed as 'an Additional Officer of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order (OBE)'. The Citation/Recommendation for this award reads thus:
For distinguished service during the war whilst serving in HMS Kanimbla. During the operations against Bandar Shapur, Persian Gulf, the German ship Hohenfels, 7,900 ton, was scuttled to avoid capture and had to be beached to prevent sinking. HMS Kanimbla undertook to salve her and succeeded in a task which it would have thought could only be accomplished by a properly equipped salvage ship. Engineer Commander McGuffog who was in technical charge of the salvage deserves very special mention for his ingenuity in improvising gear, his indefatigable attention to his duty, his technical skill, and his willingness to take risks when the occasion required. His Commanding Officer describes him as 'a joy to work with, an able engineer and a very loyal officer. (11 June 1942)

On 1 June 1943 HMS Kanimbla was decommissioned as an RN LSI and was recommissioned as HMAS Kanimbla. On 30 July under the command of Commander N H Shaw RAN, the ship recommenced her new duties as an LSI in time to join in with General Macarthur's program of amphibious assaults in the South-West Pacific areas of New Guinea, Leyte Gulf, Lingayen Gulf and Borneo. In October 1943, McGuffog was relieved by Temporary Engineer Lieutenant Commander Rolf W Carmichael, and was appointed to HMAS Lonsdale as Principal Naval Overseer Victoria.

Operational Context

Temporary Engineer Commander James Steel Doran McGuffog, OBE, MiD*, RANR (S), was the chief engineering officer of HMS Kanimbla throughout her 1939-1943 wartime service. He had a pre-war link to the ship having been her civilian chief engineer from her delivery voyage in 1936, having supervised her construction in Belfast. When Kanimbla was requisitioned in September 1939 and converted to an Armed Merchant Cruiser, he was commissioned as a Temporary Commander, RANR. McGuffog oversaw the operation, maintenance and readiness of her diesel propulsion plant and auxiliary machinery. He assumed overall supervision of the engineering department, ensuring fuel efficiency, reliability, and damage control preparedness. He also adapted civilian engineering systems to wartime demands, including long patrols and combat readiness. McGuffog served during Kanimbla's patrols on the China and East Indies Stations, hunting German raiders and escorting Allied convoys. His department maintained the ship's propulsion reliability over extended deployments far from dockyard support - a critical factor in Kanimbla's ability to intercept and capture enemy vessels.

Notable Actions and Recognition.

McGuffog's engineering team ensured that Kanimbla could navigate the narrow, tidal Khor Musa Channel at night and maintain readiness for rapid manoeuvre during the surprise assault. His

leadership contributed to the successful seizure of many Axis merchant ships and port facilities.

Mentions in Despatches:

First (1941) for keeping Kanimbla operational despite illness during extended patrols. Second (1942) for fostering cohesion and high morale in the engineering department during the Persian Gulf operation.

McGuffog's Legacy

McGuffog's tenure in Kanimbla is a textbook example of how a chief engineer's deep pre-war familiarity with a ship could be utilised effectively in wartime by combining technical mastery, improvisation under pressure, and leadership which directly influenced operational success. McGuffog's pre-war technical knowledge of Kanimbla was a valuable decisive asset. He could anticipate engineering stresses and adapt systems for war service without incurring any undue delay. His dual focus on technical performance and staff morale is repeatedly cited in honours and awards, demonstrating the human dimension of engineering command. The award of the OBE to McGuffog sits alongside awards to the ship's commanding officer, executive officers, and boarding party leaders, underscoring that engineering leadership was considered as critical to the operation's success as the combat actions. Following his term (1944-1946) as principal naval overseer, Victoria, McGuffog was appointed back to Kanimbla. He was eventually demobilised on 18 January 1951. Kanimbla reverted to her peacetime role, with McGuffog continuing as her chief engineer. In 1955 he retired. On 5 January 1963, Temporary Commander Engineer James S D McGuffog, OBE, MiD*, RANR (S), passed away peacefully in North Sydney aged 74.

HMS/HMAS Kanimbla was awarded the following Battle Honours
Pacific 1941-45
New Guinea 1942-44
Leyte Gulf 1944
Borneo 1945
Lingayen Gulf 1945

YOUNG ENDEAVOR

DARWIN TO DARWIN
VOYAGE 10/25

BY AUSTRALIAN NAVY CADET LS ALANAH HARDING

Hi all, I'm Alanah Harding, I'm 17 years old and a proud member of TS Mandurah Navy Cadets. I was lucky enough to be given the amazing opportunity to sail aboard the *Young Endeavor* for Voyage 10/2025, travelling from Darwin to Darwin—and I can honestly say it was one of the best experiences of my life.

Hi all, I'm Alanah Harding, I'm 17 years old and a proud member of TS Mandurah Navy Cadets. I was lucky enough to be given the amazing opportunity to sail aboard the *Young Endeavor* for Voyage 10/2025, travelling from Darwin to Darwin - and I can honestly say it was one of the best experiences of my life.

The trip started on the 11th of June and finished on the 21st of June 2025. I flew out that morning with CDT LS Samuel Blackwell - someone I knew a little bit from cadets. It was my first time flying without my family, and I didn't expect to feel so emotional. It came all of a sudden when I boarded the plane - leaving my family behind hit me hard, and I cried. But even through the nerves and tears, I knew this trip was going to be something amazing.

Once we arrived at Darwin Airport, we met up with two Sydney cadets who were also joining the voyage. We made friends almost instantly. Stepping outside, the heat hit me like a wall - it was way hotter than I expected. We were then transported to the *Young Endeavor*, where we met the wonderful crew and Youthies on board.

The next day we sailed out of Darwin Harbour and started learning about the other youth crew. We were split into one of three watches: Red, White, or Blue. I was in Red Watch, and from that moment, we were a team.

Day 3 hit hard with the sailor's curse - seasickness. It got a lot of us, and when I say it hit hard, I mean we were curled up on the deck, too sick to move, eat, or even talk. Just lying there, hoping the ocean would calm down. But the Youthies who weren't sick were absolute legends. They kept us hydrated, helped us reapply

sunscreen, and made sure we were okay. That's when I realised how close we'd all become.

One of those legends was Lachy, from my watch - Red. He somehow didn't get seasick at all, and because he was so pale and always quietly gliding around the ship, we started calling him Edward Cullen - the vampire of the *Young Endeavor*. He fully embraced it. He even taught us line dances on deck, including the heel and toe, the Virginia Reel, and the Rockabilly. It was so much fun and gave us something to laugh about when we weren't feeling our best.

We reached the Kimberley coast and got to explore King George River. White and Blue Watch went first, hiking across the cliffs to the waterfall. The next morning, Red Watch got our turn. We saw dugongs on the way back, which was awesome. The whole place was unreal - red cliffs, clear water, and this peaceful vibe that made everything feel kind of magical.

One of the scariest things I've ever done was climbing the 38-metre mast. I stood at the bottom, looked up, and thought, "Nope." But I clipped in and started climbing. Halfway up, I froze. I cried. I was shaking and terrified. But my watchmates cheered me on, and somehow, I kept going. When I reached the top, I was crying again - but this time it was happy tears. I felt proud, strong, and kind of unstoppable.

Day 7 was packed with excitement. As we sailed along, we got a surprise fly-by from an AAF rescue plane. It zoomed right over the ship, and we all rushed to the deck to wave and cheer. It felt like something out of a movie - so surreal and so cool. Everyone was buzzing with energy after that.



That night, we stayed anchored and had a bit of downtime, which turned into a mini dance party. Two girls from Blue Watch - Rhiannon and Tara - taught us a Tate McRae dance on deck. We were all laughing, trying to keep up with the moves, and just having the best time. It was one of those moments that made the ship feel like home.

Later that day, we arrived at the Tiwi Islands. The scenery was absolutely stunning - white sand beaches, turquoise water, and lush greenery. But what made it really special was the culture. The Tiwi Islands are known for their unique Aboriginal traditions and vibrant art, and even just being there felt like a privilege. We didn't get to explore the island in depth, but sailing past it and learning about its history was something I won't forget.

Day 8 was Command Day, and it was one of the most exciting and nerve-wracking parts of the whole trip. This is the day where the Youthies take full control of the ship for 24 hours. We planned everything - navigation, sail setting, watch rotations, and safety checks. The staffies were still around to make sure we didn't sink the ship (thankfully), but they stepped back and let us lead.

I was part of the navigation and the hands of the team, which meant helping plot our course back to Darwin Harbour. It was intense. We had to work together, stay focused, and make real decisions. There were moments where we weren't sure what to do, but we figured it out as a team. Everyone had a role, and it was amazing to see how we all stepped up. We left the Tiwi Islands at 10 am and sailed through the day and night, relying on each other and everything we'd learned.

It was a huge confidence boost. I realised how much I'd grown - not just in skills, but in leadership and trust.

Day 9 started in the dark. We'd been sailing through the night, and by morning, we were exhausted but proud. At 10am, we officially handed

the ship back to the captain. I remember standing on deck, looking out, and seeing the faint outline of Darwin on the horizon. It was such a cool moment - like we'd come full circle.

We anchored at 12pm in Darwin Harbour, and that afternoon we got to go ashore. It felt so good to stretch our legs and explore. We swam, checked out the waterfront shops, and just enjoyed being back on land. Everyone was in high spirits, laughing and soaking up the last bits of adventure.

Day 10 was Community Day, where the *Young Endeavor* welcomed the public and Down Syndrome NT aboard to give them a taste of what the ship is all about. We taught friends, family, visiting Army cadets, and Down Syndrome NT guests the basics of setting and furling sails, and we even put on a show. It was such a fun and memorable day. Our Youthies brought out trays of finger food from the galley, and we all enjoyed it together. Honestly, the food throughout the trip was amazing - every meal was something to look forward to.

Day 11 came way too fast. Families came aboard for the final ceremony, and we got our certificates. Saying goodbye was emotional - there were tears for the amazing friends we'd made, friendships that will last a lifetime.

At 11am, the staff kicked us off the ship (in a fun way, of course). They didn't really want to get rid of us, but they had to get the ship ready for the next voyage.

This trip was full of excitement, nerves, laughs, and unforgettable moments. I highly recommend it to anyone who can apply. You'll make lifelong friends, learn valuable life skills, and have the best experience of your life.

Hope you enjoyed reading,

CDT LS Alanah Harding

NAVY CEREMONY TO REMEMBER THE CREW OF AUSTRALIA'S DEADLIEST NAVAL BATTLE

NAA QUEENSLAND SECTION



"WATER BEARS NO BATTLE SCARS"

Vice Admiral Michael Noonan said at the ceremony unveiling a memorial to the 645 sailors who died on HMAS Sydney (II) in November 1941.

Christmas of 1941 was a nightmare for the families of the 645 sailors who were on HMAS Sydney (II), hoping and praying that their boys might have somehow survived the warship's tragic final battle. They held onto this hope for years, even after the body of the only man to escape was found, ironically washed up on Christmas Island. In 2021 it was revealed that the body was that of Queensland country boy Able Seaman Thomas Welsby Clark.

Thomas was born in New Farm, Brisbane in 1920 to a well-to-do family. His father was

a successful grazier and businessman in western Queensland and Thomas was educated at Slade Anglican school in Warwick. Young Thomas spent many happy times on his father's properties and was an accomplished horseman. After school he studied to be an accountant and worked for a practice in Mary Street in Brisbane.

When World War II broke out, he joined up as a Naval Reservist, then moved to full-time service as an Able Seaman on HMAS Sydney (II). The official photograph of Thomas is striking, showing a strong jaw, a determined expression, sharp eyes, and confidence beyond his years.

HMAS Sydney (II) met her fate in a battle with the German raider HSK Kormoran in the Indian Ocean off Western Australia. Somehow Thomas escaped in a Carley float (life raft) but died of head injuries, and in 1942 his body was washed up on Christmas Island and later buried in an unmarked grave.

The Navy never stopped looking for the wreck of HMAS Sydney (II). Eventually she was located in 2006 and the pieces of the puzzle started to come together. Thomas' grave on Christmas Island was exhumed and his remains investigated further prior to his burial with full military honours in Geraldton, Western Australia.

Earlier research showed clues to his identity. He was tall, fair-haired, blue-eyed and had a fresh complexion. His teeth had gold fillings – a sign that he was from a wealthy and caring family. Thomas's leg bones showed a life of horse riding, so a country upbringing was assumed, and his identity narrowed down. Finally, after 15 years, DNA revealed his name and a handful of living family members from all over Australia.

On Thursday 30 October at 11 am, the sailors of the Royal Australian Navy who served and perished on HMAS Sydney (II) were remembered in a ceremony at Jack Tar



Jack Tar Memorial (South Bank Brisbane)

Memorial in South Bank, Brisbane. The ceremony was attended by Madeline Bythe, whose brother went down on Sydney and is one of the last living close relatives of the crew.

The address was delivered by Commander Rose Apikotoa, Commanding Officer of HMAS Moreton who served on Sydney IV and was farewelled by the Naval Association at the Ship Inn after the ceremony. Rose will be promoted to Captain as she takes up a new position in Canberra.

The Royal Australian Naval Association Queensland commemorates a different section or conflict on the last Thursday of each month from February to November.



75th Anniversary of the Korean War Landing

By
Ian Holthouse
President
WA Section



National Honour Guard with flags of 22 nations who served in the Korean War

From my meeting in Canberra with Ambassador Admiral Sim Seungseob ROKN and Defence Attache Colonel KIM Jinbu for a joint ROKN, RAN and NAA ceremony in South Korea, a request was sent to Admiral YANG Yong Mo ROKN.

The prompt response for a Ceremony in Incheon coinciding with the 75th Anniversary of the Korean War Landing was suggested, and the Mayor of Incheon would be arranging a parade, ceremony and dinner.

Commander Kim Jinjung ROKN was appointed as out liaison officer. His efficient responses, and information made it easy to put everything in place.

Slowly the Australian attendees built up and were to meet in Incheon on the 10 September, with the advance party landing on the on the 8 September. An information

lunch meeting was arranged on 9 September where Captain ROKN provided updated information, and appointed ROKN Marine Captain LEE Daho to look after us for our time in Incheon,

Captain Lee was to arrange buses to take us to all events and significant visits. His service and knowledge were impeccable, and soon became a friend and one of us. We found the high efficiency of the ROKN was the norm, as was their friendship.

We cannot thank enough the ROK Navy hosts for their efficient organisation and the care they provided us. South Korea must be justly proud of their Navy and Marines. Incheon City and the Mayor must be commended for hosting so many events so efficiently, which were expanded to include many groups.

The ROK Navy from inception to completion made the event world class and so inclusive, we felt we were always a part of them.

A special commendation must go to our personal allocated staff Marine Captain Lee Daho, who obviously never sleeps.

Arranging so much overnight for our comfort, and for the attention in looking after our Korean War Navy veteran Reg Sharpe, which was above and beyond any duty. Thank you.

Our ever helpful and so friendly driver Seaman Hong Seong Min whose service was exceptional. Thank you.

We felt so proud to have South Korea as a Friend to Australia, and a such a trustworthy alliance member Nation.



The War Memorial Honour Guard, ceremony is excellent to watch.



The ROK War cemetery with over 105,000 war dead of their veterans.



Korean War RAN Veteran Reg Sharpe, RAR Major Peter Heeney & Ian Holthouse NAAWA



National War Memorial Seoul. So big, you need days to see it all. Excellently presented, as the Koreans are so good at display their subject matter.



This lovely lady comes every Thursday to pay respect to her brother lost in North Korea, with Capt. Kim



Some of our members along the front VIP row



ROKN Marado LPH 6112 our host ship



Ambassador Admiral Sim Seungseob with Ian Holthouse and Fay Duda Hon Consul ROK WA



Jil-Kil Lee President Korean War Veterans Association WA. Ian Holthouse. WA Korean Veteran member



Getting ready for the march through Incheon City Parade. NAA Victorians Roslyn & Graham Thomas



ROK Senior Officers, with Commanding Officer of all USA Forces Korea



Outside the UN Cemetery Chapel



Marker at the head of the Australian Graves section of the Busan UN War Cemetery



National Council Meeting – Williamstown , October 2025

Author – Russell Pettis

The National Council of the NAA met in Williamstown in late October 2025.

A range of subjects were discussed, including a follow up report on the proposed Constitution Review and possible modernization. Work has commenced, with follow up consultation having started at all levels of the NAA.

After a very successful meeting, and before travelling back to their home sections, the Council took time to visit and have an escorted tour of the WW2 Corvette – HMAS *Castlemaine*. With the loving care of a wide group of enthusiastic volunteers, the ship is in remarkable condition. She has a proud history and a connection to the events which led to the tragic loss of HMAS *Armidale* in an action against superior Japanese naval forces, and the heroic bravery of the RAN's first Victoria Cross recipient – AB Edward (Teddy) Sheean.

The Councillors are seen (below) gathering on the quarterdeck of the *Castlemaine*.



NEW HOME FOR HMAS TOWNSVILLE

HMAS *Townsville* was one of 15 Fremantle Class Patrol Boats (FCPBs) built for, and operated exclusively by, the Royal Australian Navy. She was the second navy ship to bear the name *Townsville*. The first HMAS *Townsville* was a Bathurst Class Australian Minesweeper, which served as a convoy escort vessel in the waters of Australia, the Pacific and New Guinea during World War II. She was decommissioned in 1946 and scrapped ten years later. Her battle honours (Darwin 1942, Pacific 1942-1945 and New Guinea 1944) were inherited by her namesake.

The Fremantle-class patrol boats superseded the Attack-class patrol boats.

Brooke Marine Ltd of Lowestoft, UK, designed and built the first boat. All subsequent vessels were built in Australia by the Cairns shipbuilders, North Queensland Engineers and Agents (NQE). *Townsville*, the second FCPB to be built in Australia, was launched from the NQE slipway on 16 May 1981 by Lady Ramsay, wife of the Governor of Queensland, and was commissioned into the Royal Australian Navy on 18 July 1981. The ship's company comprised of between three and five officers, four senior sailors and 16 junior sailors. The ship was based at Cairns Naval Base (CNB) at HMAS Cairns in far North Queensland.

HMAS *Townsville* had a range of 2,360 nautical miles at 12 knots and a maximum speed of almost 30 knots. Displacing over 250 tonnes, the ship had an overall length of 42 metres and a beam of 7 metres. Powered by two large 16 cylinder MTU diesel engines, *Townsville* had a rapid turn of pace and could comfortably reach speeds in excess of 25 knots. It was equipped with high-definition navigational radar, the latest GPS satellite equipment, high and ultra-high frequency communications equipment, gyro compasses and echo sounder. *Townsville* was also fitted with a satellite navigation system that enabled the ship's position to be determined with great accuracy.

Armed with a 40/60 Bofors gun and two 12.7mm 50-Calibre close range machine guns, *Townsville* also carried two small craft for boarding and other boat operations. *Townsville* was well equipped and ideally suited to fulfill a wide range of operational missions and tasks.



Townsville's motto, 'Bold and Ready', illustrates the philosophy embraced in support of her mission as she patrolled the expansive waters of Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone. Action taken against vessels found to be involved in illegal activities often led to seizure, arrest and handover to the relevant government agency for subsequent prosecution by the authorities.

HMAS *Townsville* was decommissioned on Friday 11 May 2007 in Cairns. The vessel was gifted to the Museum by the Commonwealth Department of Defence in the same month. HMA ships *Townsville* and *Gladstone*, likewise a museum vessel, are the only preserved FCPBs in Australia. Until 2015, the vessel was berthed at the former Curtain Brothers slipway, Ross Creek.

The Fremantle-class patrol boats were superseded by the Armidale-class patrol boats. In order to ensure its ongoing structural integrity, the vessel's hull was refurbished in Cairns during 2015-2016. From 2016 until 2025, the vessel was berthed at the Townsville Marine Precinct, awaiting final relocation to the former Curtain Brothers slipway, originally established in 1891 as the Cleveland Foundry Slipway, the first slipway in Townsville.

In preparation for this move, the vessel was hauled out in 2024 by Rosshaven Marine for remedial works to ensure the integrity of her hull.

On 23 July 2025, HMAS *Townsville* was dry-docked at her final destination, visible from Ross Street and also from Ross Creek. Viewing will be further improved by the planned construction of a viewing platform, linked to a planned pedestrian walkway between the cruise ship terminal and the Neville George Memorial Park (also known as the Lighthouse Park) adjacent to the Maritime Museum. Eventually she will be open to guided visits.

We are searching for ex-crew members of HMAS *Townsville* and other Fremantles for sharing their personal stories about life on board. If you are one of them, or know about someone, please get in touch with the Museum. We would love to hear from you!



International Award for WEM Contributor



GOLD COAST SUB-SECTION NEWS

Our resident naval historian and author, Dr John Carroll PhD, has been honoured for his contribution to Veterans Welfare, particularly in the field of Psychology. He has been awarded an International Prize for his work for naval veterans in Australia, related to exposure to the defoliant Agent Orange, during the Vietnam war. Whilst focusing principally to exposure to the defoliant in potable water consumed aboard naval vessels, his work also relates to all personnel who served in Vietnam and were directly or indirectly exposed to Agent Orange. His work is also being utilized in the United States, especially for those who served in troop transport and logistics roles, and those who served ashore.

The award has been provided by the United States Society for Military Psychology – Division 19.

Dr Carroll is being honoured by being the first to receive the International Contributor to Military Psychology Award promoted by the APA and Adler University School of Military Psychology. He will attend the conference by video and will be presented with his award virtually.

Congratulations John - A very long term NAA member.



While in Canberra I met up with the ACT WRANS at Poppies Restaurant at the War Memorial. I was also able to enjoy Christmas in July at the Ainslie football club. At this luncheon I met up with Merle Hare a World War 11 XWRAN. Merle is 105, turning 106 in January 26. She surely is a treasure.



I also attended a Women's Veteran's Network Australia luncheon at the Ainslie football club and Merle was there also. The club have a table set aside for Merle as she is mostly there every day. They give her a goblet of white wine along with a goblet of water when she arrives. A permanent sign is displayed on the table "Merle's Table."



I along with some XWRANS and members of the North Gold Coast RSL S/b attended Vietnam Veterans Memorial Day at Canungra Army Base. I laid a wreath on behalf of the RAN. After the service we were invited back to the Canungra RSL club for a BBQ lunch.



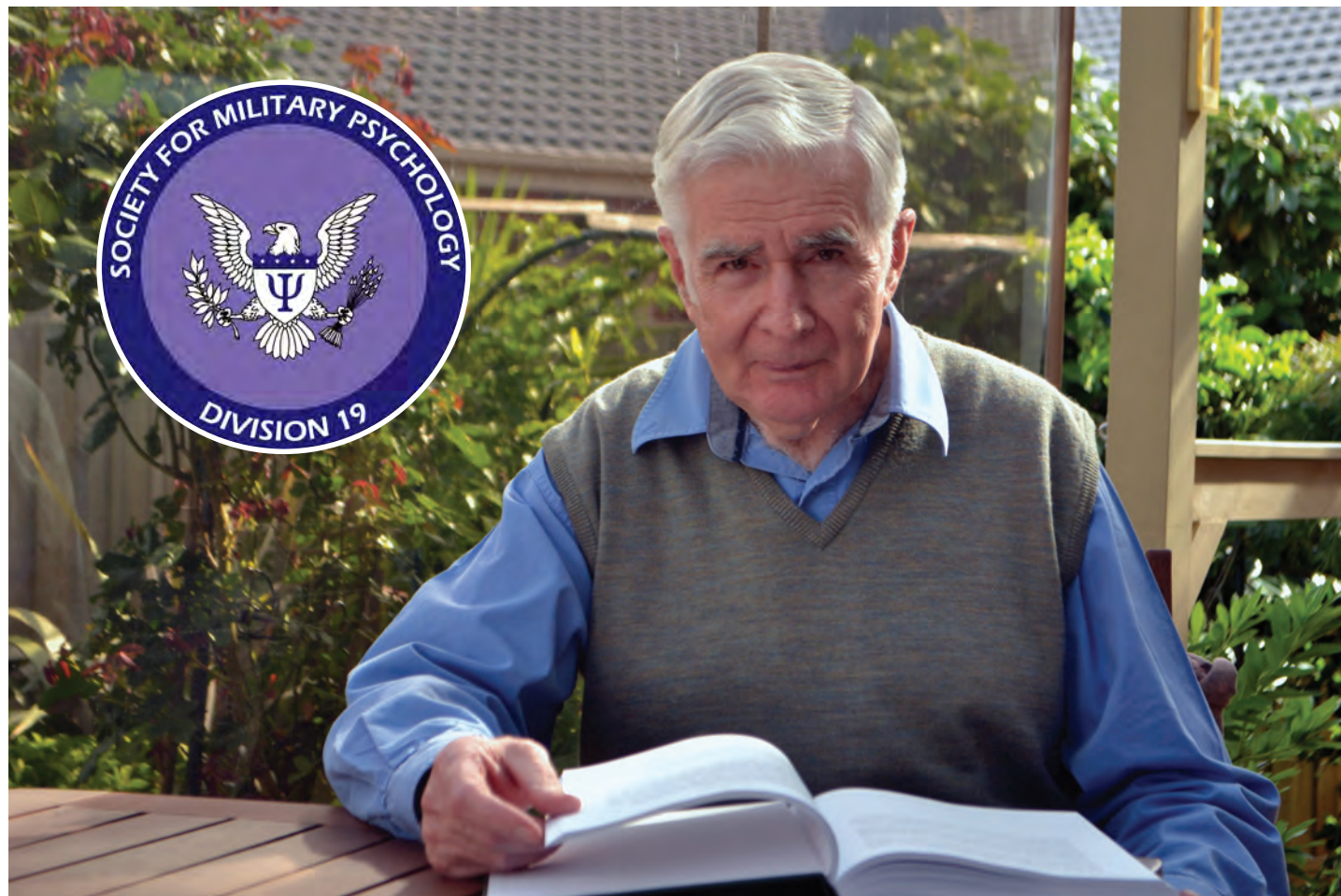
Anne Walker presenting the 30 Year Long Service Certificate to David Carter



Anne Walker presenting the 30 Year Long Service Certificate to James Dee



Anne Walker presenting the 15 Year Long Service Certificate to Kenneth Ayoub. Ken is a paraplegic and resident at the Lions Haven Residential Carer Facility, Hope Island QLD.





HMAS SYDNEY II Commemorative Service

Memorial to the Sydney at HMAS SYDNEY Place Campbelltown NSW

On Wednesday 19th November 2025 which was the 84th Anniversary of the sinking of HMAS SYDNEY II the annual Commemoration Service was conducted by the Campbelltown and District Sub Section Naval Association of Australia. This Service was conducted at the memorial to the Sydney at HMAS SYDNEY Place Campbelltown NSW.

Amongst the special guests were descendants of our local sailors who lost their lives when Sydney was sunk. These descendants have attended our Annual Service since the inaugural Service Held in 2008.

The Campbelltown & District Sub Section Naval Association of Australia through the Master of Ceremonies Mr. Warren Browning opened the Service with a warm welcome to members and guests.

The guard and Flag marshals were from the Australian Naval Cadets Training Ship KANIMBLA Commanded by Lieutenant ANC Cherrie Rowell and have supported our Service for many years.

RAN Chaplin Rafael Kaiserblueth led the prayers to remember, give thanks for and honour the crew of HMAS SYDNEY II for their service to the nation. Command Fleet Warrant Officer Brad Lahey gave the Commemorative Address and the Last Post and Wakey Wakey was delivered by Able Seamen Musician Connor Jenkinson. The Royal Australian Airforce was represented by Squadron Leader Rekesh Sunwah.

As with our custom here at Campbelltown a special tribute to the local sailors and RAAF colleagues who lost their lives on that fateful day in 1941 was presented by the Sub Section President Eddie Wendt with the ringing of a bell after each name and Official Number was read out. After the conclusion of the ODE, Last Post and Wakey Wakey the Wreath laying involved many Organisations from the Local area including fellow Sub Sections, The Mayor, CEO of City Council, the Commander of our Local Police Area and several Presidents of RSL Sub Branches and local ESO's.

After Benediction, the Australian National Anthem and the dismounting of the Guard, brought our Service to its conclusion the over 100 attendees were invited to join us for light refreshments at the RSL Club.



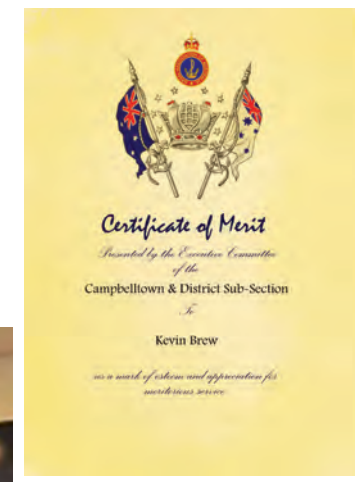
Certificate of Merit Presentation

It is with great pleasure that our Sub-Section would like to announce the presentation of a well earned Certificate of Merit award, to Kevin Brew by our President Eddie Wendt

Kevin was instrumental in helping set & organise the HMAS Sydney II Memorial among many other intricate details for the Sub-Section with fund raising benefits.

Kevin joined the Sub-Section in 2011 & continued to be very active in Fund raising with the team on Lucky Envelopes as well as the current BBQ team and supporting wellness for local Veterans. He was also the person who actively promoted Sailor's Caps for the HMAS Sydney II Memorial along with attendance of various Commemorative Services in representation of the Campbelltown & District Sub-Section of the Naval Association of Australia..

John F. Lysle
Honorary Secretary
Campbelltown &
District Sub-Section





AN IMPORTANT FAMILY CONNECTION THROUGH THE WEM

(Author – Russell Pettis North West Metro Melbourne Sub-Section)

In the White Watch edition 2024 of the White Ensign Magazine, a book review by Judith Flitcroft – *The Chant from Monte Bello* by author Tas Browning – was published. The book described the events of 1952 when the Australian and British Governments worked together to test nuclear weapons on Australian soil. The tests were conducted at the Monte Bello Islands off the West Australian coast. The British and Australian navies were deeply involved and it is a very interesting story to read. Following the publication of the 2024 WEM White edition, the Editor was contacted by a member of the public who had seen the edition and was keen to obtain copies of the book. The story now deepens as the connection between the WEM, a particular NAA member and the lady who contacted the editor start to gel.

The lady who contacted the WEM is Mrs. McDonald of Melbourne. She is a Centenarian with a strong connection to the RAN. The story begins with her husband, Hugh and his 2 twin brothers, when they joined the RAN as Cadet Midshipmen in 1936. All 3 cadets rose to varying levels in the RAN, with service during WW2 and for some service beyond the period of hostilities. Interestingly Hugh's older brother, Ian, was also a naval officer. He had undertaken his training at the naval college in 1929. Mrs. McDonald's husband, Hugh, served throughout WW2 including time on the Russian convoys aboard HMS Amazon. During that service he was awarded the DSC. Hugh McDonald retired from the RAN at the end of hostilities as a Lieutenant Commander.

From the group of young naval officers, the Monte Bello story now starts to develop. Another of the group was Mrs. McDonald's cousin, Robert Scrivenor. He was to take command of HMAS *Hawkesbury* and his ship was to transport the British scientists who were to observe the atomic tests at the Monte Bellos. The ship was assigned to the Royal Navy Fourth Task Force and was part of the First Frigate Squadron. She was assigned for 3 months to support the atomic tests at the Monte Bellos. He was 30 years old at the time of the tests. He was later to retire from the RAN at Captain Rank.



There were atomic tests conducted at the Monte Bello Islands. The islands are located 130 km off the Pilbara coast of North West Australia. The first test was conducted in October 1952. The nuclear device was detonated aboard a surplus British frigate, HMS *Plym*, moored in the Monte Bello lagoon amongst the Monte Bello Island Group (1).

When Mrs. McDonald contacted the editor, she was keen to purchase several copies of the Book – *The Chant from Monte Bello* – to provide to her large multi-generational family. Her desire was to provide them with a history of the very significant contribution her family had made to the defence of our nation. The challenge was accepted as her initial attempts to contact the publisher had failed and whilst the book was listed in the National Library, there were no details or contacts for her to pursue book purchase. A thorough search of the internet failed to provide any information. A chance discussion between the WEM editor and the National Vice President of the NAA,

Gordon Fuller JP (and also a Tasmania resident) generated some interesting facts. The author, Tas Browning, was a member of Gordon's Sub-Section – Launceston and Gordon further indicated that he had a copy of the book. He promised to speak to the author regarding availability of further copies. It had a successful outcome and copies were provided for purchase by Mrs. McDonald. It appeared that the publisher was no longer in business and Mr. Browning was holding the remaining copies of the book.

An arrangement was made for the editor to personally deliver the copies of the book to Mrs. McDonald's home in Melbourne. John Whittet is a member of the editor's NAA Sub-Section and had been at the initial Monte Bello tests as a Royal Navy sailor. John accompanied the editor to deliver the books and to provide some firsthand experiences of being at the tests in 1952. Mrs. McDonald was delighted to hear of his experiences and the day to day activities during the tests.

The North West Metro Melbourne Sub-Section had assisted John to apply for the British Government's recently released Monte Bello atomic tests medal and he has been awarded the medal and received it from the British Ministry of Defence shortly after visiting Mrs. McDonald.

It was quite an honour to meet and assist Mrs. McDonald to make the connection back to the atomic tests at the Monte Bellos and her family's significant contribution. The work was further reinforced by the work of the North West Metro Sub-Section to assist member John Whittet to be recognized by United Kingdom for his participation in the atomic tests.

Footnotes:

1. Whilst arrangements were being made to secure the copies of the Book *The Chant of Monte Bello* for Mrs. McDonald, she undertook a sea voyage off the West Australian coast in the region of the Monte Bellos to gain a sense of history. It was a wonderful effort for a centenarian.
2. Mrs. McDonald's late husband Hugh was the brother of deceased Rear Admiral Neil McDonald AO RAN Retd. and Captain Ian McDonald RAN Retd.
3. Mrs. McDonald has a great niece presently serving in the RAN.

References

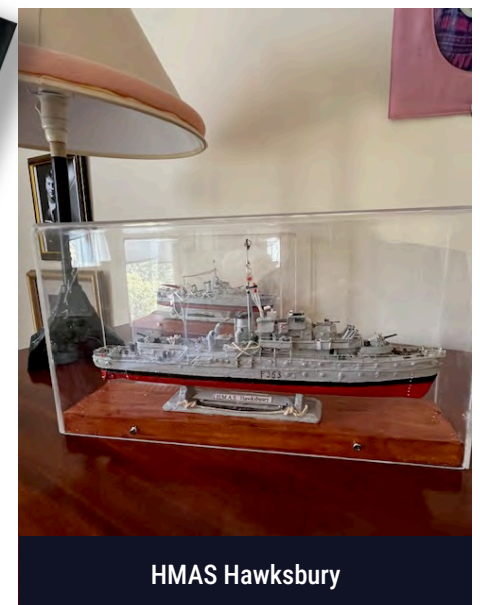
1. Avelon (Tas) Browning
"The Chant from Monte Bello" (2024)



Janet McDonald and Jock Whittet



Jock with his Monte Bello Atomic Test Medal



HMAS Hawkesbury



VISIT TO THE MALAYAN EMERGENCY MEMORIAL

John Lowcock (one of SW Vic's senior members at the age of 93) attended Canberra for the 75th Anniversary Commemoration of the Malayan Emergency. John's comment was "I looked around and there were a lot of old fellas there". Apparently all were very well looked after by DVA for the occasion.



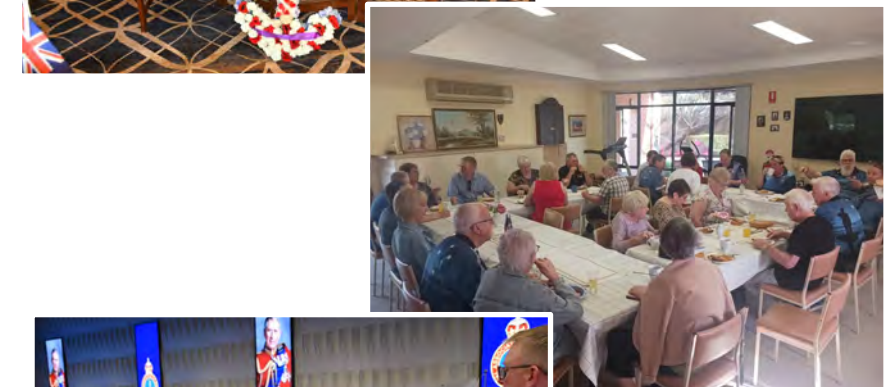
Julienne Clifford
Secretary South West Sub-Section

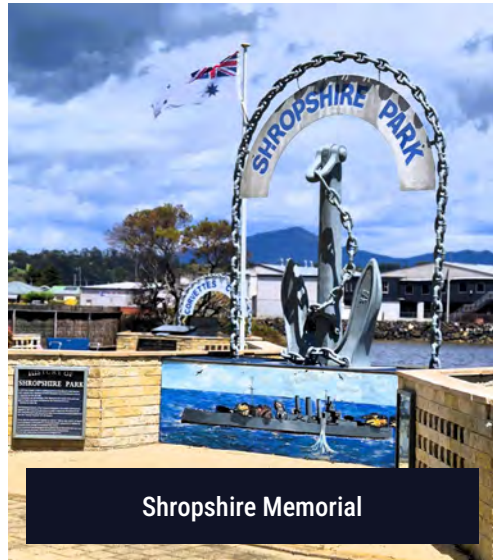


ANNUAL SUNRAYSIA DINNER

Another successful Sunraysia dinner with all attending having a wonderful evening. I thank all who attend for their hospitality and hope to see you again at our next dinner.

Sandra Farlie
Sunraysia Sub-Section





Shropshire Memorial



Shropshire Park

NAVY DAY 2025 at SHROPSHIRE PARK

A weather forecast the previous night, indicated there would be rain for the north of Tasmania for the first day of winter 2025.

Indeed, rain was falling in Burnie and Devonport, however, Ulverstone, and especially Shropshire Park were miraculously spared from any precipitation, though this might have led to a diminished gathering for the annual ceremony.

Undaunted, the Devonport/Ulverstone branch of the Naval Association set out a number of chairs to seat dignitaries and guests who travelled from interstate and intrastate. The Mayor of Ulverstone, Cheryl Fuller welcomed attendees and Rev Chris Aulich conducted prayers to the fallen. Eternal Father and Abide With Me were sung. Sea Cadets from T.S. Sheean and T.S. Emu formed a colour party under the command of Lt Chrystal and Chris Shute. Cadets sounded Eight Bells and raised the National Flags. NAA member Dan Dubbeld raised the White Ensign. The Still and Carry On was piped by NAA President Devonport/Ulverstone Sub-Branch, Barney Hanson who also doubled as emcee. State President, Gordon Fuller delivered the ode to the fallen.

Commander Deb Butterworth (CO NHQ Tasmania) delivered her address, all with not a single drop of rain falling on the heads of any in attendance. I would also like to reveal a personal observation about CMDR Butterworth, the CO of Navy Headquarters Tasmania.

As members of our Sub-Section were struggling and groaning with arthritic problems re-loading the chairs onto the back of Dan's truck, I watched CMDR Deb Butterworth run behind a building in ceremonial dress, and like a scene from a Superman movie, re-appear in a casual jacket chasing the laden truck to help our mainly incapacitated crew unload. In all my years in naval service I have never witnessed an officer, let alone a Commander in charge of a State, get down and dirty with the troops. I'm sure I speak for all our team; we salute you!

Leaving Ulverstone, windscreen wipers were required again.

Hank Koopman
Devonport / Ulverstone Sub-Section



NAA Memorial in Shropshire Park



(L to R) Barney Hanson, CMDR Deb Butterworth, Hank Koopman,
Dan Dubbeld, Tony Daniel, Derek Tite



On 30 Sept 2025 a small RSL bus kindly loaned by Moreton RSL containing members of the Ipswich & West Moreton NAA sub section attended the Qld NAA state ceremonial service for the loss HMAS Sydney 2 on 19 November 1941 and her crew.

This ceremony is held at the Jack memorial located at South Bank in Brisbane.

The event was well supported by the CO & staff of HMAS Moreton which included a catafalque party.

We also had the honour of bringing our honorary Ipswich member Mrs Madeline Blythe who is the sister of SBLT Eagar who was a crew member aboard HMAS Sydney.



Madeline with CO & Staff



Wreath laying by Madeline



Madeline with CO HMAS Moreton
Commander Rosemarie Apikotoa



*They have no grave but the cruel sea. No flowers lay at their head.
A rusting hulk is their tombstone. Afast on the ocean bed.*

LEST WE FORGET

Altham, Maxwell

Shoalhaven

Bailey, Keith

Port Stephens

Bianchi, Rudi

eFleet/State Executive

Glynn, Michael

Sydney/Country

Gross, Trevor

Sydney/Country

Higgins, Alroy "Winki"

Navy Women QLD

Hitzke, Veronica

Navy Women QLD

Hunt, Tony

Sydney/Country

Lennon, John "Beatles"

Sandgate/Pine Rivers

Link, Henry

Shoalhaven

O'Beirne, Michael

Bayside/Pine Rivers

Roberts, John

Sydney/Country

Robinson, Chris

Bayside

Smyth, Graham

Sydney/Country

Treleaven, Victor

Sydney/Country

Ward, Donald

Sydney/Country



Australian recruiting poster (c 1948) depicting the smiling crew of H.M.A.S. Australia.

ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY

Image from a Defence Force Recruitment advertising campaign launched in 2010

