



National Bosun's Call



Vol 2 No 6

Once Navy, Always Navy

July 2021

NAA Members recognised in the 2021 Queen's Birthday Awards



Elizabeth Scarce AM
for significant service to the community of South Australia through a range of roles.
WRANS Sub-section SA



Brian Warren OAM
for services to veterans
ACT Section



James McDermott OAM
for service to veterans
South Launceston Sub-section



Pete Johnston OAM
for service to veterans
Geelong Sub-section



National Newsletter of
Naval Association of Australia

**The Hon. Scott Morrison MP**

Prime Minister

Sunday 27 June 2021

Following consultations with the Deputy Prime Minister, I am announcing proposed changes to the Ministry which I intend to recommend to the Governor-General.

The Liberal-National Coalition has been a successful and enduring partnership for seven decades.

The Deputy Prime Minister and I will continue this strong partnership, one based on shared values and a shared vision for building an even stronger Australia.

Our focus remains on two outcomes — protecting lives and protecting livelihoods, as we continue to combat COVID-19 and build on the economic recovery that has led to the creation of almost one million jobs since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Deputy Prime Minister the Hon Barnaby Joyce MP will continue our strong legacy of infrastructure investment as the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development.

The Hon David Littleproud MP will serve as the Minister for Agriculture and Northern Australia. Minister Littleproud has been the driving force behind securing a strong and competitive future for our agricultural sector.

Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie will return to the Cabinet as the Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education and as Minister for Drought and Emergency Management. She will have a clear focus on service delivery in regional Australia and be responsible for the continued work developing Australia's disaster management capability.

The Hon Andrew Gee MP will join the Cabinet and serve as Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel.

The Hon Keith Pitt MP will continue to serve in the outer Ministry as Minister for Resources and Water.

The Hon David Gillespie MP will join the Ministry as Minister for Regional Health and undertake

the role of Deputy Leader of the House.

The Hon Kevin Hogan MP will serve as Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister and as Assistant Minister for Local Government.

The Hon Michelle Landry MP will continue to serve as Assistant Minister for Children and Families.

A proposed updated Ministry list is attached. [Not attached to this item]

The Hon Michelle Landry MP will continue to serve as Assistant Minister for Children and Families.

Outside of the formal executive, Senator Susan McDonald will take on the role of Envoy for Northern Australia.

These changes will provide the strongest female representation in an Australian Government Cabinet on record, building on the previous record also achieved under my Government.

However, it is not just about the size of the female contingent in my Cabinet but the skills and the experience they all bring to help us solve our nation's challenges.

I wish to thank the former Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack for his selfless and dedicated service to Australia, his tireless efforts as Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Regional Development and his faithful commitment to a strong Coalition Government.

I also wish to thank Ministers Darren Chester and Keith Pitt and for their strong contribution and service as members of the Cabinet and Minister Mark Coulton for his dedicated service in the Ministry.

It is proposed that new Ministers will be sworn into their roles on Friday. **[ENDS]**

Media Contacts:

Prime Minister's Press Office, (02) 6277 7744

The Hon. Scott Morrison MP, Sydney

The Naval Association of Australia Inc**ABN 56 653 989 978**

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Patron In Chief: HM The Queen of Australia.**National Patron** His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC Retd Governor General of Australia

Joint media release — Veteran health boost with Fussell House opening in NSW

The Hon Darren Chester MP
Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

The Hon James Griffin MP
NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Veterans

Fiona Martin MP
Federal Member for Reid

Friday, 18 June 2021

Veterans and their families will have improved access to health care with the opening of Fussell House at Concord Repatriation General Hospital in Sydney today.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said the 19 room residential accommodation facility was available to current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel and their families as they access comprehensive mental and physical health services at the world class National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare (NCVH).

"Fussell House is named after 25-year-old Lieutenant Michael Fussell who was serving with the Special Operations Task Group in Afghanistan when he was killed in action by an Improvised Explosive Device," Mr Chester said.

"We can never fully repay the debt we owe to Lieutenant Fussell, but this facility will provide an enduring way for us all to honour his memory and sacrifice for our nation in ongoing support of our veterans and their families."

"I am proud to open this facility, which was made possible by a \$6.7 million investment from the Federal Government in our ongoing commitment to put the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families first."

Fussell House provides veterans and their families from across Australia with a home away from home at Concord as they access the care and support they need. The facility offers private and shared spaces and includes family suites, individual rooms, family lounge areas, kitchen, laundry and utility rooms and outdoor BBQ area.

The NCVH is operated by a multidisciplinary team of health professionals at Concord Repatriation General Hospital and offers a unique model of care, integrating a range of specialist outpatient services for mental and physical health and rehabilitation to assess, manage, treat and support the health and wellbeing needs of veterans.

NSW Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Veterans James Griffin said the NCVH would relocate into the new \$341 million clinical services building expected to open at Concord later this year.

"Providing on-site accommodation will be a key component of the NCVH as it will support the treatment for veterans and their families including those residing outside of metropolitan Sydney," Mr Griffin said.

Federal Member for Reid Fiona Martin said Concord Repatriation General Hospital had a proud history of serving Australia's veterans and their families and Fussell House marks a new chapter in that history.

"Fussell House is integral to the support available at the NCVH and ensures our families have a dedicated space to call home while veterans are receiving the treatment they need," Dr Martin said.

"Fussell House and the NCVH will benefit veterans and their families across Australia for generations to come."

For more information and details about how to access the services offered by NCVH, visit the [National Centre for Veterans' Healthcare web site](#).

Media contacts

Rachel Tharratt or Cedric Szigeti: 02 6277 7820

DVA Media: 02 6289 6466

Office of the Hon Darren Chester, Canberra ACT

Open Arms — Veterans and Families Counselling provides support for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families. Free and confidential help is available 24/7. Phone [1800 011 046](tel:1800011046) (international: +61 1800 011 046 or +61 8 8241 4546) or visit www.OpenArms.gov.au

Council of the Australian War Memorial reappointment

Mr Kerry Stokes AC has been reappointed as a member of the Council of the Australian War Memorial for a further 12 months.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said Kerry's extensive experience, leadership and dedication would continue to benefit the Council and its ongoing stability, particularly as the Memorial progresses through the early stages of its major upgrade.

"The work of the Council is crucial in raising national awareness of the service and sacrifice of our current and former Australian Defence Force members and their families, and as a member of the Council and during his time as Chair Kerry has done an outstanding job," Mr Chester said.

"Kerry is a passionate supporter and advocate for the Australian War Memorial and I thank him for his contribution to-date and congratulate him on his reappointment."

Veteran Family Advocate appointed to the MRCC

The Hon Darren Chester MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

Thursday, 4 March 2021

The perspectives of veteran's families will continue to be represented in veteran policy and the administration of veteran entitlement and compensation claims, after the Veteran Family Advocate was appointed as a member on the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC) today.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said the inaugural Veteran Family Advocate, Commissioner Gwen Cherne, brought expertise and passion to the Commission that would result in even stronger outcomes for Australia's veterans and their families.

"Gwen was appointed as Veteran Family Advocate last August and as a standing Commissioner on the Repatriation Commission is already making a significant difference, providing me and my Department with important insights into the perspectives of veteran's families," Mr Chester said.

"I congratulate Gwen on her appointment and look forward to continuing to work with her as she expands on this important work. Her passion and experience in supporting the ex-service community

will help to ensure the Government continues to put veterans and their families first."

The appointment is made as part of the Government's commitment to ensuring the perspectives of veterans' families are represented on and directly inform the work of the Commission in setting veteran policy and the administration of veteran entitlement and compensation claims.

The MRCC was established under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA). The MRCA provides compensation and other benefits for current and former members of the Australian Defence Force who suffer an injury or disease due to service on or after 1 July 2004. It also provides for the dependants of members whose deaths were the result of an injury or disease due to service on or after 1 July 2004.

The Repatriation Commission is responsible under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) for granting pensions, allowances and other benefits, providing treatment and other services and generally administering the Act.

For more information on the Commissions, visit the [DVA website](#).

Media contacts

Rachel Tharratt or Cedric Szigeti: 02 6277 7820
DVA Media: 02 6289 6466

Biography — Veteran Family Advocate — Commissioner Gwen Cherne

Gwen Cherne was appointed as the inaugural Veteran Family Advocate, and standing Commissioner on the Repatriation Commission in August 2020. Gwen is an Australian War Widow and the mother of a currently serving Defence member.

Since the death of her husband to suicide in 2017 she has dedicated herself to advocacy for Australian war widows, defence and veterans' families, suicide prevention and mental health awareness.

Gwen was appointed to the Council of the Australian War Memorial in 2019, was an inaugural Member of the Council for Women and Families United by Defence Service, served on the board of the Australian War Widows' NSW chapter, was an Ambassador for the Commando Welfare Trust and Gotcha4Life and was a 2018 Invictus Games Ambassador for ClubsNSW.

Born in the United States, her career has taken her all around the world, including the US, Australia, Afghanistan, Africa, Central and South America,

and the Caribbean, with a focus on stability, relief, and development for youth, women, and families living in crisis and extreme poverty.



In her early career she co-founded a school for low-income children in Brooklyn, NY. She worked in Afghanistan off and on for three years as an international development worker in the Central and South Regions and as Regional Director in Jalalabad and Kabul. After returning to the US Gwen worked as a Senior Trainer and Manager for Curriculum and Training for military, Foreign Service Officers and other civilians preparing for deployment.

More recently, she spent seven years working at the Australian Civil-Military Centre as a Program Manager and Assistant Director for Research.

Gwen has a Bachelors degree in Psychology with a minor in Women's Studies and a Masters degree in Public Administration with a concentration in International Policy from the NYU Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service.

New Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Andrew Gee MP—Biography

Parliamentary service

State: Elected to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly for Orange, 2001. Resigned 30.5.2016 to contest the House of Representatives division of Calare, New South Wales.

Federal: Elected to the House of Representatives for Calare, New South Wales, 2016. Re-elected 2019.

Ministerial appointments

Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister from 25.1.2019 to 6.2.2020.

Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Education from 6.2.2020.

Minister Assisting the Minister for Trade and Investment from 6.2.2020.

Committee service

Joint Statutory: Public Accounts and Audit from 14.9.2016 to 1.7.2019.

House of Representatives Standing: Procedure from 14.9.2016 to 11.4.2019; **Environment and Energy** from 11.9.2018 to 11.4.2019 (Chair from 11.9.2018 to 25.1.2019).

Personal

Born 13.9.1968, Wagga Wagga, Australia

Married

Qualifications and occupation before entering Federal Parliament

BEC(Hons) (University of Sydney).

LLB (University of Sydney).

Barrister from 2003 to 2011.

State/Territory Government service

Elected to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly for Orange, 2001. Resigned 30.5.2016 to contest the House of Representatives division of Calare, New South Wales.

Parliamentary Secretary for the Deputy Premier and Regional Roads from 24.4.2015 to 4.5.2016.



Electorate : Calare

Location: Calare covers an area from Lithgow in the east to Eugowra in the west, Wellington and Mid-Western Regional Councils in the north to Blayney Shire Council and Oberon Council in the south. **The main cities and towns include** Bathurst, Blayney, Canowindra, Eugowra, Gulgong, Kandos, Lithgow, Molong, Oberon, Orange, Mudgee, Portland, Rylstone, Wallerawang and Yeoval.

Area: 32,666 Sq km

Electors enrolled: 118,099 (at 7.6.2019)

Industries: Mining, mixed farming, fruit, timber, vineyards, meat and wool processing, transport, tourism, light engineering, white goods manufacturing, tertiary education services, agricultural and pastoral support.

APH Website

Extracts from his first speech to Federal Parliament 14 September 2016

Mr GEE_(Calare) (13:21): I was born in the country, I was raised in the country, I am of the country and I believe in the future of country Australia. That is the reason I stand before you today. For the past five years, country communities of central-western New South Wales have put their faith and trust in me as their representative in our state parliament, and I am deeply honoured that those communities, and more still, have put their faith and trust in me to represent them in this place, our national parliament. When we are young, we all have dreams and goals, but I never once thought that I would be standing here today in this House delivering this address. It is a responsibility as heavy as it is humbling.

In my time in state politics, I saw constituents in their worst hours of need and I was privileged to be there with them in their moments of triumph. In the same way, I saw politicians soaring to their best, and I have also seen some at their worst. After five years of serving the communities of the west and being entrusted as their representative, there is one thing about politics that I know to be true: life is

short, and we are all just here in a blink of history's eye—and political careers are even shorter than that. So, while we are occupying these positions, we need to get things done. Politics is not about the offices we hold or the titles we have; it is about delivering lasting benefits that make life better for the people that we represent. That is the very essence of politics.

There is also something I know to be true about country politics: country people want and expect their representatives to stand up and fight for them. They do not mind if you do not always carry the day or if you get knocked down trying, but they expect you to fight the fight, to stand up and fight for them. And country Australia certainly needs its champions."

"The great divide exists in access to medical services. People in the country have shorter lives than those in the cities. We have worse outcomes for diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, mental health and obesity. We die younger, and that is

(Continued on page 6)

Extracts from his first speech to Federal Parliament 14 September 2016

(Continued from page 5)

the cold hard truth. The divide exists, all right. People in the cities take going to the doctor for granted, but in some of our country communities it can still take weeks just to see a general practitioner. One way we can bridge that particular divide is by training more doctors for the country, in the country, and the university that wants to do just that is the regionally based Charles Sturt University, through the Murray Darling Medical School to be based at Orange, Wagga and Bendigo. The dream of a country medical school hosted by a country university has been years in the making, and I am here to tell you that the dream is still alive. I will be doing everything I can to make that happen.

The great divide exists in social disadvantage. The central west and Calare are dynamic and prosperous, but the reality is that country electorates host some of the most socially disadvantaged communities in Australia. Many in those places feel forgotten and overlooked by their wider communities and many have continually put their faith and trust in not only me but the National Party to have their voices heard. Over the past five years, I like to think I worked hard to make sure those people and those communities did have a voice and that their voices were heard, and I recommit to that today. They will not be forgotten on my watch.

There is no better way to literally bridge the great divide than to build a new expressway over the top of it or, indeed, tunnel underneath it—or both! A Bells Line of Road expressway from Sydney's north-west into Lithgow would open up the communities of the west. Let us not dither for another generation. If the money for an expressway cannot be found at present, the federal government needs to follow the lead of the New South Wales government in putting some serious funding down to help upgrade that road now. It is not impossible. We have had some success in recent times in finding scarce funding for projects the doomsayers and naysayers said would never happen. And I will also be aiming for funding for another Holy Grail of unfinished road projects in the central west: the famed crossing at Dixons Long Point between Orange and Mudgee, a project 80 years in the making. If the great divide is truly to be bridged, policies of decentralisation need to be actively pursued. The National Party has blazed the trail for decentralisation."

"Whilst I was young, my family lived for a time in Nairobi, Kenya and also San Francisco. We eventually settled in Maitland, in the Hunter Valley. My parents by then operated a small business: a wholesale and retail nursery. It was my parents who taught me the value of hard work, initiative, perseverance and resilience.

I was fortunate enough to attend Newcastle Grammar School. My modern history teacher was someone well-known to this side of politics in New South Wales, Patricia Forsythe. It was she who steered me towards Sydney University, St. Paul's College and politics, and she is with us here today.

After I finished law school and commenced life as a solicitor, my brothers, David and Matthew, and I

decided we would move to Asia and start our own business licensing consumer products and promotions for international entertainment companies. My brothers went to Singapore and I headed to Hong Kong. It was a long way from Largs in the Hunter Valley. Building a business from scratch across multiple countries was hard work, but I look back on those years with pride, not least because my brothers and I did it together.

When I returned to Australia, my first job as a solicitor was at the illustrious firm of Colin Biggers & Paisley, or 'the fighting CBP' as it is known to its many friends. There I was lucky enough to be schooled in the art of litigation by two outstanding solicitors, Antony Riordan and Alex Ostermayer, who are also in the gallery today.

After completing my bar reading, I moved around the corner to Queen's Square Chambers in Macquarie Street. But the call of the country was strong. We wanted a better quality of life and a true sense of community, so my family, like so many before us, crossed the Great Divide to find a new life in the magnificent electorate of Calare. I practised as a barrister both there and in Sydney until the New South Wales election of 2011."

"In my time as a state MP, it was the community campaigns that marked the time in the electorate: the fight for Gulgong hospital and ensuring that promises made were promises kept; saving the Drip near Mudgee and having it declared a national park; the fight for a 24-hour rescue helicopter service; the fights for better radiotherapy at Orange and also better roads; and saving the Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health.

In Sydney, the last five years or so were marked by regular scans and check-ups at the Sydney melanoma unit after being diagnosed with stage 3 melanoma during a state election campaign of 2010. Professor John Thompson is not here today, but he and the cancer researchers like him are the unsung heroes in Australia, and I am very grateful to him for patching me up and getting me back on the paddock. In fact, when after my operation I asked him whether he thought I would be right to contest the 2011 state election, he replied that, if it was a political career I was contemplating, perhaps he should book me in for a brain scan. That is medical humour for you, but I appreciate all that Prof. Thompson has done for me."

"Today I also thank the people of Calare. When I entered politics in 2011, I committed to representing the people of our communities with the same qualities that they themselves possess: courage, passion and energy. I reaffirm that commitment today. But to communities of the west I further commit to this: I will fight for you, Calare. Every day I occupy this office I will fight. When I am out in our communities I will fight. When I am here in this place I will stand up and I will fight for you, Calare. I will fight and we, all of us, will fight with an unshakable faith in the future of the west and together we will make this time count for something. We will make these years Calare's years, and together we will make this Calare's time."

Captain Cook Graving Dock a National Monument

The Captain Cook Graving Dock at Sydney's Garden Island, built during World War II, has been recognised as a National Engineering Landmark by Engineers Australia.

The first ship to use the 347m dry dock was the 225m aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious* and the latest is the 230m landing helicopter dock HMAS *Adelaide*.

President of the Sydney Division of Engineers Australia Jessica Qiu and Director General Maritime Support Branch Commodore Shane Glassock on June 17 unveiled a plaque at the historic site to mark its new status as an engineering landmark.

Ms Qiu said the dock took four years to complete and at the time was Australia's largest engineering project.

"It's important that we recognise the people who built this landmark and how it contributed to our community," Ms Qiu said.

Construction activity peaked in 1943 with more than 4000 men employed on the project.

Commodore Glassock said the graving dock was a product of incredible foresight and remained a national strategic asset.

"It continues to support maritime sustainment through the ability to dry dock our largest Royal Australian Navy ships, foreign navy ships and regional commercial vessels," Commodore Glassock said.

"While the design and construction of the dock have very much stood the test of time, planning is now underway to ensure this critical asset remains available and operational in the decades ahead."

Resembling a giant bath tub, the dry dock is the last remaining facility in Australia capable of docking ships that have a displacement of more than 12,000 tonnes, and its importance is highlighted in the 2020 Force Structure Plan.

Colin Randall, from the Naval Historical Society of Australia, first saw the process as a 13-year-old in 1961 when his father worked in the Dockmaster's



HMAS Parramatta in the Captain Cook Graving Dock 2020

Office as a maintenance engineer.

"This was a wonderful place for a kid," he recalled.

"My favourite fishing spot was the last bit when they drained the dock. When there were Spanish mackerel, everyone was in there with a bucket."

Since 1999, the graving dock has been operated and maintained by Above Water Systems, which is part of Thales Australia, on behalf of the Navy, symbolising the close ties Navy has with Defence industry.

Above Water Systems vice president Max Kufner said the company appreciated the responsibility of the role and the trust placed in it.

"The trust shown in us by the Royal Australian Navy has instilled an enormous sense of pride and accomplishment across Thales Australia," Mr Kufner said.

Commanding Officer HMAS *Kuttubul* Captain Matthew Shand said a significant ceremony was planned last year when the dock turned 75, but was called off.

"Unfortunately a thing called COVID-19 hit and the world was, almost overnight, turned on its head," Captain Shand said.

He thanked the historical society president for his efforts to ensure the dock's many years of service were not forgotten.

"Through David Michael's sheer persistence, we celebrate the 76th anniversary of the dock and formally recognise what was, and still is, an engineering feat of national proportions," Captain Shand said.

Defence News

President of Engineers Australia - Sydney Jessica Qiu and the Director General Maritime Support Commodore Shane Glassock unveil a plaque next to the Captain Cook Graving Dock at Garden Island in Sydney.

Photo: Leading Seaman Leo Baumgartner



Indexation of rates 1 July 2021

1 July 2021

From 1 July 2021, the Income Free Areas and Assets Value Limits used to calculate rates of income support pensions under the *Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986 (VEA)* will rise.

The amount of income (per fortnight) an income support pensioner may receive before their pension is reduced under the income test:

	Single rate (fortnightly)	Couples rate Combined (fortnightly)
Service or Age Pension	\$180.00	\$320.00
Income Support Supplement (War Widow(er)s Pension is included in these amounts)	\$1,483.60	\$2,002.80

The maximum value of assets a person can have before their pension is affected:

	Single Rate	Couples Rate- Combined
Service or Age Pension		
Home Owner	\$270,500	\$405,000
Non-homeowner	\$487,000	\$621,500
Income Support Supplement Different limits apply if assessed under transitional rules		
Homeowner	\$488,000	\$685,500
Non-homeowner	\$704,500	\$902,000

The deeming thresholds have increased effective from 1 July 2021. This means that the value of financial assets deemed to be earning the lower rate of 0.25 per cent has increased. The higher deeming rate of 2.25 per cent is applied to the balance of financial assets over these thresholds.

	Single Rate	Couples Rate- combined
Deeming threshold	\$53,600	\$89,000

Some payments under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA)* also increased, including:

	New Rate (weekly)
Maximum Permanent Impairment amount	\$363.09
Maximum Rate of Household Services	\$514.12
Maximum rate of Attendant Care Services	\$514.12
Dependent eligible young person	\$155.47

For further information, contact DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

Their Duty Nobly Done

Kate Reid-Smith

HMAS MATAFELE

There's an enduring mystery of ships missing at sea, and HMAS *Matafele* is just one of them. The last vessel to escape Simpson Harbour, Rabaul (New Guinea) just as the Japanese landed in January 1942. The *Matafele* had been a small cargo and passenger boat operating Pacific Island routes.

Sailing undetected by the Japanese and safely arriving in northern Australia, *Matafele* was one of many placed under the control of the Australian government, initially being assigned to transport military stores in and around coastal northern Australia. As the war progressed, so did *Matafele's* war service, as the only ship of the RAN to be commissioned while at sea on 1 January 1943. Now with extra ballast installed, bulletproof plating around the bridge, a 12-pounder anti-aircraft gun fitted aft, and the eighteen civilian European crew replaced by a naval complement, operational taskings expanded to include not only store transport, but also supplemental survey and navigation duties. Given the choice to leave the vessel on commissioning, thirteen Pacific Islander crewman volunteered to stay onboard for the duration.

Deployed as part of the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) and initially based out of Port Moresby, *Matafele* became an integral shipping component between Milne Bay and various Queensland ports. On a routine cargo run carrying roughly 215 tons of naval stores, the vessel left Townsville on 18 June 1943 for the four day run to Milne Bay. The usual route was north through the Coral Sea and China Straight on to the Solomon Sea, but when *Matafele* failed to arrive and with complete radio silence, the worst was feared. On 24 June, a RAAF overfly reported seeing a vessel underway but in distress and floundering close to the coast in heavy weather. An air and sea search launched from both Cairns and New Guinea found nothing, as did three subsequent Naval Boards of Inquiry.

Although mystery still surrounds what happened to the *Matafele*, especially because there was no known enemy submarine activity in the area at the time, the tragic loss of all crew is remembered both at the Tasmanian Seafarers' Memorial in Triabunna (Tasmania), and in a stained glass window at St Mary's Anglican Church, in suburban Kangaroo Point near Brisbane.



HMAS VAMPIRE (1)



When Commander William Moran assumed command of the V-class Destroyer HMAS *Vampire* in Singapore in December 1941, little did he know that the elderly warship would live up to her motto of being 'unseen and unexpected'. A World War One veteran and one of the famed Scrap Iron Flotilla, *Vampire* was still earning her battle honours in no less than three theatres of war.

Vampire consistently proved her metal, whether undertaking military and mercantile convoy, anti-submarine patrol duties in the Mediterranean, Allied reinforcement and evacuation operations from Greece, or escort duties as part of the Tobruk Ferry Service in the Western Desert Campaign. After two years fighting against the *Kriegsmarine* in the European theatres of war, *Vampire* had joined the British Eastern Fleet at Ceylon (Sri Lanka), taking up the fight against the Japanese in December 1941 engaged in Indian Ocean intercept and hunting duties, including looking for the German cruiser the *Admiral Graf Spree*.

When Japan's Fast Carrier Task Force which already controlled the neighbouring Bay of Bengal, began attacking the harbour in Colombo, *Vampire* sailed as escort with the British aircraft carrier HMS *Hermes* in the hope of avoiding any chance of follow-up strike or aerial bombing while in port. *Vampire's* luck at being unnoticed ran out in a short but defiant action against sixteen Japanese Aichi D3A Val dive bombers. On the morning of 9 April 1942 both vessels came under ferocious attack just south of the Ceylon coast, with the *Hermes* sunk with the loss of 300 crew. *Vampire's* tenacity surprised the Japanese shooting down at least one aircraft, and when despite being hit by 250kg of bombs, breaking in half and sinking within half an hour, crew losses amounted to nine, including Moran.

A Golden Cypress tree at the Shrine Reserve in Melbourne still stands in living shrine commemorating the fallen crew of HMAS *Vampire* (1).



Veteran shines light on 1964 naval tragedy of HMAS Melbourne-Voyager collision and sinking

ABC Eyre Peninsula
By Jodie Hamilton Edited

Posted 24 Jun 21

A veteran from the HMAS Melbourne and HMAS Voyager collision on February 10, 1964 that killed 82 people believes changes to floodlighting on the aircraft carrier caused Australia's worst peacetime disaster.

John Werner, 77, who worked on HMAS Melbourne in weapons electronics-gunnery systems, has spoken about the crash for the first time at a Port Lincoln Returned Services League event commemorating the 110th anniversary of the Royal Australian Navy.

He was the duty electrician that night and set up floodlighting on the aircraft carrier to light the deck and island section for the aircraft. John Werner believes new red floodlights were responsible for Voyager mistaking Melbourne's position. HMAS Melbourne had undergone a re-fit and he noticed the floodlights now had red filters.

"I thought 'things have changed'. In the past they'd been just normal white floodlights," Mr Werner said. "After thinking about it and talking to a couple of other guys on the Melbourne, I understood that the bridge on the Voyager mistook these for the red steaming light of the Melbourne and cut across what she thought was the stern, which in fact was the bow. It occurred just on sunset when both the navigation lights and the red-filtered portable floodlights were turned on. *[Collision occurred at 2056K]*

"At least one of the red filtered floodlights was facing to starboard — it overshadowed the green navigation light, being mistaken on Voyager's bridge as the port navigation light," Mr Werner said.

Professor Frame *[Tom Frame author 'Where Fate Calls]* said some information would have been dealt with in-camera for security reasons.

"It was potentially misleading, the new floodlighting that was being trialled, potentially," he said. "But the royal commission was aware of it, one, and secondly came to the view, as I came to the view, that it wasn't the cause of the collision.

"The navy in one sense did a pretty poor job of explaining to its own people ... why they thought it occurred and so it led people like John and others to think that the evidence that they presented was not given the recognition that it deserved."

Mr Werner is speaking out now because he has post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from his career that only surfaced when he retired.

Editor's comment

In his book 'Where Fate Calls' published in 1992 ISBN 0 340 54968 8 at pages 19-20 and 96-97 Tom Frame writes in his examination of the 1964 Royal Commission: proceedings and outcomes

Pages 19 and 20

There was added interest in these particular night flying exercises as it was the first occasion on which the carrier's flight deck was floodlit. A check had been made by Commanders Kelly (NO) and Bailey (XO) while the ship was at anchor in Jervis Bay the previous weekend to ensure none of the red lighting was visible on the starboard side of the carrier. It consisted of one light near the base of the bridge island, and an experimental directional red floodlight set up on the gun direction platform giving a downward beam from near the top of the island. This light was being trained onto the angled flight deck until the senior Gannet pilot, Lieutenant Commander Toz Dadswell, who had been making 'touch and go' runs across the carrier's deck, informed Flying Control in Melbourne by radio that the glare from the light was blinding him during his approach. The light was then trained onto the forward lift."

Pages 96 and 97

"There was one more compelling factor that Street should have mentioned. At every point in her final manoeuvre, Voyager was able to see Melbourne's starboard side light. It was the only green light and witnesses have claimed it was visible from Voyager even at a range of 2,000 yards. Thus Voyager was constantly in a position to see she was on Melbourne's starboard side."

Street was Leading Counsel for the Stevens family in the 1964 Royal Commission into the collision

Sunset in Sydney 10 February 1964 was at 1858K

The full ABC report can be seen at <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-25/john-werner-hmas-melbourne-hmas-voyager-theory/10022071>



Part of the Voyager Memorial Park
Huskisson

Successor to Royal Yacht Britannia flagship to 'promote British trade on the world stage' following Brexit

30 May 2021

Boris Johnson has announced a successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia to promote British trade on the world stage following [Brexit](#).

The vessel will be used to host trade fairs, ministerial summits and diplomatic talks as the UK seeks to build links and boost exports following Brexit.

It will be the first national flagship since Britannia, which was decommissioned in 1997, but the new vessel will be a ship rather than a luxury yacht.

A name for the ship has not been announced, but the Prime Minister has faced pressure from campaigners and Tory MPs to name it after the Duke of Edinburgh, who played a role in designing Britannia.

The old Royal Yacht is currently berthed in Edinburgh, Scotland.

The Government intends to build the ship in the UK, at a reported cost of up to £200 million.

Boris Johnson has announced a successor to the Royal Yacht Britannia to promote British trade on the world stage following Brexit

Mr Johnson said: 'This new national flagship will be the first vessel of its kind in the world, reflecting the UK's burgeoning status as a great, independent maritime trading nation.'

'Every aspect of the ship, from its build to the businesses it showcases on board, will represent and promote the best of British - a clear and powerful symbol of our commitment to be an active player on the world stage.'

The announcement of the vessel comes at the end of a difficult week for the Prime Minister, which has seen him savaged by former aide Dominic Cum-

mings, who claimed the Government was responsible for tens of thousands of needless deaths during the coronavirus pandemic.

Mr Johnson said: 'This new national flagship will be the first vessel of its kind in the world, reflecting the UK's burgeoning status as a great, independent maritime trading nation'

Construction of the new ship is expected to begin as soon as 2022 and it will enter service within the next four years.

The tendering process for the design and construction of the vessel will launch shortly, with an emphasis on showcasing British design expertise and the latest innovations in green technology.

The ship will be crewed by the Royal Navy and is expected to be in service for around 30 years.

Shadow Treasury chief secretary Bridget Phillipson said: 'Right now our country faces huge challenges, and there's no sign the government has a plan for the recovery.'

'We want to see public money used for targeted investment in a green economic recovery, resources for our NHS, and supporting families to succeed.'

'If this ship is going to be part of a genuine plan for Britain's future, the government must set out clearly how it will boost trade, jobs and growth in every corner of our country.'

'We'd want to see it built in Britain, supporting jobs and skills in shipyards here, and with a real focus on value for money at every stage.'

By JEMMA CARR FOR MAILONLINE
Edited copy



Turn into the Wind; Volume II

Turn into the Wind, Volume II.

US Navy, Royal Navy, Royal Australian Navy, and Royal Canadian Navy Light Fleet Aircraft Carriers in the Korean War and through end of service, 1950-1982

Cdr. David D. Bruhn, USN (retired)

American and British light fleet aircraft carriers, an expedient of war at a time of dire need in World War II, answered their nations' call a second time during the Korean War. While larger US Navy fleet carriers plied their trade in the deeper Sea of Japan off Korea's east coast, their svelte sisters — USS Bataan, HMS Glory, HMS Ocean, HMS Theseus, HMS Triumph, and HMAS Sydney — were consigned to the Yellow Sea. Operating off the west coast, ragged and heavily indented with numerous small islands, aircraft aboard the carriers repeatedly struck the

Winters were cold, with occasional gales and blinding snow squalls; summers were hot and humid, with heavy rains and fog. While the piston-engine aircraft attacked enemy supply lines, fortifications, and troop positions, enemy MiG jet aircraft were a constant threat, some flown by Russians. Carrier air also provided protection to friendly islands, from which guerillas mounted operations behind enemy lines.

Following the Korean War, Australia acquired two additional former Royal Navy light fleet carriers, and Canada three in succession, as centerpieces for naval fixed air programs. Former CVLs served in new roles during the Cold War/Vietnam War: USS Wright as a "doomsday" afloat White House, HMAS Sydney as a troop transport, and USS Arlington as a communications link between the Pentagon and commanders in the field. One hundred fifty-five photographs, maps, and diagrams; appendices; and an index to full-names, places, and subjects add value to this work.

This is a follow on from

Turn into the Wind, Volume I.

US Navy and Royal Navy Light Fleet Aircraft Carriers in World War II, and Contributions of the British Pacific Fleet

Cdr. David D. Bruhn, USN (retired)

In the Pacific in World War II, the dearth of US Navy fleet aviation capabilities became acute following the loss, in 1942, of four aircraft carriers to combat action. New Essex-class fleet aircraft carriers were being built, but would not be ready soon enough. Time was of the essence.



DVA's recovery program for post-traumatic stress

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) funds a number of hospitals across Australia to deliver Trauma Recovery Programs (TRP). These programs focus on helping veterans living with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other common challenges by supporting psychological growth and recovery.

Each hospital provides a specialised program using evidence-informed care for veterans who are DVA clients and current-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) members living with PTSD. Current serving members will need to be referred to the program by Defence.

To learn more about the program, please contact one of the hospitals in your state or territory and speak to the coordinators directly. A list of these contacts can be found on the Open Arms – Veterans & Families website by searching 'PTSD-recovery'.

The hospital will assess your eligibility and where appropriate, allocate you to a treatment group. Wait times before treatment commences may vary.

If you or a family member needs immediate help, please call Open Arms on 1800 011 046 for free and confidential 24/7 support.

Support available

1 January 2021

Please remember that our focus at the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) is to support your health and wellbeing. So, if you need mental health or medical support, we strongly encourage you to get in touch with us. DVA is not part of any investigation. Our only concern is your wellbeing.

To anyone who is serving in the ADF, or has served, or is close to a serving or ex-serving member, please remember:

- You should be immensely proud of your service, or your loved one's service, and there is overwhelming respect in the Australian community for your service and sacrifice.
- If you need help dealing with the IGADF Afghanistan Inquiry findings, reach out and get the specialist support you need. Support is readily available through DVA and is routinely used by thousands of serving personnel and veterans every year.
- Families, particularly children and teenagers, could also be affected by the Inquiry and there is support available for them as well.
- We don't need to know what happened overseas. We just want to make sure you're okay. And help you cope with what you are feeling today.
- DVA will prioritise the claims of any veterans who may be impacted by the Inquiry.

Where to get help

For all current ADF members and their families, the **Defence all-hours Support Line** is a confidential phone and online service and is available on **1800 628 036**. Families of serving personnel can also contact the **Defence Family Helpline** on 1800 624 608.

All current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families can access **Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling**. Open Arms is a national mental health service that provides 24-hour free and confidential counselling. It is not part of the Department of Defence. Importantly the Open Arms website provides a range of self-help resources and wellbeing tools. Visit

www.openarms.gov.au or phone **1800 011 046**.

In addition, **Safe Zone Support** is an anonymous counselling service that has been established to support veterans and their families impacted by the IGADF Inquiry. Safe Zone Support is staffed by specialist counsellors who have an understanding of military culture and experience and can be accessed at: **www.openarms.gov.au/safe-zone-support** or **1800 142 072**. **Calls to Safe Zone Support are not recorded**. Both current members of the ADF and veterans can access this service any time, day or night.

DVA CONTACTS

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

PHONE NUMBER:

Telephone:
1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)

International callers:

+61 2 6289 1133

POSTAL ADDRESS FOR ALL STATES AND TERRITORIES:

Health Approvals & Home Care Section Department of Veterans' Affairs

GPO Box 9998

BRISBANE QLD 4001

DVA WEBSITE:

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

DVA email for prior financial authorisation: health.approval@dva.gov.au

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

CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

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

Claim Enquiries: 1300 550 017

Family of veterans or service personnel who are concerned about the impact the Inquiry may have on a loved one, can call DVA to seek guidance on the support available.

If you are unsure what support is available please contact DVA on **1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)**.

Information about support services can also be found on the **IGADF page of the DVA website**.

If you know someone in need, please pass on this important message – DVA is there to help.

Ex-service and non-government organisations

- Ex-service organisations (ESOs) play a vital and complementary role to DVA by providing mateship, advocacy and welfare support. You can [find ESOs on the DVA website](#).
- There are also a number of excellent non-service related community organisations available, such as Lifeline (call 13 11 14 for 24/7 crisis support or visit www.lifeline.org.au)



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