



National Bosun's Call



Vol 5 No 8

Once Navy, Always Navy

September 2023

50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, National Commemorative Service



Newsletter of the
Naval Association of Australia



BALMORAL CASTLE

8th August, 2023.

Der Lieutenant Commander Manolas

Thank you for your letter of 24th September in which you kindly propose that The King becomes Patron of the Naval Association of Australia. Please do accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you. As I am sure you will understand, due to the high volume of correspondence since September it has not been possible to reply until now.

As you may be aware, The Royal Household has been conducting a detailed review of Royal Patronage following The King's Accession. The review will cover the organisations of which Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was Patron and those organizations to which The King and Queen were connected through Patronage or Presidency as The Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall.

While I am unable to comment at this time as to whether His Majesty will be able to take on patronage of the Naval Association of Australia, please be assured that I have made a careful note of your organization's request and my team will be in touch with you in due course. Thank you for your continued patience as we work through our assessment. Their Majesties are grateful for your patience and understanding.

Dr. John Sorabji
Deputy Private Secretary to The King

Lieutenant Commander David Manolas (Retd.).

The Naval Association of Australia Inc**ABN 56 653 989 978**221 Centenary Avenue
MELTON VICTORIA 3337Editor: Peter Cooke-Russell Contact peter.cookerussell@gmail.com**National Patron** His Excellency General The Honourable
David Hurley AC DSC Retd Governor General of Australia

Vietnam War, National Commemorative Service

Australia marked the 50th anniversary of the end of its involvement in the Vietnam War with a national service held at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial, on Vietnam Veterans' Day, 18 August 2023, remembering the service of some 60,000 Australian men and women who served in the Vietnam War and their families.

Tragically, 523 Australians lost their lives in the war, and over 3,000 were wounded.

The Vietnam War was the longest 20th Century conflict in which Australians participated.



Top: His Excellency, General the Honourable David Hurley AC, DSC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley lay a wreath at the commemoration held in Canberra

Right: Mr Keith Payne VC AM of the AATTV and Vice Chief of the Defence Force Vice Admiral David Johnston AC RAN, at the commemoration

Photos Nicole Mankowski

Below Attendees at the National Service held at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial

Photo: DVA



**50th Anniversary Commemoration of the end of
Australia's Involvement in the Vietnam War 18 August 23,
National Vietnam Memorial Canberra.
Veteran Reading: provided by Mr David Manolas
Naval Association of Australia**

As part of this commemorative service, I have been asked to recount some of my experiences serving in HMAS *Sydney*, during the Vietnam War.

The *Sydney* was a post WWII era aircraft carrier, refitted as a fast troop transport in 1962. She undertook twenty-five voyages to the south of Vietnam in support of the 1st Australian Task Force between May 1965 and November 1972. These voyages earned her the nickname; "*The Vung Tau Ferry*". The *Sydney*, along with Australian Merchant Navy vessels *Jeparit* and *Boonaroo*, transported the majority of the Australian personnel and equipment contributed to the Vietnam War effort. The Army's 32 Small Ships Squadron also played their part in transporting stores, munitions and vehicles from Australia, and in-country in Vietnam.

I was one of the mostly 16 years old trainee sailors, who joined the ship in October 1966. On the 8th April 1967, with 7 RAR embarked, *Sydney* departed her namesake city for her fifth voyage to Vietnam, with the Destroyer *Vampire* as escort and Wessex anti-submarine helicopters embarked for the first time.

I can recall, that apart from what looked to be seasoned non-commissioned officers, most of the diggers were also very young. As it was for practically all within the Navy, most of the embarked forces were volunteers but also amongst their ranks were 20-year-old conscripts. On the journey to Vietnam the Army was kept busy with physical training, weapon-firing practice, and other training activities. The ship's crew performed their ongoing shipboard duties along with safety and emergency drills, helicopter flying operations and main armament weapon drills. Overall, the atmosphere, particularly for the embarked forces, was generally subdued.

With the crew at a heightened degree of readiness the ship had been completely darkened throughout the night as we neared Vietnam. As we made our final approach into Vung Tau on 20th April, there was a lot for the ship's crew to get on with: damage control and defence readiness measures activated; helicopters deployed to conduct patrols ahead of the ship; ladders and cranes made ready; ships boats turned out in readiness to conduct anti-swimmer patrols whilst we were at anchor; ammunition provided to the ship's armament; ship's divers readied to conduct hull searches; and, upper-deck sentries armed and positioned.

There was always so much going on: vehicles and stores being off-loaded onto barges; US Sky-crane helicopters airlifting heavy stores containers and vehicles ashore; troops ferried ashore in landing craft, US Chinook, and US and Australian Iroquois helicopters. Our mission was to see the troops and their gear safely disembarked and at another time, safely embarked for the return journey back to Australia. If this could be done in a timely manner it assisted in minimising the risks of attack upon the *Sydney* or her escort.

The passage home was altogether different. Whilst most of the deployed forces would sail home, those brought home by air would find themselves back in Australia having left the realities of combat just days before. Those in the *Sydney* had a number of days at sea in the company of their mates, therein sharing in natural debriefing through camaraderie. We would subsequently learn that to their detriment, few Vietnam Veterans were formally debriefed after their tour of duty.

As we neared home, the diggers would be seen cleaning their uniforms, webbing, and weapons ready for their disembarkation. As I weaved my way through a group who had taken up all the available deck space to clean their gear, one digger was carefully cleaning his bayonet. Without warning he stabbed a picture in one of the old newspapers spread out before him! Later I was told there was a story and image of an anti-war protest back in Australia and it had understandably angered him! The *Sydney* was no longer as trim as she once was; it was fortunate the bayonet had not hit a rusty spot where he may well have pierced the steel deck!

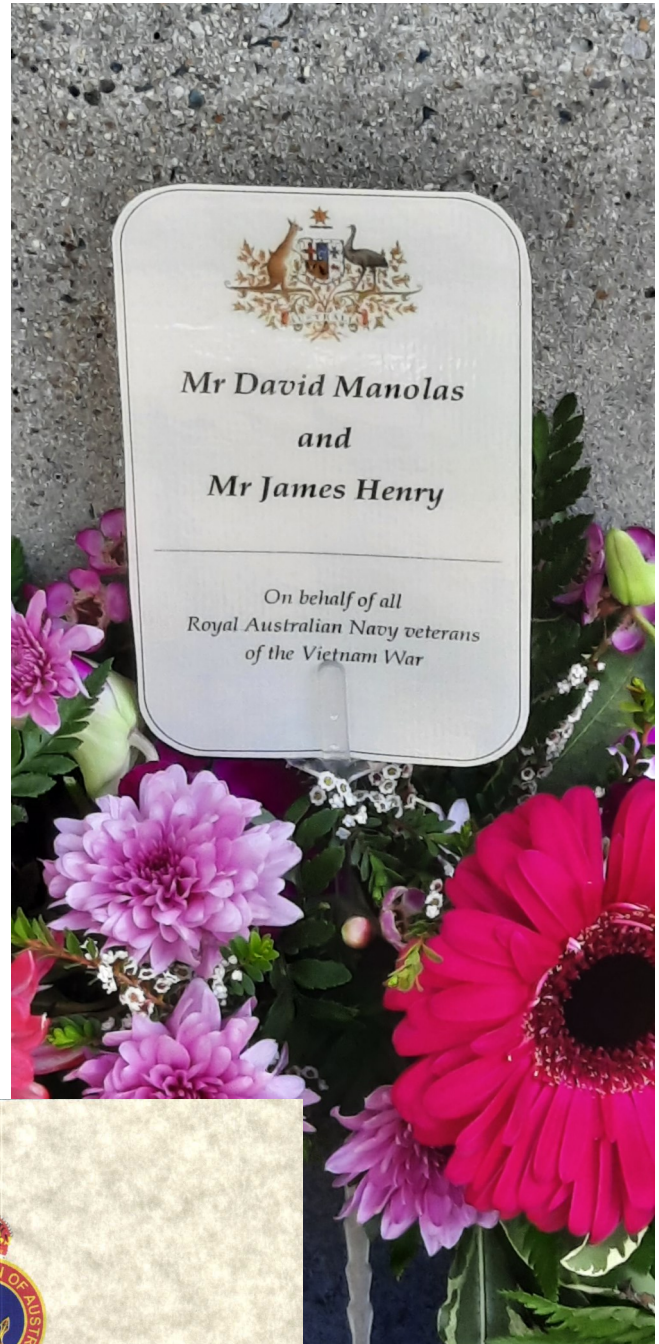
In the Vietnam War the Navy served in long deployments at sea, ashore, in the air and the inland waters of Vietnam. We also served in the logistic support role. All endured the effects to varying degrees, then and soon after, and as with so very many veterans, it would come upon us much later in life. This anniversary is a time for veterans to look back on their service and deservedly reflect with pride at the part they played in Australia's longest twentieth century conflict.

As has been said, 'Vietnam, it changed the lives of all of us!'

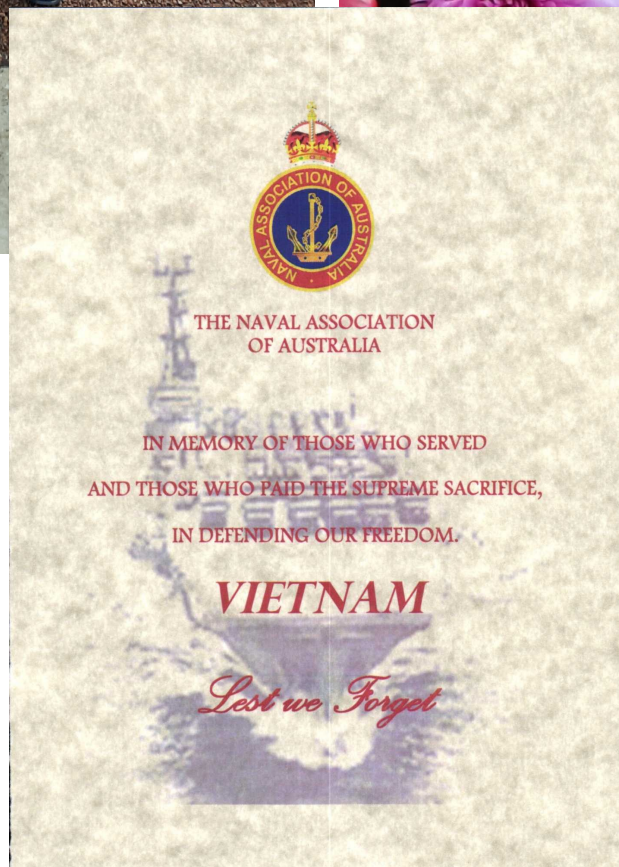
LEST WE FORGET



Above:
David Manolas on
completion of the
Commemorative Service



Above:
Wreath Card laid on behalf of
RAN Vietnam War veterans



Left:
Wreath Card laid on behalf of
the Naval Association of
Australia



VALE

Roy (Tim) Holt

22 May 1925 – 2 August 2023

Last Master at Arms in the RAN
30 July 1973

Sir Peter Cosgrove reflects on the Vietnam War

17 August 2023

As part of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War, General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK CVO MC (Retd) reflects on his experiences of the Vietnam War as a young officer

Sir Peter began his Army career as an officer cadet at the Royal Military College – Duntroon in 1965.

'All of us were breaking our necks to get away on operational service,' he says. 'You wanted to test yourself out. Looking back, it was a fairly immature attitude, but understandable. When we graduated in 1968, a lot of us, soon, found ourselves in Vietnam.'

Sir Peter served in Vietnam from August 1969 to July 1970 and was awarded the Military Cross for an engagement he took part in. He discusses how fighting in Vietnam was very demanding.

'The vegetation, the terrain is so constricted that it requires enormous skill,' he says. 'Self discipline [is essential] ... You tend to work in a way that is almost totally silent ... until combat. And then the silence becomes an overwhelming cacophony – explosions, small arms, people shouting ... you go from apprehension to the realisation of mortal danger.'

Sir Peter went on to become Chief of the Defence Force and Governor-General of Australia.

'I went on to a very long career after Vietnam,' he says. 'But everything I did rested on that experience. And I always enjoyed the opportunity to further be responsible for Australian men and women in uniform as I got more senior.'

'On the 50th anniversary we look back on the entire experience, back to 1962 until January the 11th 1973 when the Whitlam government through the Governor-General proclaimed that this was

the end of our combat operations ... all that's perfectly legitimate. But the demonstrations, the abuse from time to time, heaped upon the men and women who'd [served], who'd seen their comrades die, this was most unfortunate.

'Sixty thousand went off to that war. 523 were killed directly ... about 35,000 remain alive today. I like to think that on the 18th of August, Australians will pause and say "thank you".'



Deep Down You Know It Makes Sense – Some Simple Thoughts About Charting the Course to Australian AUKUS Submarines.

By Commodore Bob Trotter OAM RAN (Rtd)

Synopsis: *Adding the term “nuclear-powered” to “submarine” seems, in some sections of Australian society, including some political, defence and navy circles, to create a sense of something so foreign it’s simply too hard. Undoubtedly the decision to buy such submarines for the Royal Australian Navy brings with it new challenges for Australia but we need not be frightened by them. This is especially so regarding the hull and machinery aspects.*

In the Beginning

In the period shortly after Australia’s first submarines AE1 and AE2 wrote their own histories early in World War 1, Rudyard Kipling said the following about Submariners in an extract from his writings called “Sea Warfare 1914-1918”.

“The Trade lives in the dark and thinks out inconceivable and impossible things which it afterwards puts into practice.”

(The story goes that when an elderly Admiral of the Royal Navy first saw a submarine and the typically dishevelled dress that was an inevitable consequence of service aboard early submarines, he declared that submarines must be manned by a group of ‘tradesmen’. At that time (c. 1910) the term was still a pejorative but, notwithstanding, the Submariners of the day proudly adopted the title ‘The Trade’.)

This engendered an enduring drive and enthusiasm for continual honing of submarine warfare capability and skills absorbed by the members of the Australian Submarine Force, becoming a capability in itself across its 110-year history. It drove our early capability, industrial and scientific development from simply anti-submarine training vehicles for the surface fleet in the 1960s Force, to Anti-ship Missile, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations of the 1980s and beyond. The period was one during which the Force developed an impressive reputation for very long-range operations in the most demanding environment ever required of conventionally powered submarines. This hard-won reputation remains current with the present Collins Class, now regularly surpassing world class standards of performance.

Adding Nuclear Power

In the simplest of terms, nuclear power re-introduces steam turbine propulsion and power generation systems to naval engineering. The heat source for the “boiler” is a nuclear reactor rather than an oil-fired furnace.

Unlike a diesel-electric submarine which needs to suck in air to recharge its battery, a nuclear-powered submarine is completely independent of the ocean surface throughout any deployment. It has virtually unlimited power so decisions can be made with less regard to energy efficiency. For example, it can produce its own oxygen from water,

removed carbon dioxide, power sophisticated self-noise reduction and many other power-hungry equipment. This brings with it new, and more advanced requirements in education and training for the Submarine Enterprise (Naval Personnel, Industry and Science).

However, it is worth noting that even before the nuclear age, the use of steam turbines in submarines was not new. Designed in 1913, Britain’s Royal Navy’s remarkable oil-fired, steam-turbine ‘K’ Class idea, for the submarines to achieve high surfaced speeds so that they could keep up with the Battleships of the Battle Fleet, was tactically good but proved to be a dramatic and tragic failure. (Google ‘The Battle of May Island’ and ‘K13 Memorial Carlingford’).

Achieving a Sovereign Capability

The submarine should be built in Australia; we have done it very successfully before and to the great benefit of Australian industry and the Navy; and we should do it again by pulling together as a Nation.

Focussing on an Australian build will provide the best outcome for our sovereign capability and sustainment. Most, if not all, practitioners in the naval ship and submarine capability profession hold the view, unfiltered by Departmental and political processes and subtleties, that the only way to establish a truly sovereign submarine capability is to ensure its maintenance, logistics and development is home grown. Its very long-term effectiveness is best achieved by embedding the capability, capacity and skills within Australia from the very start by building all of the submarines in Australia. The Government of the day saw that for the Collins Class and took the courageous step of making Australian construction a requirement in the Prime Contractor selection process.

The result was that, starting from a greenfield site, in the relatively short period of ten years Australian industry delivered six highly effective submarines with over 70% Australian content, an excellent basis for sustainment. Moreover, by far the majority of problems which occurred during the construction phase arose with overseas suppliers.

Submarine Enterprise Runs on the Board

- 1914 – 1915 - maintenance of HMAS AE1 and AE2
- 1919 to 1926 - maintenance of six Australian J Class submarines
- 1927 to 1931 - maintenance of two Orion Class submarines
- 1949 to 1966 – maintenance and major overhauls of Royal Navy 4th Submarine Squadron ‘A’ and ‘T’ Class Submarines

(Continued on page 8)

Deep Down You Know It Makes Sense – Some Simple Thoughts About Charting the Course to Australian AUKUS Submarines.

(Continued from page 7)

- 1967 to 1990
 - ◆ Maintenance of Six Oberon Class submarines
 - ◆ 11 major overhauls of the Oberon Class submarines, each comprising 1,000,000 man-hours and of two years duration.
 - ◆ Completion of six Australia Oberon Class submarine weapons updates. Australia's Oberon update program during the 1980s also established a very clever technology capability in Australian industry when high-end capabilities were successfully introduced despite overseas Doubting Thomas's. The major components were as follows:
 - ◇ New, cutting-edge sonars,
 - ◇ Mk 48 Heavyweight torpedo,
 - ◇ 'Harpoon' submarine-launched anti-ship missile system, a world first for diesel-electric submarines,
 - ◇ New digital combat system.
 - ◇ Australian-designed and manufactured slimline, reelable towed array passive sonar; a world first.
- 1990 to 2003. Design development and construction, setting to work, and trials, of six Collins Class submarines.

- 2003 to the present. Full cycle dockings of all Collins Class submarines

We Can!

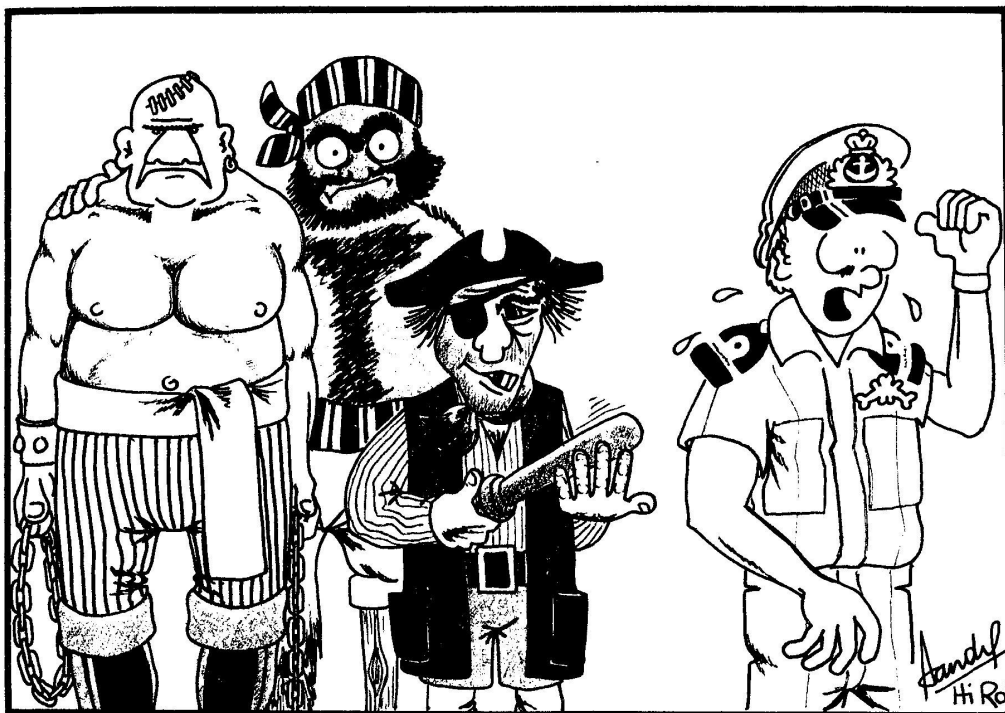
Australia has an impeccable submarine pedigree established over more than a century; its submarines are commanded by highly professional officers supported by crews of the best submariners in any navy; its Force is supported by a world class industry and scientific organisation. Establishing a Force of home-grown nuclear-powered submarines will be hard and will require a huge step-change in education, training, industry and science resources and sheer effort. In the words of Jane MacMaster, Engineers Australia Chief Engineer during a recent ABC 4 Corners programme – "It is possible depending on how we work together."

Commodore Bob Trotter OAM RAN (Rtd)

July 2023

*Their feats, their fortunes and their fames
Are hidden from their nearest kin;
No eager public backs or blames,
No journal prints the yarn they spin
(The Censor would not let it in!)
When they return from run or raid.
Unheard they work, unseen they win.
That is the custom of "The Trade."*

Last verse "The Trade" by Rudyard Kipling



"Sir, the recruiters from the Submarines Enterprise are here. What do you want me to do with them?"

With permission from and apologies to Sandy Freeleagus

Violet McKenzie (Mrs Mac) recognized with a park to be named in her honour in Campbell ACT

A park in Campbell, ACT, will be named after the woman fondly known as 'Mrs Mac' this month to recognise her dedication to service including the creation of the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS). The park will be behind the Campbell shops between White Crescent and Blamey Place.

Violet McKenzie was a driving force behind the early innovative work in signals, wireless and radio, even opening the country's first wireless spares shop – the Dick Smith of the time.

Head of Navy History and Heritage Miesje de Vogel said without Mrs McKenzie's work, Australia wouldn't have been prepared from a signals perspective for WW2.

"Without starting her school for Women's Emergency Signalling Corps (WESC) before the war, Australia would never have had enough trained Morse code operators," Ms de Vogel said.

"At the time, the services did not intend to employ women at all in technical work – until Mrs Mac successfully petitioned Navy to establish the WRANS.

"She led the way in getting people trained, with her graduates finishing quicker, and at better speeds than those being trained by the Army."

The introduction of the WRANS was achieved by McKenzie energetically campaigning to have some of her female trainees accepted into the Air Force and Navy as telegraphists. She encountered a great deal of official resistance. In 1940 she wrote to the Minister of the Navy, former Prime Minister WM (Billy) Hughes, saying "I would like to offer the services of our Signalling Corps, if not acceptable as telegraphists then at least as instructors."

Despite her suggestion being dismissed, In early January 1941, Commander Newman, the Navy's Director of Signals and Communications, visited the WESC headquarters on Clarence Street to test McKenzie's trainees. Finding they were highly proficient, he recommended the Navy admit them. Hughes still took some convincing, but some time later McKenzie and six trainees were provided third-class train tickets to Melbourne to meet with the Naval Board for testing.

Although McKenzie threatened to take her offer to the Air Force instead, the urgent need for trained telegraphists prevailed, and on 21 April a Navy Office letter authorised the entry of women into the



Navy. This was the beginning of the WRANS. The Minister's condition was that "no publicity...be accorded this break with tradition".

McKenzie accompanied 14 of her WESC trainees (twelve telegraphists and two domestic helpers) for their medical tests on 25 April and arrived at HMAS Harman on 28 April 1941. The women were dressed in their green WESC uniform which had been designed by McKenzie herself– it was several months before a female Navy uniform was ready. Francis Proven became WRANS number 1. From this initial intake of 14, the WRANS ranks expanded to some 2,600 by the end of the war, representing about 10 per cent of the entire Royal Australian Naval force at the time.

In May 1941, the Air Force appointed McKenzie as an honorary flight officer of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force, so she could legitimately instruct Air Force personnel. This was the only official recognition McKenzie received during the war for her efforts.

The school provided more than 2000 women to the WRANS and Women's Auxiliary Air Force and an additional 12,000 men from Navy, Army and Air Force with the ability to transmit Morse code. This included American forces who were under-trained on arrival.

Violet McKenzie helped with rehabilitation after the war, keeping her school open for as long as there was a need for instruction in wireless signalling. In the postwar years, she trained men from the merchant navy, pilots in commercial aviation, and others needing the trade qualification known as a "signaller's ticket". In 1948, a reporter from Sky Script visited the school and described the scene, and diversity of the students

In 1950, she was awarded an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for 'voluntary service to the WESC'.

Mrs McKenzie died at Greenwich, in northern Sydney, on May 23, 1982.

In late 2022, the local community was encouraged to nominate names for an existing park area in Campbell. The theme agreed on by the ACT government was 'female Defence personnel'.

From 21 candidate submissions, although only an honorary WRANS, Mrs McKenzie appeared several times and the ACT Place Naming Committee selected her name.

Edited text from Seapower and Wikipedia

Statement from the Department of Veterans' Affairs— Veterans' MATES program

10 August 2023

The Veterans' MATES program has been operating for more than 18 years to provide a valuable proactive service addressing 'real life' health care problems in the veteran community. Specifically, the program seeks to positively change veteran medicine usage, and increase the uptake of complementary DVA funded health services, all to support veteran wellbeing and a reduction in adverse medicine events.

The University of South Australia is contracted by DVA to deliver the Veterans' MATES program on DVA's behalf.

The program takes an evidence based, targeted approach, using a team of clinical experts to develop current health and medicine information, using secure and private billing data to identify members of the veteran community who would benefit from receiving this information.

Identified data is only used to determine veterans who are at risk of medicine related problems, writing to the veteran and their doctor to bring them together to have a positive conversation that is tailored to the veteran's specific health care needs. All other data used in the program is de-identified.

DVA takes privacy very seriously, and we would like to assure veterans and families that DVA and the University of South Australia have strict policies in place to ensure the appropriate protection of personal information, and that ethics approval remains in place, guiding the delivery of the program.

Since the program's inception, the Veterans' MATES program has reached more than 300,000 veterans. Each year approximately 77,000 veterans receive health educational material from Veterans' MATES, specific to their health care needs. Veterans report they find the information useful, and that it empowers them to take an active role in their own health. This targeted and timely information and support for veterans, and their healthcare teams,

has achieved many positive health outcomes across a range of health issues affecting the veteran community. Evidence shows that adverse medicine events have been reduced and that veteran access to suitable health services has increased.

We would like to reassure veterans and families that there has not been a breach of their data, and there is no systemic data security issue. The recent determination by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC) relates to an individual case in 2017 whereby the individual opted out of participation in the program and DVA did not fully implement this request. DVA has unequivocally apologised for this.

Veterans have always had the ability to opt out of the program, however DVA has taken steps to more prominently communicate this, so veterans can make an informed decision about their participation.

The OAIC determination has highlighted that DVA's notices to veterans could include more information about how their billing information would be used for the purpose of the MATES program. More information about privacy, and the ability of veterans to opt-out of the MATES program has been added to DVA's website and MATES program materials.

The Secretary has requested a review of the MATES program to ensure that all requests to opt out of the program have been actioned appropriately, and to provide further assurance of compliance with the opt out provisions under the program.

DVA is engaging with the OAIC openly and in good faith, as it looks to improve its processes.

More information about the MATES program and the use of personal information can be found at [Veterans' MATES | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](https://www.veterans.gov.au) and <https://www.veteransmates.net.au>

Free financial literacy workshops

21 August 2023

A message from UCare Gawler & Veterans Financial Wellbeing

Free financial literacy workshops are available online for veterans, transitioning Australian Defence Force members and families. The workshops are also free for ex-service organisation volunteers and wellness advocates.

The next workshop will take place online via Teams on Thursday 21 September from 1.00pm to 3.00pm (**South Australian time**). Book via [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

The My Money Basics program is run by UCare Gawler in South Australia and sponsored by Good Shepherd Australia and New Zealand. Veterans Financial Wellbeing is funded by the Ecstra Foundation.

The objective is to help participants live within their income, plan for the future, reduce stress and enjoy life more.

You can take part online from anywhere in Australia. However, if you live in the Adelaide region and would prefer a face-to-face workshop, get in touch with UCare Gawler via the email address below. Date and location by arrangement.

Email: veteransfinancialwellbeing.ucg@ucaregawle

The "Forgotten War" no longer

27 July 2023

The Perth Korean War Memorial was unveiled on the 27th July 2023 commemorating the 70th anniversary of the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement.

Located in Kings Park, the memorial recognizes the bravery and sacrifice of the soldiers, sailors, and aviators who fought in Korea. The memorial was opened by the Hon Roger Cook MLA, Premier of Western Australia and His Excellency Mr Kim Wan-joong, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Australia.

Three Pilatus PC-21 aircraft from No. 2 Flying Training School performed a flypast over the ceremony. These aircraft have a similar performance to the P-51 [Mustang] that 77 Squadron flew in Korea.

The campaign for the establishment of a Korean War Memorial at Kings Park began with a small working group created in 2018 and with bi-partisan support from the Hon Peter Tinley AM MLA and the Hon Tjorn Sibma MLC. In March 2019, then Korean Ambassador to Australia, His Excellency Mr Baiksoon Lee was guest speaker at Highgate RSL Sub-Branch and gave a presentation about Aus-

tralia's contribution to the Korean War. It became clear that a formal committee would need to be established to take the project forward and gain the necessary approvals. CDRE Brett Dowsing JP RAN (Rtd) was a member of the Committee

The County of Gapyeong in South Korea donated and shipped the 10 tonne centrepiece stone and plinth for the memorial. This was stored with the assistance of Peter Henderson, Donnybrook Sandstone Supplies and Perth Korean-born sculptor Jina Lee. The stone is from the area where the Battle of Kapyong took place in 1951.

It was a critical year for the Korean War and the men of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment showed great courage in this significant battle. Michael Kelly, an historian at the Australian War Memorial wrote an article for the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 2016 and said that: "The Battle of Kapyong turned the tide of the Korean War, the legacies of which can still be felt today".

From the Defence and Perth Korean War Memorial Committee websites

Right: Korea. 1951. View of the flight deck of HMAS SYDNEY (III) during a blizzard off the Korean coast. Fairey Firefly aircraft are lined up on the left of the photograph with Hawker Sea Furies on the right.

Photo RAN

Below: Senior Navy officer RAAF Pearce, Lieutenant Commander Brad Eaton and 453 Squadron member Pilot Officer Esther Kim at the Perth Korean War Memorial.

Below right: Korean War veterans and VIPs cutting the ribbon at the Perth Korean War Memorial unveiling

Photos: Flying Officer Michael Thomas



HMAS Canberra Memorial Service

When war broke out with Japan on 8 December 1941, HMAS *Canberra* was berthed in Sydney Harbour with more than 175,000 miles of wartime operational steaming to her credit.

Following the outbreak of the Pacific War she continued her role of escort cruiser, convoying troops to New Guinea in January 1942 and convoys to the Malayan/Java theatre. On 7 February 1942 she docked in Sydney for extensive refit work that was not completed until mid May, when she escorted a convoy south to Melbourne. Back in Sydney she lay at anchor not far from the cruiser USS *Chicago* on the night of the Japanese midget submarine attack on 31 May/1 June 1942.

Captain Frank E Getting RAN assumed command of *Canberra* in June 1942. During the same month *Canberra* took part in offensive sweeps in the Coral Sea as part of Task Force 44, which included US Ships *Chicago* and *Salt Lake City*.

In August 1942 *Canberra* operated with the naval force supporting the American landings at Guadalcanal and Tulagi, operations which ended with her loss in the Battle of Savo Island on 9 August 1942.

Canberra was struck by two torpedoes on her starboard side and over 20 salvos of 8-inch shellfire. With power lost and the ship listing, the wounded and survivors were transferred to USS *Patterson* and USS *Blue*.

Rear Admiral RK Turner USN ordered that *Canberra* be abandoned and sunk if she could not steam by 0630.

The 81st anniversary of her loss was commemorated by the ACT Section of the NAA with the support of HMAS Harman's ship's company on the 9th August at the memorial built in Kings Park in 1981 by the ACT Chapter of the Naval Historical Society. It overlooks Canberra's central feature, Lake Burley Griffin.

The service was attended by representatives from local government, Navy veterans, RAN, RAAF, RN, USN and RNZN, ex members of *Canberra* (II) and (III) ship's companies and relatives of those who were lost with HMAS *Canberra* (I).

Edited Seapower History website

Left: Mr Des Jones, sole remaining survivor of HMAS Canberra (i) lays a wreath remembering his shipmates at the HMAS Canberra Memorial in Canberra

Photo: Kathy Masters

Below: HMAS Canberra passing Circular Quay

Photo: Seapower RAN



Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023

Special operations forces from Australia and the United States combined to conduct an audacious 1600km force projection mission from Sydney, Australia, to Norfolk Island as part of Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023.

A small force of Australian special forces soldiers from 2nd Commando Regiment 'seized' the Norfolk Island airport after parachuting in several days earlier. That force element was reinforced by more Australian and US special operations forces on board an MC-130J Commando II (Hercules) aircraft from the US Air Force 353rd Special Operations Wing.

A Royal Australian Air Force C-17A Globemaster aircraft arrived some time later with a United States Marine Corps high-mobility artillery rocket system (HIMARS) from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, which 'fired' a rocket salvo against a small 'enemy' naval warship fleet as part of a coordinated multi-domain strike also involving other land, air, maritime, space and cyber capabilities.

Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023 has seen Australian, PNG and US special operations forces conducting training side-by-side in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and on Norfolk Island from 20 July to 4 August. Canada, New Zealand, South Korea and the United Kingdom also sent special operations forces as observers. More than 30,000 military personnel from 13 nations are taking part in

Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023.

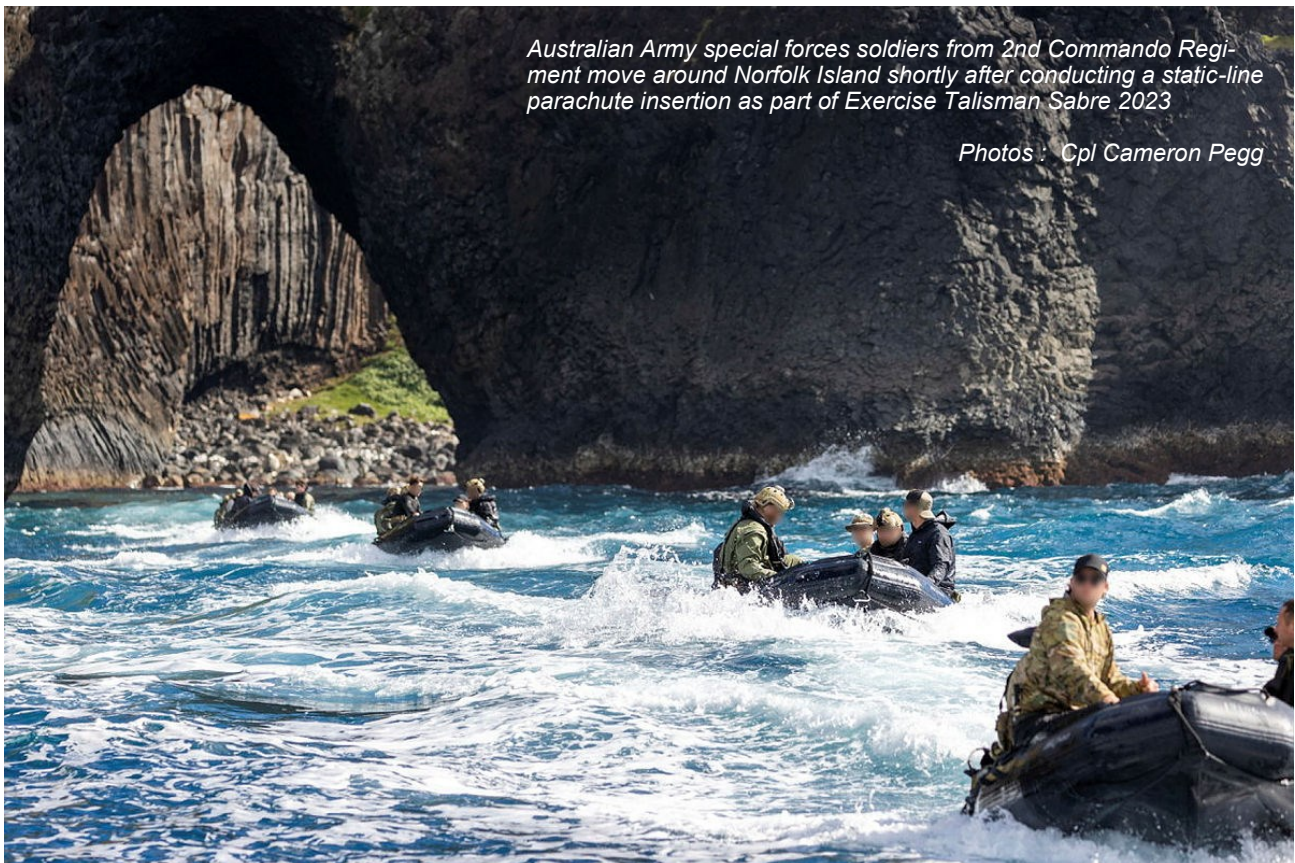
Exercise Talisman Sabre is the largest bilateral military training exercise between Australia and the US. Occurring every two years, Talisman Sabre reflects the closeness and strength of our enduring military relationship with the United States, as well as our commitment to working with likeminded partners across the Indo-Pacific.

Right: An Australian Army special forces soldier from 2nd Commando Regiment parachutes into waters off Norfolk Island as part of Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023



Australian Army special forces soldiers from 2nd Commando Regiment move around Norfolk Island shortly after conducting a static-line parachute insertion as part of Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023

Photos : Cpl Cameron Pegg



DVA CONTACTS

Provider enquiry numbers

- Provider invoicing & billing enquiries: [1300 550 017](tel:1300550017)
- Provider enquiries: [1800 550 457](tel:1800550457)
- Transport bookings: [1800 550 455](tel:1800550455)
- [Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre \(VAPAC\)](#): [1800 552 580](tel:1800552580)

Hearing or speech impairment assistance

- If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the [National Relay Service \(NRS\)](#):
- Talk To You (TTY) users phone [1800 555 677](tel:1800555677) then ask for 1800 838 372
- Speak and Listen users phone [1800 555 727](tel:1800555727) then ask for 1800 838 372
- Internet relay users connect to the [NRS](#)

Claim processing times

Where things are at

In the month of June 2023 we:

- made 6,724 decisions on claims
- received claims from 5,146 veterans
- As at 30 June 2023 we:
- were working on 42,888 claims
- had 32,153 active claims not yet allocated to a decision-maker (known as the claims backlog), lodged by 21,164 veterans

During Financial Year 2022-2023

Claims lodged	68,306
Claims determined	67,817
Acceptance rate for initial liability conditions	74.0%

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 \(1800 838 372\)](tel:1800838372)

International callers:

[+61 2 6289 1133](tel:+61262891133)

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
(Option 2 Allied Health)

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

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

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

OPEN
Veterans & Families
Counselling
ARMS
1800 011 046



**SAFE ZONE
SUPPORT**

FREE ANONYMOUS
COUNSELLING LINE
CALL 1800 142 072

**Defence
Family
Helpline**



1800 624 608

**Defence
All-hours
Support Line**



1800 628 036