

CALL THE HANDS

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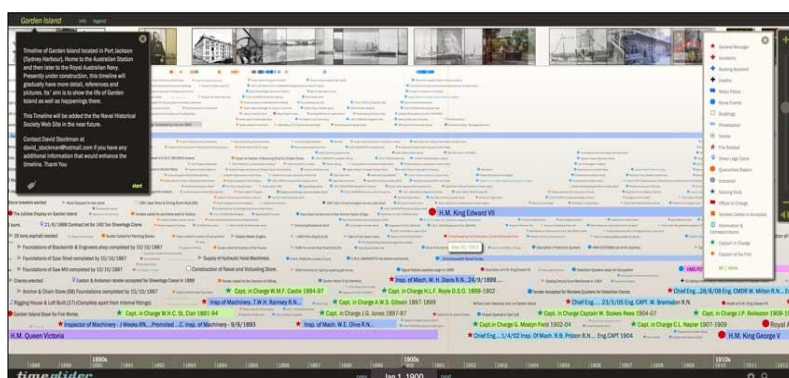
From the President

In the absence of our President this month, it is my pleasure to commend to you the June edition of Call the Hands and accompanying Occasional Papers. In addition to the historical stories we are reminded that history is being made on a regular basis by the Royal Australian Navy with the advent of our new Air Warfare destroyers and the introduction of cutting edge capabilities such as the 'Cooperative Engagement' linking technology recently trialled by HMAS Hobart and HMAS Brisbane.

The biography of Leading Cook Francis Bassett 'Dick' Emms provides us with insight into not just his distinguished service but the shape of the Fleet, its employment and sailors postings during the interwar years.

Several interesting podcasts have come to notice in the past month. Life on the Line has interviewed a number of distinguished former Naval Officers which are well worth listening to. They can be accessed through the website www.lifeonlinepodcast.com. Stan Nicholls at 93 is very interested in Naval History and his son has recorded his comments on service in three of the four HMAS Sydney's that have served the Australian Navy. This video is probably Stan's last and can be found on YouTube at [HMAS Sydney by Stan Nicholls](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HMAS_Sydney_by_Stan_Nicholls). As usual, we are very grateful to members and subscribers for this type of feedback. I would also remind all our readers that our website and Facebook page will keep you in touch with a range of naval historical information.

The June 1866 entry in 'This month in History' relating to the dedication of Garden Island as a permanent Depot for the use of Her Majesty's Ships reminds us that this is just one event in the more than two-hundred-year history of the Island. In addition to the Garden Island heritage page (<https://www.navyhistory.org.au/naval-heritage-sites/garden-island-nsw>) on the Society's website is a detailed timeline also full of fascinating events not widely known. It is well worth a browse, but note that it takes a long time to load.



John Jeremy.
Vice President



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In this Edition

Page	
1	From the President
2	Australia Tests Cooperative Engagement Capability on Air Warfare Destroyer
3	They Also Served – Leading Cook Francis Bassett 'Dick' Emms
4	Carley Life Rafts of WW2
5	HMAS Perth - Canberra Times Monday 19 July 1965
6	Wartime RN wreck discovered off Iceland after 74 years
7	News in Brief
8	Photo of the Month
9	This Month in History
10	Readers Forum and Coming Events
11	Society Matters

Australia Tests Cooperative Engagement Capability on Air Warfare Destroyer

Australia's new guided-missile destroyers successfully tested a new wide-area air defence system this month.

The Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) first-of-class air warfare destroyer HMAS Hobart and its sister ship NUSHIP Brisbane have successfully completed a series of user trials this month to test the so-called cooperative engagement capability (CEC), a new wide-area integrated air defence system, the Australian Department of Defence (DoD) said on April 17. CEC allows the real-time sharing of sensor data on air targets, including incoming enemy aircraft and cruise missiles, among CEC-equipped warships.



The CEC tests took place in April off the coast of South Australia. CEC allows one ship to engage an incoming target based on the other ship's data. The Hobart-class air warfare destroyers are the first warships outside the U.S. Navy to be equipped with CEC. CEC "is one technology that will form a part of the Australian Joint Integrated Fires Capability being implemented in the Australian Defence Force," the DoD added.

"Together Hobart and Brisbane bring revolutionary air defence capabilities – not by adding new radars or weapon systems, but by utilizing existing sensors and weapons in a more effective manner," Australian Minister of Defense Marise Payne said. "In the coming years, the Australian Joint Integrated Fires capability will link our ships, aircraft and land-based assets to create an increasingly sophisticated air defence network that can see over the horizon." In her statement, Payne emphasized that CEC will enable closer cooperation between the RAN and its most important ally, the U.S. Navy:

Not only does this capability enable us, for the first time, to share targeting data in real time between ADF assets, it will also enable us to share it with United States assets, providing new levels of interoperability within a coalition force. Australia is the first international partner outside the United States to gain access to this cutting-edge technology, further demonstrating the strong alliance between our two countries.

CEC interfaces with the Aegis combat system and will enhance its early detection capabilities. The new Hobart-class is the RAN's first surface warship to be built around the U.S.-made Aegis combat system. Each ship will be equipped with the AN/SPY-1, an advanced, automatic detect and track, multi-function phased-array radar system, which will be paired with the MK 41 Vertical Launching System, capable of firing Raytheon's Standard Missiles (SM) of all variants as well as the RIM-162 Evolved Sea Sparrow Missile.

Credit: <http://www.thediplomat.com>

They Also Served – Leading Cook Francis Bassett ‘Dick’ Emms

Francis Bassett ‘Dick’ Emms was born at Launceston, Tasmania on 28 November 1909 and joined the Royal Australian Navy on 14 March 1928. He undertook initial training as an Ordinary Seaman at HMAS Cerberus and on completion he joined HMAS Canberra in March 1929. He served in her until July 1930, during which time the ship operated mainly off the east coast of Australia. He was promoted to Able Seaman in January 1930 and later qualified as a gunnery rating. Although he had been christened as Francis he was known to his shipmates as Richard or Dick, and rarely used his given name.

He spent much of the next seven years in the Seaman Branch, which included postings to Cerberus (1930-31) and HMAS Australia (1931-33). The cruiser took part in the normal training exercises off the east coast, coupled with a winter cruise to Queensland and a summer cruise to Tasmanian waters. Australia also circum-navigated the continent in late 1931 and ‘showed the flag’ visiting New Guinea and the Solomon Islands in the latter part of 1932.

In November 1933 Emms was posted to the Sydney depot ship HMAS Penguin and later served in the destroyers HMAS Waterhen (1934) and HMAS Vendetta (1934-35). In April 1935 he joined the old coal burning cruiser HMAS Brisbane, which was sent to England for scrapping. Her crew then became the commissioning crew of HMAS Sydney (II). Dick Emms then served in Sydney (II) from September 1935 until April 1937.



It was in 1936, while serving in the Middle East in Sydney (II), working with the Royal Navy, that his eyesight began to deteriorate, and rather than leave the Navy he was offered the chance to transfer to the Supply Branch. In January 1937, he underwent a short cookery course at Cerberus to assess his suitability, and on 9 February 1937 he was re-rated as a Cook (Officers). Emms was then posted to the destroyer HMAS Stuart in April 1937 and served in her until June 1938, during which time the ship operated off the east coast of Australia. Dick Emms was promoted to Acting Leading Cook (Officers) in April 1938.

Following service in Stuart he was posted to the sloop HMAS Swan (1938-39) and the depot ship Penguin (1939-40) where he was confirmed in the rank of Leading Cook. He served again briefly in Canberra during 1940. In September 1940 Dick Emms was posted to the Darwin shore depot HMAS Melville where he was employed as a cook at the base, and in the boom defence vessels which operated the world’s largest anti-submarine boom in Darwin harbour.

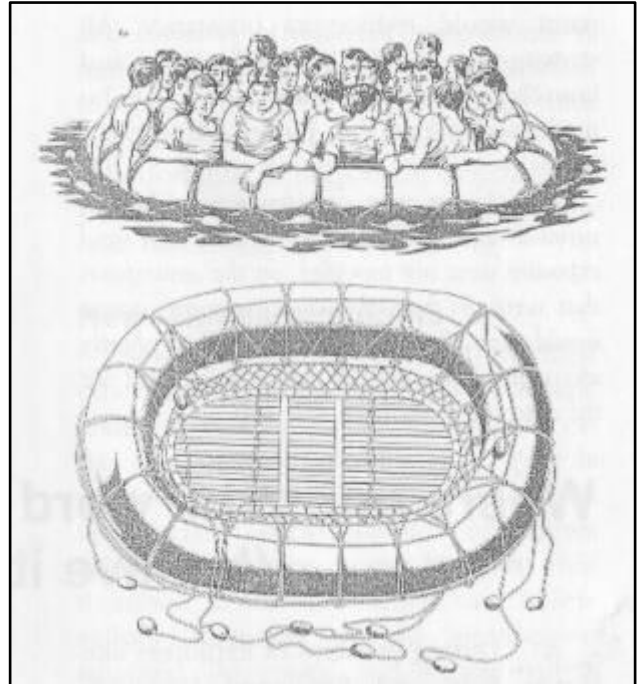
On 19 February 1942 Leading Cook Emms was serving onboard the boom defence vessel HMAS Kara Kara when the Japanese conducted their first air raid on Darwin. During this raid dozens of Japanese aircraft attacked ships in the harbour, the RAAF airfield, and bombed the city indiscriminately. Eight ships were sunk, dozens of aircraft destroyed, nearly 200 people were killed and many others seriously injured. During the attack Kara Kara was singled out by several Japanese aircraft which commenced strafing the vessel. Emms manned one of the ship’s machine guns and returned fire, and continued to do so even after he had been seriously wounded. His constant and accurate fire forced the Japanese aircraft to break off their attack and probably saved the lives of several of his shipmates.

Dick Emms was badly wounded as a result of the attack and died while being transferred to the hospital ship HMAS Manunda. He and several other men killed were buried at sea later that evening. He was subsequently awarded a posthumous Mention in Dispatches: ‘...for continuing to fire his machine gun although mortally wounded, thereby probably saving the ship and many of the ship’s company’. Many of his shipmates believed he should have been awarded the Victoria Cross. His medals and awards included a Mention in Dispatches, 1939-45 Star, Pacific Star, Defence Medal, 1939-45 War Medal and the Australian Service Medal 1939-45.

Carley Life Rafts of WW2

The Carley life-float (Admiralty Seamanship Manual 1956 terminology) was the principal method of lifesaving equipment during WW2, fitted to all warships, and not superseded by the present form of inflatable life rafts until the mid 1950s.

It was designed to float either side uppermost and comprised a copper tube of large diameter formed into an oval ring and divided by internal bulkheads into watertight compartments. (A shrapnel-damaged example, reputedly from HMAS *Sydney* – sunk in action with the German raider *Kormoran* in 1941 – is on display at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra). Each compartment was fitted with an air-valve to enable it to be air-tested for watertightness. The body of the raft was covered with a layer of cork parcelled with grey-painted canvas. A platform of slatted wood was slung from the inner edge of the oval body of the float by rope netting and a life-line, fitted with wooden or cork floats, was becketed round the outer side of the raft.



The float (raft) was fitted also with a painter (line), a buoyant light, a wooden box containing water in tins and emergency equipment, and a set of wooden paddles which were to be secured to the raft by lanyards at intervals, rove through holes drilled through their grips.

The rafts were supplied to the RN and HMA ships in two sizes and each size was designated by either its Pattern number or (more usually) by the number of persons (survivors) it was rated to support, both inside and outside the raft (e.g. a 20-man raft would support 12 men inside on the platform and 8 more outside clinging to the beackets of the lifeline). The rafts could be stowed in a nested stowage flat on deck, on platforms such as the tops of turrets, on sloping skids, or upright against a screen near the ship's side. They could also be slung upright from the sides of the superstructure or from the shrouds of a mast, whence they could be slipped to fall clear of the ship's side into the water. When slung from the superstructure, the sling comprised three legs spliced on a ring; the two lower legs shackled to eyebolts in the superstructure and the upper leg held by a rigging slip shackled to an eyebolt in the superstructure.



Carley Raft stowages on aircraft carrier
HMAS Vengeance

The rafts were not to be repainted because the weight of successive coats of paint would reduce its buoyancy. All stowage's, slings, equipment and launching arrangements were to be inspected at least at 6 monthly intervals.

The longer-term considerations of human survival and protection from cold, wet and exposure were not provided, on the assumption that survivors from shipwreck or enemy action would normally expect to be picked up shortly afterwards. Unfortunately this was all too frequently just not the case, out in the open sea.

The RAN receives its new destroyer

BOSTON, Sunday. — The guided missile destroyer HMAS Perth was formally turned over to the Royal Australian Navy yesterday.

Its crew marched aboard as a US Navy band played a version of Waltzing Matilda.

The Perth is the first warship ever built in the US which was ordered and paid for by a foreign power.

The \$45 million (£20 million) 4,500 ton, 437 ft long Charles F. Adams class destroyer was turned over to the Royal Australian Navy at the Boston naval shipyard where it was completed.

Air defence work

The ship was accepted by Australia's Ambassador to Washington, Mr Keith Waller, from Vice Admiral John McCain, of the US Navy.

Mr Waller's uncle had served aboard the first Perth, which was sunk in an engagement with the Japanese off Java during World War II.

The Perth, equipped with guided missiles and with a top speed of more than 30 knots, will be used for air defence of the fleet and also for anti-submarine work.

It has a crew of 20 officers and 312 enlisted men.

The ceremonies were attended by more than 250 people.

Members of the official party included the Australian High Commissioner to Canada, Sir Kenneth Bailey, the Chief of Naval Staff for the RAN, Vice Admiral Alan McNichol, and the British Consul General in Boston, Mr J. C. Curle.

The Lord Mayor of Perth, Cr Charles Veryard, gave the Perth's captain, Captain Ian Cartwright, a painting of the City of Perth.

After Mr Waller accepted the ship, a document was signed to signify the formal handing over.

Short prayers were then read by two Australian padres, the Rev George Denning and the Rev George Peck.

Australia's Minister of Defence, Senator Paltridge, sent a message of congratulations.

The keel of the Perth was laid by the Defoe Shipbuilding Co in Bay City, Michigan, in 1962.

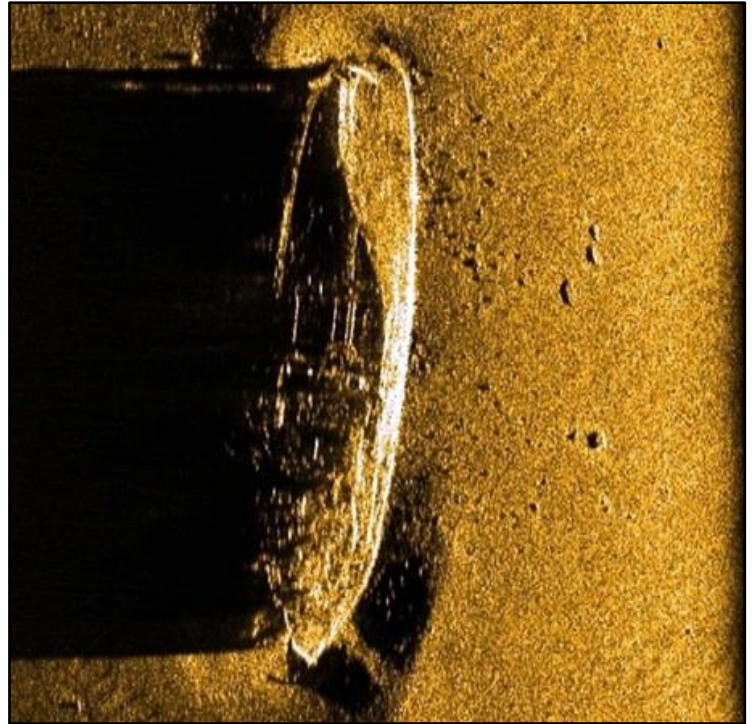
It is the first of three guided missiles destroyers to be built in the US for the RAN. The other two, yet to be completed, are the Hobart and the Brisbane.

Wartime RN wreck discovered off Iceland after 74 years

Nearly three quarters of a century after she mysteriously disappeared on a rescue mission, the wreck of naval tug Empire Wold has been discovered – and the tragic fate of her 16 crew revealed.

Crewed by a mix of Royal and Merchant Navy personnel, the Sunderland-built vessel was sent to Iceland to support Allied convoys crossing the Atlantic or sailing for the Soviet Union.

On November 10 1944, storm force winds lashed Iceland forcing an approaching convoy from Loch Ewe in Scotland to scatter. As it did, a lurking German submarine, U-300 picked off the tanker Shirvan two dozen miles southwest of Iceland's capital Reykjavik. Survivors were picked up by an Icelandic vessel, the Godafoss, only for it too to fall victim to the U-boat. Torpedoed, the Godafoss sank in just four minutes. Also heading for the Shirvan's last reported position was the military tug Empire Wold. She never got there.



Some historians believed Empire Wold had become another victim of the German submarine, although U-300's surviving crew were adamant they had not sunk the tug when their U-boat was sunk off Gibraltar the following February.

Now the Icelandic Coastguard has discovered the wreck and confirmed the U-boat's crew account. After sonar found the wreck on the seabed – some distance from the tug's last reported position – a submersible was sent down to inspect the vessel and reveal its identity. The coastguard team found no signs of any explosion and, having consulted contemporary weather reports from 1944, determined that the tug probably foundered in heavy seas and 40-knot winds.

Lost with her were seven Royal Navy personnel, led by 38-year-old reservist Lieutenant David Morris, and nine Merchant Navy sailors, including the tug's 40-year-old Master, Henry Draper, from Gravesend, and Second Engineer Oswin 'Happy Harry' Green.

His widow María Elisabet Frederiksen still lives in Iceland at the age of 94. She was left looking after the couple's daughter, Thórunn Elísabet Green, just nine months old.

As the last resting place of Royal Navy sailors, the wreck is now protected by law and its precise location is not being revealed by the Icelandic authorities.



News in Brief

- AWD Alliance, the alliance in charge of delivering Royal Australian Navy 's air warfare destroyers launched the third and final destroyer in the class in a ceremony on Saturday, May 19 NUSHIP Sydney, as the ship is to be named, will be launched at ASC's Adelaide shipyard. Sydney is entering the water two and a half years after construction on the ship officially started with a keel-laying ceremony in December 2015. The launching ceremony starts at approximately 9.45am (ACST) and will be live streamed, according to AWD Alliance. NUSHIP Sydney will be delivered to the Royal Australian Navy sometime in 2019, following further outfitting and sea trials. The lead ship in the class, HMAS Hobart, has already entered service. The second ship, future HMAS Brisbane, started sea trials in November 2017 and will be delivered to the navy mid-2018.



- The Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) Anzac-class frigate HMAS Arunta is currently undergoing the Anzac midlife capability assurance programme (AMCAP). HMAS Arunta is also scheduled to undergo a platform systems obsolescence programme that has been designed to increase platform reliability and maintainability. The programme also includes the modernisation of the Australian vessel's communications systems through the integration of SEA 1442 Phase 4. HMAS Arunta is expected to be back in service with the Australian Navy by the end of 2019, while upgrades on the remaining seven vessels of the class are expected to be completed by 2023.



- Two Royal Australian Navy helicopters were flown more than 11,185 miles (18,000km) from Scotland to Australia following the crews' involvement in military training. The machines were transported from RAF Lossiemouth in Moray by a pair of Royal Australian Air Force C-17A Globemaster III aircraft at the end of Exercise Joint Warrior earlier this month. To attend the training, the MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopters, along with aircrew, maintenance workforce and required support equipment and spare parts had to be first transported from New South Wales, Australia, in April on the Globemasters. The Sea Hawks were offloaded at RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire and then flown by their own aircrews to Scotland to take part in anti-submarine warfare training. The helicopters also made training sorties over Loch Ness.



Photo of the Month:



HMAS Melbourne at the Queen's Silver Jubilee Naval Review, Spithead England, June 1977

This Month in History

June 1831	HMS COMET, (sloop, 18 guns), was stationed at Port Jackson, Sydney. The vessel was used for punitive expeditions in the Pacific Islands.
June 1866	The Government Gazette proclaimed: 'The whole of Garden Island is now therefore permanently dedicated as a Depot for the use of Her Majesty's Ships'. Garden Island, Sydney, occupied 12 acres at this time. By 1900 it had grown to 19 acres due to reclamation, and in 1980 it was 2.5 acres.
June 1889	The fleet of the State of Victoria consisted of HMV Ships NELSON, (cut-down 1st rate); CERBERUS, (turret ship); BATMAN, and FAWKNER, (armed auxiliaries); CHILDERS, NEPEAN, and LONSDALE, (torpedo boats); VICTORIA, and ALBERT, (gunboats); GORDON, COMMISSIONER, and LION, (torpedo launches); GANNET, (armed tug); and LADY LOCH, (armed auxiliary).
June 1913	The battle-cruiser HMAS AUSTRALIA, (CAPT S. H. Radcliffe, RN), was commissioned at Portsmouth, England. AUSTRALIA was laid down in John Brown Yard, Clydebank, Scotland, on 23 June 1910, and launched on 25 October 1911. Lady Reid, (Wife of the Australian High Commissioner), performed the ceremony.
June 1918	HMA Ships SYDNEY and MELBOURNE, were on patrol in the Heligoland Bight with British warships, (as part of the Harwich Force), searching for German minesweepers and destroyers, when they came under attack from two German aircraft who dropped five bombs near the ships. SYDNEY and MELBOURNE each had a Sopwith Camel fighter onboard, which could be launched from a specially built revolving platform. The aircraft from MELBOURNE, (piloted by Flight Lieutenant Gibson, RAF), lost sight of the German aircraft he attacked when it flew into a large cloud bank. However, Flight Lieutenant A. C. Sharwood, RAF, who was piloting the aircraft from SYDNEY, pursued the other aircraft for over sixty miles. Sharwood managed to hit the enemy aircraft several times, and saw it go into a nose dive before he was forced to break off the attack, when he in turn was attacked by another German fighter. One of Sharwood's guns jammed, and he was forced to break off the attack on the second aircraft and make his way back to the Allied ships. He eventually put his aircraft down near HMS SHARPSHOOTER, (destroyer). The aircraft started to sink, and he was rescued by a boat from the destroyer. His aircraft was then salvaged by HMS CANTERBURY. Unfortunately for Sharwood he received no formal recognition of his efforts on that day.
June 1928	Captain Charles Kingsford Smith, in his aircraft Southern Cross, completed the first trans-Pacific flight The aircraft was guided in the last leg of its history making flight by the RAN's wireless station at Garden Island, Sydney, which relayed messages through Australian destroyers stationed in the Tasman and Coral Seas.
June 1935	HMAS BRISBANE, (cruiser), was ordered to assist HMS HASTINGS, (sloop), which ran aground on Shab Kutle Reef in the Red Sea. The cruiser stood by the stranded ship for a week until she was freed.
June 1942	Australian Coastwatcher SBLT Cornelius Lyons Page, RANVR, was captured by the Japanese on Tabar Island. Page was later executed
June 1944	HMAS MATAFELE was sunk. 4 officers, 20 ratings, and 13 native crew lost their lives
June 1953	The Coronation Review of the Fleet, by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, took place at Spithead, England. HMAS SYDNEY represented the RAN at this review.
June 1968	At 0300 the destroyer HMAS HOBART, (CAPT K. W. Shands, RAN), was accidentally attacked by a US Air Force F-4 fighter, off Cap Lay, Vietnam. The aircraft fired a total of three missiles at HOBART, in two separate attacks. All three missiles hit the ship, and two RAN personnel, Ordinary Seaman R. J. Butterworth, and CPO R. H. Hunt, were killed, and seven others wounded. An enquiry into the incident revealed that due to the darkness, the pilot of the aircraft mistook the radar picture of the ship as an enemy helicopter.
June 1973	The first Hawker Siddeley 748 transport aircraft was delivered to the RAN's Fleet Air Arm. The new aircraft replaced the Dakota transports in service since World War II.
June 1977	HMAS MELBOURNE, (aircraft carrier), launched two of her Wessex helicopters, each carrying a World War II cannon, from a position off Crete, and delivered the pieces to the newly built Cretan-Australian War Memorial at Stavromenos. Fifteen minutes later the helicopters returned with a section of the, band which played the National Anthems of both nations.
June 1977	HMA Ships MELBOURNE, and BRISBANE represented Australia at the Queen's Silver Jubilee Naval Review, at Spithead England. MELBOURNE was the oldest, and the largest ship at the Review.
June 1984	A flight of Grumman Tracker aircraft flew over the decommissioned HMAS MELBOURNE, (aircraft carrier), to mark the end of fixed wing aircraft in the RAN's Fleet Air Arm.
June 1989	CDRE M. Taylor, RAN, Commanding Officer of Naval Air Station, HMAS ALBATROSS, Nowra, NSW, and LEUT K. Champion, flew the RAN's last UH 1B Iroquois helicopter flight.
June 2004	The frigate HMAS NEWCASTLE, (CAPT T. N. Jones, CSC, RAN), was en-route to Hawaii for Exercise Rimpac 04, when she was diverted to rescue three Danish sailors from the yacht TICO TICO. The yacht had been badly damaged when it capsized near a Fijian atoll, and the three crew were forced into a life raft. A RNZAF Orion aircraft on patrol, picked up a signal from the yacht's distress beacon, and guided NEWCASTLE to the raft. The crew had been in the life raft for over 48 hours when NEWCASTLE's helicopter arrived on the scene and winched them to safety.

The Society's website enables you to look up any event in RAN history. Searches can be made by era, date look up or today. The latter appears on the home page. The others are accessed via the Research page.

<https://www.navyhistory.org.au/research/on-this-day/>

Readers Forum and Coming Events

For the Diary

- 1st June HMAS Kuttabul Memorial service at Garden Island. There is an account of the attack on Sydney Harbour by Japanese midget submarines on the NHS website at <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/naval-heritage-sites/garden-island-nsw/1940-today/>.
- 20th June. The society's volunteers will gather at Club York, 99 York Street in Sydney for lunch and a chance to celebrate volunteering with the Society. It will also be an opportunity to recognise Norm Rivett – a Foundation Member of the Society who bid the Boatshed farewell for the last time on 24 May.
- 21st June The NHSA (WA) will host a presentation by CDRE Brett Dowsing entitled 'History of the Military and naval battles for Rabaul' in the Seminar Room, 57 Lisle Street, Mount Claremont.
- 17th July NHSA meeting in the RSL Chatswood when John Smith will discuss 'Napoleon. The RN and me'

New Material

We recently received a new DVD entitled 'The Hero's – Operation Jaywick'. The DVD covers the actions of Z Force and their remarkable voyage in the Krait to mine shipping in Singapore during WWII. This DVD is available for purchase from www.buckleyfilms.com.au and is recommended by our librarian.



Society Matters

Society Library

The Society maintains an extensive research library of naval books and other publications which are available to members and volunteers conducting research and writing for the Society. It also facilitates responses to numerous requests for information from the public. Additions to the collection are always welcomed from people downsizing or who simply no longer require their books.

If you are in this situation and would like to assist by donating books on Australian naval history please contact our librarian. We would be particularly grateful for copies of books from the series published by the Naval Historical Society in its early years entitled "Ships of the Royal Australian Navy". This series included books on HMA Ships; Sydney, Hobart, Parramatta, Adelaide, Yarra, Canberra, Perth and Australia. It also included volumes on the WW2 Fremantle submarine base, WRANs, Clearance Diving Branch, N Class destroyers and the scrap iron destroyers.

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Naval Historical Review

Become a member to receive quarterly copies of the Naval Historical Review the Society's flagship magazine. <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/membership/>

Tours of Garden Island, Sydney

Tours of Garden Island provided by Society volunteers on Thursdays are very popular with organized groups and retired naval personnel and their families. Tours of 1.5 to 2 hours which take in historic sites and buildings in the Dockyard including the Captain Cook Graving Dock are preceded by an introductory video in the Boatshed, Garden Island. Groups and individuals generally arrive by ferry from Circular Quay but arrangements can also be made for groups arriving by coach. The cost is \$20 per person. Should you be interested in booking a tour start by visiting the website, calling or e-mailing the Tour Coordinators.

Phone: (02) 9359 2243) Thursdays only

E-Mail: tours@navyhistory.org.au

Website: <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/garden-island-tours/>

Subscription

Should you become aware of others who wish to receive *Call The Hands* they should be advised to register by e-mailing the Society at callthehands@navyhistory.org.au. Current subscribers can unsubscribe by emailing the same email address.

Further Reading

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