CALL THE HANDS

Issue No. 33

August 2019

From the President

Welcome to this 33rd edition of Call the Hands and Occasional Papers 60 and 61.

Occasional Paper 61 about the service life of Able Seaman Panos George Livery during WW2 can be accessed via the <u>Society's website</u>. It was too large for attachment to the covering e-mail. The website <u>Research page</u> where Occasional pages are posted also provides access to more than 2,000 stories previously published by the Society. Readers can search by selecting a category or key word.

On 22 July it was pleasure to attend the presentation evening conducted by the Society's Chapter in Melbourne. A warm welcome by VP John Redman, Marty Grogan and other Committee members in the absence of President Rex Williams was very much appreciated as was the opportunity to meet many of our Victorian members. We wish Rex who was laid low in hospital a speedy recovery.

The main reason for the visit was to present first prize for our essay competition on autonomous ships won by Lieutenant Mario de Angelis. Mario's excellent essay which addressed the many considerations associated with development of autonomous vessels; technical, operational and regulatory was published in the June 2019 edition of the Naval Historical Review. Congratulations Mario and thanks to the Chatswood RSL Club for its generous support.

Attendance at Society presentation evenings conducted in Melbourne, Sydney, Perth, and Canberra are not only an opportunity to hear interesting presentations but to socialize with many other like-minded members and friends. Details of coming events which are pen to all are available on the Society's website home page. Non-members are also welcome. Visit the website home page for coming <u>upcoming events</u>.

Whilst in Melbourne I visited HMAS Castlemaine berthed at Williamstown and warmly welcomed aboard by Dennis Gail from the Castlemaine Trust who provided a tour of the ship which is wonderfully conserved and presented as a floating museum. Naturally, Bathurst Class mine sweepers are the focus of the collection. Castlemaine is quite unique as a floating museum in that visitors can access all spaces including the boiler and engine rooms. It is very child friendly. Congratulations to Dennis and his team of volunteers for maintaining the ship in such wonderful condition. If you can help them locate an Oerlikon gun to complete Castlemaine's fit out they would be most appreciative.

David Michael President

Support the Society

Although Call the Hands is a free service to the community, produced by volunteers there are costs. Our objective is simply to promote understanding of Australian naval history. Voluntary contributions are essential to deliver this service to readers. If you value our work <u>please consider a donation</u>. <u>https://www.navyhistory.org.au/donate/</u>



The Naval Historical Society of Australia

> ABN 71 094 118 434 Patron: Chief of Navy

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In this Edition

Page	
1	From the President
2	Vice Admiral Sir Guy Charles Cecil Royle KCB, CMG
3	News in Brief
4	Readers Forum
4	It's Never Too Late - Medals For 17 Australian Heroes
5	Three Awarded Navy and Marine Corp Commendation Medals
7	Able Seaman Peter George Livery: Occasional Paper 61
7	Photos of the Month
8	Treacherous Bougainville Reef
8	Royal Navy Collier 'Atlas' grounding on Bougainville Reef
9	Convoy TN 192 Grounding on Bougainville Reef
9	HMAS Castlemaine: Museum Ship
10	This Month in History
11	HMS Sirius: 230th Anniversary of Loss
11	Occasional papers
11	Society Matters

Vice Admiral Sir Guy Charles Cecil Royle KCB, CMG

Vice Admiral Royle served in the RAN as First Naval Member, Australian Commonwealth Naval Board and Chief of the Naval Staff from 18 July 1941 to 28 June 1945.

Between 1924 and 1934, after service in the First World War, Royle held the post of naval attaché in the British Embassy, Tokyo and became a specialist in the field of naval aviation. In 1933 he commanded the aircraft carrier HMS Glorious for a year, followed by two years as Naval Secretary to the First Lord of the Admiralty, London. He took the appointment of Vice-Admiral Commanding Aircraft Carriers from 1937 to 1939, and returned to sea duty commanding the aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal, between 1939 and 1940. He then took a position in the Admiralty again, as Fifth Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Service between 1940 and 1941. He was knighted in 1941 and in June 1941, he was appointed to the position of Chief of the Naval Air Service of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) until 1945. He retired from the RAN in 1946 and was appointed Yeoman Usher of the Black Rod and from 1948 was Secretary to the Lord Great Chamberlain. He died on 4 January 1954, aged 69.

Source: Australian War Memorial, available at, https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/ART90537/



Portrait of Vice Admiral Sir Guy Charles Cecil Royle KCB, CMG, AWM image by Ronald Keith Monro

News in Brief

HMAS Ballarat returned home on 14 July after a nine-month deployment and seizing over \$1B worth of drugs in Middle East

HMAS Ballarat worked together with the international Combined Maritime Forces to seize nearly 20 tonnes of illicit drugs worth an estimated AUD\$1.41 billion. Drug seizures included approximately 19.76 tonnes of hashish, 1.41 tonnes of heroin and 50 kilograms of methamphetamine and amphetamine.

Ballarat's patrol area ranged from the North Arabian Gulf to the

Southern Indian Ocean. The ship also integrated with two carrier strike groups and took part in several highend warfighting exercises with the navies of the US, UK, France and Gulf Cooperation Council states.

Last piece of a US aircraft carrier's flight deck is installed

The US Navy's newest, digitally-built, aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) now has a complete flight deck after shipbuilder Huntington Ingalls Industries lifted the final bow section into place.

The addition of the upper bow section is one of the last steel structural units, known as a superlift, to be placed on Kennedy. It was built using digital technology, such as visual work instructions to install piping in the upper bow on the final assembly platen instead of on the ship. Weighing 780 tons, the superlift took 18 months to build.

Kennedy is being built with an improved build strategy that includes the increased use of digital tools to build superlifts that are much larger and more complete at ship erect than on prior carriers.

The carrier's christening is planned for late 2019. Video: (CVN 79) Upper Bow Lift

500-Year-Old Shipwreck Located Intact in Baltic Sea

Laying on the muddy floor of the frigid inland Baltic Sea, scientists have found an almost perfectly preserved and intact shipwreck, undisturbed for hundreds of years.

Based on its incredible preservation, archaeologists have been able to date the ship back to the Renaissance. That's around the late 15th or early 16th century CE, the time of Christopher Columbus and Leonardo da Vinci.

The precise origin of the ship is unknown. It's from a time before naming ships was common; for now, it's been labelled Okänt Skepp - "Unknown Ship" in Swedish.

Video: Intact Renaissance Shipwreck in the Baltic







Readers Forum

Able Seaman Peter G Livery

Dear NHS

Not sure whether you call for photos but would like to submit a photo of my father and his mates re WW2 for possible photo of the month.

This photo was taken in March 1943 at Jack Dempsey's Bar in New York. The sailors were survivors of the sinking of HMAS Canberra and were part of the HMS Wolfe contingent heading to London to pick up the *Shropshire*. Little did they realize that this was the party before the storm and crossing the Atlantic amidst the U-boats.



HMAS Canberra Survivors at Jack Dempsey's Bar New York City, 8 March 1943

Regards Florence Livery

PS My father Peter G Livery is far left

By Editor: We are most grateful to Florence for not only providing this image of her father and his shipmates but also providing a biography of her father which has been published as Occasional Paper 60. A summary of the Paper is provided on page 7 as it is too large to attach to an e-mail. It may be accessed on the Society website at https://www.navyhistory.org.au/research/occasional-papers/.

Loss of USS Frank E Evans: 50th Anniversary

Readers may recall that in the July 2019 edition of *Call the Hands* Tony Horton reminded us of the tragic day in USN and RAN history when USS Frank E Evans was lost. This occurred on 3 June 1969 during a combined exercise in the South China Sea. Tony also reminded us that a fiftieth anniversary commemorative event had been conducted in California. Our thanks go to Steve Kraus, President of the USS Frank E Evans Association for providing the following stories.

It's Never Too Late - Medals For 17 Australian Heroes

By Steve Kraus

In late March 2019 the USS Frank E. Evans Association received a query regarding 17 shipmates that were aboard HMAS Melbourne on the dreadful morning of 3 June 1969. According to the communication it was believed they had been recommended for a Navy Commendation clear back in October 1970. However, they were never presented the medals because Australian law prohibited Australian Military personnel from wearing a foreign country's medal.

The Association's immediate response was that we knew several sailors aboard HMAS Melbourne who had acted in a heroic manner during the recovery of USS Frank E. Evans Sailors, but we were unsure of their identities.

Upon further investigation we learned that 17 of HMAS Melbourne's crew members had been recognized by the United States Navy and recommended for receipt of medals. Those recipients are:

Navy and Marine Corps Medal

Air Medal

LEUT Robert Burns AB Alan Evett AB Patrick Richardson LCDR Leslie Powell LCDR Des Rodgers CMDR Geoffrey Vickeridge

Navy Commendation Medal

EM Wayne Baldwin	LEUT James Buchanan
AB Lewis Farkas	NA Ian Hartley
OS Chris Harris	CA Stanley Heares
CMDR Errol Stevens	EM Kerry James
LCDR Colin Patterson	LS Liam McDonald
	NA Robert Winston

bert Winston The plan was to present the medals on 3 June 2019 in Sydney, Australia. However, it was determined that three of the recipients had made plans to attend the 50th Remembrance gathering in Long Beach, California. Plans went in motion to present the medals at one of the evening banquets, but it was important for this to be a complete surprise! It stretched our imaginations on how to pull off such a presentation.

The Association asked Commodore Gabriel Varela USN to be the keynote speaker at the 3 June evening banquet and to present the medals. To the Australians surprise, Commodore Varela began his speech with "Shipmates, Mr. Richardson, Mr. James, Mr. Winston, friends and family of the Frank E Evans Association. I am honored to be here with all of you today to remember the 74 Sailors who lost their lives 50 years ago today, and to specifically recognize the heroism of three men, who exhibited extreme bravery during the aftermath of this terrible accident."

Commodore Varela went on to say "No matter what country's military you serve in and in what capacity, one of the very first things you learn is that you are part of a team and the men and women in that team are a family and you are part of that family and it is your duty to protect that family. These 3 men are exemplified in a bible passage in Psalm 107: "They that go down to the sea in ships; That do business in great waters; They see the works of God and his wonders of the deep."

For the official presentations of the medals, Commodore Mathew L. Hudson, CSC, RAN and Association President Steve Kraus joined Commodore Varela on stage. (Commodore Hudson had presented a wreath during the morning memorial ceremony on behalf of Australia.

L to R: Commodore Mathew Hudson, Kerry James, Robert Winston, Patrick Richardson, Steve Kraus and Commodore Gabriel Varela

Three Awarded Navy and Marine Corp Commendation Medals

The following awards were given under the hand of the President of the United States of America on the 10th day of September 2018. They were originally awarded on 19 October 1970 by Secretary of the Navy John R. Chafee.

Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal to Able Seaman Quartermaster Gunner Patrick J. Richardson, RAN



For heroism on 3 June 1969 in connection with a collision involving **HMAS MELBOURNE (R-21)** and **USS FRANK E. EVANS(DD-754)** while engaged in a combined exercise in the South China Sea, resulting in the sinking of the forward half of the U.S. destroyer, and the evacuation of the after half. Exercising exemplary initiative, Able Seaman Quartermaster Gunner Richardson led other Sailors from **MELBOURNE** to life rafts which they inflated and towed several hundred yards toward the forward section of **EVANS**. He personally assisted in bringing two U.S. Navy survivors to a life raft where he tended to them until he was able to summon aid from a passing cutter. By his cool courage and decisiveness in an emergency, Able Seaman Quartermaster Gunner Richardson reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Naval Service.

Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal to Engineering Mechanic Jerry R. James, RAN



For meritorious achievement on 3 June 1969 in connection with a collision involving HMAS MELBOURNE (R-21) and USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD 754) while engaged in a combined exercise in the South China Sea, resulting in the sinking of the forward half on the U.S. Destroyer and the after half, serving as machinery watchkeeper auxiliary aboard HMAS **MELBOURNE**. Engineering Mechanic James entered the water and assisted in freeing life rafts from **MELBOURNE** and in towing these rafts toward supervisors from the forward section of **EVANS**. He personally assisted two U. S. survivors into rafts and tended to them until they were taken to **MELBOURNE** by a powerboat. By his courage and initiative, Engineering Mechanic James reflected credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of Naval Service.

Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal to Naval Airman Aircraft Handler Robert W. Winston, RAN.

For meritorious achievement on 3 June 1969 in connection with a collision involving HMAS MELBOURNE (R-21) and USS FRANK E, EVANS (DD 754) while engaged in a combined exercise in the South China Sea, resulting in the sinking of the forward half on the U.S. Destroyer and the after half, serving with flight deck handling team two aboard HMAS MELBOURNE. Naval Aircraft handler Winston was the second man to board the stern section of **EVANS**. He assisted in the movement of U.S. Navy personnel to the fantail, and helped in the preparation of their transfer to **MELBOURNE**. He also conducted a personal inspection of all accessible compartments to assure himself that all



survivors had been moved to safety, remaining on board until ordered to leave. By his courage and initiative, Naval Airman aircraft Handler Winston reflected credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of Naval Service.

Able Seaman Peter George Livery: Occasional Paper 61

Published along with this edition of Call the Hands is an occasional paper written by Ms Florence Livery. It is an interesting history of her father's service as an Able Seaman during the Second World War.

In her article (which you can read in full at <u>https://www.navyhistory.org.au/research/occasional-papers/</u> she outlines her father George's family's arrival in Australia from Greece and his joining the RAN in 1942. Some six months later he was in HMAS Canberra when she was sunk on 9 August 1942. Following his rescue, he was posted to HMAS Brisbane on boom laying operations and then to England to join the RAN contingent to commission HMAS Shropshire. There followed a relatively pleasant sea trip with his new shipmates to San Francisco, and then overland by rail to Norfolk Naval Shipyard and an enjoyable stint in New York. He then crossed the tumultuous Atlantic in HMS Wolfe, a submarine depot ship, in convoy and under constant U-Boat threat. His ship arrived safely in Scotland, and he then travelled to Chatham Naval Dockyard to await the refit of HMS Shropshire prior to her being transferred to the RAN about three months later. He was able to see a good deal of Britain. He was a good and very active sportsman, and was particularly proud of having played cricket for HMAS Shropshire at Lords.

HMAS Shropshire arrived in Australia late in 1943 and then saw very active and well recorded service in the Pacific. George Livery continued his service in her until March 1944. He then had a variety of postings in Australia and New Guinea until the end of the war, when he returned to his civilian life.

Florence's well researched summary of her father's service provides and interesting overview of this sailor's life before and during the war, including his own view of significant aspects of his service, including the happy ones. An interesting selection of photographs is included.

Photo of the Month



Captain John Collins, CB, RAN leads his men with 'three cheers' following Shropshire's commissioning into the RAN, at Chatham, UK on 20 April 1943. RAN image.

Further Reading and Viewing

Life on HMAS Shropshire, Stan Nicholls, available at, <u>https://www.navyhistory.org.au/?s=shropshire</u> HMAS Shropshire, Sea Power Centre Australia available at, <u>http://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-shropshire</u>

Treacherous Bougainville Reef

Bougainville Reef has a treacherous recent history with a naval connection. It is home to two wrecks and is the site of several groundings by ships in Convoy TN 192 including HMAS Gladstone in 1943. The reef is a small 4km long oval atoll formed thousands of years ago by coral growth around the top of an ancient underwater volcano. It is located 250 nautical miles north-east of Cairns in the Coral Sea. A sandy lagoon has formed atop the volcanic peak. Largely invisible to mariners the reef is fully submerged at high tide.

The only structure within the area is a steel tower navigation aid and weather station which was regularly serviced by the lighthouse tender vessel, MV Cape Moreton and its crew until 1993.

As the water surrounding the reef is very deep with no safe anchorages, visiting vessels, generally dive boats, can only drift.

One of the wrecks, MV Antonio Tarabocchia has broken up. The second, Royal Navy Collier, *Atlas* is relatively well preserved.

MV Antonio Tarabocchia was an Italian steel cargo vessel of 5851 tonnes built in 1956. On 13 November 1961 when on route from Kobe for Mourilyan in ballast she grounded on the seaward side of Bougainville Reef. Tugs were unsuccessful in towing the vessel off and by mid-December the vessel had broken its back.

Royal Navy Collier 'Atlas' grounding on Bougainville Reef

The Royal Navy Collier, *Atlas* of 4,810 tonnes was wrecked on her maiden voyage on 3 November 1945. The following narrative written by John McBryde, an officer in HMAS Bungaree describes the rescue of crew members from *Atlas*. The accompanying painting by McBryde is in the Australian War Memorial collection.

'I came on board HMAS Bungaree, minelayer, to take over command from Lieutenant Commander Brown who decided to change over on arrival at Cairns. We were about to enter the Reef Passage when we received a signal to turn back and render assistance to the Fleet Collier "Atlas" which had stranded on

> Bougainville Reef. On arriving there we found her high and

dry on the reef with heavy seas breaking over her. We also got a signal from the Naval Guns Crew asking that an officer be sent over as there was none on board. I suggested that I go over and take the whaler to the lee side of the reef and from there enter and go alongside "Atlas". I did that, but had to manhandle the whaler on the way. The reef was mostly dead coral. When we reached the ship there was barely enough water to float the whaler and we had to get out and push. On board we found there was trouble everywhere, the Mate accusing the Captain of countermanding his alteration of course when the lighthouse was sighted. As a result, the ship struck and grounded; also, drink was being indulged in a rather heavy way so we couldn't get

AWM Collection.





Navy Collier Fleet Auxiliary on Bougainville Reef.

Photographer LEUT N. B. Stuckey of HMS Wessex.



Painting by John McBryde of RN Collier Atlas aground on Bougainville Reef. AWM Collection much sense out of them. She was right on top of the flat coral reef and all her double bottom tanks were holed. I decided to take all those who wished to leave, and that included the whole crew, some engineers, work operators and the Guns Crew. Two life boats were lowered and I guided them through the reef channels and thence to Bungaree where we hoisted the boats on board and sailed for Cairns. The morning after the Captain and the remainder of the crew were taken off by a destroyer.

References:

AWM, https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C1117761

Collier Atlas may Become Complete Loss, Daily Mercury Mackay Qld, Tuesday 6 Nov 1945

Convoy TN 192 Grounding on Bougainville Reef

On 18 December 1943, HMAS Gladstone, in company with HMA Ships Gympie (I) and Stawell (I), were escorting convoy TN 192 of eight ships with troops embarked bound for Milne Bay when almost the entire convoy ran aground on Bougainville Reef in the Great Barrier Reef just after 9:30pm that evening. Gladstone had observed Aldis Lamp signals down the convoy and intercepted the word "hit". Assuming that the convoy was under attack, the ship closed up at action stations, altered course towards the ship thought to be under attack and increased speed. She then prepared to attack with a full pattern of depth charges. Luckily for Gladstone, less than a minute after going to actions stations, she observed the signal "am aground" enabling her to reduce speed and prevent a hard grounding on the reef. As it was, *Gladstone* made a soft grounding and, thanks to some masterful manoeuvring of the vessel, was re-floated 42 minutes later. She navigated her way clear of the reef and waited, in company with *Gympie* and *Stawell*, until daylight.

Seven of the eight merchant vessels in the convoy had run aground, SS Charles M Russell being the only exception. The vessels *Colorado*, *Ambrose Bierce* and *City of Fortworth* had all managed to free themselves by dawn and, with HMA Ships Lithgow and Castlemaine arriving to assist and her own starboard propeller damaged, *Gladstone* detached just after 7:00am to escort the trio back to Cairns. All of the remaining ships were quickly re-floated, suffering varying degrees of damage, while *Gladstone* was forced to return to Brisbane to repair her damaged propeller.

Reference:

HMAS Gladstone, Sea Power Centre Australia, available at: http://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-gladstone-i

HMAS Castlemaine: Museum Ship

HMAS Castlemaine is one of the sixty Australian-built Bathurst Class mine sweepers commonly referred to as 'Corvettes' which served throughout World War II. *Castlemaine* is the only corvette still afloat and is very well maintained and presented by the Maritime Trust of Australia.

Built at Williamstown Naval Dockyard and launched in 1941 the ship is now open to the public at Gem Pier in Williamstown, Victoria.

Information at: http://hmascastlemaine.org.au/



HMAS Castlemaine at Gem Pier Williamstown, Victoria. Defence Image

This Month in History

 was commissioned. BALLARAT was laid down in Williamstown Dockyard, VIC, on 17 April 1940, and launched on 10 December 1940. Mrs Dunstan, (Wife of the Premier of Victoria), performed the launching ceremony. 6 August 1946 HMAS PIRIE, (minesweeper), was transferred to the Turkish Navy, and renamed AMASRA. 18 August 1959 817 squadron, flying the Fairey Gannet AS.1, decommissioned. 16 August 1976 HMA Ships MELBOURNE, (aircraft carrier), and TORRENS, (destroyer escort), rendered aid to the disabled motor vessel MISS CHIEF, in heavy seas off Bundaberg, QLD. TORRENS took the vessel in tow until a tug arrived. 	August 1831	The NSW Government Gazette announced that officers of the Royal Navy and Marines, retiring from the service or going on half-pay, (in Australia), would be entitled to the following remissions when purchasing Crown land:- Those who had served 20 years and upwards; £300; 15 years and upwards; £250; 10 years and upwards; £200; 7 years and upwards; £150.
20 August 1875 CDRE James Goodenough, RN, commander of the Australia Squadron 1873-75, died from wounds sustained from poisoned arrows, fired by Santa Cruz Islanders. 6 August 1900 South Australian gunboat, HMCS PROTECTOR, (CAPT W. R. Creswell, RN), sailed from Adelaide for China to participate in quelling the Boxer Rebellion. 3 August 1903 The first Marines Corps formed in Australia were the New South Wales Marine Light Infantry, recruited as the Third Contingent to join New South Wales' volunteers in South Africa. The unit sailed in the transport SALAMIS for China. 29 August 1912 HMAS SYDNEY, (cruiser), was launched at London & Glasgow Yard, UK. 4 August 1914 Great Britain declared war on Germany. The telegram informing Australia of a state of hostilities was not received in Melbourne until 5 August. At the outbreak of war the strength of the RAN was 3800 of all ranks. 8 August 1918 HMAS Ships HUON and YARRA, (torpedo boat destroyers), collided in the Adriatic. HUON was severely damaged, and was withdrawn from further war service. 5 August 1920 Sir Neville Howse, Minister for Defence, enunciated the policy that all officers of the RAN should be Australians. 30 August 1941 The Bathurst class minesweeper, (corvette), HMAS BALLARAT, (LCDR A. D. Barling, RANR(S)) was commissioned. BALLARAT was laid down in Williamstown Dockyard, VIC, on 17 April 1940, and launched on 10 December 1940. Mrs Dunstan, (Wife of the Premier of Victoria), performed the launching ceremony. 6 August 1946 HMAS Ships MELBOURNE, (aircraft carrier), and TORRENS, (destroyer escort), rende	August 1848	sloop), was conducted to prove the relevant efficiency of the two systems of propulsion. NIGER
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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. <u>https://www.navyhistory.org.au/research/on-this-day/</u>

HMS Sirius: 230th Anniversary of Loss

To mark the 230th anniversary of the loss, in 1790 of the First Fleet flagship HMS Sirius on Norfolk Island, a program of events on Norfolk Island is being planned by the between 16 and 20 March 2020.

Details can be obtained from Norfolk Island Travel Centre at: https://www.norfolkislandtravelcentre.com/event/230th-anniversary-of-thewrecking-of-hms-sirius/



Occasional Papers in this edition

Included with this edition of Call the Hands are the following occasional papers: -

- Occasional Paper 60, Naval Gigs: Alive and Still Being Built in the United Kingdom
- Occasional Paper 61, From a Periscope to a Cricket Pitch in a Matter of Days The Surreal Nature of War

Society Matters

New History Tour Launched: Garden Island Northern End

The Society now conducts Heritage Tours of the northern end of Garden Island, Sydney. The tour includes the Hill, old signal station, the lookout, indigenous history and the earliest marks made by Europeans in Australia. The tour is conducted one Sunday per month for up to 30 people who will arrive on the Island by public ferry. Full details are available on the Society website at https://www.navyhistory.org.au/garden-island-tours/.



circa 1920

Society Events

Visitors are welcome. Details are provided on <u>the website</u> or contact Chapter points of contact.

Naval Historical Review

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

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