

CALL THE HANDS

Issue No. 41 May 2020

From the President

Welcome to Edition 41 of *Call the Hands* and accompanying occasional papers. It is apt that the theme of this edition is 'HMAS Brisbane' given that pennant number 41 was allocated to both HMAS Ships *Brisbane* (II) and (III). Captain Ralph Derbidge MBE RAN (Retired) has assisted greatly by providing two occasional papers on HMAS Brisbane. The papers have quite different themes and portray very different aspects of Brisbane (III) in particular.

As space did not allow any significant coverage of *Brisbane* (I) readers with an interest in aviation may appreciate the story of [*HMAS Brisbane \(I\) and the Sopwith Baby*](#), published by the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia. Interesting links are also provided in this edition to papers published by the Sea Power Centre-Australia on the conventions of naming ships, assigning designations and pennant number, a subject which can cause considerable confusion.

As always, I am grateful to members and subscribers who provide feedback and additional material on our stories. Our special thanks this month to Hugh Stevenson, Gerry Shepherd John M Wilkins. Research into HMAS Ballarat led to Occasional Paper 79 which is a first hand account of the loss of *Ballarat* in the English Channel during World War II.

The Society is pleased to acknowledge the commissioning of NUSHIP Sydney (V) into the Fleet on 2 May 2020. Unfortunately, the ceremony will be a low key, practical event for ship's company only without official guests and family members. The ceremony will simply mark the occasion the ship is commissioned into service. We understand there are plans to live stream the event for the benefit of the wider Sydney family but the details are unknown.

Finally, despite the constraints of the Society's office being closed I am most grateful to my fellow Committee members and volunteers who have adapted magnificently to maintain services to members.

Stay safe and healthy,

David Michael

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 **please consider a donation.** <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/donate/>



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In this Edition

Page	
1	From the President
2	Society's Archive: A Unique Collection
4	Report of Proceedings – HMAS Brisbane (II)
7	Video of the Month
7	Ship Names and Pennant Number Conventions
7	Ship Designation: AWD vs DDG
8	Photo of the Month
9	News in Brief
10	This Month in History
11	Readers Forum
13	Occasional papers
13	Society Matters

Society's Archive: A Unique Collection

The Naval Historical Society's collection, established in 1970 reflects the history of the Royal Australian Navy, and all aspects of its life; ships, shore bases, serving personnel, and service in wartime and in keeping the peace. It is a diverse collection, much of which is donations from retired and serving naval personnel and their families. A long-term goal is to make unique items available to the public through a digitisation process with funding from the National Library of Australia.

Stage one of this three-year project involved a significance assessment in March 2020 by Roslyn Russell a Canberra based museum services specialist. Roslyn's extensive report on the Collection opened our eyes and helped us appreciate the national significant of the Collection and its immense research and social significance.

Because many items in the collection are not available in other collecting institutions the digitisation of the original items in the collection will make them accessible to researchers and the general public when they are available online.

The following is a small sample of the broad range of documents and items held.

Coastwatchers

A series of photos in the collection illustrates the critical role played by the Coastwatchers, a unique intelligence network set up in 1919 along the Australian coastline by the RAN to report suspicious or unusual happenings, including sightings of strange ships or aircraft. It was extended to the islands to the north and east of Australia in 1939.

Right: Coastwatchers, Lieut. Keenan and Sgt McPhee studying maps with other Coastwatchers



HMAS Stirling Fleet Base West

The collection includes maps of HMAS Stirling, promotional material and ephemera, and copies of a hand-made newspaper produced on the base in the early 1980s. *Stirling* is situated on Careening Bay south of Fremantle, Western Australia. In 1966 a feasibility study was begun into the establishment of a naval support facility on the island, and in 1969 it was endorsed by the federal government. Construction of the 4.3 km causeway began in 1971 and completed in 1973. The Naval Support Facility was completed in 1978 and HMAS Stirling formally commissioned in the same year.



Cartoon by Rigby on the planning for Fleet Base West.

Decorative items made from parts of RAN ships



Poker work bowl and plate is made from wood from HMAS *Encounter*.

On 12 August 1914 *Encounter* captured the steamer *Zambezi*, which was under German control, and became the RAN's first wartime prize. In September 1914 she accompanied the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force transports and store ships to capture German New Guinea, and provided covering fire, regarded as the Navy's first offensive fire of the war.

Report of Proceedings – HMAS Brisbane II

This, her first, Report of Proceedings covers her commissioning in 1967.

H.M.A.S. BRISBANE,
At Boston.

30th December, 1967.

The Australian Naval Attache,
Paramount Building,
1735 Eye Street, N.W.,
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006.

H.M.A.S. BRISBANE - REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

DECEMBER, 1967.

(all times local)

I have the honour to report the proceedings for the month of December, 1967, for Her Majesty's Australian Ship BRISBANE under my command.

2. H.M.A.S. BRISBANE was commissioned for service in the Royal Australian Navy at 1505, Saturday 16th, with a ceremony conducted in fine but cold weather at number One pier, Boston Naval Shipyard. Copies of the Outline Commissioning Programme, the Commissioning Order, the Religious Service and my Introductory Remarks are attached as Appendix 'D'. Despite a maximum temperature of thirty two degrees, the guard and the ship's company performed well, and at the official receptions which followed, they received high praise from many sources.

3. In honour of the occasion, Saturday 16th had been declared BRISBANE Day throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by the Governor, Mr J.A. VOLPE.

4. During the forenoon, prior to the Commissioning ceremony, I was pleased to receive His Excellency, the Australian Ambassador, Mr J.K. WALLER, C.B.E., and Mrs WALLER, for an informal tour of the ship.

5. The high spirits which prevailed after the commissioning were dampened late on Sunday night, by the tragic news of the disappearance of our Prime Minister, The Right Honourable Mr HAROLD HOLT, M.P.

6. Ceremonial Tartar Stanchions were presented to the Ship by General Dynamics in a short ceremony onboard during the forenoon Sunday 17th. Representing the donor were Mr E. REEVES, POMONA Division and Mr D.E. Kenly Senior Field Representative BOSTON. The latter gentleman, born and raised in GEORGIA, kindly presented to the ship's company a most acceptable treat of 200 pounds of Old Southern Xmas Cake.

7. On Monday, 18th, a comprehensive internal training programme began. This training programme continued for the remainder of the month, in conjunction with fitting-out availability and was adjusted to allow the Ship's Company to take up to 7 days leave during the Xmas or New Year periods.

8. Mourning was observed and colours were half-masted from 0800, Wednesday, 20th until sunset Friday, 22nd, as a mark of respect for the late Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, and in addition a memorial service was held on board on Friday, 22nd. The Right Reverend FREDERIC C. LAWRENCE, Suffragan Bishop of Massachusetts, the Reverend RAYMOND A. LOW, and the Reverend WILLIAM J. DUMBRELL officiated. Present at the service were the Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts, Mr F.W. SARGENT, and the British Consul General in BOSTON, Mr R. SELBY.

9. During this period I received many expressions of condolence from both U.S.N. authorities and civil dignitaries. U.S.N. ships in BOSTON were ordered to conform with BRISBANE in half masting colours.

10. The prospects of a white Christmas appeared slim in BOSTON until the morning of Saturday, 23rd, when an unexpected snow storm provided a blanket of approximately six inches of snow over the area. The natural enthusiasm of the sailors in welcoming their first traditional New England Xmas was dampened somewhat by the subsequent requirement to arm themselves with snow shovels.

11. Many offers of hospitality were extended to the sailors over the festive period, and on Christmas Day a large number of the Ship's Company were entertained to lunch in private homes.

12. Fitting-out progress has been satisfactory during the month, and at present few difficulties are envisaged in meeting the target completion date of Wednesday, 24th January, 1968.

13. The health of the Ship's Company has been generally good, although a considerable number of officers and sailors have been affected for short periods by an epidemic of influenza which has recently swept the BOSTON area. Morale on board remains at a high

level, and the conduct of the Ship's Company throughout the month has been satisfactory.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(1) 
(A.A. WILLIS)
CAPTAIN, R.A.N.



HMAS Brisbane (II) in dry dock in the Boston Naval Shipyard.
Her commissioning day was declared 'Brisbane Day' throughout the 'Commonwealth' of Massachusetts.

Video of the Month

The Royal Australian Navy Band brings you the fantastic LSMUSN Cam McAllister arrangement of Waltzing Matilda!!

https://www.facebook.com/RoyalAustralianNavyBand/videos/2570777133185060/UzpfSTeYnzE0Nzg2NDUxNTIwODo2MzlyNzE2MDA2Njk0OTY/?eid=ARASj3rKlbXg1k67nfzt3QezAS9z7C0wkYCALTOZXSlilwtLvSLmusT4u1THr0g2Oyr_ZZjzqhdv1uD0

This arrangement of the iconic Australian song by Christina MacPherson was recorded back in 2016 by the RAN Band Admiral's Own Big Band, and features on the album *Straight Ahead*.

To hear the full *Straight Ahead* album and more, head to www.soundcloud.com and search for Admiral's Own Big Band.



To hear more from our full RAN Band discography visit, www.navy.gov.au/.../organisation/navy-band

Ship Names and Pennant Number Conventions

Many readers, familiar with ships of the Royal Australian Navy over the last four decades will be pleased to note that not only does the practice of reusing names for later generation ships continues, but the matching of pennant numbers where possible is also practiced. For example, HMAS Canberra carries the pennant number L02 and not L01 even though it was the first of its class to be built. HMAS Adelaide (III) carries pennant number L01. This is so the two ships' pennant numbers will conform to the convention adopted with their namesakes in the Adelaide Class FFGs.

Similarly, the maintenance of a tangible connection with the previous DDGs HMAS Hobart (II) and HMAS Brisbane (II), the Navy made a decision to again use 39 for Hobart (III), and 41 for Brisbane (III). HMAS Sydney (V) which commissions on 2 May 2020 was allocated 42. This is possible because blocks of numbers are allocated by ship type and country under an international agreement.

Sources:

Naming of RAN Ships by John Perryman, published by Sea Power Centre – Australia, available at, <https://www.navy.gov.au/history/feature-histories/naming-ran-ships>

Semaphore: *AWD, Hobart, MFU or DDGH - What's in a Name?*, published by Sea Power Centre – Australia, available at <https://www.navy.gov.au/media-room/publications/semaphore-september-2010-0>

Ship Designation: AWD vs DDG

The use of acronyms by armed forces as a form of linguistic shorthand can be most confusing. Therefore, what is the correct designation for the RAN's new Destroyers, 'AWD' or 'DDG'? The answer is provided in the Sea Power Centre's Semaphore paper referenced above which states. 'In the early stages of a defence project when the exact form of a ship is yet to be determined, a generic descriptor of its purpose suffices. The AWD was accordingly a ship highly capable in air warfare, while the 'modular, multi-role class' included in the 2009 Defence White Paper.' Today, the correct designation for the Hobart Class DDGs is Destroyer, Guided Missile (DDG).

Photo of the Month:



HMAS Brisbane I - launch on 30 September 1915.

HMAS Brisbane (I) and her sister ships HMA Ships Melbourne and Sydney were the first cruisers built for the RAN. They were constructed to the design of the Chatham group of the British Town Class.

Brisbane was launched on 30 September 1915 by Mrs Fisher, the wife of the then Prime Minister Andrew Fisher and commissioned at Sydney on 31 October 1916 under the command of Captain Claude L Cumberlege RN. On 13 December 1916 she departed Sydney for war service in the Mediterranean, arriving at Malta on 4 February 1917.

Brisbane decommissioned on 22 January 1929. As she was still a relatively new ship, with only 13 years of service, she was retained in reserve, although the RAN did not have the money or manpower to reactivate her during the period of the Great Depression.

Brisbane was recommissioned at Sydney on 2 April 1935, under the command of Captain Charles Farquhar-Smith, RAN and on 2 May 1935 she sailed for England manned by a complement which would form the balance of the ship's company of the new HMAS Sydney (ex-HMS Phaeton), a Modified Leander-class light cruiser. While en route to the UK Brisbane assisted the sloop HMS Hastings. On the 13th of June *Hastings* had run aground on Shab Kuttle Reef in the Red Sea. The ship arrived at Portsmouth on 12 July 1935, where she finally paid off on 24 September 1935.

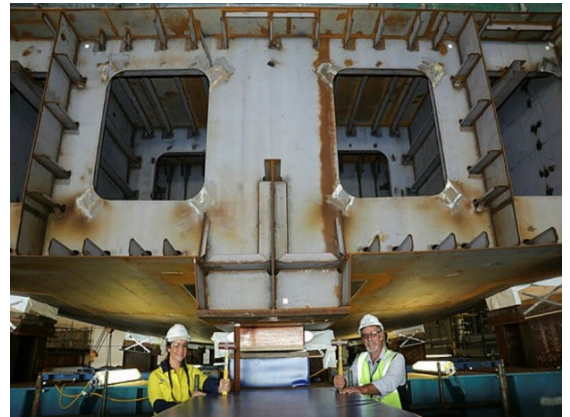
In June 1936 Brisbane was sold for breaking up to Thomas Ward & Co Ltd of Sheffield, England, for £19,125.

News in Brief

Keel laid for Australia's second Arafura-class OPV

The Australian Government has announced the keel-laying of the second Arafura-class offshore patrol vessel (OPV) in Adelaide as part of the Australian Defence Force's \$90bn National Shipbuilding Program.

This Arafura-class vessel, which is being built for the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), will be commissioned as HMAS Eyre once it enters into operational service in early 2023. The following four OPVs will be named HMAS Pilbara, HMAS Gippsland, HMAS Illawarra and HMAS Carpentaria. ASC Shipbuilding is building two OPVs at Osborne Naval Shipyard.



MH-60R helicopters to conduct flight trials on HMAS Adelaide

Royal Australian Navy landing helicopter dock (LHD) HMAS Adelaide (LO1) is conducting first of class flight trials for the MH-60R 'Romeo' helicopters off the coast of Queensland.

The trials will determine the safe operating limits of the Romeo helicopters on the LHD in a range of sea states and wind speeds at both day and night. Adelaide's Commanding Officer, Captain Jonathan Ley, said the training was essential to ensuring navy maintains its readiness to conduct humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations in support of the Australian public and its neighbours if required.



According to Captain Ley, the Royal Australian Navy had put in strict measures on its ships to ensure the continuation of essential training while preserving the health and welfare of its people.

All crew on Adelaide were screened for COVID-19 symptoms before departure.

Lost men and women of 'Shark 02' remembered

April 2 is a sombre day for many personnel as they remember and reflect on the loss of nine Australian Defence Force personnel who died when Sea King helicopter 'Shark 02' crashed while on a humanitarian support mission on the Indonesian island of Nias in 2005

Due to current physical distancing requirements, personnel and family were unable to gather for the service however Chaplain Steve Estherby conducted a private memorial ceremony, which has been uploaded to social media platforms. This can be viewed at: <https://vimeo.com/403158509>.



This Month in History

May 1856	The sloop-of war HMCS Victoria, (CMDR W. H. Norman, RN), arrived at Port Phillip, Melbourne, VIC, on her maiden voyage from the United Kingdom. <i>Victoria</i> was proclaimed as the 'first vessel of war built to the order of a British colony', thus launching Australia's first colonial navy.
May 1884	Tasmania's only warship, an unnamed 2nd class torpedo boat known as TB1, arrived in Hobart.
May 1912	LEUT A. Longmore, (an Australian serving with the Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps), and LEUT Samson, were the first pilots to fly aircraft at a Spithead Review. Longmore flew a monoplane, and Samson a 'hydro-aeroplane'.
May 1915	The RAN and the RCN operated together for the first time, when HMAS Melbourne and HMCS Niobe, (cruisers), joined up to conduct patrols off the east coast of the United States. These patrols were to ensure German merchant ships, then interned in neutral United States ports, did not try and escape.
May 1918	CAPT R. A. Little, DSO and Bar, Croix de Guerre, an Australian who served in the RNAS, and No. 203 Squadron, RAF, was fatally wounded in a night engagement with a German Gotha bomber over Vieux Barquin, France. Little was in a position to shoot down the enemy aircraft when he was blinded by an Allied searchlight. CAPT Little was credited with the shooting down of 47 enemy aircraft.
May 1923	A specialist branch of observers was formed within the RAN, to enable officers to qualify as pilots and observers. On qualifying as pilots they received 4 shillings per day additional pay.
May 1940	PO A. J. Fisher, RAN was awarded the DSC for daring, endurance, and resource, while serving in HM Submarine TRUANT. Fifteen months later he was MID for skill and enterprise in the same submarine.
May 1943	Coastwatchers LEUT L. J. Bell, RANVR, LEUT D. A. Lewis, AIF, and a half-caste bearer, were murdered by natives at Bena Bena, New Guinea.
May 1949	HMAS Sydney (III) arrived in Jervis Bay with the Fleet Air Arm's first Naval Air Squadrons, 805 and 816 Squadrons, embarked. Two Supermarine Type 309 Sea Otters were lowered into the water and flew to Nowra while 27 Hawker Sea Fury FB II's and 27 Fairey Firefly AS 5s were landed ashore by aircraft lighters along with the associated stores, machinery, aircraft documentation and personal baggage. Once ashore, the aircraft were towed to Nowra in convoys, the last arriving on 29 May. It was another two weeks before flying could commence due to inclement weather.
May 1953	850 Squadron commanding officer Lieutenant Commander Reginald Wild, DFC killed while flying a Hawker Sea Fury F.B. II when his aircraft collided with a Tiger Moth in mid-air over Wagga airfield. The occupants of the Tiger Moth were uninjured.
May 1963	HMAS Queenborough, (frigate), struck HMS Tabard, (submarine), while exercising off Sydney. Both vessels were damaged but returned to Port under their own power.
May 1967	Three divers of Clearance Diving Team 3 were flown to Phu Loi, Vietnam, to recover a Chinook helicopter which had crashed into the sea. The team recovered the bodies of the crew, and assisted in the raising of the sunken helicopter. Two battalions of troops guarded the area against Viet Cong attack during the operation.
May 1970	The Naval Historical Society of Australia was formed.
May 1975	HMAS Queenborough, the last of the five 'Q' class destroyers presented to the RAN as a gift by Great Britain, was towed out of Sydney, bound for Hong Kong and breaking up.
May 1980	The rank of Provisional Warrant Officer was abolished in the RAN.
May 1988	While on exchange with the Royal Navy, LCDR N. Wallace, RAN, was appointed in command of HMS Olympus, (submarine).
May 1992	At the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea, a national memorial was unveiled at Townsville, QLD. Personnel from HMA Ships <i>Perth</i> , <i>Adelaide</i> , <i>Tobruk</i> and <i>Jervis Bay</i> , and US Ships <i>Blue Ridge</i> and <i>Fletcher</i> , were present at the unveiling.
May 2001	HMAS Jervis Bay, (fast transport), was decommissioned in Hobart, TAS. Known as the 'Dili Express', she had carried 6,600 troops, and 3,200 pallets of stores, to East Timor during her two year career.
May 2009	Whilst transiting the 'Internationally Recognised Transit Corridor' in the Gulf of Aden, HMA Ships <i>Sydney (IV)</i> and <i>Ballarat (II)</i> came to the assistance of a merchant vessel, MV Dubai Princess, which was under attack from pirates in two small skiffs.
May 2019	Keel laid for HMAS Arafura, Offshore Patrol Vessel

The entries selected for publication this month are randomly generated from an extensive database of historic naval events. The absence of a significant event is in no way intended to cause offence. The objective is to provide a cross section of events across time. 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

Looking for WWII Veterans

Received from the Federation of Naval Ship Associations.

In preparation for NSW events to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of the war in the Pacific in August this year the Department of Veterans Affairs seeking contact details for any WWII Navy Veterans still living in NSW. If you know of any Veterans who haven't already sent in their name and details, please contact Nick Young of the DVA direct. His email address is Nick.Young@veterans.nsw.gov.au

Silver Model of Captain Cook Graving Dock Located

The sterling silver model of the Dock presented to the Duchess of Gloucester on 24 March 1945 by John Beazley, Minister of Munitions during the official opening of the Captain Cook Graving Dock has been located much to the surprise of Society volunteers.

In planning for the 75th anniversary on 24 March 2020, enquiries directed to Kensington Palace, London and Government House, Canberra were unsuccessful. Neither the staff of HRH the Duke of Gloucester nor Governor General knew the whereabouts of the model which is encased in a wooden presentation casket of Tasmanian blackwood and inlaid with ebony.




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CELEBRITY ROAD
MOSS VALE 2577
NEW SOUTH WALES
AUSTRALIA

J. B. HAWKINS ANTIQUES



The Captain Cook Dock
Opened by H. R. H. The Duchess of Gloucester in March 1945 to take the largest battleships afloat damaged in the war in the Pacific.
"Such an undertaking presaged almost insurmountable difficulties, and its successful completion is a great tribute to the skill, enterprise and co-operative effort of Australian executive and workmen."
This Royal presentation casket 14" x 10" of Tasmanian blackwood inlaid with ebony and mounted with fully marked silver handles, feet and key. Maker, Louis Sornme, retailer and manufacturer W J Sanders, the cabinet work by Sikman and Coates of North Sydney.

W.J.S. 925 4 615

28 — AUSTRALIANA February 1998

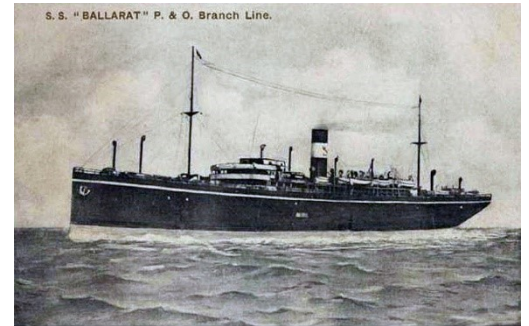
Quite unexpectedly, a research question received in early April by a valuer assessing an item recently donated to the National Museum of Australia was actually about the model. The specific question related to the fact that the model was cast. The valuer sought to know whether Navy still held other casts. The more interesting story is the history of ownership since 1945. It has been so far established that the piece was advertised in the Australian journal by John Hawkins Antiques in 1998. It is probable that Hawkins purchased the presentation piece from the Gloucesters, perhaps in 1997. As the name of the donor to the National Museum of Australia cannot be disclosed, we will a little longer to fully solve the mystery.

Left: Advertisement placed in the Australian journal by John Hawkins Antiques in 1998.

HMAT A70 Ballarat

Our thanks to Hugh Stevenson for drawing attention to HMAT Ballarat which was one of many vessels leased by the Commonwealth of Australia to transport various AIF formations to overseas destinations during World War One. When not committed to direct military support they were made available to carry commodities to France and Britain. They were a mix of British flagged and captured German ships.

Ballarat was owned by the Pacific & Orient Steam Navigation Co Ltd, London and used pre-war to transport emigrants to Australia from the UK. *Ballarat* initially served as an Indian transport vessel before becoming a troopship, carrying Australian troops. She made four voyages from Australia before being torpedoed by U-boat UB-32 at 1400 on 25 Apr 1917 in the English Channel. An Anzac Day service was being held at the time. This was the 13th voyage undertaken by the *Ballarat*.



Company of Master Mariners of Australia, image from postcard.

Fortunately, the ship remained afloat until next day allowing the 1752 men onboard, mostly (1,602) reinforcements from Australia to be rescued without loss. All were transferred to other ships within an hour. The ship sank 15 kilometers south of Lizard Point, Cornwall just as efforts were being made to tow her into shallow water. She was also carrying copper and bullion.

Word of the great discipline demonstrated by the Australian soldiers during their ordeal reached King George V who sent a message to their commanding officer.

By Editor

In researching this story two first hand accounts of the German torpedo attack on HMAT Ballarat came to attention. They are reproduced as occasional paper 79.

KING'S MESSAGE TO ANZACS

LONDON, Saturday 5 May 1917

Message from King George to the officer commanding the Australian troops aboard the *Ballarat*.
'I have learnt with pride and satisfaction of the admirable discipline and fearless spirit displayed by all ranks during their recent perilous experiences. They have emulated upon the sea the noble deeds of their brothers ashore.'

Captain Cook Graving Dock Opening Ceremony

Received from Gerry Shepherd

I have just finished reading the Three Headed Dog and plans for a 75th anniversary Ceremony of the opening of the Captain Cook Graving Dock at Garden Island, Sydney in May.

I wouldn't mind betting that I am the only ex Sailor left on our planet that was in the Guard of Honour for the Governor General of Australia, the Duke of Gloucester who officially opened the 'Dock'. We, the Guard of Honour were made up from HMAS Penguin, the Naval Base at Balmoral, Sydney Harbour.



I can still remember the opening ceremony as it were yesterday. It was a glorious sunny day and I was so proud to be in the Guard of Honour, especially being an Ordinary Seaman!
Yours Aye

Gerry Shepherd

Colony of Victoria's Blue Ensign: 1870

I noted the very informative Occasional Paper by John C. Vaughan, Vexillographer on the use of the Southern Cross on flags in the early days of the Australian colonies up to Federation and the forming the Commonwealth of Australia on 1st January 1901 and subsequent selection and flying of the winning design of the Australian Flag in Melbourne on 3rd September 1901, at the new Federal Capital City of Australia's Exhibition Building.

There was however another flag with the Southern Cross that was the Colony of Victoria's blue ensign authorised by Admiralty in 1870.

Following the UK Colonial Naval Defence Act 1865 Imperial Forces in the Australian Colonies were withdrawn in 1870. The Australian Colonial Governments now had to focus on the practical effects of this withdrawal as it left them responsible for their own defence. Victoria Barracks in St Kilda Road Melbourne, centre of Victoria's Naval & Military, was only 50% complete after ten years of construction when the Imperial troops left.

The 20 year old Victorian Colonial Government now became responsible for these Barracks and its own defence. No attempt was made to complete the Victoria barracks master plan. The existing buildings became the Victorian Colonial Defence Centre. Captain Fullarton framed regulations for the Naval Reserve and the Victorian Colonial Government enacted the Naval Discipline Act 1870 and recruited 302 Naval Reservists.

Admiralty now approved Blue Ensigns to be flown by the Colonies, and Victoria's blue flag comprised the UK Union flag, Crown above the Southern Cross.



1870. February 9th – Victoria's HMVS *Nelson* was the first to fly the Victorian Colonial Blue Ensign as from 1864 only commissioned ships of the Royal Navy were permitted to fly the RN's White Ensign.

This flag design has a close resemblance to the 1901 winning Australia flag design whose Judges possibly received advice from senior officers of Admiralty's Australia Station in Sydney.

CMDR *John M Wilkins* OAM RFD* RAN Ret'd
4 Mar 2020

Occasional Papers in this edition

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

- Occasional Paper 78 - Two Proud Ships: HMAS Ships *Brisbane* (I) and (II)
- Occasional Paper 79 - The Loss of HMAS Ballarat
- Occasional Paper 80 - The Early Years (1970-1971) of HMAS Brisbane (DDG-41)

Society Matters

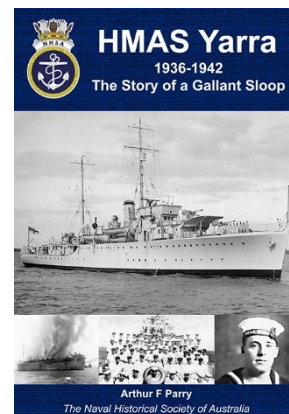
Naval Historical Review

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

New Books

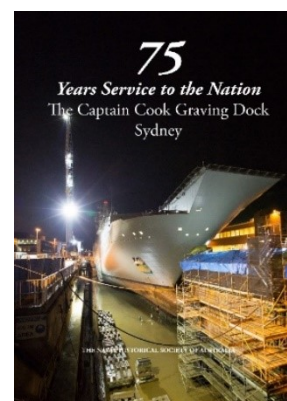
HMAS Yarra 1936-1942, The Story of a Gallant Sloop

Between 1936 and 1942, HMAS Yarra and her crew served Australia in peace and war, in Australian waters, the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf and finally South East Asia. Yarra was lost on 4 March, 1942 in a valiant fight against overwhelming odds, in defence of the ships she was escorting. All but 13 of her complement of 151 perished in this action. Arthur Parry, who served in Yarra during all of her overseas service up until mid-February 1942, made a promise to his crewmates to tell their story, and this book is the culmination of that promise.



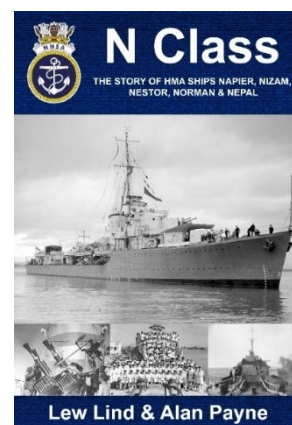
75 Years of Service: The Captain Cook Graving Dock, Sydney

This story of the Captain Cook Graving Dock commemorates the 75th anniversary of its opening on 24 March 1945 by the then Governor General of Australia, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester. In addition to details of construction, this book provides detail about the opening ceremony, the Civil Constructional Corps members who laboured on the project, the war artists who captured the mood of the time and dock operations since 1945.



N Class - The Story of HMA Ships Napier, Nizam, Nestor, Norman & Nepal

The 'N' Class Destroyers book first published by the Society in 1974 has been republished in three electronic formats and is now available for sale in the Society's online shop. This story of HMA Ships Napier, Nizam, Nestor, Norman and Nepal takes readers through the story of each ship from commissioning, through extensive service during World War II until late 1945. The missions described cover the full spectrum of destroyer operations in the period.



Purchase Online

These books are all available for purchase through the Society's website in a variety of formats.

<https://www.navyhistory.org.au/shop/>

Society Office Temporarily Closed

The Society closed its Garden Island Office in the Boatshed, Garden Island on 26 March in response to the current pandemic. Fortunately, many of its functions continue from remote locations. Others have had to be placed on hold including, the conduct of guided tours and the distribution of physical products ordered online or by other means. These will be dispatched at the earliest opportunity.

Subscription to Call the Hands

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 publications@navyhistory.org.au. Current subscribers can unsubscribe by emailing the same address.