



**Honouring
History**

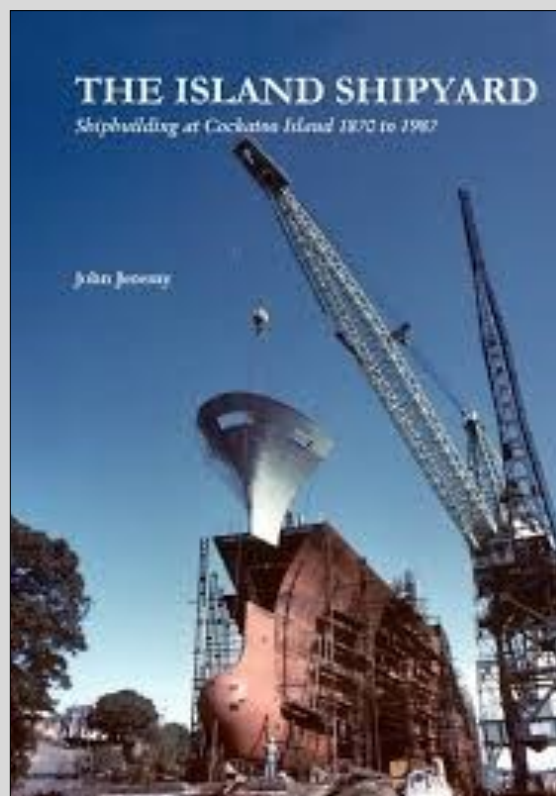
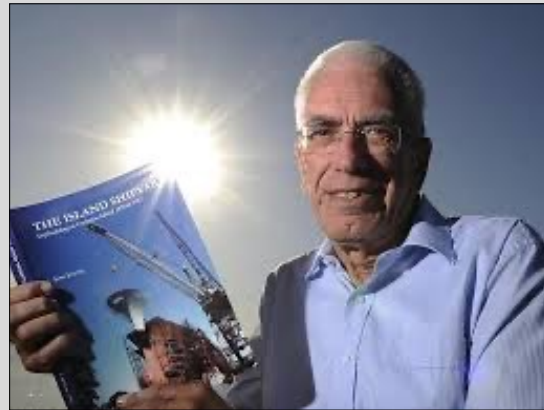
NAVAL HISTORICAL REVIEW

Volume 46 No. 2 - June 2025



A tribute to Mr. John C. Jeremy AM - 1942-2025

Vice President of the Naval Historical Society of Australia



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Right: An 1895 plan for 'New Era Warships', by Commander G. Bosanquet, NSW Naval Forces, begins on page 10.



Editor/page design: Ross Gillett

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Front cover: Remains of the Dutch submarine HNLMS K XI in the Rottneest 'Graveyard'. Inset: K XI underway. Courtesy WA Museum.

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Chief of Navy

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Viewpoint

Veteran lost

In mid-February 2025 the RAN 'lost' one of its oldest surviving units from the Great War (1914-1918). The ship in question was 113-year-old wooden steamship, *Cartela*, hired from the Huon Channel and Peninsula Steamship Company, from 4 August 1914 to 19 April 1916. During her 20-months of service *Cartela* served as an examination vessel and patrol boat from Hobart.



Above: *Cartela's* maiden voyage, New Year's Day, 1913. Courtesy Steamship Cartela.

The historic Tasmanian vessel, built in the same year as the *Titanic*, was launched at Battery Point by Purdon and Featherstone on 21 September 1912. She would eventually serve as an iconic presence on the River Derwent for more than 100-years. *Cartela* also provided crucial ferry services after the 1975 Tasman Bridge disaster and operated until 2014, before being relocated to Franklin.

In the years following the move to Franklin the vessel's condition deteriorated significantly. A 2021 report described *Cartela* as being in a terrible state at her berth on the Huon River, despite plans to restore the vessel to her former glory.



Above: The former Great War patrol vessel *Cartela*, partially sunk at her berth on the Huon River, in February 2025.

Articles

The variety of articles in this June 2025 edition of NHR is the result of the efforts of many members, past and present.

A varied career

1. In the lead story, former submariner Tony Vine presents the first of two articles on Able Seaman Harry Weigand, RAN, and his exploits in both the RAN and Australian Army. Part 2, to appear in the next NHR, will discuss his life in a prisoner-of-war camp.

Back in time

2. Well-known naval historian John Bastock returns to the pages of the NHR through a transcript of his speech to members in 1972. A few years back one of our original Sydney-based members, Kevin Brown, and now in Tasmania, provided the Society with copies of many of these early speeches. After many attempts to convert one of these to a word document, we are able to reproduce in both words and photographs, what life was like aboard the first of the RAN's 'modern' cruisers, the trio of Town class units, HMA Ships *Sydney*, *Melbourne* and *Brisbane*.

Germany's *Seeadler*

3. Former Garden Island tour guide, Colin Randall, discusses the loss of the raider *Seeadler* at Mopelia Island in August 1917 and the role of HMAS *Encounter*. Colin describes it as: *the last excitement in her varied war career*.

Chinese naval visits

4. With all the talk about the recent deployment of three or more PLA-N naval units around the continent in the months of February and March, the editor investigated how many Chinese naval ships have actually visited Australia in the last 60-plus years. With the help of *Navy News*, some friends, other naval publications and photographs, it appears that at least three visits were carried out by the island of Taiwan, and another eleven visits by varying numbers of PLA-N warships and auxiliaries.

The June edition of the *Review* also features:

- a 1919 report describing HMA Submarine *J5* including life aboard,
- an article by Walter Burroughs discussing the connection between Port Jackson and Manukau Harbour in New Zealand,
- a tribute to the last of the P & O cruise ships operating under the famous company colours, and
- in the list of contents, details of the four colour pages in the electronic (e) version of the *Review*.

Moving ahead

It's good to report that the first of the new offshore patrol vessels, to be commissioned as *Arafura*, is now in her home-port of Fleet Base West. Navy took some photos of the ship and these can be seen on the RAN homepage. They provide a good comparison of the relative sizes of the various fleet units at the base for a major anti-submarine exercise.

Old Soviet boat

A 55-year-old Soviet Foxtrot class submarine, formerly berthed at the ANMM from 1995, and since 1998 moored adjacent to the old liner *Queen Mary*, in Long Beach, California, is to be broken up.



Above: The old Soviet Foxtrot submarine alongside the museum ship, ex-HMAS Vampire. Chris Sattler.

The vessel originally operated as part of the Russian Pacific Fleet until being decommissioned in 1994. She was sold to a group of businessmen and placed on display at the ANMM for three-years.

Contributors

Stories and photographs for inclusion in the Naval Historical Review are always welcome.

Cheers

Editor, Ross Gillett

Sea mail

Last issue

I've had a good read of the March NHR. Enjoyed the front cover being the same orientation as the rest of the review. Big fan of the mention in viewpoint to suggest readers sharing photographs or stories of service. Having this as a standing "item" mentioned on the contents page might help encourage members to contribute.

Liked the greater proportion of images to words. Words are wonderful, and very important (and I read plenty of books that have no pictures in them at all), but I think that most people find a good picture/word ratio helpful in digesting things - and the 'ole picture tells a thousand words' works well.

Great to see Walter Burroughs had an article in the last edition. More broadly, a great selection of articles and topics. I liked the inclusion of an article from earlier NHRs in there (Lower Deck Memories - 1908 to 1911). Being published over 50 years ago, even those who read it then are unlikely to remember it, and it's a good way of surfacing older content (potentially adding some new images at the same time, like I suspect you may have done for this article).

Thank you very much for your work and for the work of the other authors. I hope we get to hear from Max Sulman about the actual visit, Cris George's article was excellent and anything from Greg Swinden is always a treat, and Walter's always tops. I look forward to the June edition.

**All the best,
Dave Long**

Queenborough in London

Those photographs of HMAS *Queenborough* (F02) in the March 2025 edition of NHR reminded me of the very first photo that I took. My grandfather gave me a Kodak Brownie 44A camera for my birthday. To say it was basic was an understatement. No zoom, focus control or any other form of adjustment. Simply point and shoot, so the results were pretty poor.

However, I send this image I took of two other Type 15 frigates (below), the Royal Navy's HMS *Venus* (F50) and HMS *Virago* (F76), about 1961, and taken in the same position as your photos of *Queenborough*. This of course, is where the cruiser HMS *Belfast* is now moored as a museum ship on the River Thames.

**Cheers,
Ralph Edwards**

Editor: I always thought that our four Type 15 frigates were better looking than their RN running mates.



Above: One of our readers sent in this image of a Blackburn Baby seaplane operated by HMAS Brisbane in 1917. See the March 2025 issue, pages 12-15.

New full-colour Naval Historical Review

In early May 2025 the NHSA committee decided to proceed with a full-colour Review. On behalf of the former editor, Walter Burroughs, and myself, the committee would like to thank Snap Printing of Burwood for the printing and production of our quarterly magazine. The relationship between us has always been cordial, and in particular their manager Romil, always courteous and helpful, managing to meet sometimes demanding deadlines. Production has always been to a high standard and often receiving favourable comments from our many members and customers. But with reduced demand for hard copy we must draw this chapter to a close. However, we sincerely thank Snap for their support and wish all there every success for a prosperous future.

Editor.



*Harry Weigand, shown as a
Sapper in the 2nd AIF.*

FULL CIRCLE To hell, and then home by submarine

**The story of Able Seaman
Hilton (Harry) George Weigand, RAN**

by Tony Vine

When Harry Weigand walked off the submarine HMAS *Oxley* in Malta in 1928 to return home to Australia medically unfit, little did he realise that one of the last chapters in his military career would come 16-years later when he walked off the American submarine USS *Pampanito* at Saipan in the Pacific Ocean.

The beginning

Although christened Hilton, he was known as Harry, and was born in Nowra, New South Wales on 7 July 1905. His 20-year-old father Horace was an apprentice blacksmith, and he only married Harry's mother, 18-year-old Margaret Thicknesse four days after Harry was born. It was clearly a marriage of necessity and not love, as Horace was arrested later that year for deserting his family.

Following their forced reunion, the couple would have another five daughters and a son, of whom only two would survive to reach adulthood. The family surname is spelt variously as "Wingand," "Wiegand," and "Weigand." Harry enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy as Wiegand, and in the AIF as Weigand, but for consistency the surname "Weigand" will be used.

Homelife

The Weigand household was clearly not an affluent or a happy one. Horace was regularly before the courts, and this may have influenced a 17-year-old Harry to enlist in the RAN on 20 March 1923. On his 18th birthday he would elect to serve for a term of twelve years. In 1923 Australia was in a recession, the Government had slashed spending, and the opportunity to lock in employment for twelve years was clearly to Harry's advantage.

On completion of his training at HMAS *Cerberus* he was rated as an ordinary seaman before posting to the light cruiser HMAS *Brisbane* in October 1923, where he served in Australian waters for nine months. Harry was rated able seaman in March 1924, serving briefly in the survey sloop HMAS *Marguerite*, then in the famous light cruiser HMAS *Sydney* from September 1924. With ships rotating in and out of commission for economic reasons, he would transfer to *Brisbane* in October 1925, staying for twelve months.

Submarines

In early 1926 the opportunity arose for Harry to break the cycle of postings to light cruisers. In March 1925, the RAN had ordered two submarines to be constructed at Barrow-in-Furness in the United Kingdom and had recently called for volunteers to man them. Harry volunteered but initially it appeared he had been unsuccessful. In September of that year, he married Hilda Ada Spinks, however the union was not a happy one and Hilda returned home to Hobart as Harry had refused to provide a home for her and for their son Gordon. This was coincidental with Harry posting to HMAS *Cerberus* to undertake gunnery courses followed by a posting to the aging torpedo boat destroyer HMAS *Huon*.



Above: Harry joined HMAS *Brisbane* in October 1925. In this view the cruiser is docked during her time on the China Station, between Feb-Aug 1925.



HMAS Huon under refit at Cockatoo Island.

In October 1927, *Huon* visited Hobart and Harry went to his mother-in-law's house where his wife Hilda was living. After a brief discussion with Hilda, he placed a revolver against her chest and threatened her. Fortunately, his mother-in-law intervened taking the gun off him and telling him to leave. On 23 November he was arrested by the Tasmanian Police and after a court appearance, was released into the custody of the Commonwealth. This was done on the understanding that the navy would immediately remove him to another jurisdiction. The navy had already held him in cells for 13-days, most probably on the catch all charge of "Conduct Prejudicial" and that may have influenced the court's decision. He was immediately posted to the UK to standby HMAS *Oxley*, travelling in style on the Orient Steam Navigation Company's liner *SS Osterley*. He would have been one of the last of *Oxley*'s crew to arrive in the United Kingdom, so it is possible that the navy was deliberately moving him as far from Hilda as possible.



Above: HMA Ships Otway and Oxley, with HMAS Penguin, ex Platypus, at the Oil Wharf, Garden Island.

In February 1928, Harry was serving on *Oxley* when the boat, in company with *Otway*, departed Portsmouth for Australia. The journey home would be a long and arduous one. Within days of sailing, cracks began to appear in the main engines and both submarines stopped in Malta for repairs which took nine months.

When *Oxley* sailed from Malta Harry was no longer onboard, as in August 1928 he had been classified as "unfit for further submarine service" and returned to the UK to join the newly commissioned heavy cruiser HMAS *Canberra*, for passage to Australia.

Medical issues

Harry's health was such that within weeks of *Canberra* arriving in Australia he was invalided out of the navy. He was awarded a payout of 43-pounds, nine-shillings and five-pence, in lieu of his extended leave. A tidy sum at a time when Australia was sliding into the Great Depression. Despite this relative wealth, within 18-months he would be convicted of illegally travelling on a goods train in rural NSW.

Meanwhile in Hobart, Hilda had petitioned for a divorce. Harry had not paid maintenance for her or Gordon since he had been discharged from the RAN. At a time when divorces were difficult for women to obtain, her case was strengthened by the incident in 1927, and the divorce was granted in May 1931. Gordon would later become a talented middle-distance runner in Tasmania.

Within a year Harry had married again, this time to another Hilda; Hilda Leonore Richards in Canterbury, NSW. They would have a son William in 1934, and the family lived with Harry's parents in Sydney. Harry worked as a motor mechanic, seaman or as a labourer. They would later move to Katoomba to live with Hilda's parents.

Army days

In June 1940 Harry enlisted in the army, correctly stating his date of birth, giving his occupation as miner, but not declaring his naval service. This may have been a deliberate act, so he did not have to enlist in the navy or serve in the merchant marine. On his enlistment Harry was allocated to the 2/12th Field Company of the Eighth Division Engineers which was under the command of Major John Shaw, a civil engineer from Sydney. The company formed at Liverpool in Sydney and consisted of approximately 250 officers and men, a mix of tradesmen and labourers, of whom over half were considered too old to serve in the infantry. The Eighth Division was the third raised for service in the war and many of the men had hopes of joining the action in the Middle East. It was under the command of Major General Gordon Bennett, a pre-war Army Chief of General Staff.

Harry trained at Liverpool, Ingleburn, Bathurst and North Head; however, his health was clearly suspect as he had several periods absent with illness. In April 1941 he was promoted to acting Corporal, but it was short lived, and he had reverted to Sapper by the time the company embarked for overseas.

The company was a mix of men. Of the 253 men who embarked in late July 1941, 129 were over 30, of whom eleven were over 40. Sprinkled amongst them were a group

of 20 to 23-year-olds. The oldest by far was Sapper George Wilkins who claimed he had been born in 1900. In fact, George was born in 1887 and had served during the Great War. In 1918 he was a Lieutenant with a Military Cross. The youngest was 20-year-old Bob Davis who embarked with his brothers Lawrence and Roy. While Bob Davis would return, his brothers would not. George Wilkins would perish at Sandakan in Borneo. In total, 97 men (38%) from the original company would not survive the war.

Troop transports

The Eighth Division departed Sydney on 29 July 1941, with the 2/12th Field Company on the Dutch liner *Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt*. The ship's destination was Singapore, then part of Malaya, and not the Middle East. *Johan Van Oldenbarnevelt* and the TSS *Katoomba* headed south towards Melbourne, escorted by HMAS *Sydney*. The convoy was joined by a second Dutch liner, *Marnix Van St Aldegonde* off Melbourne, and HMAS *Canberra* took over as the convoy escort, with *Sydney* heading back to Port Jackson.

The convoy continued on to Fremantle, where it dropped off *Katoomba* and picked up *Sibajak*, before setting out for division's final destination of Singapore, then part of Malaya, instead of the hoped for Middle East.

The men were kept occupied on the ship with lectures and menial duties. Harry fell afoul of the regimental police, and he was charged and convicted of "failing to appear at a place of parade after being named for Gd (Guard) duty." He was fined five shillings for his misdemeanour. The convoy arrived in Singapore on 15 August and commenced disembarking the following day, moving their stores and equipment to a camp at Johore Bahru which had been prepared for them by their sister Field Company, the 2/10th.

For the next three months Harry and his mates were engaged in a variety of engineering tasks, ranging from building pontoon bridges, installing tank traps and even constructing a slipway. The men, many of whom had never

previously worked in the tropics, began to fall ill, mainly with fever and diarrhea. In early October they would lose their first man, Sapper Harry Hannington a 36-year-old who died of meningitis. Harry was afforded a full military funeral, something few of the men would receive over the next four-years.

"RAFFLES"

All would change on 6 December 1941, when the Duty Officer received an urgent message with the word "RAFFLES", the allied code that hostilities had begun against Japan. The progress of the enemy forces down the Malayan Peninsula was spectacular, and the British Commonwealth (including Australian) forces rapidly fell back. By the middle of January, the engineers were at Segamat setting demolition charges on key points. By the end of the month they were on Singapore Island building defences near the causeway.

On the night of 8 February, the Japanese crossed Johore Strait and landed on the north-west corner of the island. The next day the engineers were tasked with blowing up fuel tanks near the causeway. However, the truck carrying the charges was destroyed by a shell, killing sappers Gordon Hall, Lance Hamblin and Don Saunders. The OIC of the detachment, Lieutenant Arthur Watchorn, and Sergeant Reg Wilstencroft, walked four miles with replacement charges to complete the task. Watchorn received the Military Cross and Wilstencroft the Military Medal for their actions. Soon after the engineers were absorbed into the 27th Infantry Brigade Group falling back initially to the MacRitchie Reservoir before being forced back into the final AIF perimeter.

Just after 2000 on Sunday, 15 February, the men received the news that the British Commonwealth Forces had unconditionally surrendered. The next morning, they had a big feed of 'bully-beef' before linking up with the rest of the company in houses to the west of Singapore city. Three days later, they marched 24-miles to Changi Barracks.

Right: Singapore's famous Raffles Hotel in 1935. "RAFFLES" was the allied code that hostilities had begun against Japan. Postcard.



Changi

In Changi, the Japanese issued cards for the men to fill out so their next of kin could be advised that they were safe. Few of the cards ever reached Australia. Not long after, the engineers were sought out by their captors to build roads and repair the infrastructure that their own troops had destroyed. This gave the men an opportunity to scrounge food and items from abandoned houses and buildings. As the weeks went on, the security became stricter and the opportunities to scrounge waned.

In May, Major General Callaghan, who had assumed command of the Eight Division when Bennett had deserted it, was advised that a party of 3000 men were required to travel to Burma and Thailand where allegedly, much better accommodation, food and conditions would be provided. There would be three battalions of 1000 men each. The second battalion was known as 'A' Force after its CO, Lt Colonel Charles Anderson VC MC. The battalion would be made up of engineers, signallers and other specialist units. This would become Harry Weigand's ticket out of Changi and into hell.

Whilst many of Harry's field company were selected to go to Burma and Thailand, 34 men would go to Borneo, of whom only two would survive the war. The men who went to Thailand would also suffer grievously building the infamous Burma Railway with 33 men perishing over a 16-month period through disease, malnutrition and brutal treatment from their captors.

On the railway, 'A' Force would be joined by some of the sailors who had survived the sinking of the light cruiser HMAS *Perth*. A number, including Chief Cook Bob Bland, Petty Officer Telegraphist Don Fowler and Gunner Len Smith, were contemporaries of Harry from his time in the RAN.

Part II will appear in the September 2025 edition of NHR.

About the author:

Anthony (Tony) Vine joined the RAN in January 1971 and submarines in 1977, after serving at sea on HMAS Supply and HMAS Melbourne. He was awarded his Dolphins on HMAS Orion in February 1978 before becoming a commissioning crew member of HMAS Otama.

Over the next 30-years he served on HMA Submarines Orion, Otama, Ovens and Otway and in numerous submarine shore positions including in the UK and Canada. He also served on Major War Vessel Sea Training Group and on HMAS Manoora. Tony has been the National Vice President of the SAA since October 2022. He has been married to Cathie for 48-years. They reside in Warrell Creek on the NSW mid-north Coast.



Below: POWs working on the infamous Burma Railway.





Commander George Bosanquet, NSW Naval Forces. The 1900 NSW Army and Navy List 1900 advised: Joined Royal Navy 1865 as a cadet, Lieut 1 March 1876, retired 1877, Total 12 years. Still on Navy List in 1900. Commanding NSW Naval Volunteer Artillery. Holds 1st Class Certificate for Whitehead Torpedo from HMS Nelson dated 15 April 1886. Officer in Charge Torpedoes.

NEW ERA WARSHIPS - 1895

Coastal and Harbour defence by torpedo boats - a lecture by Commander Bosanquet, New South Wales Naval Forces



Above: At the time of Commander Bosanquet's proposals, the city of Sydney was defended by just two 1878-vintage torpedo boats, like Acheron, shown here sailing towards Farm Cove. Bosanquet was a strong proponent of a larger local naval force for operations along the colony's coastline. By 1895 the 'modern' torpedo boat destroyers he promulgated were much larger, carried an improved armament, and could steam further and faster.

Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* newspaper of 1 October 1895 featured an informative article on the defence of the Australian coast through the acquisition of the latest torpedo boat destroyers (TBDs), then entering service with Britain's Royal Navy. The speaker, Commander George S. Bosanquet, of the NSW Naval Forces, was keen to progress his own naval force with the purchase of up to four of these larger TBDs, backed up by a new generation of the traditional, but still effective, smaller-sized torpedo boats.

The report continued:

Last night at the rooms of the United Services Institute, Commander Bosanquet, late Royal Navy, presented a paper in the presence of a large number of military and naval officers on "Coast and Harbour Defence by Torpedo Boats." Bosanquet said the subject was one which had been pretty well gone into in Europe, although there had been so far

very little war experience. His paper dealt with the special protection given to the coast, harbours and rivers by torpedo boats, independent of the British Navy. He was of opinion that the torpedo boats should defend pilotage water including the approaches and entrances to ports, and in harbour defence should be employed in defending the inner waters by enclosing particular positions, and by repeated attacks on the enemy in confined water.

A larger force

The long coastline of New South Wales was particularly adaptive to defence by torpedo boats seeing that their proper work was as raiders from a base. The local government could not look to the British Admiral to station his warships at any particular spot for the protection of the coast and its many harbours, but needed to be prepared to guard merchant ships in pilotage waters with no defences.

Bosanquet said he considered that for an efficient coast defence by torpedo boats there should be four torpedo boats operating from each principal port, and two for each of the harbours or rivers which had any claim for protection. These units would also be supplemented by one larger TBD for every 150-miles of coastline.

In time of conflict these better armed warships would be stationed temporarily at depots on the coast, where they would water and coal from punts. The duty of the TBD it was said was to supply information, to cover the enemy by day, and to worry them all the time. The four boats would cover an area of 600 by 100-miles and would frequently be in touch with the first line of defence constituted by the vessels of the navy.

Doctrine of operations

Bosanquet explained that in attacking a ship underway or in confined waters, the smaller torpedo boats would approach in pairs 'from to leeward' (sic), and, if possible, assisted by a similar attack from a different direction, which might be from seaward, the unexpected quarter. The report continued: *It had been found that the probable position of discovery would be about 1000-yards from the enemy, and this zone should be travelled over at full speed, a moderate speed sufficing until discovery.*

As the movement would be rapid it would be best to take the enemy end on, sweep past as close as possible, and use the broadside discharge, as being the quickest and most reliable in and out of action. The percentage of hits in action at sea was, according to Admiral Colomb, 2 percent, and taking into consideration the actual rate of fire in warfare it was probable that a torpedo boat would escape from the fleet of the enemy.

In firing a torpedo at a vessel, it had been found that a 50-yards range was quite long enough, and when ships had been struck it was generally by the broadside torpedoes, which should be fired first, the bow tubes being kept in reserve. Successful attacks must be sudden and unexpected, and given with dash, and unless favoured by fogs or rain squalls, a daylight attack would have little chance of being successful.



**Dress ship, HMVS
Countess of Hopetoun.**

Harbour defence

For harbour defence, the torpedo boats should attack from seaward, thus falling on the enemy in the rear; that was when they were kept outside the harbour and not allowed to cross in. When attacks were about to be made from inshore, the officer commanding the defence would give the order to cease fire, and the attack would thus relieve the garrison. There was nothing like repeated attacks to demoralise the enemy, and attacks such as he had indicated should be made frequently.

In all probability an enemy could rely upon at least four clear days on the Australian coast without interruption, though at Wai-hei-Wei, where the Japanese had complete control of the seas, it took 13-days to silence the guns. Batteries, minefield guns and submarine mines were the recognised defences in protected ports, though history had shown that such protection was by no means invulnerable and rather that passive defence was invariably unsuccessful. The moral effect of torpedoes was quite as great as that of mines, as its effectiveness with regard to hitting its object far greater. Even the small torpedo boats of an antiquated type and considered useless for an attack against ships in the open sea, might be substituted for mines, and they would have all the advantages that the attack, mobile and sudden, has over the defence, immobile and passive.

**Right: With his
binoculars in hand,
Bosanquet stands
before the single
stack of the torpedo
boat Avernus.**



Future force

Leading up to the arrival of the 20th century, it was quite possible that mine defences would be altogether abolished, opinion generally inclining towards keeping the main channels in all harbours absolutely clear. After dealing at considerable length on the method of harbour defence, Bosanquet concluded by saying he considered that a good armament of quick-firing guns, backed by some fast torpedo boats, would be the very best way of expending a defence vote, the fixed defence invariably taking second place to the mobile force.

In summary

The table below provides a good comparison of the main specifications of three principal warships of the time. The first column describes the Sydney-built torpedo boat *Acheron*, which Commander Bosanquet served on during his time with the NSW Naval Forces. By 1895, when the officer outlined his plans for an improved defensive force, these two torpedo boats, *Acheron* and *Avernus*, had been in service for 17-years, a prolonged period for such small naval assets. In comparison, the Victorian Colonial Naval Forces operated a total of five torpedo boats, two first-class, two second-class and one torpedo launch.

Name	<i>Acheron</i>	HMVS <i>Countess of Hopetoun</i>	HMS <i>Sturgeon</i>
Operator	NSW	Victorian	Royal Navy
In use	1878-1902	1892-1924	1894-1910
Type	2 nd class torpedo boat	1 st class torpedo boat	Torpedo boat destroyer
Tons	22-tons	75-tons	340-tons
Length	82.6-feet	130-feet	194.6-feet
Torpedoes	Two 14-inch	Three 14-inch, plus four sets of dropping gear	Two 18-inch
Guns	Small arms	Two 1-inch Nordenfelt	One 12-pounder Quick Firing (QF)
Speed	16-knots	24-knots	27-knots
Crew	Approx 12	19	53

The pair of first-class boats, HMV Ships *Childers* and *Countess of Hopetoun*, had by 1895, been in use for eleven and three-years, respectively. Both could operate in heavy seas and had in fact, made their way to Victoria from their English builders. They remained effective upon the outbreak of the Great War in 1914 and continued to serve with the RAN, *Countess of Hopetoun*, in a variety of roles until 1924. To reach the standards of his Victorian counterparts, Bosanquet would have desired to obtain four of the latest TBDs, like HMS *Sturgeon*, which entered service with the British Fleet the year before. If approved, this class of warship would have offered both increased armament and speed, and the ability to operate in heavier seas.

Developments in the type of warship described by

Bosanquet would eventually be acquired by the Royal Australian Navy, albeit, not until 1910. Then, the first pair of River (I) class arrived, with all six boats serving during the Great War and in the training role after the arrival of their replacements, the five S class destroyers.



Model of HMS Sturgeon.

Postscript

Unfortunately, the ideas put forward by Bosanquet would not see the light of day, with Government approval for such vessels, not obtained until late in the first decade of the 20th century.

On 18 August 1902, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on the death of Commander George Bosanquet. The report read:

We have to record the death of Commander George Stanley Bosanquet, Royal Navy, for many years Commander of the New South Wales Naval Volunteer Artillery and staff officer in charge of the torpedoes. The officer's death was comparatively sudden, and took place at his late residence, Moorebank, Liverpool, on Saturday, the immediate cause of death being aneurism of the heart.

Bosanquet was born in the year 1851 and entered the Royal Navy as a cadet at the age of 14. In March 1876 he obtained his commission as lieutenant and retired from the service in the following year. His first connection with the New South Wales Naval Forces dates from March 5, 1885, and in August 1888, he became Commander of the Naval Volunteer Artillery, and also officer in charge of torpedoes.

He rendered useful service to the State and was regarded as a capable officer in both positions. Upon the reorganisation of the naval forces under the Commonwealth recently the deceased commander was retired owing to the age limit. He leaves a widow and family of four sons and one daughter. The remains were brought from Liverpool to Sydney by train on Sunday and buried in the Waverley Cemetery in the afternoon. The late commander was accorded a naval and military funeral. The coffin was removed from the train at the Redfern station and placed on a gun carriage. It was covered with the Union Jack, on which rested the deceased officer's cocked hat and sword.



The cortege proceeded to the Waverley Cemetery, the gun carriage drawn by men from the Naval Brigade and preceded by a firing party and escort. The service was conducted by The Rev. R. Mc Keown. At the conclusion, the firing party fired three volleys over the grave (above).

SERVING ABOARD THE TOWN CLASS CRUISERS

A transcript of the 1972 presentation to the NHSA
by naval historian and member John Bastock



Above: John Bastock's grand painting of the arrival of the first RAN Fleet unit into Sydney Harbour on Saturday, 4 October 1913. As he describes below, John sat on his father's shoulders to get a fine view of the new warships at rest in Farm Cove. John shows the battlecruiser HMAS Australia (centre), the two Town class light cruisers, HMA Ships Melbourne and Sydney (right and far right), and on the far left, in the distance, the Flagship of the Australia Station, HMS Cambrian.

When the first Australian Fleet Unit arrived in Sydney on 4 October 1913, I had a fairly good view of the events because I was taken down as a small boy to the site close to the Opera House and near to Man o' War steps.

And as it appeared that there must have been at least half the population of Sydney present, I prevailed upon my father to sit me on his shoulder, which he did, and so I had a fine view of the entry of our fleet. Everyone, of course, was impressed with the great battlecruiser HMAS Australia, which was the flagship of the new fleet. But as a young boy, I must confess, like all other youngsters, that I was most impressed with the sleek light cruisers which laid between Australia and Garden Island, Numbers 2 and 3 buoys, which we used to call them then. Number 2 was halfway between Bennelong Point and Mrs. Macquarie's chair, and Number 3 was right off Mrs. Macquarie's chair.

Now to see these 'four-funnellers,' HMA Ships Sydney and Melbourne, belching forth their smoke, I was extremely impressed.

Little did I think at the time, as a lad, that one day, some years later, I would be serving in these two ships, and not only in these two, but also in their young sister, Brisbane, which at that point of time was just barely taking shape on the stocks of Cockatoo Island. She wasn't due in the water for another two-years after that.

And so, I'd like to tell you something tonight about these four-funnel cruisers. Now these three, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, where the first cruisers built for the RAN. They were built to the design of the Chatham group of the British Town class light cruisers which were constructed before the Great War.

Intended as a counter to the large number of German cruisers coming into service, they were nice little vessels, very handsome ships I thought, with their raking masts and funnels, cut-away bow and over-hanging stern. They looked tough, particularly when belching all that smoke, but we thought they looked all right at that time. In the Chatham group, to which this little part belonged, the forecastle of the ship was taken right aft, nearly to the mainmast, and on that level, five of the eight six-inch guns were carried.



Above: HMAS Sydney (I) conducts a firing exercise with one of her 6-inch guns.

Design

In earlier classes of British ships, one of the weaknesses in design was that the forecastle was broken at the point near the bridge and run up. And at that time, the principle of putting all the guns on the centreline of the ship, to fire on each side, hadn't been fully developed. Thus, much of the main armament had to be carried on the sides of the ship.

And you can imagine, at this level, guns fitted on the side of the ship would be fairly low in command, and not only that, they would be washed out in any sort of a sea running from the bows right down to the beam. And not only was this uncomfortable for the gun crews, because they would practically have to hang on for life when each 'green-back' washed over the ship, but there was a more genuine problem as well.

The armament of these ships at this time was made up of separate ammunition. That is, the 6-inch shell was separate to the charge. The shell was put into the gun first, followed by a cordite charge. On each end of the cordite charge was a little powder bag, a bag of gunpowder. And you all know the adage, keep your powder dry!

Well, with 'green-backs' washing over the ship, it was hard to keep your powder dry, and the result would be a missed fire, because you can't light, or you can't ignite wet powder.

And so, the guns were useless. But in the Chatham group, as we say, the 'French Quebec' was extended nearly 'half' (sic) to the mainmast. And at this height, five of the eight 6-inch guns were carried. And so there was no problem with the seas washing over the ship.

If the seas were so rough that those guns couldn't be worked on, it was time to go home and fight another day. Because it was the same gun group as the other 'fellow', with the same problems.



Above: Visitors inspect the forward 6-inch gun aboard HMAS Sydney (I) at Port Melbourne Pier. Open ship was conducted on Sunday, 12 November 1922.

Class data

Now, for a bit of an in-depth look at this Chatham group of ships. They were of 5,400 tons displacement. That is about 800 tons heavier than our present (Perth class) guided missile destroyers, which, for the sake of people not conversed with Navy jargon, we call those the DDGs. Their overall length was 457 feet, so the cruisers were about 20-feet longer than the DDGs.

That doesn't seem very much, but these ships did look much bigger than our present DDGs, which are a very handsome ship, but more like they are, in fact a big destroyer. But these Chatham class units look every inch a fighting ship and a cruiser.

They were well armed for their size. The 6-inch, 50-calibre guns fired a shell weighing 100-pounds. And that was the heaviest hand-loaded shell in the British naval services at the time. As a secondary armament, they carried four 3-pounder guns.

As the secondary armament, I would suspect that they were actually second-hand guns. And I also believe that they would have been useless against anything that they fired against. But they had a couple of effective uses. One was for frightening the heck out of residents in the case of any troubles ashore. And, of course, their primary purpose in these RAN ships was for saluting.

And not only that, but this little three-pounder was also the ship's star-shell gun. That is, it illuminated the target with star-shell. It was found very early in the Great War, that as soon as you switched your searchlights on, particularly if you did them at both ends of the ship, you were a sitting duck.

So, the lesson was quickly learned, that you don't switch your lights on if the lookout picked up a suspected enemy, you fire a star-shell to illuminate it with a sickly yellow pyrotechnic display. And, as well, the little guns made a dreadful noise.

Engines

The cruisers were powered by turbines, not geared turbines, but direct drive Parsons turbines. And their horsepower was 25,000. Maximum speed, or design speed rather, was 25 and a half knots.

But by stoking them up a little, with a little 'blood, sweat and tears', another knot could be extracted from them in those conditions. They were four-screwed vessels, although their later sister *Adelaide*, only had two.



Above: HMAS Brisbane (I) departing Fremantle in 1923.

Torpedoes

Another important part of the armament were the torpedoes. They had two 21-inch submerged torpedo tubes, with the starboard tube placed a little further forward than the port tube, because the beam of the ship was narrow, 50-feet, and you couldn't put two tubes end to end. So they were staggered, the starboard tube being the foremost of the two.

It had been claimed up to about this period that submerged torpedo tubes were a great idea because the enemy could not see you firing at it. Well, that was true, but this was not always an advantage, because at some stage, and this was found to be vital, particularly during the Second World War, as well as the Great War, but you wanted the enemy to see you firing torpedoes at him. Because as soon as you let loose with torpedoes, he had to take some evasive action. Another great disadvantage was, if you imagine the ship slipping through the water at about 20-knots and firing a

torpedo, measuring about 25-feet in length, before it got halfway through, the torpedo would snap off like a carrot. And this was a great disadvantage. To fix the problem, the RAN installed a very heavy thing called a 'bar'. And this heavy fitting had to be run out before the torpedoes, and thus protected the torpedo until it got clear of the tube. And that was the way the problem was overcome.

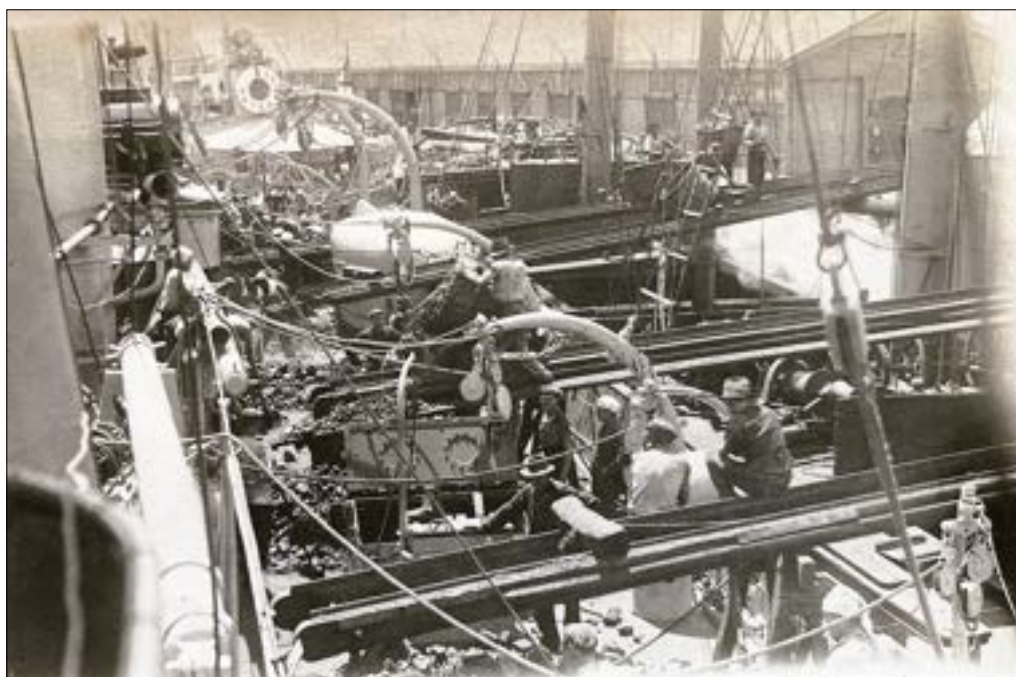
But the underwater torpedo installation was a messy business. These ships carried an outfit of about eight or nine torpedoes. And it was a very strenuous task, loading these heavy weapons. It required a great number of interlocks on the tube for safety purposes because there had to be a front door to keep the water out while you loaded your torpedo. And there was a side door on the torpedo tube and a rear door. You had to close the front door. You had to open the rear and side doors.

And then close them up again before the front door was open, and before you fired the torpedoes, you must know that the bar was run out. And in any case, by the time you've fired about half a dozen torpedoes, as well as being exhausted, you would be up to your knees in salt water, which had to be pumped out again. So, it was a bit of a messy business all round.





Left: Another view of the public open day aboard HMAS Sydney (I) at Port Melbourne Pier on 12 November 1922. One of the cruiser's searchlights is visible, as is the one of the starboard side 6-inch guns. Two of the ship's boats can also be seen.



Right: Coal ship, a very messy task. Crew members can be seen helping with the loading of their important fuel, in Fremantle, on 31 October 1923.

Saluting

In those early days, everything was very unsophisticated, with a nice timing to the salute. Some of the older personnel here tonight will remember this routine: the gunner's mate used to stand on the platform adjacent to them, and when the order was given to let fire for the Royal Salute, he would say, Fire one, if I wasn't a gunner, I wouldn't be here. Fire two, if I wasn't a gunner, I wouldn't be here. Fire three, and so forth. And that sounded particularly good. It was very nicely spaced. And that's the way they got over the spacing of their royal salute and all those types of things.

Three-pounders

It's interesting to note that when these cruisers were first commissioned and arrived in Sydney Harbour, no provision had been made for fighting aircraft or for attacking enemy submarines.

My Lords of the Admiralty at that time evidently thought that the aircraft was just a toy, and the submarine as well. But they were, of course, a few years later to learn the lesson in a hard way. So, the ships were eventually armed with their four 3-pounder guns, aft of the fourth stack, as a defender against aircraft.

IN MEMORY

New HMAS Perth (I) Memorial unveiled



Above: HMAS Perth (I) in full splendor. The new memorial to the ship and her crew was unveiled on 1 March 2025.

Event

HMAS *Perth* (I) commemorative ceremony to unveil the new memorial on 1 March 2025, the 83rd anniversary of the light cruiser's loss in the Second World War.

Location

Training Ship *Perth* in Fremantle, Western Australia.

Origin

In 2018 as an initiative of the Navy League of Australia, West Australian Division, initial contact was made with a number of interested individuals, inviting them to a presentation for a proposed memorial. Following this, a committee was formulated and a Certificate of Incorporation was achieved on 4 April 2019, formally approving the HMAS *Perth* (I) Memorial Foundation Incorporated.

Progress

To bring the project to completion, the Foundation worked closely with Smith Sculptors, the creators of the HMAS *Sydney* (II) Memorial at Geraldton, WA.

The Foundation's official launch was later conducted in conjunction with the 60th anniversary of the HMAS *Perth* (II) Memorial Regatta, held at the Nedlands Yacht Club on 16 February 2020.

Right: The impressive memorial commemorates the loss of both HMAS Perth (I) and USS Houston in the Battle of Sunda Strait during the Second World War.



Above: The Memorial Foundation's commemorative ceremony. The memorial was opened by the Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson, APM and the Commanding Officer, HMAS Perth (III) Commander Dylan White, CSM, RAN.



Aims

The memorial acknowledges and honours the members of the ship's company who:

- perished in the Battle of Sunda Strait,
- survived the battle and attempted to avoid capture,
- were captured, imprisoned and enslaved,
- died as prisoners of war, and
- finally returned to Australia or the United Kingdom

The memorial also acknowledges the families whose lives were forever changed by the loss of HMAS *Perth* and the American cruiser USS *Houston*.

Opening

This stunning memorial to the hundreds of brave men who died when *Perth* (I) was sunk in 1942 was opened by WA Governor, Chris Dawson and his wife Darrilyn. In acknowledgement of the sacrifice of the fallen, the Governor focused his address on the families of those killed, and the team who made the memorial possible, achieved over the last few years.

He concluded with: *In March 2025, we stand before a memorial of the gallant crew of HMAS Perth, in a world where today, there are wars and rumours of wars. And we as an Australian nation, must learn from and never, NEVER forget the supreme sacrifice of our brave fallen.*

*HMAS Perth will
ALWAYS BE – STILL ON WATCH.
LEST WE FORGET.*



Clockwise from top:

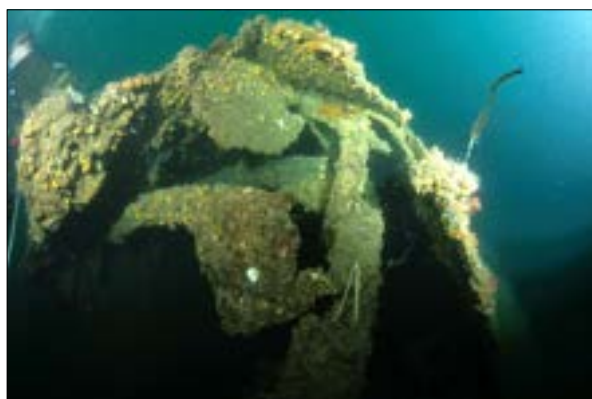
- **The Commanding Officer, HMAS Perth (III) Commander Dylan White, CSM, RAN (left) with the Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency the Honourable Chris Dawson, APM.**

- **HMAS Perth National Association - Western Australia Branch President Leon Best recites the Ode of Remembrance.**

- **Detailed view of the recently unveiled plaque.**

- **A United States Navy photograph of HMAS Perth (I), taken in October 2015.**

- **The new memorial in the evening light.**



J CLASS SUBMARINES and their WONDERFUL MECHANISM

Intricate Machinery and its Use in War Talking to Ships at the Bottom of the Sea

By A.C.C.S., 'Sunday Times' - 20 July 1919

"Just about the greasiest job I ever took on," said the photographer, as his grimy but radiant face reappeared above the hatch of the conning tower of HMAS J5 as the vessel lay alongside HMAS *Encounter*, her foster mother for the time being.

In order to inspect this unit of the Commonwealth Naval Forces, a representative of the 'Sunday Times,' accompanied by the camera man, duly armed with flash-light apparatus, paid her a visit last week as she lay in Farm Cove. Tied up to the parent ship, she looked in the distance like nothing else so much, perhaps, as a big baby whale cuddling up to its monstrous mother for protection.

A warlike vessel

The illusion, however, ends on closer inspection, when it is obvious that this baby is extremely warlike. We know that she can fight grim battles against overwhelming odds on her own. Deep down in her vitals she carries an armament of torpedoes capable of sinking leviathan battleships protected by armour-plate, whilst on her superstructure with predatory snout tilted aggressively, squats a vicious-looking gun that can tackle sea or air craft with equal ease.

Lying thus, rocking gently to the swell, and dwarfed by the man-o'-war at her side, with little else showing save her steel decks almost awash and her pulpit-like conning tower, J5 does not give the impression of deadliness and power that this class of vessel has earned for itself in the war; but come below, and you shall see the stored-up energy that makes a submarine so dangerous.

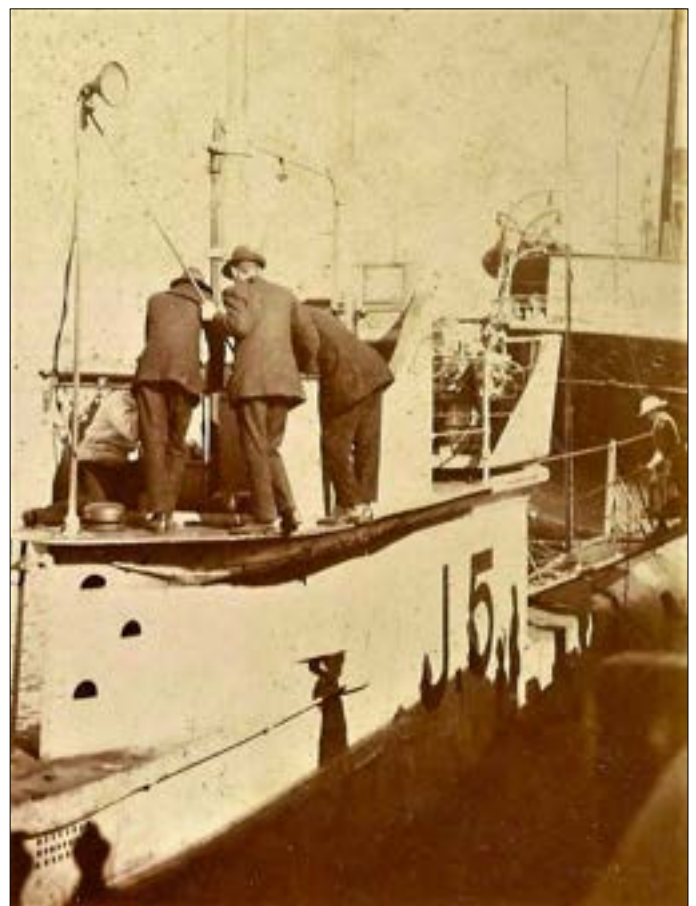
To begin with, none save a fit man and a tolerably slim one should attempt to negotiate a submarine's hatchway. The only means of ingress proved is a perpendicular steel ladder, exceedingly greasy - and slippery at that, which leads down to a very narrow shaft some 20-feet deep into the bowels of the boat.

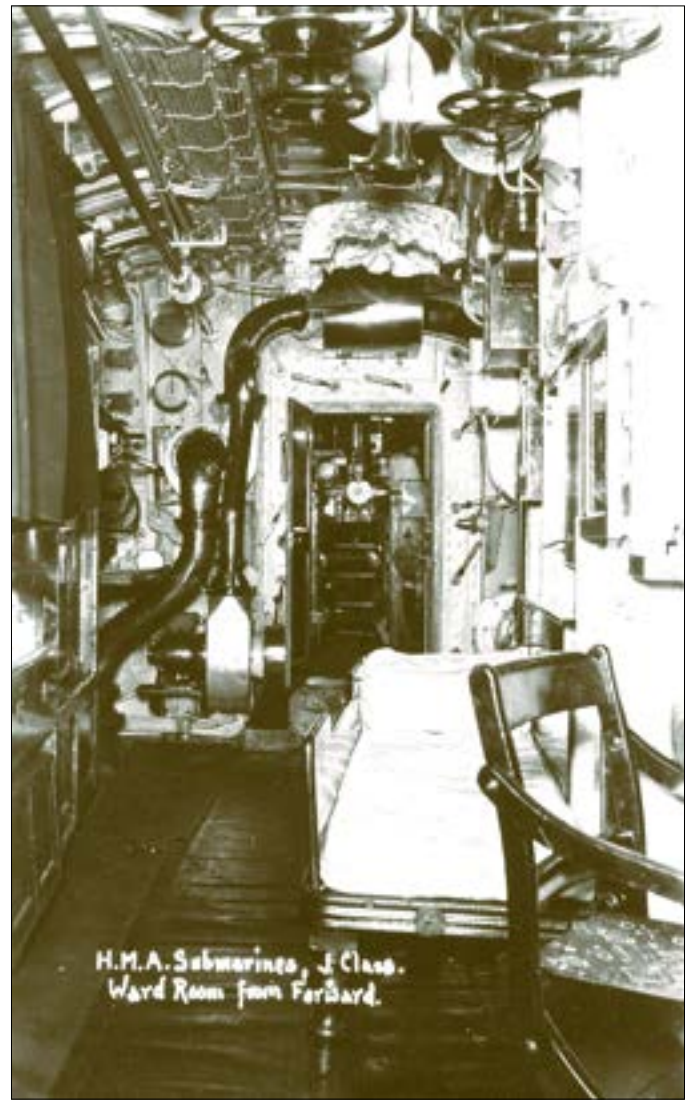
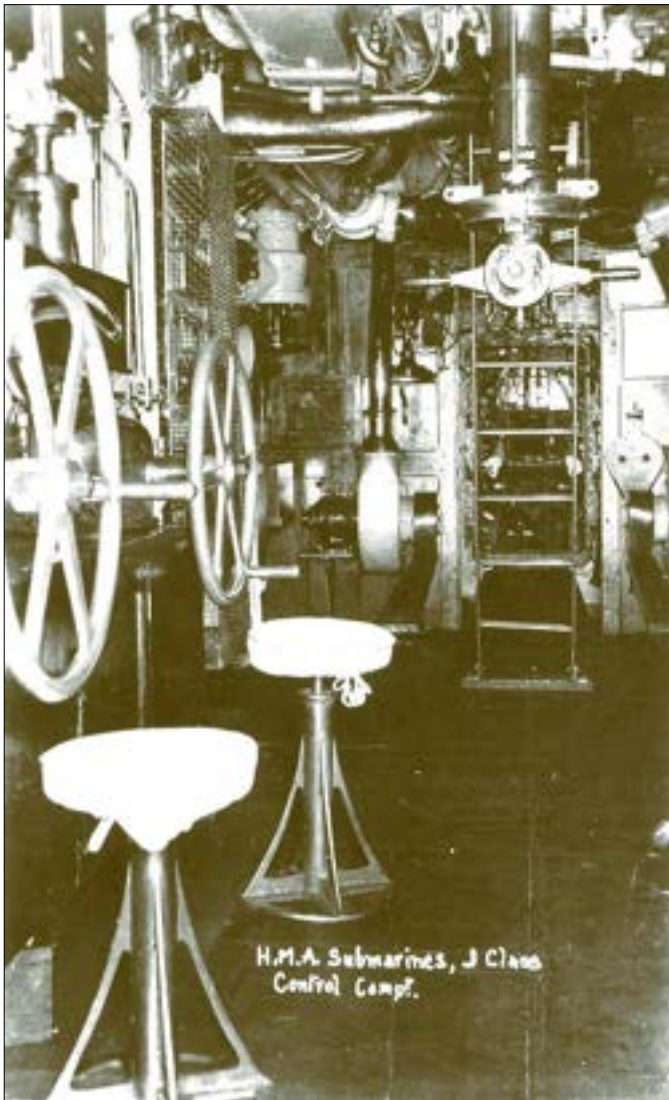
Our guide, Lieut. R. Pierson, DSC, the amazingly youthful-looking commander of J5, disappeared below like a streak of lightning, betokening much practice. The pressman followed gingerly, bumping faithfully with head or knees, or both, every projection enroute. These seemed to be innumerable.



Above: The original J5 story from the Sunday Times, 20 July 1919. TROVE.

Below: Members of the public inspect HMAS J5, taking much interest in the workings of the 'modern' boat.





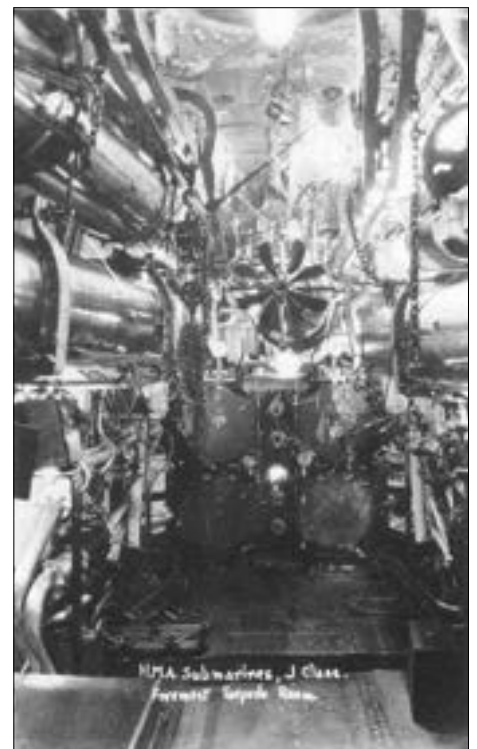
Postcards taken aboard one the J class boats, with the original captions.

Clockwise from top left:
- the control compartment,

- the wardroom from forward,

- the foremost torpedo room, and

- another internal view of the boat.



The Box of Tricks

"I suppose you would like to see the whole box of tricks," said the Commander, as he bustled forward to the torpedo chamber, whilst we scrambled along as best we could after him, punctuating every yard of the painful journey with bumps against unseen and unexpectedly low pipes, wheels, switches and the like. The interior of a submarine at first sight appears to be one vast conglomeration of machinery. It lies closely packed on either side, whilst overhead is an intricate mass of tubes, electric wiring, motors, clutches, valves, gyroscopes and the thousand and one parts that go to make up the modern oil engine. The stamp of power is overall, deadly power, whilst the shiny brightness of all metal parts and the fresh unscratched paintwork is such as only the Royal Australian Navy can show.

The Torpedo Chamber

The torpedo chamber is up in the bows of the boat, a low complicated looking space packed full of sudden death. Forward there were four tubes, all loaded, ready for use, and four more torpedoes are slung up on the sides in reserve. "They contain 350-lbs of high explosive," said our guide, nonchalantly tapping one of the huge 'tin fish'. The name of the explosive is apparently a state secret, for enquiry on the subject proved the Commander reticent. Not without cause do we call ours the silent Navy! The torpedoes are fired by compressed air, and it is not necessary for anyone to be in the chamber at all during firing, as the operation can be performed from the bridge or the control room amidship by merely pressing a button.

Each of these great steel cylinders of potted destruction is some ten or twelve-feet in length, and about four-feet in circumference, and is worth £1000. There are twelve of them aboard. It costs something to wage war with such 'missiles', and one must be tolerably sure of one's mark. We learn that *J5*, in spite of several shots at U-boats in the North Sea, managed to bag one.

A torpedo cannot be recovered normally in wartime after an unsuccessful run, as it is set to sink to the bottom to prevent an enemy retrieving it; but we learn that in the Sea of Marmara one of our submarine commanders did, on several occasions, under the eyes of the enemy, set his torpedoes to float, thereby successfully recovering them after having missed the target. Our guide added: "I know chaps who just jumped overboard after one, and the Turks were generally scared too stiff to stop us. Spoken in a drawling, languid way, this all sounded delightfully simple and safe but remember that a torpedo has a warhead, and if it comes in contact with anything hard annihilation follows!

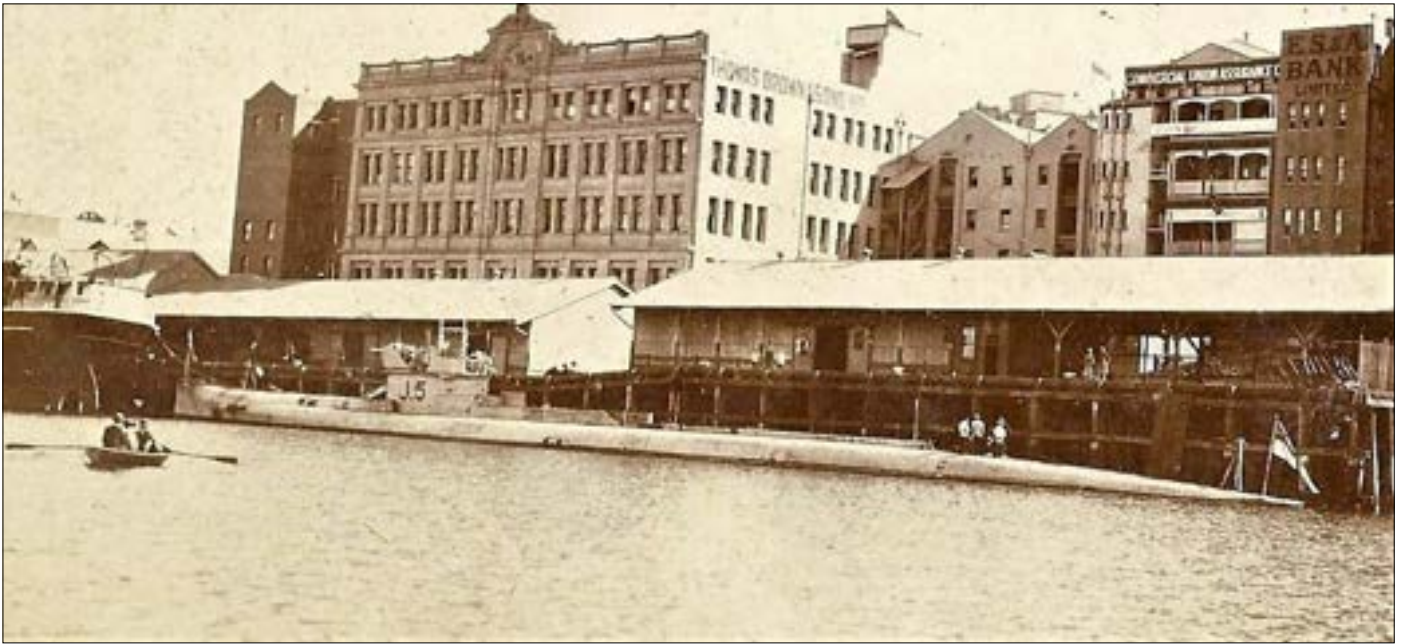
The Hydrophone

If there was secrecy about torpedo explosives, there was dramatic mystery about an instrument designated the hydrophone. Stripped of all technicalities, it is possible for those aboard a submarine in the depths of the sea to detect the presence of other craft around them. The hydrophone does more than this. It enables an expert, from the note produced in the instrument, to gauge the whereabouts of the other ship, and to estimate its size and speed and many other points.

The business end of this wizard machine was carefully sewed up in thick canvas in the officer's wardroom. "Just to keep one from bumping one's head, don't you know," politely explained the Commander. In spite of this touching solicitude, one could not help feeling suspicious that there were other more material reasons for concealment. Apparently, the apparatus consists of two diaphragms on the outside of the boat which transmit sound waves to a delicate registering instrument aboard, which can in turn be read by a trained man with almost mathematical accuracy, the tone of the note produced being the determining factor.

HMA Ships J5 and J1, alongside in Hobart, Tasmania, during their January 1921 cruise to the southern state. Courtesy Geelong Maritime Museum.





Above: Broadside view of HMAS J5, alongside during a visit to Brisbane.

A Talking Machine

If this seems wonderful, what shall one say about the Fessenden Gear, to which we were introduced next. Here is an instrument that enables a submerged submarine to talk to other submarines in Morse code at a range of five-miles or so. Lieut. Pierson worked a machine which emitted a penetrating sort of honk, like a motorcar horn. That was all. Yet that miraculous honking must have saved thousands of lives and millions of tons of shipping in the late war. "The enemy had the Fessenden gear before us," offered our guide, "and the hydrophone, for the matter of that, too."

Then, as another means of communication there is the wireless apparatus. The Commander waxed eloquent and enthusiastic over this. It was evidently a favourite with him, and one gathered such words of praise as "Absolutely up to date." "Very powerful," and so forth. Enclosed in a little dog-box of a place off the control chamber, it seemed somewhat uncanny to hear that this wireless outfit had a range of 600-miles.

Before seeing all these "Jims," as our guide somewhat irreverently described these various instruments which render communication between submarines possible, one had always imagined this class of warship groping about blindly at the bottom of the sea at the mercy of currents and so forth; but it is quite clear that such is not the case, and that submarines can maintain formation below just as accurately as surface ships can above.

Ship's Nerve Centre

The nerve centre of the ship is her control room. From here radiate thousands of wires, tubes, and other parts of the vastly complicated Vickers submarine engine, which is capable of developing a hundred horsepower per-cylinder,

and in this case has two engines of 12-each. These engines worked three propellers, which are all independent. This is just as well, for after bucketing about the North Sea for years, and surviving every test, one of the propeller shafts of J5 broke near Aden on her recent voyage out to Australia. She could still proceed with her other two propellers, but was towed at times.

The noise in the engine-room when the engines are running is deafening, yet the ship's crew, which numbers 40, sleep right alongside the machinery. The bunks are in tiers, and how the men manage to get in and out of them remains a mystery. It is interesting to know that whilst one has to shout to make oneself heard against the roar of the engines, sleeping men awake with a start if they stop, and find it difficult to get repose in a quiet room ashore when on leave.

An Excellent Crew

One could not help admiring the good stamp of sailor comprising the crew. Picked men, we were told, and they looked it. In place of the tense, nervous, drawn expression one might reasonably have expected on the faces of the officers and men who for years have lived within hourly call of death, one found instead an infectious sort of gaiety and camaraderie not met with usually to such a great extent on a large battleship or cruiser. The crew are paid 2/- a day extra, submarine pay, "and, by Jove, they deserve it!" was the comment of the Commander. Submarine officers similarly draw 6/- a day extra, and one is quite sure they, too, deserve the extra remuneration.

The officers' wardroom is in no sense elegant or luxurious. A table one side, tiers of bunks the other, and a few shelves complete the furnishings. "Yes, a chap can tumble out of bunk at eight and have breakfast straight away," says the navigating officer, Lieut. Sim, DSC, who joined our party. Lieut. Sim represents the mercantile marine, and he received his decoration for good work in locating and placing

mines in the North Sea. It was interesting to note the splendid spirit of good fellowship obviously prevailing between the RAN and the RANR officers aboard. Personality counts, and provided an officer is a decent fellow, he gets as good a spin in the RAN as anyone else.

The cooking for officers and men is done electrically, and, despite rumours to the contrary, they all fare pretty well. One thing missing apparently is a refrigerator for keeping fresh meat and other food. Enemy submarines had such things, we are told and run the freezer off the engine exhaust. It seems a pity that something of the same sort could not be installed on our own submarines, which remain below the surface of the sea occasionally as long as 24-hours on end and may be away from a base independently for 15-20-days or more on patrol.

A Big Ship

It was only after one had traversed the full length of *J5* below that one realised what a very big ship she is in reality; therefore, it is not surprising to learn that she is 275-feet in length and has a surface displacement of 1200-tons. Yet this unwieldy great cylinder is as sensitive and fragile as a watch, almost, crammed full of high-power electric plant capable of generating 220-volts and carrying a multitude of bottles of compressed air showing a pressure of 2500-lbs each. *J5* is just energy in tabloid form from bow to stern. The pity is that all this ingenuity should be concentrated on destruction alone.

Seated around the wardroom table, over a pipe, we discussed the life aboard a submarine. During the war there was a great rush to serve on them. There is not so much of a rush in peace time, yet the separate commands just suit the ambitious young officer.

Below: J5 in the process of stripping before being scuttled.



If a submarine's quota of officers pulls well together, and they nearly always do, life can be very jolly indeed; but if they don't, existence in an undersea boat can be utterly impossible. In such cases the only remedy would probably be for the whole personnel to be changed.

A Crash Dive

We heard of concerts aboard whilst *J5* lay bumping on the bottom of the sea, of wonderful sights of enemy ships split in half in the act of sinking as seen through the periscope, and with no photographer handy to secure a record. Then for our benefit was enacted the procedure for what is known as a 'crash dive.' Imagine that the officer and lookout man on deck see some menace that calls for immediate action. The orders for immediate submerging are telephoned down, and the men on deck themselves leap down the conning tower in order not to be shut out.

Simultaneously with the order a loud rattle is sounded on board, which is the signal for everyone to spring to his special post. Hatches are closed, tanks filled, and in 45-seconds the submarine can be completely submerged. Woe betides the luckless inmates of the ship if saltwater gets into the engine room from the conning tower hatch. Chlorine gas is created if it does, and this makes life below intolerable.

Chances of Rescue

Questioned as to the chances of the crew of a submarine being rescued if she failed to rise to the surface from below, the commander told us that it might be possible to blow out the tanks and go full speed ahead and gradually work up to the surface, or, failing this, as a last desperate effort to save some of the crew, to let water into the conning tower shaft and neutralise the pressure of the water outside, and then shoot as many men as possible up to the surface through the open hatch. This would be a desperate chance, but has actually been resorted to in at least one recorded instance.

We were told of the effect of a depth charge dropped near a submarine, how the dull, heavy detonation shakes the craft, and, if severe enough, may put out all the lights, or worse still, stave in the sides, and thus end the chapter, so far as the submarine is concerned. But don't you think our submarine sailors deserve that 2/- a day extra?



Above: Very grainy image of J5 being scuttled off Port Phillip Heads on 4 June 1926.

COLLECTORS

Captain James Cook's Commemorative Plate

The commemorative plate (opposite) was produced as a souvenir that marked the bicentenary of the 1770 landing on Australian shores of Captain (Lieutenant) James Cook.

The face of the plate (top) carries a transfer-printed depiction of Cook's ship, *HMB Endeavour*, encircled with the legend: TO COMMEMORATE THE BI-CENTENARY OF THE DISCOVERY OF AUSTRALIA 1770-1970, surmounted by the Australian Coat of Arms and with an image of Captain James Cook, Royal Navy beneath. Plaques representing the six Australian states are arranged around the rim of the plate on a background of Australian wildflowers and floral emblems.

The back of the plate (below) carries a brief biography of Cook, plus a description of *Endeavour*. The plate was also produced in a limited hand-painted edition.





JAMES COOK

Born October 27th 1728
at Marton-in-Cleveland
Yorkshire, England.

Commissioned as a
Lieutenant in the Royal Navy,
May 26th 1768. Described by
Admiral Lord Colville as a man of "genius and capacity."
Sailed on August 25th 1768 from Plymouth, England via
South America's Cape Horn into the Pacific.
At daybreak on April 20th 1770 Cook's First Lieutenant
Zachary Hicks sighted the east coast of Australia.
Cook landed at Botany Bay on April 29th 1770.
On August 22nd whilst on Possession Island, Cook
claimed all Australia's east coast naming it NEW WALES
later amending this to NEW SOUTH WALES.

His Majesty's Barque ENDEAVOUR

A collier designed mainly for the
North Sea Trade - built 1764. 97'7" long
29'3" across its widest part and just
over 368 tons in burden. Bought into
the Navy for £2800 in 1768.



HMAS ENCOUNTER and the RAIDER SEEADLER

Colin Randall discusses the loss of the German ship in 1917



Above: Crew from HMAS Encounter aboard the German raider Seeadler at Mopelia Island. The Australian cruiser is visible in the background. The enemy ship had been abandoned after drifting onto the island's reef. Postcard.

The enemy raider *Seeadler* sailed from Germany in December 1916 and during an extended cruise in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, captured and sank 14 Allied merchant ships and sailing vessels. By July 1917 *Seeadler* had been at sea for seven months and required essential maintenance. Seeking a remote location Kapitanleutnant Felix von Luckner chose the island of Mopelia (sometimes spelt Mopeh'a) in the Society Group, off which the ship anchored on 31 July. Unfortunately, on 2 August, the ship dragged its anchor and drifted onto a coral reef.

Von Luckner and his crew escaped from the wreck and attempted to pass themselves off as shipwrecked Swedish mariners, but they were captured and became prisoners of war, placed in a POW camp in New Zealand. Von Luckner's career in *Seeadler* and his antics as a prisoner of war are not the subject of this history of HMAS *Encounter*, and those wishing to know about his career should read the book 'The Sea Devil' by Lowell Thomas for a more detailed, although somewhat dramatised account of the ship's career and her very interesting captain.

The wreck of *Seeadler* on Mopelia Island was soon reported and *Encounter* was dispatched to investigate the wreck and look for other members of her crew. As well, the Japanese protected cruiser *Hirado* was sent to Fiji to search that area for a suspected second raider and the Australian cruiser HMAS *Brisbane* was also sent to the Solomon Islands on a similar anti-raider mission.

Encounter arrived off Mopelia Island on 9 November 1917. Chief Petty Officer Ernest Stidston who was serving in the cruiser at the time recorded the following in his diary:

9 November 1917 - 1000, Encounter arrived Mopelia Island. We could see the German raider Seeadler on the reef between two islands. She had been set on fire before being abandoned and was practically gutted. Officers and men went aboard and found two 4.1-inch guns intact and some ammunition that escaped the fire. Through field glasses, huts could be seen on the island. Commander Wilmot, the Chaplain (Vivian Ward Thompson), and Sub-Lieutenant Harris set out to search the settlement that the Germans had built. They found a considerable amount of stores, enough to last some time.



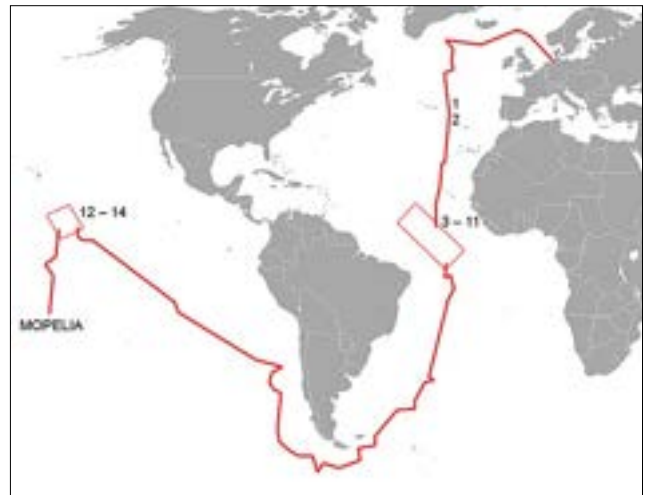
Above: Kapitanleutnant Felix von Luckner.

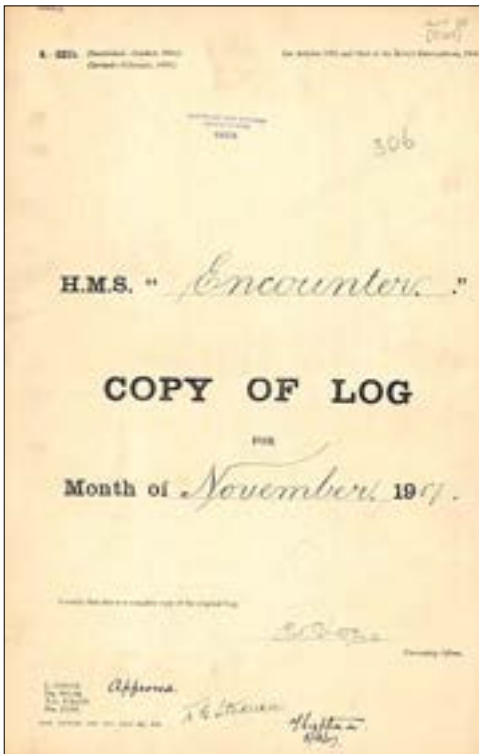
Below: Von Luckner and his crew aboard Seeadler.



Above: Painting of Seeadler in the Great War.

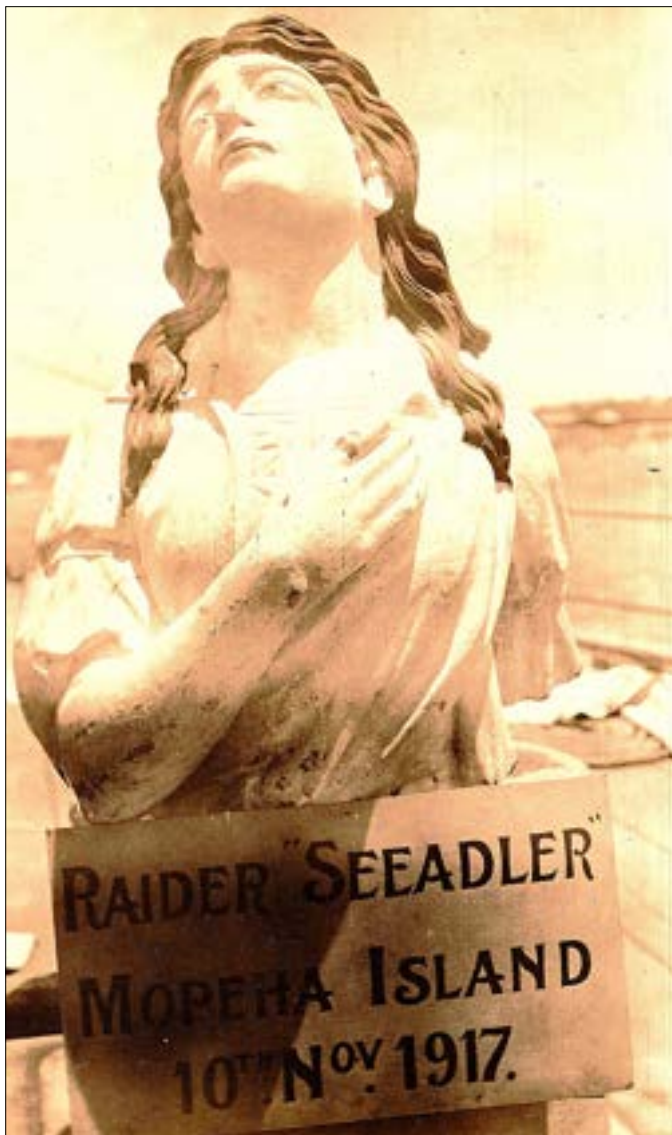
Below: Voyage of the raider Seeadler from Germany and the locations of the ships engaged.





Clockwise from top left:

- *Log book from HMAS Encounter, November 1917.*
- *Rescue sign found on Mopelia Island.*
- *Encounter crew members board the wreck of the German raider Seeadler. Postcard.*
- *Figurehead taken from Seeadler. Postcard.*



Right: One of Seeadler's two 4.1-inch guns that escaped the fire and found intact. Postcard.



Below: Wreck of the raider Seeadler at Mopelia Island. Postcard.



10 November 1917 - A working party under Engineer Commander Brand and Lieutenant Commander Matheson boarded Seeadler and brought off one 4.1-inch gun and miscellaneous ship's gear.

11 November 1917 - 0600, A party went aboard the ship and put a charge of explosives in the remaining gun mounting and destroyed it. At 0900 we sailed for Tahiti, 260 miles away.

Encounter reached Tahiti three days later. While there her steam pinnace was sunk when run down by a large motor yacht, but fortunately unlike an earlier 1909 incident, there were no casualties. This was the last 'excitement' in *Encounter's* varied war career. She returned to Sydney and went into refit in December 1917. In the New Year, with the possibility of another German raider becoming active, she carried out regular patrols in Western Australian waters from April to July, and then cruised between Fremantle and Sydney for the remainder of the war. On 18 November 1918 she was dispatched to Samoa and the surrounding islands to provide assistance during a major outbreak of influenza.

Her wartime crew consisted of 475 personnel. She carried only 21 'permanent' officers (i.e. not including officers under training) which consisted of the Captain, Executive Officer (often called the Commander), five seaman Lieutenants (including the Navigator and Gunnery Officer), Engineer Commander, Engineer Lieutenant, Engineer Sub Lieutenant, Chaplain, Surgeon, Staff Paymaster, Assistant Paymaster, Chief Artificer Engineer, three Gunners of whom one was a Torpedo Specialist, Carpenter and two Artificer Engineers.

Of note is that many men spent their entire war service in *Encounter* (affectionately known as the '*Old Bus*') and that she was generally a happy ship. There were, however, many in her crew who longed for more activity. Officers posted to her considered they were serving in a second-rate ship and longed for a draft to one of the more modern Australian cruisers then serving in the North Sea. *Encounter's* desertion rate amongst the younger members of her crew was high with many leaving to join the AIF in order to undertake more 'fulfilling' active service.

100-YEAR-OLD DUTCH SUBMARINE FOUND IN ROTTNEST GRAVEYARD

A report by Steve Chaplin



The Western Australian Museum recently identified the wreck of a scuttled Dutch submarine in the Rottneest Ships' Graveyard to be that of HNLMS K XI (K 11), a Royal Netherlands Navy patrol submarine designed for use in then Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia).

Head of Maritime Heritage at the WA Museum, Ms Corioli Souter, said that the Museum had been investigating the 'Graveyard' since the 1990s. The K XI is one of the most significant of over 50 water craft recorded as being discarded in the 'Graveyard', and is an important artifact of mutual Dutch-Australian heritage values and to the State's under-water cultural heritage.

"For more than three decades, the Museum has been fortunate to collaborate with a diverse range of organisations and people to investigate the Graveyard".

"We knew the wreck was out there, and we are delighted to have collaborated with technical divers from WreckSploration, along with their partners, who finally found the wreck," Corioli said. "Over the decades, the use of archival sources, local knowledge, and remote sensing surveys allowed the Museum to identify a number of significant sites in the Graveyard. In this project, we compared archival records with the 3D model created by WreckSploration to confirm that the wreck was K XI," Corioli added.

The Museum has a long-standing relationship with the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE) who, through their International Programme for Maritime

Above: Underway in calm seas, the patrol submarine HNLMS K XI, was an active member of the Dutch fleet for 20-years. The forward gun is on display in the Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club, the former Naval Auxiliary Patrol Boat Base, HMAS Leeuwin II, at Kearne's Point, on the Swan River.

Heritage, financed the photogrammetry work conducted through WreckSploration. The photogrammetry work was developed into a 3D model of the wreck for identification purposes.

Dr Martijn Manders of the RCE said "It is the best result we could have hoped for. The discovery of the submarine not only shows the ties between the Netherlands and Australia, but also how close we are when it comes to the management of our maritime cultural heritage".

A brief history

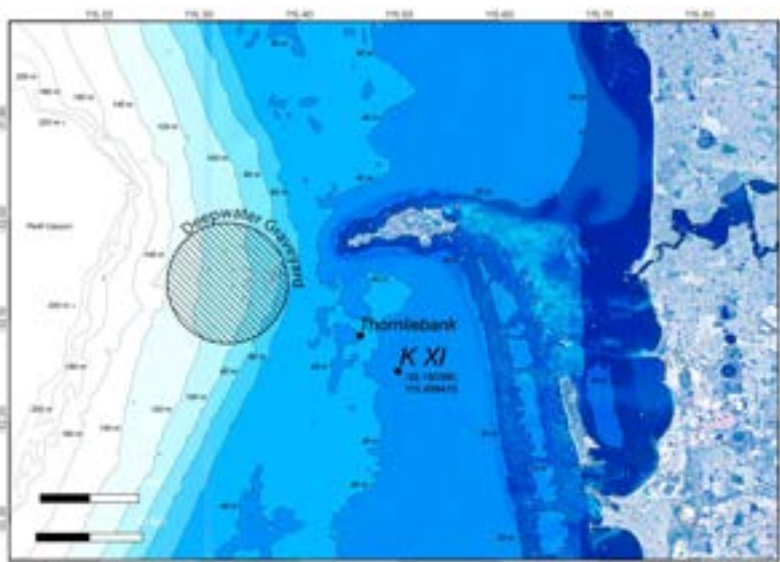
K XI was the first of three K XI class submarines (the 'K' stood for 'Koloniën' of the Royal Netherlands Navy, built to serve as long-range patrol vessels in the Dutch colonies. K XI was laid down on 9 December 1922 and commissioned into service on 24 March 1925. She was built by the Fijenoord shipyard at Rotterdam.

On 15 October 1925, K XI, under the command of First Lieutenant G.E.V.L. Beckman, departed for the Dutch East Indies. On 28 December 1925 she arrived in Sabang.



Above: HNLMS K XI in the Dutch East Indies. RNN.

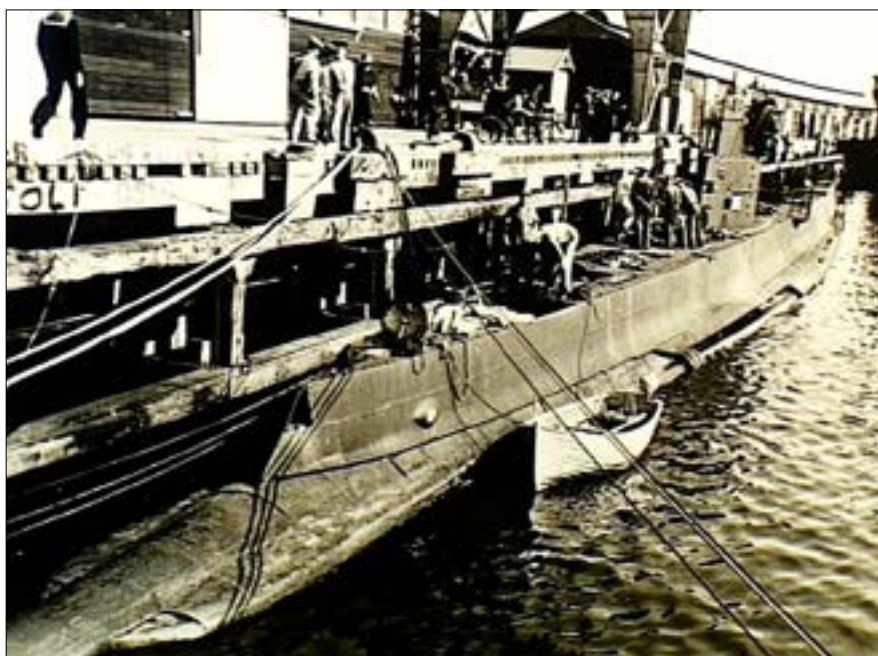
Right: The WA Museum chart depicts the 'deepwater graveyard' (centre left) and the site south of Rottnest Island where HNLMS K XI was located.



Below right: Starboard quarter view of the boat in Fremantle, 1945.

K XI remained on station, operating throughout the Dutch East Indies between January 1926 through to December 1941 when the Netherlands, some seven hours after the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor, declared war on Japan.

Subsequently, at the request of the Royal Navy K XI was transferred to Fremantle, Western Australia, departing Bombay on 20 February 1945. She arrived approximately a month later on 22 March. On 11 April 1945, K XI was officially decommissioned, and then towed to HMAS *Leeuwin II* (Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club) where she was partially stripped, and the deck gun donated as a memento to the club.



The boat was then towed down river to the North Quay and placed onto the slipway to undergo further stripping. After returning to the water, the submarine unfortunately sank on 28 March 1946 after a depth gauge had been left off the hull whilst on the slipway. The boat was salvaged some six weeks later. K XI was then stripped even further, at North Wharf, before being towed out to the site west of Rottnest Island and scuttled on 6 September 1946.

Right: The sunken K XI, with the boom defence vessel HMAS *Karangi*, and the port workboat *SS Agnes*, during salvage operations on 4 June 1946. After the initial attempt to raise her failed, due to leaks and an overwhelmed air compressor, the boat was finally raised on 29 June.



K XI was intended to be scuttled at the designated Rottnest Island ship disposal area, but the location where the boat was discovered on New Year's Day 2025 was 7.8-nm south of Garden Island and 8.2-nm from the northern tip of Garden Island, at a depth of around 40-metres. This was about 4-nm east of the designated scuttling ground.

Discovery and legal protection of the wreck

The discovery was announced on the 80th anniversary of her final voyage, the date the boat departed Bombay on 20 February 1945 for the Australian port of Fremantle.

It is still not known why the wreck was not disposed of in the Rottnest Ships' Graveyard as originally intended. A possible explanation is that the submarine's hull suffered from flooding before it reached the 'Graveyard', and had to be prematurely abandoned.

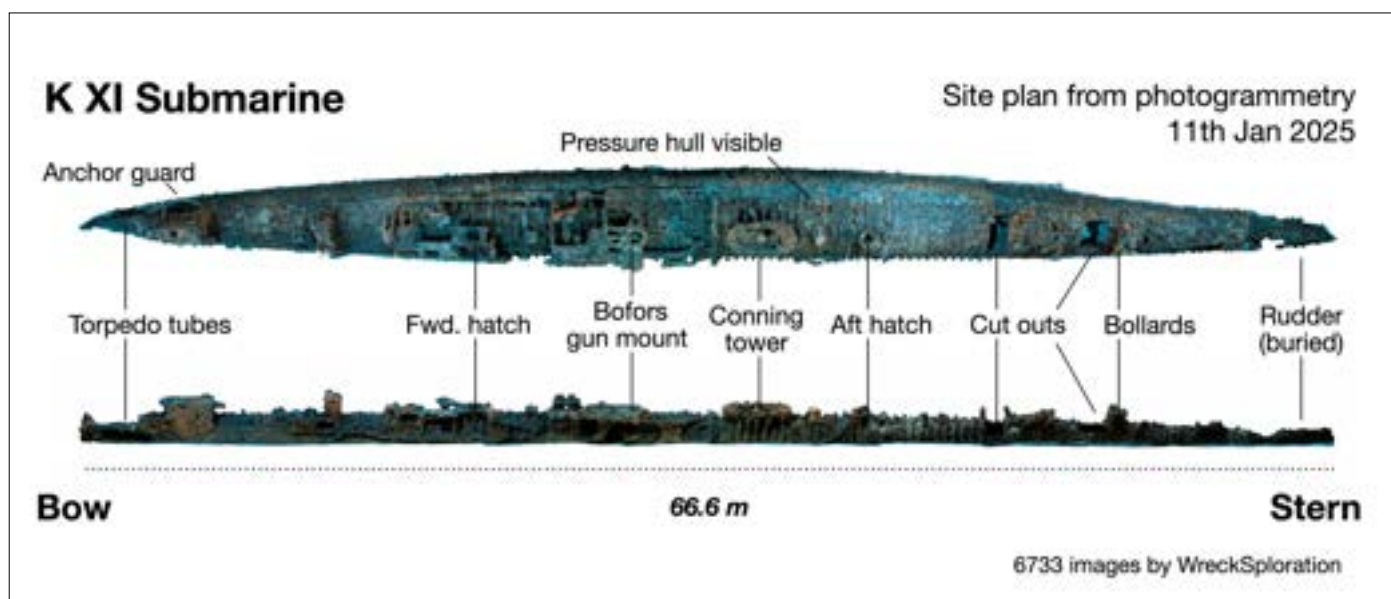
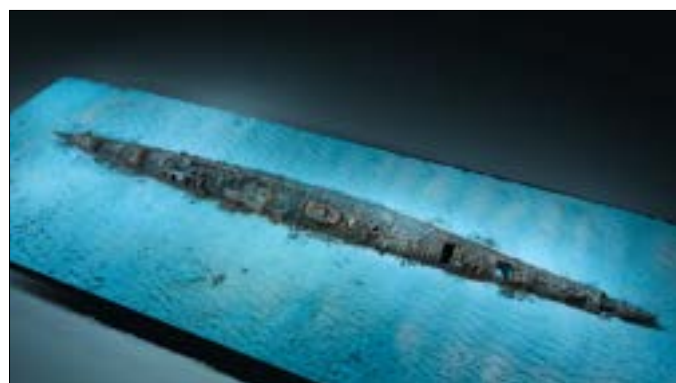
Because the wreck of K XI has spent more than 75-years underwater in Australian waters, it is automatically protected by the Commonwealth's *Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018*. Divers with appropriate certification can visit the site, but must remember it is protected and that it is an offence to damage, disturb, or remove any part of the wreck.

K XI was found south of Rottnest Island by Andrew Oakeley, David Jackson and Patrick Morrison on 1 January 2025, using magnetic data supplied by Alasdair Cooke of the Maritime Discovery Group. It was recorded using photogrammetry by WreckSploration on 11 January 2025, with the Western Australian Museum confirming the submarine's identity by comparing archive data with a 3D model of the wreck made by the divers.

Above right: Detailed view of HNLMS K XI . WA Museum.

Right: The remains of HNLMS K XI . WA Museum.

Below: Site plan of HNLMS K XI. A total of 6733 images from were taken by WreckSploration. WA. Museum.



Found on Facebook

Right: Garden Island's old boat pound, 1925. In the back-ground is the Town class light cruiser HMAS Melbourne, and to the far right, the RAN coal lighter Mombah.

Below: Starboard broadside of the light cruiser HMAS Sydney, resting at the buoy in Farm Cove, Sydney Harbour.



Above: Navy divers, training aboard the diving tender HMAS Otter, in the waters east of Garden Island in the late 1950s.



Above: The former examination vessel (HMAS) Alvina, underway on Port Phillip in the years after the Great War.



Left: Recovering the minesweeping gear aboard the mid-war sloop HMAS Geranium.

Right: Onboard view, looking aft, of the decommissioned Tribal class destroyer Warramunga. Taken at Athol Bight in Sydney, early 1962. Courtesy Eric Hogben.



Chinese Naval Goodwill Visits

Naval units from two Chinese nations have visited Australia, initially from the island of Formosa (Taiwan) from 1963 to 1974, and then, the Peoples Republic of China from 1998 to 2020. Four Taiwanese units undertook their visits into Sydney, Melbourne and Fremantle, to be followed much later by 18 PLA-N units across 28-years. Editor Ross Gillett describes these goodwill visits.



Above: The Yau Kung Mun dancers greet the PLA-N training ship Zheng He as she arrives at Fleet Base East in Sydney on 20 September 2010. RAN.

Taiwan

Sourcing information through TROVE, Facebook, the Taiwanese Navy homepage, and the memories of two local maritime historians, it was possible to identify three separate visits to Australian ports by members of the Republic of China Navy (ROCN).

The first known visit was conducted by the Gleaves class destroyer ROCS *Nan Yang* (DD-17). Sailing via the Philippines, the former USS *Plunkett* (DD-431), arrived in April 1963. Cruising more than 12,000 nautical miles, *Nan Yang* achieved the record of the longest voyage then undertaken by the ROCN. The clipping (right), dated 22 April, confirmed the arrival of the Commander-in-Chief of the Formosan Navy, who spent five days in Melbourne at the same time as his ship.

Nan Yang was laid down by Federal Shipbuilding Co., Kearny, New Jersey on 1 March 1939, launched 9 March 1940 and commissioned 16 July 1940. She was transferred to the ROCN and commissioned on 16 February 1959. Due to her very obsolete equipment *Nan Yang* was decommissioned in 1975.

THE news that top naval officers of three nations will be visiting Australia during the next few weeks calls for a limited naval review.

The commander in chief of the Formosan Navy (Admiral Ni Yue-si) arrived yesterday to spend five days in this country, while the chief of the naval staff and commander in chief of the Pakistan Navy (Vice-Admiral A. R. Khan) arrives on May 16 for 10 days.

And the commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet (Admiral John Sides) will be here at the end of the month for the Coral Sea celebrations.

Admiral Ni Yue-si is visiting Australia to return a visit to Taiwan by the Australian chief of the naval staff (Vice Admiral W. H. Harrington) when he commanded the Australian fleet.

In 1969, another visit by the ROCN featured four port calls. Three warships, all former members of the United States Navy included: ROCS *Kun Yang*, a Fletcher class destroyer, ROCS *Tai Yuan*, a Rudderow class destroyer escort, and ROCS *Hua Shan*, a Crosley class high speed transport, conducted goodwill visits to Sydney, Melbourne, Fremantle and then Darwin. The Melbourne visit coincided with the commemoration of the discovery the eastern coast of

Australia, at Cape Hicks, by LEUT James Cook, aboard HMB *Endeavour*, on 19 April 1770.

Five years later, in May 1974, *Nan Yang* returned to Australia, on this occasion only to Fremantle. The table below outlines the principal details of these three ROCN visits:

Arrival date	Visiting naval units	Comments
21Apr63	ROCS <i>Nan Yang</i>	Berthed at Station Pier, Port Melbourne, about 21Apr63, for a five-day visit
May69	ROC Ships <i>Kun Yang</i> , <i>Tai Yuan</i> and <i>Hua Shan</i>	Visited Sydney (Garden Island), Port Melbourne (Station Pier), Fremantle, North Quay, No. 12 berth (24-25 May 1969), and Darwin
May74	ROCS <i>Nan Yang</i>	Visited Fremantle, Western Australia. Ship paid off in 1975



Left: ROCS *Nan Yang* at Port Melbourne in April 1963.

Above: ROCS *Kun Yang* departing Sydney in May 1969. Chris Sattler.

Below: ROCS *Hua Shan*, May 1969. Chris Sattler.



Fremantle visit 1969

In May 2022 the World Ship Society's Fremantle Branch magazine, featured this May 1969 visit by the three Taiwanese warships. Courtesy of its editor Chris Gee, it read:

The event was a rare visit by the three units of the Republic of Taiwan to Fremantle, and was conducted across 24-25 May 1969, with the ships berthed triple-banked at the new container terminal, North Quay No. 12 berth.

Details of the ships were:

DD 19 - Kun Yang, ex-USS Yarnall, was the former USN Fletcher class destroyer, commissioned 1943, and transferred to Taiwan on 10 June 1968. She displaced 3,050 tons (full load). Armed with five 5-inch 38-calibre single turrets, six 40mm AA (twins); five 21-inch anti-ship torpedo tubes sited between the second funnel and third 5-inch gun mount. Main engines: two Allis Chalmers geared turbines, 60,000-shp, two shafts, speed 36-knots. Complement approx. 250. Pennant number changed to 934 in January 1976. On 2 November 1982 the ship completed a conversion to a missile destroyer, DDG-919. Decommissioned in October 1999.

DE 27- Tai Yuan, ex-USS Riley, a former USN Rudderow class destroyer escort, commissioned 1944, and transferred to Taiwan in July 1968. Displaced 2,000-tons full load. Armed with two single 5 inch 38 calibre dual purpose guns; four 40mm AA (twins); four 20mm AA (single), and six 12.75 -inch torpedo tubes (Mk 32-triple); one hedgehog; and depth charges. Retrofitted by Taiwan for minelaying. Main engines: Geared General Electric turbines with electric drive, 12,000-shp, two shafts, speed 24-knots. Complement approx. 200. Transferred to fisheries patrol in late 1980s and retired in 1992. Name also rendered as T'ai Yuan.

PF 33 - Hua Shan, ex-USS Donald W. Wolf, former fast troop transport (APF), commissioned 1945, and transferred to Taiwan in April 1965. Displaced 2,130 tons full load. Armed with two 5-inch 38 calibre, eight 40mm AA (twins), six 12.75-inch torpedo tubes (Mk32-triple), Hedgehog, and depth charges. Main engines: Geared General Electric turbines with electric drive, 12,000-shp, two shafts, speed 23.6-knots, Complement approx. 200. Name also rendered as Hau Shan, numbered 854. Later transferred to Customs service.



Left: Bow view of the trio of visiting Taiwanese warships in Fremantle in May 1969. From left: Hua Shan (PF 33), Tai Yuan (DE 27) and Kun Yang (DD 19), all former USN warships. In USN service Hua Shan was fitted with davits amidships for four LCVP-type landing craft. Courtesy Fremantle Port Authority.

Right: Stern view of the three units of the Taiwan (Republic of China) Navy, seen berthed triple-banked at the North Quay No.12, 24-25 May 1969. Kun Yang (left) was retrofitted by Taiwan for a minelaying role. A local Fremantle bunker barge is alongside the outboard warship, Hua Shan. After their short visit, the ships departed for Darwin. Courtesy Fremantle Port Authority.



Nineteen PLA-N ships across 28 years

After a gap of 24-years, Australia again welcomed Chinese naval ships to its shores, this time from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC).

On 4 May 1998, the Luhu class guided missile destroyer *Qingdao*, training ship *Shichang* and replenishment ship *Nancang* berthed at Fleet Base East in Sydney. The visit provided opportunities for senior level navy to navy talks, socialising between PLA-N and RAN personnel, as well as various cultural exchanges.

At the May 1998 arrival an official welcoming ceremony was held for the Deputy Commander of the North Sea Fleet, Rear Admiral Han Fangrun, on the FBE wharf shortly after her arrival. For the four-day visit to Sydney, the guided missile destroyers *Perth*, *Hobart* and *Brisbane* were appointed as 'host ships' to *Qingdao*, *Shichang* and *Nancang*, respectively.

RAN in China - a quick review

This initial 'goodwill visit' in 1998 followed on from the successful visit by the Australian Prime Minister John Howard to China in 1997. Contacts between the two fleets, the RAN and PLA-N, had begun back in September 1981, when the destroyer escort HMAS *Swan* berthed in Shanghai. In subsequent years other Australian fleet units visited China, including HMA Ships *Stalwart*, *Stuart* and *Yarra* in September 1984, *Parramatta* and *Derwent* in August 1986 and then, in late 1997, HMA Ships *Perth*, *Newcastle* and *Success* to Quindao, in northern China.

In April 2009 HMA Ships *Success* and *Pirie*, together with HMNZ Ships *Endeavour* and *Te Mana* visited Qingdao, the highlight being the Chinese Navy's 60th Anniversary Fleet Review in the Yellow Sea. In September 2010 HMAS *Arunta* undertook a port call to the South China Sea Fleet Navy base in Zhanjiang.

In May 2012 the frigate HMAS *Ballarat* berthed in Shanghai and conducted a passage exercise with the Chinese Navy frigate *Anqing* at the mouth of the Chang Jiang (Yangtze).

Then, in early November 2015, *Arunta* returned with *Stuart*, on this occasion, to Zhanjiang. On 3 November 2015 the two frigates conducted a screenplay exercise with *Yuncheng* in the South China Sea.

Two years later, on 3 April 2017, *Ballarat* departed HMAS *Stirling* on a south-east Asian deployment. This included a tour of the PLA-N Jiangkai II class frigate *Huangshan* at Zhanjiang on 13 April. *Ballarat* and *Huangshan* conducted exercises on completion of the port visit. The guided missile frigate HMAS *Melbourne* enjoyed another port visit to Zhanjiang and undertook a combined passage exercise with the frigate *Xianning* in late September 2017. Later, in April 2019 she participated in China's International Fleet Review, held in Qingdao.

Below: Training ship Shichang departing Sydney on 8 May 1998. The captain said: "that his ship was fitted with hotel-level living facilities and appliances. The cabins met the needs of more than 200 crew embarked for navigation training." Chris Sattler.

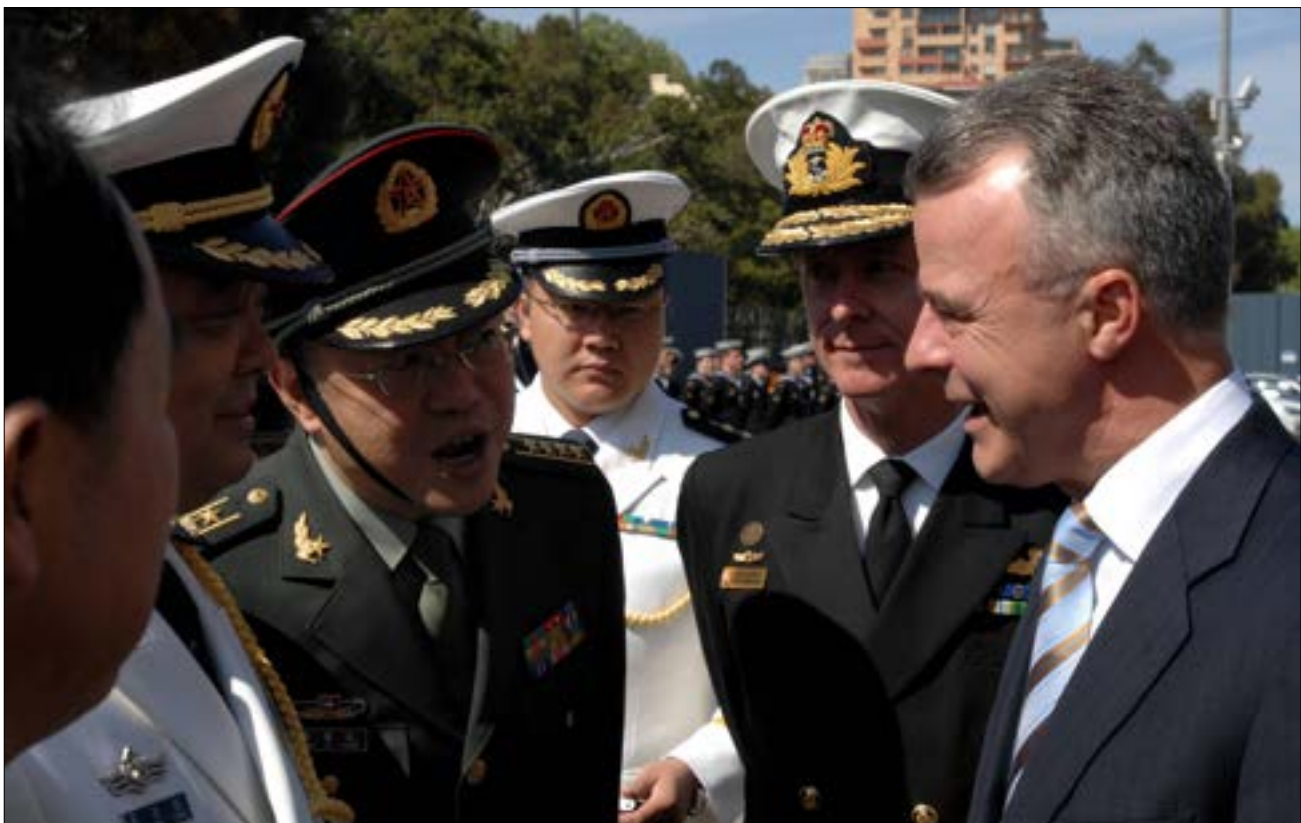




Left: Fleet Base East in October 2001, with naval units in port for the cancelled Centennial Fleet Review. The two Chinese ships are just visible under the old Hammerhead crane. RAN.

Right: Luhu class destroyer Harbin arrives at Fleet Base East on 28 September 2007. Following the port visit, the two visiting Chinese ships took part in a Trilateral Search and Rescue Exercise in the Tasman Sea with the RAN and the RNZN. This was the first time such an exercise had been undertaken with China. RAN.

Below: At Fleet Base East on 28 September 2007, Minister for Defence, Dr Brendan Nelson, and Rear Admiral Nigel Coates, met with Vice Admiral Su Shiliang, Commander North Sea Fleet. RAN.



Later years

It may surprise some readers that the RAN hosted a total of eleven visits by the PLA-N between the initial May 1998 visit, up to September 2020, when relations between the two nations lessened due to the COVID crisis, then affecting the entire globe.

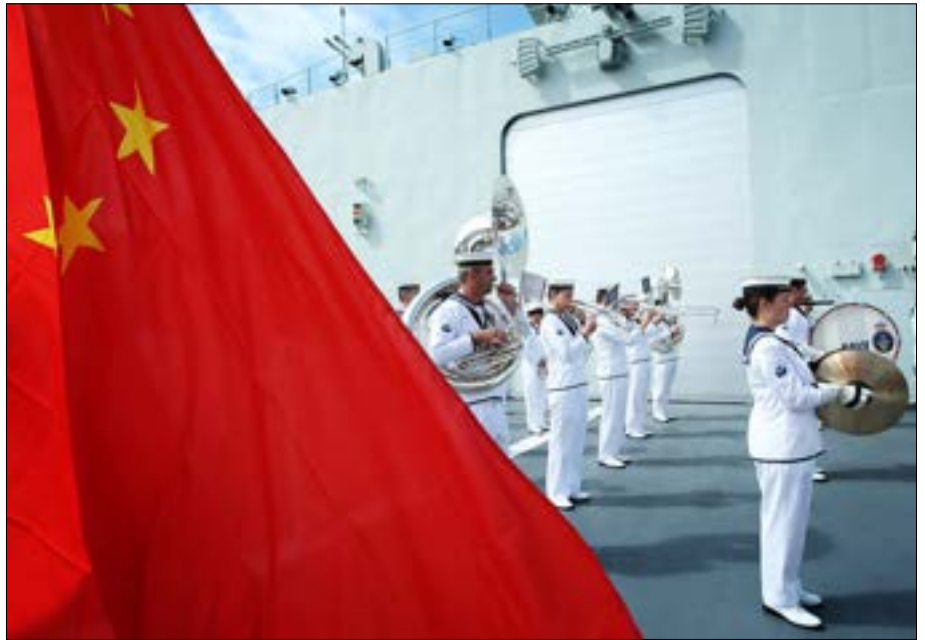
The table below outlines the principal details of these goodwill visits by the People's Liberation Army - Navy:



Above: Training ship Zheng He, arrives 20 September 2010, the first of her three visits to Sydney. Chinese crew members inspected RAN ships and establishments and participated in several community events. RAN.

Arrival date	Visiting naval units	Comments
04May98	Destroyer <i>Qingdao</i> (Type 052), training ship <i>Shichang</i> and replenishment ship <i>Nancang</i> (Type 908)	First PLA-N task group visit to Fleet Base East, Sydney. Departed 08May
02Oct01	Frigate <i>Yichang</i> (Type 053H3) and replenishment ship <i>Taichang</i> (Type 905)	Australian Federation/Fleet Review celebrations held in October 2001, although events were cut back due to the 11Sep01 attacks on the USA. Both PLA-N ships sailed 09Oct
28Sep07	Destroyer <i>Harbin</i> (Type 052) and replenishment ship <i>Honghu</i> (Type 903A)	Coincided with the 35th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Australia and China and China's National Day on 01Oct.
20Sep10	Frigate <i>Mianyang</i> (Type 053H3) and training ship <i>Zheng He</i> (Type 679)	After a four-day visit, sailed from FBE 24Sep10
17Dec12	Frigates <i>Yi Yang</i> (Type 054) and <i>Chang Zhou</i> (Type 054) and replenishment ship <i>Qian Dao Hu</i> (Type 903)	Arrived in Sydney after counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden. Sailed 22Dec12. This ship visit was one of several defence activities conducted that year to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two nations.
04Oct13	Destroyer <i>Qingdao</i> (Type 052)	Attended International Fleet Review held on Sydney Harbour to celebrate 100-years since arrival of first RAN Fleet units in Sydney
23Nov16	Training ship <i>Zheng He</i> (Type 679)	Four-day visit as part of the ship's training exchange and goodwill voyage. The deployment spanned 68-days and covered 16,000 nautical miles. <i>Zheng He</i> carried 349 crew - including 169 trainees, of whom 17 were females. Two foreign trainees, from Australia and New Zealand, also trained with <i>Zheng He's</i> crew
08Jun17	Frigates, <i>Heng Yang</i> (Type 904A) and <i>Yulin</i> (Type 054A), and the replenishment ship <i>Honghu</i> (Type 903A)	Ships were returning from a counter-piracy deployment in the Gulf of Aden, the 25th Task Group of the PLA-N arrived in Sydney for a three-day port visit from 08Jun17
Dec18	Frigates <i>Yi Yang</i> (Type 054A), <i>Chang Zhou</i> (Type 054A) and replenishment ship <i>Qian Dao Hu</i> (Type 093)	
03Jun19	Frigate <i>Xuchang</i> (Type 054A), amphibious transport dock <i>Kunlun Shan</i> (Type 071) and replenishment ship <i>Luoma Hu</i> (Type 903A)	Four-day visit to Fleet Base East. Prime Minister Scott Morrison stated that: "the ships were returning after a counter drug trafficking operation in the Middle East. It was a further demonstration of the relationship that we have, and this had been in train for some time."
20Sep20	Frigate <i>Mianyang</i> (Type 053H3) and training ship <i>Zheng He</i> (Type 679)	Chinese crew members visited RAN ships and establishments, as well as holding a number of community events. Both ships departed 24Sep

Right: The Royal Australian Navy Band entertains guests onboard Chinese People's Liberation Army-Navy's replenishment ship Qian Dao Hu on 18 December 2012. Chinese Minister for National Defence General Liang Guanglie announced that: "the two navies would share the lessons learned on counter-piracy operations as part of the visit." RAN.



Left: Replenishment ship Qian Dao Hu, sailing from Sydney on 22 December 2012. The visit and training exercises were part of celebrations for the 40th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and China. Chris Sattler.

Right: Marines stand on the deck as the Chinese People's Liberation Army-Navy destroyer Qingdao arrives in Sydney Harbour, Sydney, Australia, 4 October 2013. More than 20 warships from 17 nations had arrived to take part in the historic International Fleet Review. The event included ships from the United States, the United Kingdom, France, India, Singapore and China. PLA-N.





Above: Training ship Zheng He coming alongside FBE on 23 November 2016. The ship departed on the 27th. RAN.



Above: As part of the PLA-N's 25th Task Group, the frigate Yulin departs from Sydney 11 June 2017. Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Tim Barrett, said: "The Chinese Navy and the Royal Australian Navy conduct these exercises in an effort to enhance mutual understanding, facilitate transparency and build trust." Chris Sattler.



Above: Two frigates, Yi Yang and Chang Zhou, and the replenishment ship Qian Dao Hu, arrived in Sydney and berthed at FBE in December 2018. RAN.



Above: Amphibious ship Kunlun Shan, as seen from North Head, Sydney Harbour, 3 June 2019. Chris Sattler.



Above: Frigate Xuchang, arriving 3 June 2019. Chris Sattler.



Above: A recent visitor to the Tasman Sea was the Jiangkai class frigate Hengyang, exercising as part of the three-ship Task Group 107. This view was taken on 11 February 2025 in northern Australian waters. No port calls were made. ADF.

Below: The guided missile destroyer Zunyi, February 2025, a member of TF 107. ADF.



‘Box-Brownies’

HMAS Australia 1942-43

Good clear images of life aboard the Second World War era heavy cruiser HMAS *Australia* were recently received by the NHSA, and are reproduced here. From bow to stern, at work and at sport, to the Sunday church service, plus training on the guns and embarked aircraft are featured.



Above: One of the high angle (HA) gun crews loading the MK XVI twin mount. The 35-lb projectile could be fired out to 18,000-yards.



Above: Taken from the foremast, this view looks towards the bow, with the bridge and two forward twin-8-inch gun turrets visible.



Above: HMAS Australia's main W-T space.



Left: Crew members working on HMAS Australia's Walrus amphibian. If you look closely, one of the aircraft's bombs is still attached underneath the wing. The Walrus is sitting atop of it's trainable catapult, which was fitted amidships. During her long commission the heavy cruiser operated a total of seven Seagulls from 1936-37, as well as twelve of the later model Walrus sea-planes from August 1940 to mid-1944.

Right: One of cruiser's four twin 4-inch Mk XVI guns, used for both anti-aircraft and anti-ship defence.





Above: Shell-room, HMAS Australia, in February 1943.

Below: Three-a-side deck hockey, played on the quarterdeck.



Above: Crew members share the cruiser's sick-bay.



Above: Church service aboard HMAS Australia, at Palm Island, 28 March 1943.



Above: Awnings have been rigged above a very quiet quarterdeck, at Noumea, New Caledonia, 1942.

HMAS Falie

Part 1 - A watchdog of Sydney Harbour

By Lyn O'Grady

Right: The Australian War Memorial oil painting, 'The Examination Ship, Sydney Heads' 1941, by war artist Frank Norton depicts HMAS Falie.



In 1940, South Australia's coastal trader, *Falie* was requisitioned by the Royal Australian Navy and was delivered to Garden Island, Sydney to serve on the home front as HMAS *Falie*.

At that time the survey read: *Steel house abaft mainmast with three cabins, galley and mess room. Wooden house on poop containing lavatory and bos'ns locker. Crews' quarters under poop. Engine room aft, engines installed 1938. Dynamo driven by 2-hp Kero engine. Air compressor driven from main engine also by 3-hp Petters Kero Engine, fuel tanks fitted port and starboard side of engine room as follows – PA 800 gallons, PF 800-galls, SA 400-galls and SF 700-galls. Bridge fitted above fore end of house with wheel house. Masts: Main mast steel, foremast wood - both approx. 56-feet from deck to truck.*

The Navy's additions to the ship included a boat each side on davits, amidships, and a signal bridge forward. Lt Cdr Charley V Wood RANR(S), a retired Merchant Navy captain, as well as Lt Alistair Fergusson and Lt Jackson, were assigned to *Falie* for the duration of the war.

A relieving skipper and the crew were sourced from the Australian Merchant Navy service. *Falie's* first deployment was as an examination ship outside of Sydney Heads, checking the bona fides of ships entering the famous harbour (a role shared with HMAS *Adele*). Across the entrance to the harbour was an anti-submarine net (although there were gaps at either end), supported on the sea floor by a number of "indicator loops", detecting devices on the seabed that would indicate the passing of metallic objects.

Right: Report by the District Naval Officer, Tasmania recommending the suitability of *Falie* for naval duties, dated 23 May 1940.

Commonwealth of Australia
Department of Defence

NAVAL HEAD OFFICE
HOBART. 23/5/40.

The District Naval Officer,
TASMANIA.

Submitted: Report on the Auxiliary Steel Schooner "FALIE",
Trading S. Australia-Melbourne-Hobart.

This vessel was built in Rotterdam in 1919.
Originally constructed as a Dutch towler. In 1938 her
original 90 H.P. engine was changed for a new Full Diesel
195 H.P., giving the vessel 8-9 knots.

She is a steel vessel built to Lloyd's Register
requirements. Carrying capacity 240 tons. Schooner rig -
2 masts.

In my opinion this vessel would be eminently
suitable as an Auxiliary Patrol Vessel or A/P for patrol in
Storm Bay. There are no suitable vessels in Hobart for
this purpose.

Certain structural alterations would be necessary
to fit her for Naval Service, and these would have to be
done in Sydney or Melbourne.

Two guns could be fitted:
1 5-pdr. on Po'cals.
1 4" on well-deck.

With alterations she could be fitted to carry depth charges
and rails.

The master reports, her sea-going qualities are
such that, in spite of her small tonnage, she beats the
coastal steamers - Melbourne to Adelaide - when heading into
strong westerly winds.

Lt. Cdr., R.A.N.V.R.
Staff Officer C. & I.

Submitted for your information. This craft appears to
me to be very suitable for either anti-submarine or mine-
sweeping duties.

Commander, R.A.N.
H.M.S. Tasmania



Above: HMAS Falie undergoing maintenance at Garden Island in May 1941. Ray Olson.

Of the events on the night of 31 May/1 June 1942, when Sydney Harbour was attacked by Japanese midget submarines, no published account mentions *Falie*. However, she was on duty outside Sydney Heads when, at 2305 it was noted in the log, that she: had struck a submerged object, 'feeling' three distinct bumps. This was signaled to the Port War Signal Station. That night three midget submarines, each with a two-man crew, attempted to enter the harbour to destroy Allied ships.

The first midget crossed the indicator loop at 2000 and left a good 'trace', but failed to be identified as an intruder because the signal was thought to be related to the passage of two ferries minutes earlier. Not long after crossing the loop, however, this boat became entangled in the anti-submarine net and its bow rose to the surface. It was spotted by a watchman and reported to the channel patrol boat HMAS *Yarroma*. *Yarroma*'s skipper was skeptical, however, and it was not until the watchman and a stoker from *Yarroma* rowed out to the suspicious object nearly two hours later that it was positively identified and the alarm raised.

HMAS *Lolita* was called up by signal lamp at 2220 to attack the entangled intruder, but unfortunately her depth charges failed to go off because they were not set correctly given the depth of the harbour. In a hopeless situation, Japanese detonated their scuttling charges at around 2230, blowing up their craft and themselves to avoid capture. At around

the same time the port was closed to all shipping and air raid sirens sounded.

Eight minutes after the explosion, a second midget was spotted by HMAS *Lauriana*, her searchlight illuminating the conning tower near inner North Head. HMAS *Yandra* attempted to ram the midget, and coming round, she then dropped depth charges which lifted the 60-ton *Lauriana* up out of the water, after which the midget was not sighted.

Meanwhile a third midget had crossed the loop at 2148 and was fired upon an hour later by the cruiser USS *Chicago* when sighted near Garden Island. At 0030 the midget fired two torpedoes at *Chicago*. Aim was poor because the dockyard lights had been extinguished, and steam billowing away in the wind from *Chicago* gave the impression she was moving ahead. Both torpedoes missed, one failing to arm and running aground on Garden Island, but the second missed *Chicago* by about 25-metres and ran on to explode against the harbour wall at Garden Island where HMAS *Kuttabul* was berthed (with Dutch submarine K IX moored alongside her). *Kuttabul* was sunk and 21 killed, while K IX was damaged. Subsequent submarine attacks off Sydney and Newcastle failed to damage any significant targets.

What was the submerged object struck by *Falie*? Is there a chance *Falie* had come into contact with one of the midget submarines attempting to enter the harbour?

The volunteer group, Historic Ketch Falie Inc, have education resources on their website and are looking for new members and interested supporters to share Falie's significant maritime history.

Enquiries to: historicketchfalie@hotmail.com.
Visit the website at <https://historicketchfalie.org.au>

Part 2 HMAS Falie - in the near Pacific 1942-1945, will appear in the September edition of NHR.



Above: The transports, RMS Queen Mary and RMS Queen Elizabeth cross paths at the entrance to Sydney Harbour. The examination vessel HMAS Falie is the smaller of the two vessels, underway between the 'Queens'.

Left: Colourised image of the troopship RMS Queen Elizabeth being escorted by HMAS Falie (right).



THE PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL STEAMSHIP COMPANY

The final cruise - A report from 'our cruiser'



RMS Strathaird berthed at Circular Quay, Sydney.

For more than two centuries shipping interests that eventually became the iconic Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company built an impressive global business. Then, in the early part of this century, the P & O Company was broken up and sold off.

In 2000 its passenger ships were purchased by the American Carnival Cruise Lines, and in 2006, the much larger P & O Maritime Logistics business, mainly involving worldwide cargo handling operations, was sold to the Dubai based DP World. Finally, in 2019 its European ferries were also sold to DP World. The brand name is all that remained of this once dominant part of Britain's maritime industry, and even this has now disappeared from the Australian lexicon.

The author had the pleasure of being a passenger aboard MV *Pacific Adventure* on her last 'mini-cruise' before the well-known brand of P & O Australia ended on 14 March 2025. This final voyage was not without its pitfalls. Expected to sail from Sydney to Moreton Island, the recent Cyclone Alfred was directly in our path, so the itinerary had to be rapidly changed, and the ship proceeded south about to Twofold Bay and Eden. Twofold Bay is also home to the historic one-time whaling settlement of Boyd Town.

With insufficient cruise berths in Sydney, the small port of Eden has enjoyed a significant increase in tourism, and with a new deep-water berth at Snug Cove, close to the town, it expects to host 46 cruise ships this season. Naval ships also call there for ammunition using a separate wharf at the southern side of the harbour. This is connected to an ammunition depot about 15-km distance inland.

While passengers were offered a full refund if they wished

to cancel, very few availed themselves of this opportunity. So we sailed with a full complement of about 3,000 passengers and 1,300 crew on the evening of 10 March. Departing from Circular Quay, and backing towards the Harbour Bridge, we then turned to seaward with the attendant tugs giving full vent with their water cannons. As we passed the Opera House a magnificent firework display lit up the harbour to which the ship saluted with her siren.

Upon return to Port Jackson *Pacific Adventure* passed under the Sydney Harbour Bridge at first light. At nearly 109,000 tons she was one of the largest ships to sail under the bridge, to berth at White Bay. A few hours later, without passengers, she was on her way again, this time to Melbourne to start a makeover to become *Carnival Adventure*.

P & O - a brief history

P & O originated in Britain in 1837 with the founding of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. It delivered mail, but soon also carried 'excursionists' to Greece, Spain and Egypt. In 1852, P & O won the contract to transport mail to and from Australia, and with this, a regular passenger service, lasted until overtaken by air transport in the 1960s.

With a downturn in passengers and freight caused by the Great Depression, P & O took a gamble and advertised its first Australian cruise in December 1932, this Christmas cruise selling out in 24-hours. The mail liner *Strathaird* sailed with 1,100 guests from Sydney to Brisbane and Norfolk Island.

Of the ship's three funnels, only the centre funnel served as a smokestack, the others were just decorative and helped

set off her white painted hull, providing quite a glamorous appearance. Prior to this P & O ships with their black hulls looked solid but dour.

P & O was part of Australian maritime history for some 173-years. The company was also involved in numerous conflicts providing troopships from the time of the Crimean War. Many may recall the fine ship *Canberra* which spent much of her life gracing our shores, to be requisitioned as a troopship in 1982 during the Falklands War (1), taking a Commando Brigade right into the heart of the conflict. Still painted white, Argentine pilots respected her neutrality thinking her a hospital ship, noting that the liner *Uganda* also painted white marked with red crosses was used as a hospital ship. At the end of the war *Canberra* repatriated captured Argentine troops to their homeland. This rust-stained veteran was greeted with rapturous fanfare when she finally returned to Southampton in July 1982 before resuming her normal peacetime role.

From the 1950s, P & O began operating fully fledged cruise ships such as *Himalaya*, which sailed from Sydney into the South Pacific. Between 1945 and 1972 P & O ships such as *Canberra* and *Oriana* carried '10-pound Poms' and other immigrants from Europe to Australia. The 'Australian run' peaked in 1969 with 80,000 passengers. In 2000 its cruising arm was split off to create brands including P & O Cruises Australia, which operated ships such as *Pacific Sky*, *Pacific Star* and *Pacific Jewel*.

The Future of Low-Cost Cruising

The last two locally based ships were *Pacific Explorer*, homeported in Brisbane, and *Pacific Adventure*, homeported in Sydney. After a short transition in Melbourne, they

renamed *Carnival Adventure* and *Carnival Encounter*.

Carnival Corporation CEO Josh Weinstein put the move down to the "strategic reality of the South Pacific's small population and significantly higher operating and regulatory costs."

Cunard and Virgin voyages have also pulled out of homeporting in Australia. Carnival Corporation commands almost 60% of the market here with 19 ships operating in the region, so the company remains committed to the local market.

Until recently *Adventure* and *Encounter* have been registered in London but under the Carnival banner they are now expected to be registered in Nassau, Bahamas. The Bahamas is a Commonwealth country off the coast of Florida regarded as a 'Flag of Convenience.' This means reduced regulation and lower taxes which cut operating costs.

To the dismay of millions of Australians who have sailed on P & O ships, the low budget holiday is now perhaps over as the cost to consumers under the new banner is expected to rise with fares estimated to increase by at least 30%.

Notes

1. During the Falklands War over 50 ships were taken up from trade ranging from the transatlantic line *Queen Elizabeth 2* to the salvage tug *Yorkshireman* - a feat no longer possible with the much smaller British register of merchant ships.

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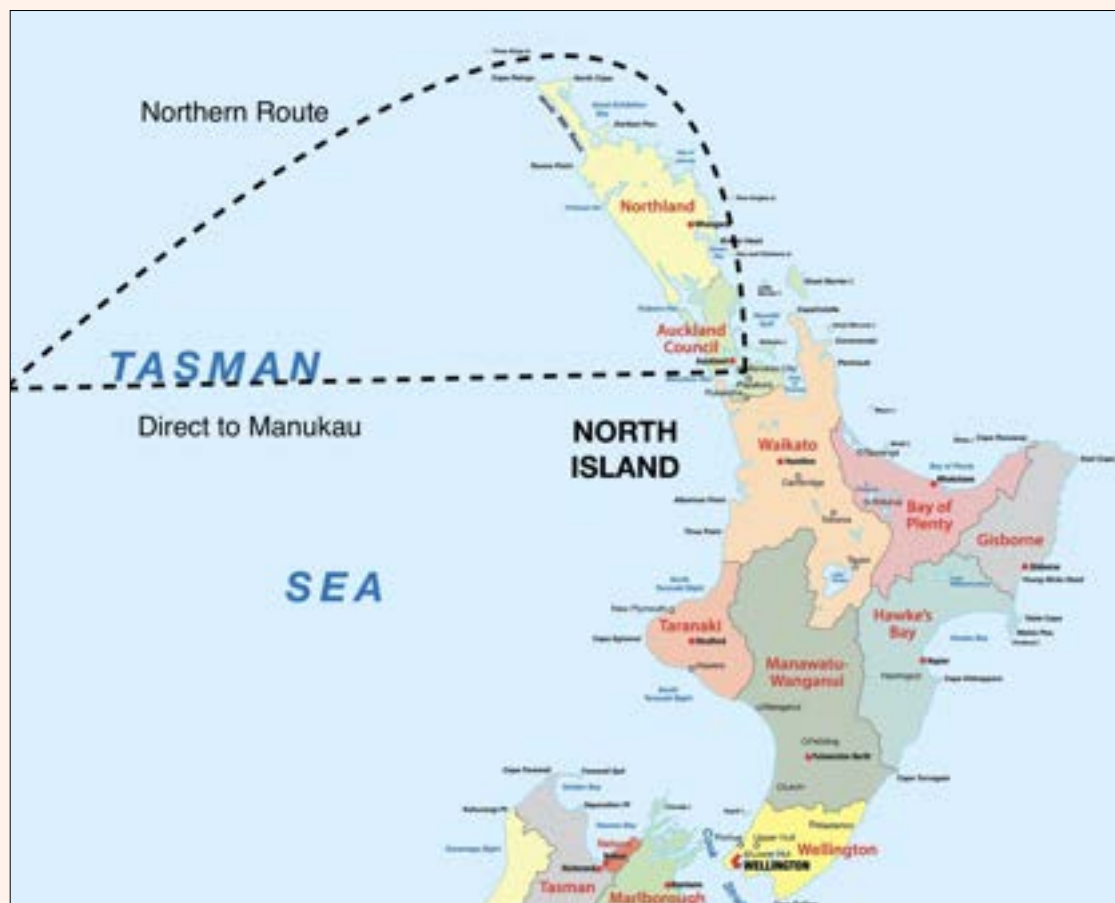
Right: SS Canberra returning to Southampton at the end of the Falklands War.



PORT JACKSON AND MANUKAU and Some 'Fencibles'

Walter Burroughs

This story is a tribute to Gerald Elliott our New Zealand correspondent whom we unfortunately never met. At the age of 99 he passed away on 6 December 2024.



Above: Shipping routes Port Jackson to Auckland and Manukau. Author.

A member of the NHSA recently asked us to assist with research relating to the loss of HMS *Orpheus* on the bar at the entrance to Manukau Harbour on the west coast of New Zealand on 7 February 1863. With the loss of 189 lives it was New Zealand's worst maritime disaster.

This led us to explore further the interaction of shipping between Port Jackson and Manukau. Claiming some personal interest, the author sailed from Onehunga and safely through the bar at Manukau on 31 August 1965 as Second Mate in the Northern Steamship Company coastal ship *Tawanui*. Moving forward nearly sixty years he now finds himself an honourable member of the New Zealand 'Fencible' Society!

Manukau Harbour and the Port of Onehunga

The west coast of New Zealand's North Island contains two large inlets open to the Tasman Sea, but both hindered by treacherous sandbars, which exposed to the pounding of strong westerly swells, are liable to shift. The northern most and largest of these is Kaipara and slightly smaller to the south, is Manukau.

The importance of the latter is its proximity to Auckland, the main settlement and first capital of the New Zealand colony. Taking advantage of prevailing westerly winds Manukau lies south-east of Port Jackson and is considerably closer, by 250-nautical miles, than proceeding around the top of North Cape and down the east coast to Auckland.

One of the earliest Europeans to visit the Manukau was the pioneering missionary Samuel Marsden who having befriended Māori visitors to Sydney gave him protection when making voyages from Sydney to the Bay of Islands. He was also able to assist HMS *Coromandel* seeking procurement of New Zealand timber for naval shipbuilding. This enterprising parson first paddled a native canoe across the waters of the Manukau on 9 November 1820.

In 1835 Thomas Mitchell a Sydney-based timber merchant chartered the schooner *Fanny* under command of Thomas Wing to take him and a missionary, the Reverend William White, into the Manukau. Mitchell negotiated with local Māori leaders for the purchase of 40,000-acres in return for

166 gold sovereigns, 1,000 pounds' weight of tobacco, 100 dozen clay pipes for smoking tobacco, and six muskets.

The following year Mitchell moved to this property on the northern shore of the Manukau and established a timber mill. Regrettably six months later he died there by drowning. In 1851 a pilot station was established and Captain Thomas Wing, who had conducted detailed surveys of the harbour and its bar, was later made harbour master and pilot, a position he held for the next 30-years. It took until 1874 for a lighthouse to be built at South Head some 385-feet above sea level with oil lamps visible 26-miles to seaward.

Visits

From these humble beginnings the Port of Onehunga evolved and was at times used as a base for visiting Royal Navy ships. In 1861 Captain Wing reported that during the calendar year 23 war steamers, 31 merchant steamers, nine sailing vessels and 48 coastal vessels entered the harbour.

While the first capital of the New Zealand colony was at Auckland facing the east coast the quickest passage from the New South Wales capital of Sydney was via Manukau on the west coast, and only a few land miles from Auckland. Accordingly, shipping preferred, but not exclusively, to trade between Manukau and Port Jackson. In an early description the Reverend Rowe (1863) said: *Manukau Harbour is only six miles to the west, reckoning by the road, along with the pensioners' settlement of Onehunga is fast advancing to meet the suburbs of the capital. Manukau Harbour itself has a channel deep enough to admit vessels of the largest class and is unencumbered by the usual sandbank off its mouth.*



Above: MV Tawanui in Manukau Harbour, about 1960. Northern Steamship Company.

Calliope Graving Dock

The opening of the Calliope Graving Dock in Auckland in 1888 with associated workshops became the impetus for a naval base. Now, without the need for ships to return to Sydney for docking and refit this spelt the end of the Manukau as a naval facility.

However, on 9 October 1899 the Auckland contingent of volunteers for the Boer War departed from Onehunga in the steamer *Rotoiti* bound for Wellington where they would join the first troops to sail for South Africa. This amazing small port continued to prosper during both world wars. In the latter conflict American troops were based at Onehunga and Fairmile B patrol boats were also built there.

In 1962 a survey of the harbour approaches was conducted by the Royal New Zealand Navy hydrographic department who found the once treacherous bar no longer constituted a major hazard. This was nearing the zenith in the port's history when in the following year Onehunga was described as "perhaps the most successful secondary port in New Zealand and has shown a remarkable rise in trade, with every other coastal port showing a decline."

A record was achieved in 1967 when 293 ships visited the port. But this was short-lived, with trade moving to larger ships and interstate goods moving to road transport a decline set in. By 2017 the once proud Port of Onehunga waved farewell to its last commercial ship and so came to an end 180-years of shipping history. The port is now used extensively by fishing vessels.

The Māori Wars - now known as the New Zealand Wars

With a mild climate and fertile land New Zealand was especially attractive to British migrants who came in droves from the 1840s. There were inevitable disputes over land with the indigenous population resulting in conflict which escalated into a series of wars. The colonial government brought in numerous heavily armed troops and naval forces against local tribes who fought admirably, but in an uneven contest the result was never in doubt.

Earlier, on 7 February 1788 Captain Arthur Philip RN had formally taken possession of the Colony of New South Wales which at that time included adjacent islands to the westward including New Zealand. It was not until 1 July 1841 that Captain William Hobson RN took formal possession as Governor of the independent Colony of New Zealand.

Earlier conflicts resulting in inter-tribal warfare were known as the 'Musket Wars' which were fuelled by the indiscriminate availability of European muskets leading to the deaths of thousands of Māoris. They used muzzle loading single shot, often smooth bore guns, of thankfully limited rate of fire.

Below: The attack on Gate Pa in 1864 where British troops and Naval Brigade forces were defeated by Māori warriors - the attackers lost 35 killed and 75 wounded, many more than the Māori defenders. This is an artist impression from the London magazine.



It was not until 1867 that the Royal Navy began converting its standard Pattern 53 Enfield muzzle loading rifle to a breach loader using the Snider mechanism, and the far more lethal Henry repeating magazine fed rifles did not come into use until the 1870s.

A growing involvement

The 26-gun frigate HMS *Iris* was the first flagship of the Australia Station under command of Commodore William Loring RN. She arrived on station in 1859 and was soon involved in New Zealand unrest and politics leading to the early resignation of the Commodore. A Naval Brigade of 150 officers and men with 12-pounder guns from *Iris* was sent to assist land forces to suppress a rebellion in Taranaki.

The Naval Brigade grew to over 600 men drawn from various other Royal Naval ships and the Victorian Colonial ship HMCS *Victoria*¹. Most of the RN shipping was based at Auckland, but HM Ships *Harrier* and *Eclipse* became the guardians of Manukau, with HMS *Cordelia* and *Victoria* acting as transports between Manukau and other ports.

To assist in colonial defence, in 1861 the New Zealand Government acquired a small (60-foot-long and displacing 40 tons) commercial paddle steamer *Avon*, then in Lyttelton. In 1862 she steamed to Onehunga and was refitted with iron plating and armed with a 12-pounder gun and a rocket tube. In addition, four armoured barges (30 to 35-foot-long) were prepared as troop transports.

Avon and her barges were towed to Waikato Heads by HMS *Eclipse* on 25 July 1863. Another stern paddle wheeler, *Waikato* (140-foot-long and displacing 300-tons), was built by the Australian Steam Navigation Company at its Pymont shipyard to navigate her namesake river.

In April 1863 Commodore William Wiseman RN, in HMS *Curacoa*, assumed command of the Australia Station. A small convoy departed from Port Jackson on 22 September 1863 comprising HMS *Curacoa* and *Eclipse* towing *Waikato*, which had been acquired by the New Zealand Government.

In heavy weather the major warships lost sight of one another with *Curacoa* continuing to Auckland and *Eclipse* and her tow to the Manukau. They all arrived at their destinations at roughly the same time on 2/3 October. A detachment was marched from *Curacoa* to Onehunga where they took command of *Waikato* which was now armed as the New Zealand Colonial ship *Pioneer*. Included in this detachment was Midshipman Cecil Foljambe² who kept a journal of his time in *Pioneer*³.

Two more stern-wheel iron gunboats, named *Koheroa* and *Rangiriri*, were also built in Sydney and taken in sections to the Government dockyard and stores depot at Port Waikato where they were commissioned in 1864. A number of other small vessels were requisitioned by the colonial government for use in riverine warfare.



Above: The river gunboat *Pioneer* was New Zealand's first purpose-built warship.



Left: Watercolour of HMS *Eclipse* towing the paddle-wheeler *Waikato*. Inset: One of the preserved ship's cupolas, that housed the gun turrets.

In summary, during the main battles of the New Zealand Wars between 1859 and 1865, a total of 12 naval ships were involved in supporting land forces with 1,198 New Zealand medals awarded to officers and men of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Two Victoria Crosses were also awarded; the first to Leading Seaman William Odgers from HMS *Niger* for displaying conspicuous gallantry in storming by the Naval Brigade of a native stockade at Taranaki in 1860, and secondly, to Able Seaman Samuel Mitchell of *Harrier* in 1864 during an attack by the Naval Brigade at Tauranga (Gate Pa) where disregarding an order, to retire and look to his own safety, he recovered his mortally wounded commanding officer, Commander Edward Hay RN, who before dying, recommended Mitchell be recognised for his great act of bravery.

The Royal New Zealand 'Fencibles'

The term 'Fencible' is derived from defensible used to describe regiments raised from retired servicemen for local defence and garrison duties. They were used in Britain during periods of unrest and threats of invasion where mainly military pensioners still fit enough for military service formed a limited reserve force and in return, received a small payment.

When Captain Arthur Phillip RN returned home after his service as the first Governor of New South Wales he was given a semi-retirement position in command of the Hampshire Sea 'Fencibles'.

Owing to the potential threat to the small European settlements from a native uprising the Governor, George Grey, sought 2,500 troops to defend the colony with 1,000 of these being reservists who could also be employed to support the capital. This was refined into a scheme whereby a small garrison of Imperial troops was sent to the colony in two transports followed by a detachment of reserves known as the Royal New Zealand 'Fencibles' (RNZF). These personnel first arrived in four ships in 1847, followed by a further six ships, with the last to arrive in 1852.

Below: Early Fencible Cottage at Howick. Author.



The RNZF were recruited in Britain from abled bodied men with previous military service in the Army or Marines, of good character and under the age of 48. They would retain current military pensions and in addition during their seven-years' service as a 'Fencible' receive a further payment from six-pence to one-shilling and three-pence-per-day. They and their families would be shipped to New Zealand free of charge where they would be granted an acre of land on which a rent-free, two-roomed cottage, would be built to accommodate them.

The cottages were built on the dividing line of adjacent allotments, so they were semi-detached dwellings built of prefabricated wood with roofs of thatched flax, but the chimneys and fireplaces were of brick imported from Sydney.

Many 'Fencibles' came from Ireland which suffered from unemployment and poverty. The families would live in a number of armed settlements south of Auckland, as a counter to potential attack from disaffected Waikato Māori, with villages established at Howick, Onehunga, Otahuhu and Panmure. Each village had a schoolhouse which could double as a chapel. With the settlements often unready for occupation many of the cottages were constructed by their future owners.

'Fencibles' were obliged to undertake 12-days of military exercises each year and muster under arms with their families at church parades each Sunday. They would be guaranteed work for the first year of their service after which they were encouraged to find local employment. After seven-years the cottage and allotment would become their property.

The first detachment of 'Fencibles' sailed from Tilbury on 14 April 1847 in the 750-ton barque *Ramilles*, arriving in Auckland on 5 August 1847. They were under the command of Major William Kenny of the 73rd Regiment, accompanied by naval surgeon Dr Cunningham and Lt. Colonel Bolton a Royal Engineer. This detachment comprised 67 'Fencibles', 55 wives and 103 children. The first detachment had to make do with temporary 'raupo' houses built of reeds and flax over a wooden frame with wattle walls of clay and thatched roofs.

They were followed by further ships bringing a total of 2,581 persons to Auckland. Of these 721 were able bodied men classed as 'Fencibles'. At the start of this program the European population of Auckland was only 2,800.

An historic village is maintained at Howick showing 'Fencible' housing and how the community lived.

In summary, it was a great pleasure to have benefitted from the knowledge of the Royal Navy, the Naval Brigade and the 'Fencibles' provided by 98-year-old Gerald Elliott who was married at the historic Howick 'Fencible' church and continued to live at Howick.

Gerald died in his 99th year, on 6 December 2024.

Notes:

1. HMCS *Victoria* was the first warship built for an Australian colony, arriving at Hobsons Bay on 31 May 1856. After her delivery voyage *Victoria* was handed over to the colonial government with the complement reduced to just 58 officers and men. During the Māori Wars she was seconded to the Royal Navy with 32 of her crew loaned to the Naval Brigade. Surprisingly during this period, she remained under the Victorian flag. Her crew were envied by other members of the Naval Brigade as they had the latest model of Enfield rifles and received additional pay - the Victorian Government paying a bonus, lest crews deserted to the gold fields.

2. Foljambe is an ancient family who came to England with William the Conqueror. Cecil Foljambe was educated at Eton before entering the Royal Navy as a Midshipman and retiring as a Lieutenant. He then had an extensive political career and was elevated to the peerage first as Baron Hawkesbury and later Earl of Liverpool. His eldest son became Governor and later Governor-General of New Zealand.

3. HMCS *Pioneer* provided useful service during the Waikato uprising but on 24 December 1866 she broke her moorings at Port Waikato and drifted out to sea. During an attempt to steam her into harbour she became yet another victim of the Manukau Bar.

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**Right: HMCS
Victoria, in
Port Phillip.**

**Below:
Manukau
Heads Light-
house. Author.**



Book Review

by 'Subconscious'

The Secret Submarine by Tom Lewis (right) is a paperback of 315-pages, published by Big Sky Publishing, of Sydney. It was released in early 2025. The book is well supported with plentiful black and white photographs and numerous references. Available at all booksellers at about \$35.



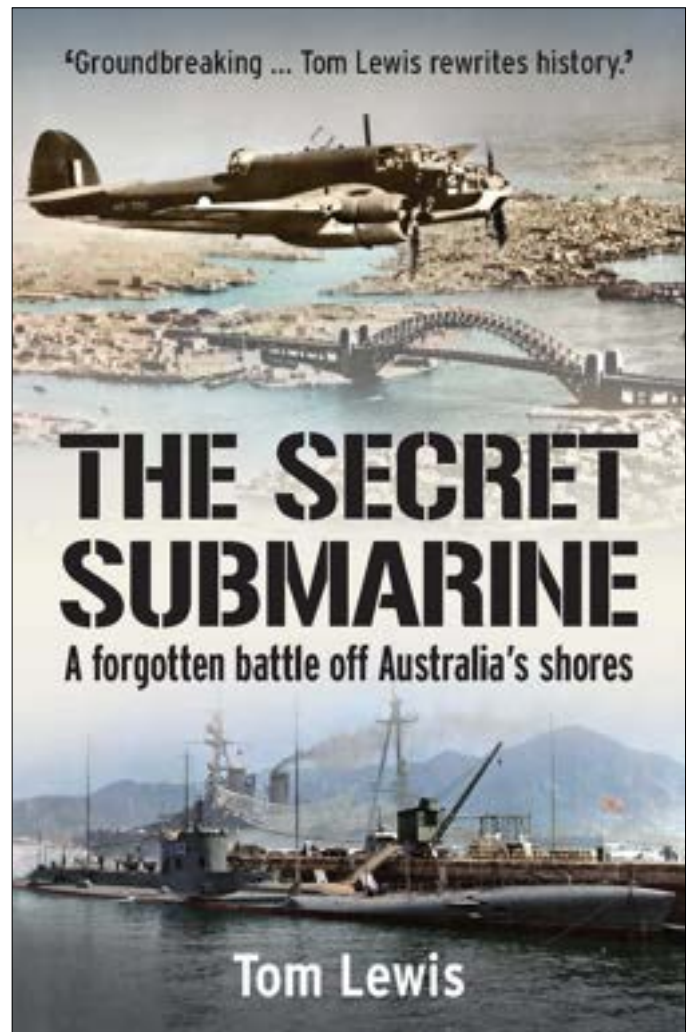
The official history of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) claims that no enemy submarines operating off the Australian coast during the Second World War were sunk. In this, his latest book, Tom Lewis suggests that the official history might have got it wrong and immerses his readers through an interesting piece of detection in explaining why.

There is an immense amount of detail in this work, but it is easily read and should be of interest both to those less familiar with our wartime history and those from the warrior class who recall these now distant times. The author takes us into the design and operation of both submarines and anti-submarine aircraft even expanding into the lesser known but fascinating field of Australian wartime aircraft production.

This eventually leads to the nub of the story which details the happy hunting ground for enemy submarines off our most easterly point with the majority of shipping having to round Cape Byron. Accordingly, it was just south of here that the RAAF established a base at Coffs Harbour for flights of aircraft to patrol and escort convoys. This task usually fell to medium and light sized bombers such as the Ansons, Beauforts and Hudsons.

From ship attacks in early June 1943, enemy submarines were known to be in these waters and this was later confirmed from Japanese records. In a strategy to keep these craft at bay, daytime patrols were conducted by Anson bombers, and at dusk these patrols were handed over to radar fitted Beauforts. Sometime at night the submarines would have to surface to recharge their batteries and this is when they were most vulnerable.

On 18 June one of three Beauforts conducting night patrols just after midnight had a radar blip and a few minutes later saw the outline of a submarine and immediately pressed an attack using three 250-pound depth charges.



These exploded close to the boat which attempted to crash dive but for some reason was unable to completely submerge and lost speed. The Beaufort completed a turn and came in for second attack and dropped its last remaining depth charge just ahead of the submarine which was now fully surfaced and stopped in the water. The first Beaufort then retired to its base at Coffs Harbour but not before dropping a flare that illuminated the target for the other two Beaufort to take over.

The second Beaufort conducted further attacks with depth charges and machine guns, and gun fire was returned by the submarine. Finally, the third Beaufort joined but was unable to locate the submarine. It is now up to the reader to find out what comes next and make a judgement call as to whether the official history be challenged.

In summary this is a well-researched and well-written history of events during a critical stage of the Second World War when the enemy was still in the ascendancy. It is full of facts and figures but is not overwhelming and there is something here of interest for everyone. The author is to be congratulated on keeping this important part of our history alive with an engrossing account before this soon fades from living memory.

Vale John Christopher Jeremy AM

4 July 1942 - 18 April 2025

Vice-President NHSA

John was much the same age as me entering this world as a wartime babe in 1942. He was the last of three sons born to Richmond and Joan Jeremy. Following his formal education John entered an unusual career path into the shipbuilding industry. Dr. Richmond Jeremy was a successful consultant physician with a practice in Macquarie Street and a family home at nearby Rushcutters Bay.

As John tells the story his father happened to meet a friend, Rear Admiral Alec Doyle, and described his son's obsession with ships. "Send him to Cockatoo to see Hutch" was the Admiral's suggestion. Dr Jeremy contacted Captain Hutchinson the Managing Director of Cockatoo Dockyard and in due course John was granted an interview.

Young John then spent his working life at Cockatoo Island, beginning in 1960 as an apprentice ship draughtsman and then qualifying as a naval architect at the University of New South Wales. He held a number of positions in the planning and technical area before being appointed Technical Director of the company in 1976. In 1978 he took responsibility for all production activities, and was appointed Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Cockatoo Dockyard from 1981 until it closed in 1991.

Busy life

John was a busy person. He was a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers (Australia), a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Naval Architects and a Member of the Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers. He was a past President of the Australian Division of the Royal Institution of Naval Architects, a Vice President of the Navy League of Australia and a Vice President of the Naval Historical Society of Australia. He was also a past National President of the Metal Trades Industry Association.

John extensively researched the history of the dockyard on Cockatoo Island and his first book, *Cockatoo Island: Sydney's Historic Dockyard*, was published by the University of New South Wales Press in 1998 running to a second edition in 2005. A further four books on shipbuilding at Cockatoo Island followed, and *Safe To Dive: Submarines at Cockatoo Island 1914 to 1991*, was reprinted in 2023.

For recreation John liked nothing more than messing about in small boats. He was a keen yachtsman and a past Commodore of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club and a member of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. He was Chairman of the Australia Day Regatta Management Committee.

In addition, John found time to be a member of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, a Council Member of the Australian Register of Historic Vessels, and a Life Member of the Australian National Maritime Museum.

He also edited the quarterly Australian Naval Architect which benefitted from his great store of excellent maritime photographs. John had "presence" and blessed with a fine voice he was often called upon as a speaker, whether these be small clubs or international conferences. He gave of his time freely to many causes which included his beloved Institute of Naval Architects where he mentored many young careers.

Right: NHSA Vice President, Mr John C. Jeremy AM.



Below: RAN Fleet Commander, Rear Admiral Christopher Smith, AM, CSM, RAN, and John Jeremy AM, at the official book launch for Safe to Dive, held at the Anzac Memorial in Sydney on 5 June 2023.

In the 2015 Australia Day Honours List, John Jeremy was awarded Membership of the Order of Australia (AM) for his significant service to the preservation and celebration of naval and maritime history.

John and the Royal Australian Navy

Through his association with shipbuilding and ship repair John built up an enormous amount of knowledge of surface vessels and submarines operated by the Royal Australian Navy. Not only did he know ships, but he also knew and cultivated valuable contacts with navy personnel, and he was always helpful in resolving the many difficult issues that can arise during complex building and repair tasks.

John took great pride in the care and precision required to construct a ship, noting HMAS *Vampire* was built when he first started at the island and is still afloat at Darling Harbour, and HMAS *Success* the last in a line of some 290 ships built at Cockatoo.

In later years his association with the Australian National Maritime Museum and the Sydney Harbour Heritage Trust and his wide circle of friends and associates were a welcome source of benefit to naval interests and especially to those of the Naval Historical Society of Australia (NHSA). The NHSA gained a Vice President, but also a charming ambassador of extraordinary ability.

The man we knew and loved

John obviously had a fascination for ships and liked nothing better than a good yarn with similar minded people on just about any maritime topic. With a sound background in naval architecture and practical experience in shipbuilding he had a great font of knowledge and enjoyed lively debate. To change the subject, we would then talk about the perils of country living, and getting stuck in the mud, at his shack, on 40 acres at Tarago, south of Goulburn.

John Christopher Jeremy AM passed away on 18 April 2025. He was a bright star who illuminated many lives - we shall miss him.

*Prepared by
Walter Burroughs*



FINAL FAREWELL TO MAITLAND

Story and photographs by Chris Gee

In mid-March 2023, the former patrol boat HMAS *Maitland*, in more recent times known as PBAT *Sentinel*, was towed from Austal's facility in Henderson, Western Australia to the nearby Australian Marine Complex (AMC) Henderson floating drydock for scrapping ashore to begin. The move had been postponed numerous times over the previous few weeks, so much so that perhaps her sentence deserved to be annulled, and the vessel released for good behaviour and sent out to pasture!



Above and below: Two views of the former HMAS Maitland on her last voyage, under tow to the Australian Marine Complex at Henderson in Western Australia.

However, those stays of execution finally ended on 18 March, when *Sentinel* took a Fremantle Ports pilot onboard for the shift movement to the AMC. Once secured inside the flooded drydock the dock was deballasted, raising *Sentinel* from the water for the last time so that the hull could be then moved by multi-wheel transporter to a position within the AMC. She was placed within a container walled enclosure for the work to be conducted. Not far away, and also ashore, was the decommissioned ANZAC class frigate *Anzac*.

History

Sentinel had previously started her first trials as an autonomous vessel from Henderson on 19 June 2023. The former Armidale class patrol boat (ACPB) had arrived at Austal Ship's, Henderson yard in June 2022, to undergo the planned modifications and preparations alongside their jetty for the Patrol Boat Autonomous Trial (PBAT) program, combining the efforts of the RAN, with Austal and L3 Harris.

By this time the boat was registered under the ownership of Austal Ships Pty Ltd, with management by International Maritime Services Pty Ltd, Fremantle. As well a new Fremantle port of registry was added to the stern. For the trials the boat carried the formal navy-style nameplate boards SENTINEL on each side of the superstructure, with the new name painted in small letters on the bows and stern. The logo wording TRUSTED AUTONOMOUS SYSTEMS was also painted in white on the grey forward housing next to Austal's logo/wording. Some small outward modifications to the ship's mast were also made and a large white dome fitted above the bridge.

Trials

Following the arrival of the vessel in Henderson the renamed *Sentinel* entered the trial's 'modification phase' which included the fitting of a variety of monitoring and control systems and technologies that enabled autonomous and remote operations. Sea trials began in October 2023, with Austal Australia responsible for the planning, modification and test and evaluation, of the various autonomous and remotely operated systems aboard the retired ACPB. The successful series of trials ended in April 2024, following which she had her autonomous equipment removed and was laid up at Austal's jetty, Henderson, to await disposal.



Postscript

For PBAT *Sentinel*, ex HMAS *Maitland*, it was perhaps ironic that her last working period and final departure point was from the same premises and jetty she had been built at 19-years ago.

A future for HMS Wellington (1934)

Ralph Edwards reports that many tourists to London will know about the Second World War cruiser, *HMS Belfast*, which is owned by the Imperial War Museum and moored opposite the Tower of London.

Not many, though, will realise that there is another ex-Royal Navy warship on the Thames. First commissioned in 1935 *HMS Wellington* is located on the north bank of the River Thames at Temple Stairs on the Victoria Embankment, between Waterloo and Blackfriars bridges.

She was saved from the scrapyards after being purchased by the Honourable Company of Master Mariners for future use as their Headquarters. On 1 July 2005, ownership was transferred to The Wellington Trust. The main aims of the trust are to raise funds to maintain the vessel as a museum ship and to promote Britain's maritime heritage through its education programme.

The Trust

The Wellington Trust's main purpose was stated as "the conservation and preservation as part of the nation's maritime heritage, the education of the public in the history of the British and Commonwealth Merchant Services and, the importance of seaborne trade to our island nation."

She now also operates as both an events venue and a museum. Free education classes are offered to schools on application. Amongst artifacts on display are some from the *SS Ohio*, including the ship's bell. *SS Ohio* was an American oil tanker that played a vital part in *Operation Pedestal*, to resupply Malta in her hour of greatest need, in August 1942, to enable Malta to remain in the war.

Above and below: The 89-year-old sloop HMS Wellington (1934). Both images courtesy Ralph Edwards.



In 2023, The Honourable Company of Master Mariners relocated to an office in Greenwich. On 3 September 2024, the Wellington Trust's Chairman, Professor Dominic Tweddle, stated "We are greatly honoured that his majesty the King has graciously approved our proposed name change from HQS Wellington to *HMS Wellington (1934)*."

This change of name in her 90th anniversary year is a true testament to her heritage as the sole surviving European warship dedicated to the Battle of the Atlantic. The Trust is proud to be stewards for the conservation and preservation of the newly named *HMS Wellington (1934)*." The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest battle fought during the Second World War, from 3 September 1939 to 8 May 1945, the entire duration of Britain's war in Europe.

Current Status

Wellington also serves as the London offices of the International Pilots' Association, the Maritime Foundation and the Flag Institute. The sloop is operating limited opening hours, but is not open to the general public until later this year. She is currently in her original far-east livery of white and buff. *Wellington* is also on the National Historic Ships Register (No.502).

In 2025 she was awarded £225,000 by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to secure her future, after an earlier grant of £213,300 from the Culture Recovery Fund in 2020.

Sisterships

In addition to the six units initially built for the Royal Navy, seven similar but not identical sloops were built in three further groups. One for the Royal Indian Navy, four (HMA Ships *Yarra*, *Swan*, *Parramatta* and *Warrego*) for the Royal Australian Navy (built at Cockatoo Island Dockyard in Sydney) and two more for the Royal Navy.



Arafura active in WA

Just after 0930 on Sunday, 9 March 2025, the RAN's first offshore patrol vessel (OPV), NUSHIP *Arafura*, slipped her moorings at the Osborne naval shipyard in Port Adelaide and proceeded to head down the Port River.

Under blue skies *Arafura* proceeded through the Outer Harbor where a small band of workers and family were on hand to cheer them off for their voyage to Western Australia.

Before heading to Fleet Base West (FBW) the ship and her crew performed one final set of trials, to check all was in order, as they progressed across Gulf St Vincent.

Arafura subsequently arrived at FBW at 0900 on Thursday, the 13th, sailing through calm seas, but with dreadful humidity building up to thunderstorms, rain and lightning. Outwardly the atmospherics looked good as *Arafura* was escorted down the channels by no less than four ADF rigid-hull inflatable boats (RHIBs) which were buzzing around or trailing astern of this lead OPV. Once clear of the channels they 'put the foot down' and she took off at surprising speed to her new base at HMAS *Stirling*.

Thanks to Matt Welsby and Chris Gee for this report.

Left and above left: Two views of the new Arafura as she proceeds from Port Adelaide on 9 March 2025. Courtesy Matt Welsby.

Below left: NUSHIP Arafura picks up speed on her way to Fleet Base West on 13 May 2025. Courtesy Chris Gee.

Below: Alongside Fleet Base West. RAN.



Ceremonial images - 2025



Clockwise from top right:

- Australian Navy Cadets from Training Ship Gladstone conduct a ceremonial sunset onboard the decommissioned patrol boat HMAS Gladstone, for Navy Week 2025. LSIS David Cox.

- Ceremonial sunset in King George Square, Brisbane, February 2025. LSIS David Cox.

- Remembering USS Peary in 2025. RAN.

- Flags of Australia and the United States of America at the 83nd anniversary of the sinking of the destroyer USS Peary, held at the USS Peary Memorial, Darwin, Northern Territory. POIS Leo Baumgartner.

- A United States Marine Corps colour party march on at the USS Peary commemorative service in Darwin. POIS Leo Baumgartner.

Society 'launches' latest book

President, Captain David Michael, RAN (Rtd), reports on the successful launch of our latest publication, *HMAS Melbourne - 25 Years and Beyond*.

The NHA has a proud record of achievement when it comes to publishing naval historical books. Over the years since our creation in 1970 we have produced almost forty books of varying sizes, and we continue to plan a new selection of titles for future years.

On Friday, 9 May 2025, we were proud to 'launch' our latest book, *HMAS Melbourne - 25 Years and Beyond*. The new 200-page work was a completely revised, updated and expanded edition of the original 1980 book. For the event we were honoured to welcome a number of distinguished officers, including RADM Rothesay Swan, AO, CBE, RAN (Rtd), RADM Tony Horton, AO, RAN (Rtd) and CDRE John Da Costa, RAN (Rtd), along with the author, Ross Gillett and myself, who spoke about the former Flagship, as we welcomed this newest 'member' to our growing list of naval publications. Representing the Australian Fleet was CDRE Terry Morrison.

To that end this article is a summary of the speakers at the 'book launch' to provide members with an overview of the day's events, as well as how HMAS Melbourne was operated from a number of different perspectives.



Presenters at the book launch on 9 May 2025. Clockwise from top left: Tony Horton, Ross Gillett, CDRE Terry Morrison, Rothesay Swan and John Da Costa.

RADM Rothesay Swan

The aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne was my sixth command, a bit different from my first command in 1946, a small motor refrigerator lighter which I had taken from Sydney to Dreger in New Guinea. In January 1977 I was sent to command HMAS Melbourne, a floating airfield which had to always survive and be ready to operate aircraft, its weapons both defensive and attack. From a command point of view, it was different. Melbourne could be said to have been two ship's companies, the second being the Air Group under the command of the Commander Air.

And then, as well, the Flag Officer Commanding the Australian Fleet, a Rear Admiral, and his staff were usually embarked, the captain of Melbourne being in some ways his Chief of Staff. So where was the captain of Melbourne in the middle of all this! Coping with command of the ship, and from pressures from his own Executive Officer, his Commander Air, the Admiral, the Admiral staff officer operations and at the same time the safety of the ship. In truth, even to this day I was more of a 'manager' than someone in command. Because of her deployment I seldom felt that the ship was under my guidance and command. I was there to make sure that the ship safety met the requirements of others. The safety of the ship was always my priority.

Let us now move onto the other role which Melbourne performed while I was in command. That is, her ceremonial role. During my time in command the ship had an admiral on board, the Commander of the Australian Fleet. And into whichever port Melbourne went, the admiral in conjunction with Australia's Ambassador or trade representative, took the opportunity of publicising what a great Navy the Royal Australian Navy was, and what a great nation Australia was.

During my time in command of Melbourne the ship took part in three international maritime exercises, each of about three weeks in duration. Two were in the Pacific and one in British waters, when she fulfilled the role of a floating airfield, but the rest of the time, fulfilling ceremonial duties internationally. In 1977 the admiral on board Melbourne oversaw the task group of Australian and New Zealand ships representing their countries at the Queen's 25th Anniversary Spithead Naval Review in the waters off Portsmouth.

Wherever Melbourne went, even at the Spithead review and in many other foreign ports visited, both before and after the review the admiral was always the host. Melbourne was the venue. It is my recollection that the Admiral's ceremonial requirements always took precedent over any other responsibilities the command had.

So in conclusion I say that my time in command was in many ways unique. I remain immensely proud of the ship's achievements while in command. She was still an operational airfield when I handed her over to my successor. We will always remember Melbourne as a great ship which contributed much to the Navy and the country.

Author Ross Gillett

In the 45 years since I assembled the material to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the RAN flagship HMAS Melbourne I was asked many times if a second edition of the book could be produced to cover the ship's later years in service with many former crew members still desiring their own copy of the original book.

So, the time was right to upgrade the 1980 edition, add the ship's remaining years in service, in reserve and finally her time in China. Producing an updated second edition also provided the opportunity to add new facts, extra images and redesign certain sections, while still retaining the original format of that book. So this much revised edition looks a bit like the 1980 book, but much upgraded to the format of current day publications.

Melbourne was launched on 28 February 1945, so by 28 October 1955, when she commissioned, she was already 10-years old. The ship operated three generations of aircraft from Sea Venoms and Gannets and Bristol Sycamores from the mid-1950s and into the sixties, and then from the late 1960s the A-4 Skyhawks and S-2 Trackers. By this time, she was operating Westland Wessex helicopters in the anti-submarine role and from the 1970s the larger Sea King helicopters.

Some people wanted to pay off the ship. There were plans in the late 1950s to decommission her because the aircraft of the day weren't deemed to be fulfilling their intended roles, but in 1962 it was decided to convert the ship to a helicopter carrier. Then we changed our mind again and in the mid-60s we ordered the two new aircraft types from the USA. She would then become a strike carrier again, from 1969 carrying those Skyhawks and Trackers in her new role, with these aircraft to operate from the ship until she paid off in the early 1980s.

I should add that there are very few ships that have served or deployed as much as Melbourne. In 1957 she deployed to south-east Asia and undertook many such deployments over the next 25 years, sailing up to Japan, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong. For those deployments she was escorted by other ships of the RAN. From the mid to late 1950s her escorts were the Battle class destroyers and Q class anti-submarine frigates. And then from 1959 up to the 1970s she was escorted by the Daring class destroyers, and then the River class anti-submarine frigates. Later from 1965-67 she was accompanied by the Perth class guided missile destroyers. So, during these times she was a very versatile ship able to operate with three different generations of surface combatants who were there to protect her, and she was there to protect them with the embarked Fleet Air Arm squadrons.

I'd also like to highlight that the book contains four particularly good descriptions of the role of the carrier, the capabilities of the ship and her crew at various times during her commission. The first of course was by Captain Gatacre who wrote the foreword to the original book. Then, in 1980, Commodore Ian Knox wrote a wonderful description of the role of the flagship. RADM David Martin in 1985 when the ship had departed for China to be broken up put together a wonderful summary of the ship across her career, highlighting the crew and their abilities. RADM Martin said "she was the advertisement of Australia's commitment to regional security and cooperation." And to round it all off, former Sea Venom observer, RADM Tony Horton, said in the foreword to the revised book, "this new addition of the Melbourne book completes the ship's voyage into the pages of naval history."

I should highlight the former crew members from Melbourne's facebook page who kindly provided additional information and a wide range of monochrome and colour illustrations, plus artwork, across the ship's 27-years of service. What I tried to do, especially with the photographs and information, was to incorporate this information into special photo album sections at the rear of each decade of the ship's service. And that has now provided a much better idea of life on board.

As a result the original book's 140-pages has grown to over 200-pages, including eight revised chapters, covering all the way up to 2002 when the ship was finally broken up in China, and a grand total of 11 appendices featuring the carrier artwork, her sisterships, the aircraft operated, armament and electronic changes and bibliography. Even reviews of the first edition have been included, and of course, a list of the commanding officers and photos of each one of them.



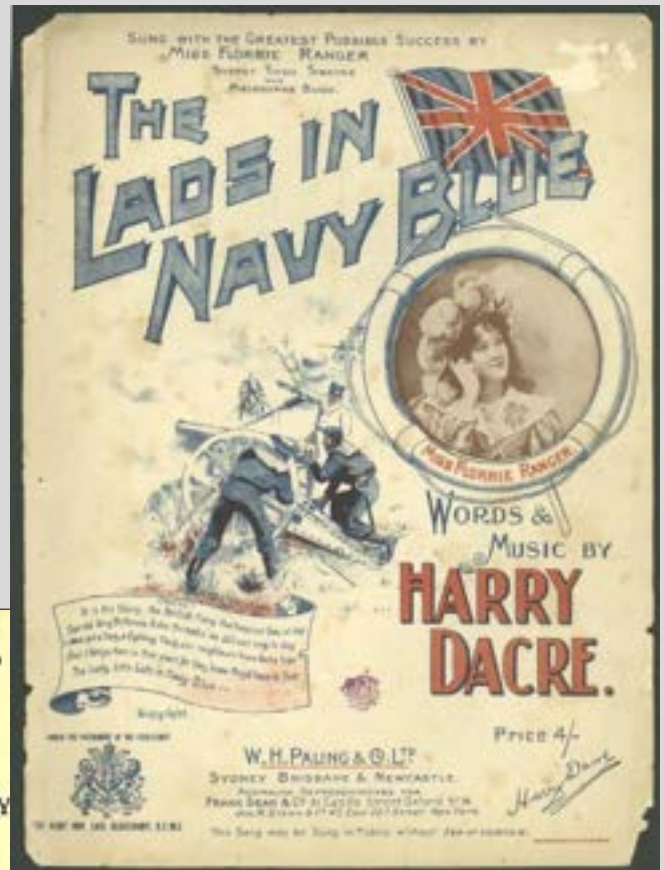
Above: HMAS Melbourne during heeling trials in 1960.

'The Lads in Navy Blue'

This song was originally written and composed in 1899 by Harry Dacre. This sheet music consisted of four pages and was printed by E. W. Cole in Melbourne, Victoria. The lithographic print on the cover (right) depicted naval ratings serving ashore. Internally, the pages contained lyrics and music alongside advertisements for other musical publications.

The lyrics, music and illustrations in this edition of the sheet music highlighted the pride in the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) that existed in Australia after the RAN's formation in 1911 and during the Great War. Patriotic songs were often sung at civic events and in Australian homes in the early 20th century, especially during those years of conflict.

The publisher E. W. Cole had the rights to print and distribute the Australian edition of 'The Lads in Navy Blue'.



Above and left: Reproductions from 'The Lads in Navy Blue'. This version was the sheet music released by W.H. Paling & Co. Ltd. in Sydney, Brisbane and Newcastle.

Numerous other editions were released in Australia during the two world wars. The designs for each of these were remarkably similar, featuring a naval vessel or sailor in uniform.

This vintage sheet music (left) now offers an insight into popular culture and social values at the time of their production. These widely distributed pieces were inexpensive to buy (four shillings), making them a very popular purchase with the general public.

Music was an integral part of people's social life in the home and at public outings such as balls, recitals, concerts and theatres.

The chorus read:

*It is the Navy the British Navy,
That keeps our foes at bay,
Our old song 'BRITANNIA Rules The Waves',
We still can sing today,
We've got a Navy, a fighting Navy;
Our neighbours know that's true;
And it keeps them in their place for they know they'd have to face;
The lively little lads in Navy blue !*

The lads in Navy Blue.

Words and Music by

HARRY DACRE.

1. Sing a song in praise of Jack the sailor
Sing a song about the jolly tar,
Why not boast of those who guard our coast?
Right proud of them we are
Must we always sing of Tommy Atkins:
Not one word for Jack?
When on land he makes a mighty stand,
And beats the foeman back?
Why in our glory do we tower?
What is the secret of our power?

*Chorus:—*It is the Navy, the British Navy,
That keeps our foes at bay,
Our old song, "Britannia rules the waves,"
We still can sing to-day,
We've got a Navy, a fighting Navy;
Our neighbours know that's true;
And it keeps them in their place, for they know they'd have to face
The lively little lads in Navy blue!

2. Years ago, when serving for their country,
British tars have met our many foes.
How Jack fought, in victories dearly bought,
Our history plainly shows.
What we did in glorious days of Nelson
England still can do.
Hearts of oak still scorn the foreign yoke:
The old song still hold true!
Why in our glory do we tower?
What is the secret of our power?
Chorus:—

3. Sailor Jack has gain'd a reputation;
Folks declare his love is only sport.
Evil minds believe a sailor finds
A wife in ev'ry port!
Ladies, I beseech you, don't believe it:
Jack can faithful be.
He never swerves: the mistress that he serves
Is Mistress of the Sea!
Why in our glory do we tower?
What is the secret of our power?
Chorus:—



***Old timer:
HMAS
Diamantina.***

One ship - two final departures. The first, flying her paying-off pennant, HMAS Diamantina departs Fremantle on 9 October 1979. Chris Gee.



The second, flying the Australian National Flag, the former HMAS Diamantina sails from Sydney on 1 October 1980. Chris Sattler.



The preserved Diamantina in the South Brisbane Dry Dock, October 1980. Ross Gillett.