



CALL THE HANDS



NHSA DIGITAL NEWSLETTER
Issue No.16 February 2018

From the President

Welcome to our first edition of *Call the Hands* for 2018. Since December, the wreck of HMAS AE1 has been discovered, STS Young Endeavour celebrated 30 years of service and Society members have been involved in several interesting activities.

In the week prior to Christmas the discovery of HMAS AE1, excited the nation and ended the Navy's longest mystery. AE1 was lost off the island of Rabaul on 14 September 1914 with all 35 crew members. The wreck site will remain 'close held' by *Find AE1 Expedition* member organisations until appropriate measures are taken to protect the site. Expedition leader, retired Rear Admiral Peter Briggs who has worked much of his life to find HMAS AE1 and his colleagues are saluted for this historic achievement.

On 16 January the Commanding Officer HMAS Hobart, Captain John Stavridis and Supply Officer, Lieutenant Commander Mark Lee visited the Boatshed to acquaint themselves with an important HMAS Hobart heritage item, the Captain's table from HMAS Hobart (I). The Society has held the table in trust since Hobart (II) decommissioned in May 2000.

Descendants of HMAS Patricia Cam crew members and the community marked the 76th anniversary of her loss with a series of events in Darwin, Gosford, Sydney and Canberra from 20 to 22 January. Patricia Cam sank on 22 January 1943 after being bombed by a Japanese float plane. Society members participated in the Gosford (plaque unveiling where she was built) and Canberra last post ceremony at the Australian War Memorial. The Society hosted families on a tour of heritage sites in Sydney on Sunday 21 January.

In the week prior to Australia Day Society volunteers celebrated founding member, Mr Norman Rivett's 63rd anniversary of continuous service on Garden Island. Norman has worked continuously on Garden Island in various capacities and as a volunteer since 24 January 1955. A few days earlier Rear Admiral Stuart Mayer handed over Fleet Command to Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead. What links these two events is the fact that Rear Admiral Mead is the 44th senior officer to command the Fleet since Norm commenced work in 1955. This puts his commitment to Navy and the Society into real perspective. He also worked for 11 Dockyard General Managers during his 32.5 years employment of service in the Dockyard. At age 92 Norman is the Society's expert on Garden Island. He regularly provides advice on the Islands history and continues to record it. Congratulations Norm and sincere thanks from Members and the RAN

Sail Training Ship (STS) Young Endeavour, the bicentenary gift from the United Kingdom to Australia celebrated 30 years of service on 25 January 2018. In 1988 the Prince and Princess of Wales were in attendance when the Australian National Flag and the RAN White Ensign were raised to mark the transfer of Young Endeavour as a 'living gift' to mark Australia's bicentenary. More than 13,100 trainees have undertaken sail training in this time. A wonderful achievement.

We look forward to an interesting and challenging year and keeping you up to date with matters of historic importance to the RAN and Australia.

David Michael
President



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of Australia

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From the Editor

Welcome to 2018. We are starting our *Call the Hands* newsletters for the year with some interesting stories which I hope you enjoy.

David Stratton
Editor and Digital Manager

Hi-Tech surveillance equipment harnessed to protect Royal Navy's shipwrecks

The National Museum of the Royal Navy - guardians of the Senior Service's centuries-long history - and the Maritime Archaeology Sea Trust, who have charted every RN vessel ever lost around the globe, have linked up with the National Maritime Information Centre, which pools information and intelligence on activities in UK waters to deter and detect anyone threatening to disturb RN war graves.

They will use satellites, radar, sensors and the AIS identification system - every ship over 300 tonnes must broadcast details of its whereabouts, cargo and destination - plus other sources of information to track or monitor suspicious activity near wreck sites, the Royal Navy said.



Nearly 4,800 British warships have been lost over the past 500 years from the waters of Albania to Yemen at a cost of thousands of lives.

The wholesale plunder of the wrecks of HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse in the South China Sea led to their remains - and other sunken RN vessels - being protected by UK law.

Enforcing such protection - especially in the many far-flung parts of the world where some of the 4,793 British warships lost went down - has proved to be tricky. But unscrupulous divers and salvage firms have also targeted war graves closer to home. The sacred sites off Jutland have not been left alone. Two thirds of the wrecks from the titanic clash between the British and German Fleets in May 1916 show signs of being attacked by salvagers and trophy hunters. Propellers and boiler condensers are particularly valued as the metal can be melted down. Most recently two divers were fined for removing items from the wreck of seaplane carrier HMS Hermes, sunk off Calais by a German submarine in the first months of the Great War.

"The Prince of Wales and Repulse are under attack, HMS Exeter in the Java Sea has already gone. Our heritage is being lost and people's graves are being disturbed," said Prof Dominic Tweddle, Director General.

"We need to be more proactive in protecting our wrecks - all too often we've been on the back foot, prosecuting people. Let's stop the problem before the looting. That's why we've asked the National Maritime Information Centre to watch wreck sites and report what's happening around them."

As well as desecrating British and Commonwealth sailors' graves the robbers are also disturbing potentially-dangerous/environmentally harmful sites: there are unexploded shells and torpedoes, asbestos and other toxic substances such as fuel (there are believed to be 2½ tons left on the wrecks of the Prince of Wales and Repulse alone).

This fact, plus the increasing decay and disintegration of metal-hulled warships from the past 150 years, has also led to growing concerns over the state of the wrecks and the effects on the environment, prompting the National Museum and archaeological trust to use the latest technology and research to protect the physical remains on the seabed.

Fourth Submarine Squadron

The RN's 4th Submarine Squadron based at HMAS Penguin was established to provide anti submarine training for the RAN and RAAF with the operating cost split between the two nations. In 1949 and 1950 HMS Telemachus, HMS Thorough and HMS Tactician arrived in Sydney They served until 1957 and were replaced by three "A" class submarines HMS Aurochs, HMS Andrew and HMS Anchorite. These boats were replaced by HMS Tapir, HMS Tabard, HMS Trump and HMS Taciturn between 1960 and 1962.



HMS Trump and HMS Tabard at South Elizabeth Pier, Hobart

On 10 February 1964, Tabard participated in anti-submarine exercises with the aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne and the destroyer HMAS Voyager, finishing at 1800 that day. Less than three hours later, Voyager sailed under Melbourne's bow and was cut in two and sunk, killing 82 of her crew.

In the early 1960s, the British Government advised the Australian Government that reductions in the Royal Navy conventional submarine force meant that the 4th Flotilla was to return to the United Kingdom. The impending withdrawal of the British submarine flotilla led to the formation of the current Australian submarine service.

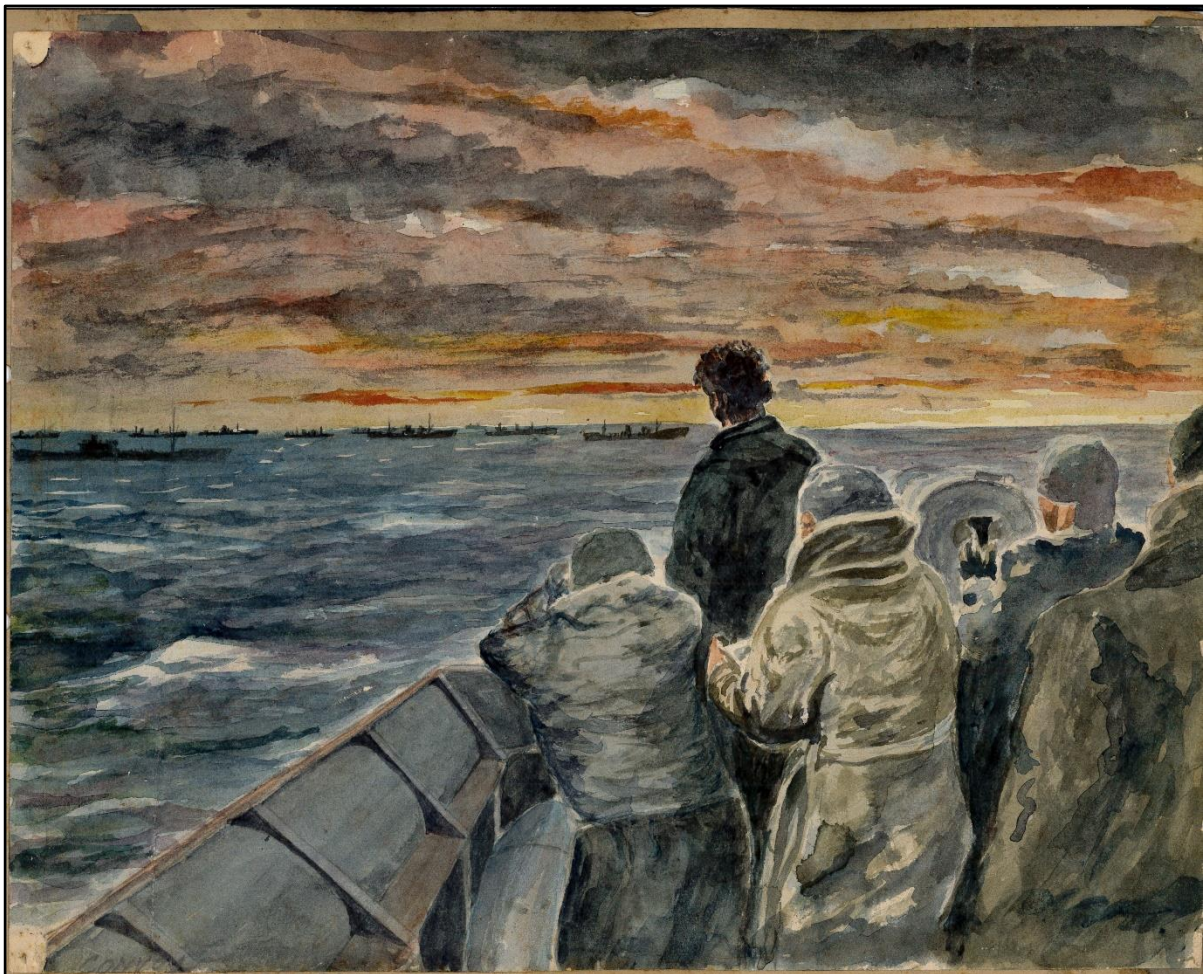
Following the establishment of the 1st Australian Submarine Squadron in 1967, the 4th Submarine Squadron returned to the UK, however Tabard along with Trump remained behind on loan to the Royal Australian Navy. Tabard returned to the United Kingdom in March 1968. And she was followed by HMS Trump in January 1969.

Painter of the French Navy (Peintre de la Marine)

The French Navy has maintained a tradition of 'official painter of the Navy (POM)' since 1830 to record events of significance in the French Navy. The honour is granted by the French Minister of Defence to artists who have devoted their talent to the sea, the Navy and seafarers. It can be attributed not only to painters but also to photographers, filmmakers, illustrators, engravers and sculptors.

Although unpaid, certain privileges and opportunities are afforded the incumbent. These include; the option to board and sea ride in French naval units, wear a uniform, sign their works with a naval anchor following the artist's signature and membership of the Defence Historical Service of France.

Is it time the RAN considered the concept?



Dawn Action Stations, HMAS Perth in the Mediterranean, January 1941 by Petty Officer Cook Roy Norris NHSA image

Inspired by Boats, Shipwrights and Modellers

Victoria Kitanov, archivist and artist recently described her experience working on Spectacle Island for the Naval Heritage Collection as a form of revelation. After being seconded from the Sea Power Centre's Directorate of Strategic and Historical Studies to assist with archiving, she became fascinated by the history of the Island (one of Australia's oldest and continuously used Defence sites) the Collection and staff working on the Island. She was particularly taken with those who meticulously restore the Collection's heritage boats and was inspired to paint them. She has recently joined the [Australian Society of Marine Artists](#) and established her own art school [Entrée to Arts](#). She sees art as another important medium for recording our history.



Victoria Kitanov

These images of her work and an example of the high-quality restorations achieved by her subjects speak for themselves. High quality restorations are achieved by first making a model of the craft to be restored thereby raising awareness of problems which may be encountered.



HMAS Parramatta (I) Ships Motor Launch and Conservator David Glasson in RAN Heritage Centre, Garden Island, Sydney

Captain John Philip Stevenson RAN Rtd Awarded Order of Australia (AM)

On January 26, 2018, Captain JP Stevenson was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to naval veterans through a range of roles.

The following is a synopsis of his service during WW2 and later career. His full [biography](#) is available through the RAN Sea Power Centre.

Stevenson joined the RAN at the age of 13 in 1934 as a Cadet Midshipman and underwent training at the RAN College at HMAS Cerberus. Soon after graduation as a Midshipman he was posted to the UK for service on loan with the Royal Navy (RN) and joined the County class heavy cruiser, HMS Shropshire, in which he was serving in the Mediterranean at the outbreak of World War II (WWII).

Following HMAS Shropshire Stevenson served in the N Class destroyer HMAS Nestor and was onboard when Nestor was bombed and subsequently lost in the Mediterranean. He then served in HMAS Napier and HMAS Shropshire after its commissioning into the RAN.

After radar training at HMAS Rushcutter and in the UK he returned to Australia as the RAN Fleet Radar Officer. He was later posted to HMAS Shropshire and was serving in her at wars end.

Captain Stevenson's distinguished 35-year career in the RAN came to an abrupt end when he resigned in 1970 following the Board of Inquiry into the collision between HMAS Melbourne under his command and the American destroyer USS Frank E Evans. He had taken command of HMAS Melbourne in October 1968 during a major refit which concluded in February 1969.

The joint USN/RAN Board of Inquiry into the tragedy held Captain Stevenson partly responsible stating that, as commanding officer of Melbourne, he could have done more to prevent the collision from occurring; however, a subsequent RAN court-martial cleared him of any responsibility.

The story of his experience of the Melbourne/Evans tragedy was documented by his wife Joanne Stevenson in the books *In the Wake* (1972) and *No Case to Answer* (1999).

Stevenson received an official apology from the Minister for Defence, the Hon Stephen Smith, MP, in November 2012.

Captain Stevenson, now 96 lives in a retirement home in Sydney.



Captain John Stevenson on the bridge of HMAS Melbourne (II), 1969



Captain John Stephenson, RAN (Rtd), (left) with fellow HMAS Nestor survivor Lieutenant Commander Ken Brown, RAN (Rtd), (right) next to Captain Gavin Irwin, RAN, at the HMAS Nestor 75th memorial service in 2017

Photo of the Month:



Coral Sea. c. May 1942. Led by two American destroyers, four eight-inch gun cruisers of Task Force 44 steam in line ahead. Cruisers are from left to right: USS Salt Lake City, USS Chicago, HMAS Canberra and HMAS Australia. The two American cruisers carry gunnery radar at their mast heads.

Australian War Memorial Collection

RAN Highlights: 1918

As the current RAN fleet commences its 107th year of exercises and operations we recall that 100 years ago the Fleet was committed to WW1 operations in Europe. Highlights of that year included;

- SYDNEY and MELBOURNE continued on North Sea operations
- Australian destroyers carried on their Adriatic patrols
- Armistice signed, 11th November
- SWAN rendered assistance to "White" Russian forces in the Sea of Azov
- AUSTRALIA, SYDNEY and MELBOURNE present at surrender of the German Fleet at Scapa Flow.

Source: [*Royal Australian Navy 1911-1961, Golden Jubilee*](#)

News in Brief

- A \$550 MILLION warship hailed for its “adaptability, speed and manoeuvrability” has been stuck in ice for a month and could remain there for weeks. The *USS Little Rock*, the navy’s newest warship, has been stuck in Montreal since December after becoming trapped in ice on the way to its new home in Florida. Bad weather caused ice to form faster than expected, trapping the ship in Seaway, Montreal. Worsening conditions means it will not be able to be moved until weather improves in the northern hemisphere spring. Commissioned in New York on December 16, the ship was due to set sail for its new home in Jacksonville, Florida when its departure was pushed back by three days. After finally setting sail on December 20 *USS Little Rock* made it to Montreal where it remains trapped due to the bad weather.



- The former commanders of two US Navy destroyers involved in collisions last year are to face charges including negligent homicide, the Navy says. The *USS Fitzgerald* and a Philippine container ship collided in June, leaving seven Navy sailors dead. Two months later, the *USS John S McCain* and an oil tanker collided near Singapore, killing 10 navy sailors. Investigations have already found that both incidents were preventable and the result of “multiple failures”. The Navy said in a statement that the then commanding officer of the *USS Fitzgerald* and three other lower-ranking officers will face charges including dereliction of duty, hazarding a vessel and negligent homicide.

- Rick Jolly, who has died aged 71 of complications from a heart condition, was the only serviceman in the Falklands war of 1982 to be honoured by both the British and Argentinian sides. The awards were in recognition of his achievements in managing three frontline field hospitals in which more than 1,000 casualties – among them around 300 Argentinian soldiers and airmen – were successfully treated, and in later years in fostering a bold and imaginative spirit of reconciliation between the once warring armies. In the wake of the conflict, which was triggered by the Argentinian invasion of the Falkland Islands in the South Atlantic, Jolly was appointed OBE, then in 1999, he stood in Buenos Aires in front of more than 50 Argentinian veterans, on some of whom he had personally operated, to receive one of the country’s highest honours, the Orden de Mayo. He told his audience that they had not been cared for because of some military command or international convention but “because we were human beings who respected life”. Jolly was the senior medical officer of 3 Commando Brigade, the force of around 5,500 Royal Marines and paratroopers dispatched on the commandeered cruise liner *SS Canberra* to liberate the Falklands in April 1982. Jolly’s devotion to the welfare of Falklands veterans – of both sides – never faltered. In 2002 he led a group of 250 former British personnel on a visit to the islands to mark the 20th anniversary of the conflict. Five years later, he stood outside the Imperial War Museum in London to welcome former Argentinian pilots arriving for the opening of a major exhibition on the history of the war. As the then commander of 3 Commando Brigade, now Major-General Julian Thompson, who masterminded the land campaign, wrote in his memoir, *No Picnic*, Jolly was “a man who found his moment in the Falklands campaign”.



January in History

| | |
|--------------|--|
| January 1885 | The Imperial Squadron in Australia consisted of HM Ships NELSON, (armoured iron cruiser); DIAMOND, (wooden screw corvette); ESPIEGLE and MIRANDA, (composite sloops); DART, (survey vessel); RAVEN, (steam composite gunboat); SWINGER, (screw composite gunboat); LARK (schooner); UNDINE and HARRIER, (schooners). |
| January 1899 | VADM Sir John Collins, KBE, CB, was born at Deloraine, TAS. |
| January 1909 | 15 sailors from HMS ENCOUNTER, (cruiser), were drowned when the ship's pinnace was rammed by SS DUNSMORE off Garden Island, Sydney. The men were on their way ashore to conduct a range shoot at Malabar when the incident occurred. All those killed were later buried in a communal grave in the Naval Section of Rookwood Cemetery. |
| January 1912 | The Australian Government decided to establish the Royal Australian Naval College at Captains Point, Jervis Bay. |
| January 1915 | HMAS SYDNEY, (cruiser), sailed from Jamaica for Bermuda to search for the German Navy collier ODENWALD. |
| January 1916 | HMAS AUSTRALIA, (battle-cruiser), participated in a 2nd Battle-cruiser Squadron sweep of Norwegian waters in the vicinity of The Naze. No enemy vessels were encountered. |
| January 1918 | MIDN E.F. Cunningham, RAN was drowned when the submarine HMS K17, in which he was serving, was rammed and sunk by a British warship in the North Sea. Cunningham was a member of the original 1913 entry to the RAN College and the first graduate to lose his life on active service. |
| January 1921 | The following ships were laid up in reserve in Sydney: HMA Ships ENCOUNTER, (cruiser), PARRAMATTA, YARRA, WARREGO, HUON, SWAN, and TORRENS, (destroyers), and MALLOW, (sloop). |
| January 1925 | The Australian Government approved the establishment of a Fleet Air Arm in the RAN. The Commonwealth Naval Order (137/25), signed 8 days later declared "The Naval Board has decided to establish a Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Australian Navy, based as far as practicable on the scheme adopted in the Royal Navy". |
| January 1936 | HMA Ships AUSTRALIA and SYDNEY, (cruisers), fired a 21-gun royal salute at sea on the accession to the throne of Edward VIII. |
| January 1940 | A rating in HMAS STUART, (destroyer), wrote: "I always count those early months in the Mediterranean before Italy came in as the worst period of the war. The Australian destroyers operated in exceptionally cold weather and high seas. Lifelines were rigged and the decks were buried in green water. Below decks was a chaos of floating clothes and gear". |
| January 1941 | HMAS PERTH, (cruiser), suffered damage during an air raid while berthed at Malta. An enemy bomb landed between her and the merchant ship ESSEX, causing underwater and internal damage to PERTH. ESSEX was hit by other bombs and set on fire. Personnel from PERTH were involved in the efforts to extinguish the fire onboard ESSEX. |
| January 1943 | The following awards were made to HMAS VENDETTA, (destroyer), "for courage, endurance and devotion to duty" while under Japanese air attack in dock at Singapore, and during the tow of the then immobilised vessel from Singapore to Melbourne: -DSC LEUT W. G. Whitting RANR(S), DSC Gunner (T) J. C. Lace, DSM CPO A. J. Thorne DSM, DSM AB W. Robertson |
| January 1945 | HMAS AUSTRALIA, (cruiser), was hit by a Japanese kamikaze plane for the third time. The ship's casualties were 14 killed and 26 wounded. |
| January 1950 | HMAS TARAKAN, (tank landing ship), was gutted in a disastrous fire at Garden Island Naval Dockyard. Seven sailors and one dockyard worker died in the fire. To rescue the survivors holes were cut through the hull of the vessel. |
| January 1951 | The flagship, HMAS AUSTRALIA, led the international fleet gathered in Sydney Harbour to celebrate Australia's Golden Jubilee. The fleet consisted of:- HMA Ships:- CONDRAMINE, CULGOA, GLADSTONE, LATROBE, SHOALHAVEN, SYDNEY, and TOBRUK. HM Ships; TELEMACHUS, and TACTITIAN HMNZ Ships; BELLONA, TAUPU, and HAWEA. SAN Ship; TRANSVAAL, HMCS ONTARIO, INS RAJPUT, Pakistani ships SHAMSER and SIND. |
| January 1968 | Naval aircrewmembers, K. R. Wardle and K. J. French were rescued by helicopters of No. 9 Squadron, RAAF, when their helicopter gunship crashed in jungle north of Baria, Phuoc Tuy Province, Vietnam. Both airmen were injured in the crash. |
| January 1968 | VADM Sir Alan McNicoll, KBE, CB, GM, RAN, hoisted his flag in HMAS PERTH, (guided missile destroyer), off the coast of Vietnam. It was the first occasion that a Chief of Staff had flown his flag in an Australian warship in theatres of war. |
| January 1975 | RAN Clearance Diving Team 1, under LEUT D. Ramsden, RAN, salvaged the patrol boat HMAS ARROW at Darwin. The patrol boat sank during Cyclone Tracy. |
| January 1985 | Divers from Clearance Diving Team 1 raised a Japanese aerial bomb from the seabed under Darwin's new Fort Hill Road. |

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

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

Readers Forum

Remembering HMAS Paluma (III) Fact or Fiction

By Mike Patterson ex CPOSR RAN
5 January 2018

Here's a photo of HMAS Paluma in 1973 off Fraser Island heading to Sydney to pay off. We were going at 13 knots instead of our regular 8-9 knots. The Hydrographic Service was into sailing as a means of economical steaming !!

After a request for more detail on Hydrographic Branch 'sailing policy' Mike came clean.

18 January 2018

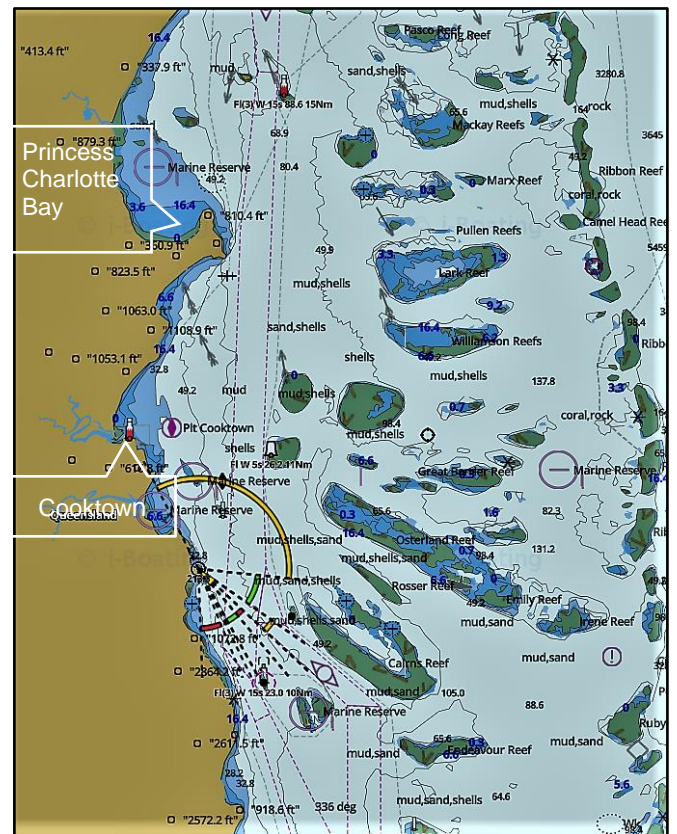
I must tell the truth as we had washed the awning and had hauled it up on the cargo boom and tied it off so it wouldn't get knocked about in the wind - whilst it dried. We did notice a bit of a lean on the ship after. We usually could only achieve 8-9 knots but with the wind and East Australian current we managed to achieve 13 knots.

We were heading down to HMAS Waterhen to pay off and it was a sad day to steam into Sydney Harbour and realize that this was the end of this mighty little survey ship. It had recently carried out a resurvey of Princess Charlotte Bay in latter part of 1972 thence carried out the last hydrographic survey using horizontal sextant angles in Bathurst Bay in early 1973 - where Cyclone Mahina had destroyed a pearling fleet in 1899 and over 300 lives were lost. During these surveys we utilized the bench mark established by HMS Dart in 1899 which also had a shallow fresh water well at its base.

During this deployment the CO was LCDR Ray Doolan RAN and LEUT James Bond was XO. The Radio Shack on Paluma was mostly valve equipment and the mode of operation was Morse, CW. Of note also was that the 2 propellers on HMAS Paluma turned the same way and coupled with a single rudder made ship handling interesting.

I was an ABSR at that time and finished my RAN time as a CPOSR on a sailing ketch in Vanuatu as part of the DCP programme.

Regards
Mike "Banjo" Patterson



Barrier Reef Chart in Vicinity of Cooktown

HMAS Paluma

HMAS Paluma was a 340-ton survey vessel of the Royal Australian Navy between 1946 and 1973. She was designed and ordered as a 120ft Motor Lighter for the Royal Australian Navy during World War II. Built as Motor Stores Lighter (MSL 252) at State Dockyard, Newcastle, she was not completed before the end of the war.

Refitted in 1958 for survey work at Garden Island Dockyard, MSL 252 painted white of the hydrographic service, was renamed HMAS *Paluma*. She undertook survey work in the St Vincent Gulf of South Australia, and Papua New Guinea in 1961, rotated in survey of Papua New Guinea until 1965. She then was based at Cooktown, Queensland. While undertaking survey work of the Cooks Passage, she discovered a new barrier reef opening.



HMAS Paluma (III)

After further refits in Sydney, *Paluma* surveyed the route from Princess Charlotte Bay to the Torres Strait, the first survey of the route since 1890. She returned to Sydney and was decommissioned on 30 March 1973.

Reference: Gillett, Ross (1988). *Australian & New Zealand Warships Since 1946*. Brookvale, New South Wales: Child & Associates. ISBN 0867772190.

Society Matters

Society Library

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

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

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Naval Historical Review

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

Tours of Garden Island, Sydney

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

Phone: (02) 9359 2243) Thursdays only

E-Mail: tours@navyhistory.org.au

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

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