

VICTORIA

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President's Report

On 26 November our Victorian members of the NHS celebrated a 'Join us for our Great Year-End Get-Together'.

The celebrations were highlighted with a 'UNIT CITATION FOR GALLANTRY BEING AWARDED TO THE RAN HELICOPTER FLIGHT VIETNAM'.

In August this year, Members of the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam (RANHFV) were presented with a Unit Citation for Gallantry at a ceremony held at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. Individual RANHFV members had previously received high level honours, however, now the whole unit has received recognition for their heroism and devotion to duty.

Our Speaker was CMDR Max Speedy DSC RANR, who was posted as 2I/C of RANHFV in 1968. The Flight served with the US Army's 135th Assault Helicopter Company. Max Speedy personally flew 1250 hours on combat assault missions with American and South Vietnamese troops. Max shared with us the RANHFV story; a story of great gallantry previously not well known, or understood by the Australian people, but now with the 'Citation', is recognised at last!



Rex Williams

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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At our Annual General Meeting, held on 20 September 2018, the following persons were elected to office:

PRESIDENT: George Carter. 89330 1331; gmcarter@bigpond.com

VICE PRESIDENT: Dr. Robert Pearce 0412857595; drpearce@outlook.com.au

SECRETARY: Roy Stall 0419 042 068; rstall@hotmail.com; 139A Rochdale Rd. Mount Claremont W.A.6010

TREASURER: Robert Potts. rwpipn@gmail.com; 89366 1075 0418 498 314; 11 Martha St. Beaconsfield W.A. 6162

COMMITTEE:

- John Selsmark: Johnselsmark36@gmail.com

- Rex Edmondson: rex1@westnet.com.au

Membership Fees

The Committee's recommendation to the 2018 Annual General Meeting that membership rates for 2019 - 2020 remain unchanged was endorsed by the AGM.

That is; \$30 for members receiving a digital version of the *Naval Historical Review* and \$45 for a printed version.

Attendees also approved a resolution to recover fees levied by financial institutions for electronic payments (credit card and PayPal) currently costing the Society \$600 per annum. Members using this form of payment will be charged \$2.

Facebook

1,668 people currently follow the Society on Facebook.

Our digital media manager, David Stratton, is continually posting interesting stories and images.

Follow this link to access more of our naval history.

<https://www.facebook.com/navalhsa/>



Essay Competition: Autonomous Ships



The Society in association with Chatswood RSL is conducting an essay competition on the subject of autonomous ships and their advantages and disadvantages in a naval context. The *Naval Historical Review* provides full details.

Length: 3,000 words

Prizes: 1st prize of \$1,000 and \$250 to the runner-up.

Winning essay: Published in the NHR and web site

Closing date: 31 January 2019.

HMB Endeavour

The replica bark, HMB Endeavour owned and operated by the Australian National Maritime Museum is making history. It has sailed over 170,000 nautical miles twice around the world, visited 29 countries and many Pacific islands, and opened as a museum in 116 ports.



The ANMM is currently planning a number of HMB Endeavour voyages in 2019 to Tasmania, New Caledonia and New Zealand.

These voyages are great for individuals who are looking for a new adventure in the new year. To find out more:

www.anmm.gov.au/sailendeavour or

HMBEndeavour@anmm.gov.au, or

phone 02 82418323



THE BUZZ

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NEWSLETTER OF THE NAVAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA

FROM THE PRESIDENT - December 2018

On 13 November the Society's 48th Annual General Meeting was conducted at the Chatswood RSL Club where it was a privilege to deliver my third annual report to members on achievements during financial year 2017-18. In short, it was a good year for the Society with a significant number of achievements and several challenges confronted and overcome. Please take time to read the annual report and financial statements on the website members page. I am also pleased to report that all office bearers and Committee members stood and were re-elected.

It is important to remember that our achievements are entirely due to the goodwill of volunteers and generous donations from members and others. Success has been possible through the dedicated efforts of a small force of approximately fifty volunteers and committee members throughout the country. Their enthusiasm and commitment to a range of tasks from research and writing to administrative matters and guiding tours is applauded. Without them, services to the community and support to the Royal Australian Navy would not happen.

Highlights during the period since June 2017 have included;

- * approval of a revised edition of the Societies Constitution at the 2017 AGM,
- * continued financial health of the Society,
- * launch of the website on 22 February by the Chief of Navy,
- * implementation of an online membership renewal system,
- * a revised format for the Naval Historical Review,
- * strong bookings for guided history tours of Garden Island,
- * ongoing recruitment of volunteers,
- * continuous growth in the number our Facebook followers,
- * increased circulation of Call the Hands and

* the retirement of Vice Admiral Tim Barrett as Patron and Chief of Navy.

Vice Admiral Barrett's support as Patron was greatly appreciated.

Commencement of the Garden Island infrastructure upgrade works and cessation of weekday ferry services has disrupted access for visiting tour groups but Defence is expected to assist with road transport as an alternative.

We remain dependent on Navy for the provision of office space and utilities. In return the Society welcomes every opportunity to be of service to Navy.

The Societies financial management philosophy continues to be conservative with the objective being to remain financially neutral over the year. Commitments are not made without an identified source of funds to achieve the objective. We remain in a strong financial situation. Generous donations from members and others assist greatly but we cannot depend on them. Through the sale of products and services and membership fees the Society must generate revenue in the order of \$1,000 per month to cover all costs including; leases, IT contracts and administrative costs.

Revenue from tours is fundamental to our financial health. Elsewhere in this edition you will read that the Chatswood RSL Club has generously sponsored our essay competition with \$1,250 in prize money. Please pass on the flyer to someone who may be interested in entering. Details are also inside the back cover of the *Naval Historical Review*.

David Michael
President

FOR THE DIARY

NSW Presentations 2019

Subject: Tobruk and Beyond

Speaker: A talk by Peter Poland

Details: Tuesday, 19 February 2019, 1730 for 1800

Where: Chatswood RSL, 446 Victoria Ave, Chatswood, NSW, 2067

Details: This presentation will convey some of the dramas of a significant period of war in the Mediterranean including the experiences of Captain Albert Poland from April 1941 until January 1943. This includes the 8-month Siege of Tobruk, during which CAPT Poland served as Senior Naval Officer Inshore Squadron responsible for all the ships which supplied the besieged garrison with all their food, ammunition, fuel etc. The talk will also cover the period following the siege during which he assisted the Army opening up ports as they advanced.

Visit the Society WebPage for full details of all presentations and events

VIC Presentations 2019 - Fourth Monday of the month

A schedule of speakers is currently being confirmed. Details will be advised by the Secretary.

Date: 24 January 2019

Where: Waverley RSL, 161 Coleman Parade, Glen Waverley (Melways 71C3)

WA Presentations 2019 - Third Thursday of the month

A schedule of speakers is currently being confirmed. Details will be advised by the Secretary.

Date: 17 January 2019

Where: Seminar Room, 57 Lisle Street, Mt Claremont

ACT Presentations 2019 - First Monday of the month

At Legacy House from 1730.

75th anniversary for Krait

On 11 October the Australian Defence Force commemorated the 75th anniversary of Operation JAYWICK, with a wreath laying ceremony on board the MV Krait at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Darling harbour, Sydney.

Wreaths were laid on board Krait by the Commander of Special Operations, Major General Adam Findlay; the Chief of Staff of Navy Fleet Command, Commodore Luke Charles-Jones; Director of the Australian War Memorial, Dr Brendan Nelson; Australian National Maritime Museum Director, Kevin Sumption; and the President of the New South Wales Branch of the Australian Commando Association, Barry Grant.

Following the fall of Singapore in 1942, the joint Australian Navy and Army 'Z Special Unit' (commonly known as Z Force), mounted a daring raid on Japanese ships in Singapore Harbour in September 1943.

"Operation JAYWICK was an audacious raid that took the Japanese by surprise," CDRE Charles-Jones said. "She was used to transport the Z Force unit from Darwin to a location offshore from Singapore, from which Z Force members staged the operation to place mines on seven Japanese ships."

"Operation JAYWICK was an important milestone in the development of Australian special operations, and it is an honour to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the operation on board Krait, which has been painstakingly restored to her wartime configuration by the Australian National Maritime Museum," said CDRE Charles-Jones.

The raid by Z Force, a unit comprised of 14 Navy and Army members, resulted in seven Japanese ships being sunk or significantly damaged.



New 'Top-End' memorial

It was a busy scene down at Fleet Base East last September with the decommissioned guided missile frigate, ex HMAS Darwin, having many pieces of equipment removed from the 34-year old ship. It is expected that the frigate will be sunk as a fish breeding reef sometime in 2019.

Meanwhile, the ship's anchor has been taken ashore before being transported to the 'top-end' for preservation in the city of Darwin. Once in place the anchor will sit on a two metre square reinforced concrete plinth. At the time of writing its unsure where the anchor will be located.

The project has been supported by the RAN and the Heritage Branch of the Northern Territory Parks, Wildlife and Heritage Division of the Department of Tourism and Culture.

Darwin joined the RAN on 21 July 1984 and remained in service until 9 December 2017.



Old ships in the news

The Russian navy's submarine rescue vessel Kommuna that has been in service for over 100 years has sailed for the Black Sea after repairs and upgrade with modern equipment on board, Fleet spokesman Alexei Rulev said recently. A catamaran by design, the ship is the Russian Navy's sole operating vessel inherited from the Imperial Fleet, and the oldest operational ship in the world. She was laid down in November 1912, and began her long career in the Baltic Fleet in July 1915.

Originally named Volkhov the ship was renamed Kommuna in 1922.

The wreck of the Confederate blockade runner Ivanhoe was uncovered in the surf along Fort Morgan, North Carolina. Ivanhoe, an iron hulled paddlewheel steamer was built in Scotland in 1864.

The ship was sunk on its maiden voyage just seven weeks later as it attempted to steam into Mobile Bay, past the Union naval blockade set up between Fort Morgan and Fort Gaines.

At the time, the Confederates still controlled both forts. Union ships patrolled the mouth of the bay just outside of the reach of the cannons in the forts.

Ivanhoe came under heavy fire from Union ships and was forced to run aground on Fort Morgan before sinking. The crew survived the incident, and most of the cargo was removed by Confederate forces stationed in Fort Morgan.



Decision on fate of ex-HMAS Otama

The former Oberon class submarine HMAS Otama, which has been anchored in Western Port for 14 years has finally been earmarked for preservation ashore. The mid October announcement will see the 40-year old boat preserved ashore as a museum vessel at Hastings in Victoria. Otama was paid off on 15 December 2000 and in 2001 was sold to the Western Port Oberon Association, a local community group intending to preserve her as a museum vessel and build the Victorian Maritime Centre in Hastings. Otama arrived in Western Port Bay in 2002, where she was moored while waiting for the approval and development of the museum. Now, 16 years later, some positive news.



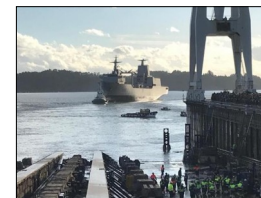
Ex HMAS Otama in 2002

RAN history being recorded

On 25 November 2018 Chief of Navy, VADM Michael Noonan, AO, RAN, positioned an Australia coin under the oak keel block of the new replenishment ship HMAS Stalwart which will soon begin construction. This tradition is thought to bring good luck to the ship during construction and her future naval service.



Earlier on 23 November, CN attended the launch of the sister replenishment ship, NUSHIP Supply at Navantia Official Shipyards in Ferrol, Spain. Like the previous HMAS Supply, the new ship will carry the hull number OR 195.





On 14 November the first of the new Arafura class offshore patrol vessels started construction in Osborne, South Australia. The first RAN ship to be named for the Arafura Sea, the name will recognise the prominence of Navy's enduring operations in the nation's northern approaches.

Remembering the early days



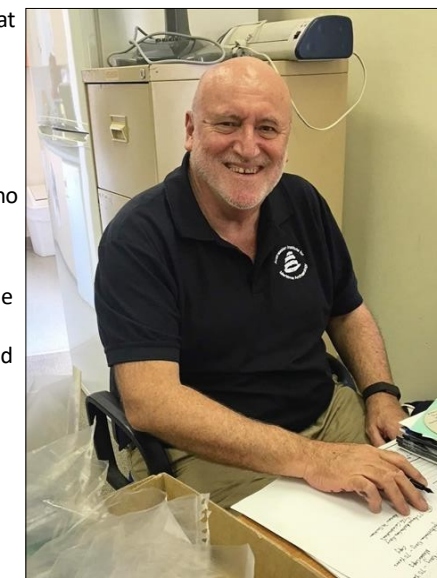
Wessex helicopters at NAS, 1983. Cameron Martin.



Garden Island 1950s.

First of new volunteers already hard at work

Our call for new volunteers at Garden Island in Sydney is producing results. Already three persons have put up their arms to offer their unique talents. This is the story of the Colin Randall who is now a regular in the Old Boatshed each Thursday.



Although never serving in the RAN, Colin has a long association with shipping and naval matters and Garden Island in particular. In 1908 his grandfather Frederick Randall served on HMS Powerful when she was the flagship of the Australian Station based at Garden Island. Then during 1945/1946 his father, Fred Randall, served on the aircraft carrier HMS Implacable as part of the British Pacific Fleet and called into Sydney on several occasions including utilisation of the Captain Cook Graving Dock.

Later, between 1948-1951 his father was on loan to the RAN as part of the establishment of the Fleet Air Arm / HMAS Albatross, with the family residing at Huskisson

Around 1960 Fred joined the Department of Navy at Garden Island, initially as Maintenance Engineer and was Superintendent of Refits at the point of his retirement. During this time, 1961 to 1969, the family lived at Residence 'C' on Garden Island while Colin attended high school and then University to become a mining engineer. During the 1980s Colin was Director of Port Waratah Coal Services in the Port of Newcastle, and in the 1990s, for a year or so, was the Public Officer for the Naval Historical Society.

Colin is a life member of the Australasian Institute of Maritime Archaeology and a Foundation Member of Australian National Maritime Museum. After retiring from the Australian coal industry in 2016 and other duties on the island of Makatea in French Polynesia, Colin joined the NHSA in September. **Welcome A'board.**

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SOCIETY OFFICIALS:

President: Capt David Michael RANR
Vice President: John Jeremy AM
Treasurer: Nick Horspool
Secretary: David Blazey
Committee:
Walter Burroughs, Peter Brigden,
Kingsley Perry, Ian Phillips, Geoff Barnes

VOLUNTEER STAFF:

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Research: John Smith
Tours: Paul Nolan and Frank Doughty
Librarian: Liz Colthorpe
Review Editor: Walter Burroughs
Buzz Editor: Ross Gillett