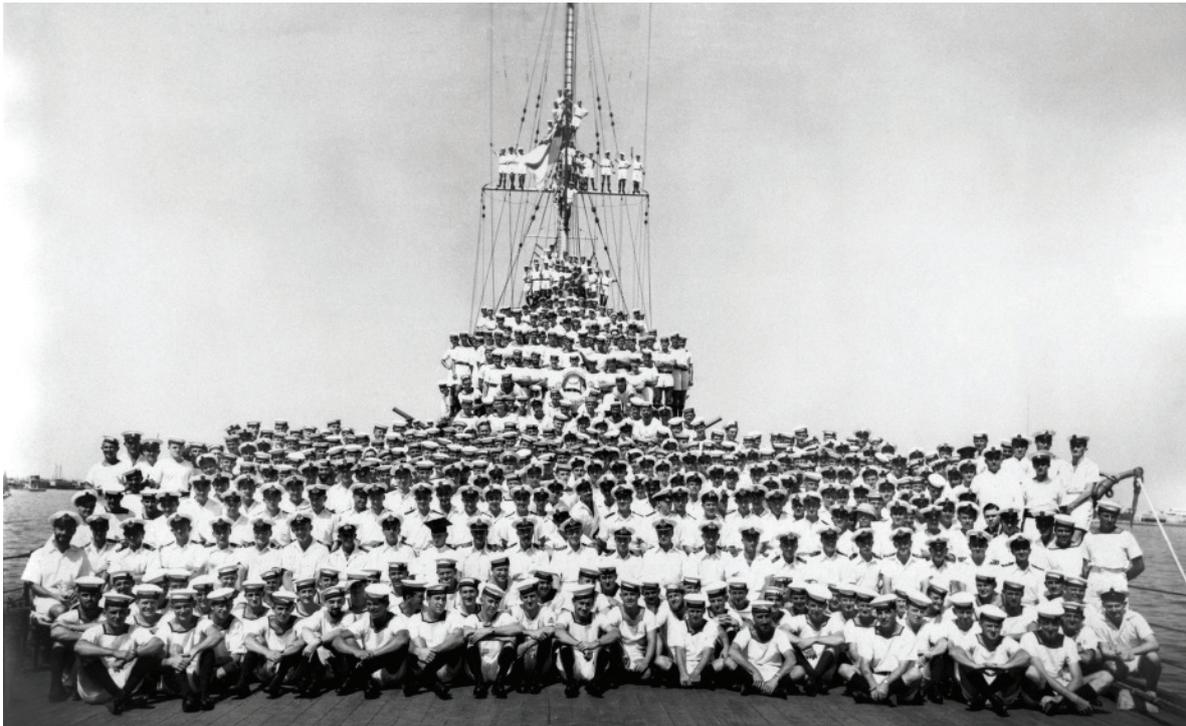




CASTLE HILL RSL SUB BRANCH



VOLUME 33 SEPTEMBER 2017



HMAS Sydney, commissioned on 24 September 1935 and sunk on 19 November 1941 with the loss of all 645 crew



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01915.020

HMAS Perth, commissioned on 29 June 1939 and sunk 1 March 1942, with 353 killed and 328 survivors

"Lest We Forget"

CONTENTS

<p>Page 2 sub-Branch contact details</p> <p>Pages 3/4 President's Report</p> <p>Page 5 Secretary's Report</p> <p>Page 6 Gym activities</p> <p>Pages 6/7 Vale – Stan Healey</p> <p>Page 8 Day Club</p> <p>Page 8 Social Secretary</p> <p>Page 9 Christmas in July</p> <p>Pages 10/11 Annual Commemorative Luncheon</p> <p>Pages 12-14 Commemorative Luncheon Address</p>	<p>Page 15 Book Review – “One Man's Navy”</p> <p>Pages 16-18 HMAS <i>Perth</i></p> <p>Page 18 HMAS <i>Perth</i> Memorial</p> <p>Pages 19/20 Ken Bennett RAN</p> <p>Pages 20/21 Dominion Yachtsmen Scheme</p> <p>Pages 21-23 Battle of the Coral Sea</p> <p>Pages 24/25 Pensions</p> <p>Page 26 Welfare</p> <p>Page 27 Volunteers – Legacy</p> <p>Page 28 From The Editor</p>
---	--

SUB-BRANCH CONTACTS

<p>President Phillip Bridie M: 0439 625 362 E: president@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>	<p>Editor – The Veteran Andrew Pursey M: 0407 922 693 E: editor@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>
<p>Vice President – Commemoration Mike Yeo W: 1300 377 736 E: VPcomm@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>	<p>Social Secretary Barry Pareezer M: 0409 916 380 E: social@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>
<p>Vice President – Personnel David Hand M: 0430 011 900 E: Vppers@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>	<p>Welfare Officer Cheryl Hill M: 0412 297 027 E: welfare@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>
<p>Treasurer Des Brady H: 9809 3142 M: 0418 663 821 E: treasurer@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>	<p>Welfare Officer (Funerals) Jim Wilson M: 0439 098 939 E: jan.jimwilson@yahoo.com.au</p>
<p>Assistant Treasurer Brian Walters M: 0407 297 390 E: brianwalters@dodo.com.au</p>	<p>Secretary Alain Dunand M: 0477 888 452 E: secretary@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>
<p>Pensions Officer Graeme Banks H: 9686 3119 M: 0427 201 541 E: pensions@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>	<p>Assistant Secretary Chas Naylor M: 0414 927 171 E: Asstsecretary@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>
<p>Gym Coordinator Phill Evenden H: 8824 4030 M: 0413 715 622 E: gymgroup@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>	<p>Sub-Branch Postal Address & Phone Postal: PO Box 2, Castle Hill, NSW 1765 Sub-Branch Office phone: 8858 4809</p>
<p>Registrar Peter Westwood H: 9872 2479 M: 0408 842 823 E: membership@chrslsubbranch.org.au</p>	

Photographs in this issue: photos courtesy of Andrew Pursey, Australian War Memorial archives, Cheryl Hill, Chris Bennett, Malcolm Botfield, and Royal Australian Navy.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Additionally, Warren "Wazza" Grant

A relatively quiet period since the last *Veteran*, although as you will see from the various reports the sub-Branch Teams continue to be busy with what we do.

Of note, we have had a change at the head of the Welfare Team with Cheryl Hill replacing our omnipresent, long serving, and hardworking Welfare Officer, Mike Lee.

Mike has stepped down after some 18 years of consummate and passionate service in this crucial sub-Branch role. The Welfare Team under his guidance has provided countless hours of much needed help to thousands of service personnel in their most vulnerable times. His commitment and dedication is obvious to all.

On behalf of you all, I would like to thank Mike for his tireless efforts over the years. I am sure Mike will continue to contribute to the sub-Branch and our community for years to come.

I am confident that Cheryl will fill Mike's big shoes well and the Executive looks forward to working with her to progress our Welfare goals.



has taken the opportunity of the change at the top to step down as the Deputy Welfare Officer and Troy Park has decided to step down as the Media Officer. I thank both for their service and important contribution in their respective roles; Wazza in supporting Mike and the Welfare Team in their outstanding work, and Troy for his fine work in setting up and running our website and social media.

David Hand would be very pleased to speak to anyone willing to pick up the Media role.

An important initiative at the sub-Branch has been the development of the Support of Deployed sub-Branch Members Policy. As we are successful in recruiting more serving members the likelihood of having sub-Branch members serve on operations increases.

This year we will have at least three members deploy, and as our prime function is the welfare and support of service personnel, this policy is timely. It deals with the identification of deploying personnel, the information needed to support them, support whilst on operation to the member and his or her family, and support post deployment.

The Welfare Team has primacy in providing these services and we have already commenced application of this policy in support of two of our members. I would like to share with you a letter sent to us by Wing Commander Ben Christie who is currently deployed to the Middle East:

“22nd August 2017

Dear Cheryl and all the Sub-Branch Members,

I would like to express my sincere thanks for the care package I received from the Sub-Branch last week. I have only been deployed for about two months now, but already missing home. So the package was gratefully received and I am already well on the way to consuming the contents!

We are very well supported here at Australia’s main operating base in the Middle East region. I suspect most of the members’ experience of deployments would be far more austere than mine now; I have great food, fast internet, and phone lines home at my fingertips. I feel fortunate as the Commander of the Air Mobility Task Group to have a great team of people working for me, making my job relatively easy. We are flying throughout the Middle East, mainly in Iraq and Afghanistan, almost every day in support of Australia’s operations against Daesh (ISIS) and the Taliban. Most days are quite repetitive and boring, with the occasional shot of adrenaline to keep you on your toes!

One opportunity I have here is to get fit again. With no children to look after, drive around or cook for, and no cooking to do myself, I’ve been able to hit the gym almost every day. I’ve managed to lose 6 kgs so far and working hard. By far the more difficult task rests with Annemarie; she has to keep the house running, kids fed and work a few jobs. But, she thrives on staying busy and I know is enjoying the opportunities arising from her involvement with the RSL Club.

Your offer to provide ‘goodies’ is very kind. Any care package is wonderful to receive; magazines are particularly popular especially those activities not available to us on deployment – golf, sailing, camping, or fishing. As a suggestion, I would like to propose that the members consider sending over an Australian or a RSL flag. I can then fly that flag throughout the Middle East, to the various places where Australian service men and women are currently serving, as a memento or dedication to those who follow in the footsteps of the members. I would be happy to present that flag to the Sub-Branch when I return and perhaps provide a brief on my experience during this deployment.

Very respectfully,

Ben Christie”

We are arranging for a flag to be sent and also following up on Ben’s suggestions. The Welfare Team whilst continuing with regular care packages (and your contributions are more than welcome), is also preparing a raft of Christmas hampers to be sent to those who are deployed over Christmas and for some of their mates.

I would finally like to thank all the members of the sub-Branch who continue to contribute to our objectives overtly and behind the scenes.

We have a vibrant sub-Branch which continues to do excellent work for our service community and that is only possible because a large portion of our members volunteer their time and effort. Long may it be so.

All the best,

“Lest We Forget”

Brigadier Phillip K.H. Bridie, AM

SECRETARY'S REPORT



Dear Members, you will be pleased to read a shorter update this edition compared to my blow-by-blow coverage of the State Congress previously.

The Executive and Committee have initiated a number of initiatives to support our members and to recruit younger veterans into the sub-Branch. Cheryl Hill, Jan-Maree Ball, and members from the Welfare and Pensions Team have worked to develop a policy to support sub-Branch members deployed on operations. The intent is to provide support to the members and their families during what can be a difficult time.

Even where deployments are for a short period of time, the lead-up work for the service member and the separation from family. Whilst the ADF makes every effort to support our deployed soldiers it is often the personal touches from home that make a big difference. That is where the care packages can make a big difference. Defence provides free postage for care packages to and from deployed members in a very timely fashion. The packages are limited in size and weight (2kg) but it is not so much the content compared to the thought that goes into it. We are currently providing this support to two of our members with another to deploy shortly.

Not forgetting the families that are back home and

the support that we can offer during the absence of the service member. This may take the form of a simple phone call to see how things are going, invitations to sub-Branch social events and putting together a small hamper from time to time.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Cheryl Hill to find out how.

Another initiative we are putting in place is a modified Gym Membership program that may cater more to the needs of younger Veterans and encourage their membership with the sub-Branch.

Similar to the excellent program we currently offer for our members, it will provide better flexibility cater to a more independent use of the Gym facilities.

If you would like to know more, please contact Phill Evenden.

Recently we have had a number of members in key positions move on within the sub-Branch and be recognising their contribution at a suitable time.

Of note has been David Cronan moving to Queensland, Mike Lee and Warren Grant resigning from Welfare and Troy Park moving on from our Web Management and Media role.

As you have read in the President's Report, Cheryl Hill will be assuming the lead for our Welfare Team.

Coming up next month is a trip to the Australian War Memorial Annex in Canberra on 4 October.

I look forward to this event and hope to see you there.

"Ubique"

Alain Dunand
Secretary

GYM ACTIVITIES

OPEN HOUSE DAY – GYM ACTIVITY

In a recent Media Release from the Local Federal Minister, he announced that this year's Veteran's Health Week was intending to promote physical activity in veterans. Veteran's Health Week will run from Saturday 21 October to Sunday, 29 October 2017.

With this in mind, and with the support of your Executive and Committee, we have obtained the support of the General Manager of the C2K Gym, to hold an Open Day with an invitation to ALL sub-Branch members to participate in a trial gym session with the current gym group.

The Open Day will be held on Monday, 23 October at 1.30 pm and run for one hour. You are not compelled to participate for that time. Just see how you go; and you don't have to be fit to start with. As part of the introduction to physical activity, our professional gym instructress, Alma Weber, will discuss with interested participants things like

diet, exercise techniques, as well as rehabilitation routines for people wishing to take up exercise after a period of extended absence.

The day will not be a "pumping iron" type workout. It will be a series of exercises in a group format and will be run at a speed which you can set. All you will need to bring along is a pair of shorts, a T-shirt, a towel, and a water bottle (or similar).

There is no cost to you and no obligation – it is merely a chance to have some fun and exercise at the same time. For those with an existing medical condition which might restrict them participating, we will need a medical clearance from your LMO.

Come along for one hour and see what we do.

If you are interested, you will need to ring me or send an email with details and I will go over the programme with you.

Phill Evenden
0413 715 622

VALE STAN HEALEY



If a copy of this Form is required, Form S. 1243 is to be used.

Form S. 459 (Revised—August, 1939).

Cut along here

AFC

CERTIFICATE of the Service of

SURNAME (In Block Letters)	CHRISTIAN NAME OR NAMES
HEALEY	STANLEY

in the Royal Navy.

NOTE.—The corner of this certificate is to be cut off where indicated if the man is discharged with a "Bad" character or with disgrace, or if specially directed by the Admiralty. If the corner is cut off, the fact is to be noted in the Ledger.

Port Division PORTSMOUTH	Man's Signature on discharge to Pension
Official No. K2597175	SEA 29055 Mandate
Date of Birth 20 November 1940	Nearest known Relative or Friend. (To be noted in pencil).
Where born Town or Village County	Relationship Name Address
Trade or occupation on entry Auto Mechanic	Address: 224 Langworthy Rd. SAUROD, LANCASTERSHIRE
Religious Denomination Church of England	

All Engagements, including Non-C.S., to be noted in these Columns.			Swimming Qualifications.		
Date of actually volunteering	Commencement of time	Period volunteered for	Date	Qualification	Signature
1-27/Jan/43	20 September 43	Active - steady	1.	ORIGINALS	
2.		to period of the present emergency	2.	STARTED 27/6/43	
3.			3.		
4.			4.		
5.			5.		
6.			6.		

Medals, Clasps, &c., L.S. and G.C. Gratuity. (see also Page 4).			
Date received or forfeited	Nature of Decoration	Date received or forfeited	Nature of Decoration
VICTORY CR	CLOTHING ISSUED 15 Dec 45		
		NICA	170115
		MANCHESTER	435,300

Description of Wound	Signature	Date	Place	Cause of Wound	Marks, Wounds, and Scars	Date	Signature
On Entry as Boy							
On Commission as Midshipman							
On Commission as Sub-Lieutenant							
On Commission as Lieutenant							
On Commission as Captain							
On Commission as Commander							
On Commission as Rear-Admiral							
On Commission as Vice-Admiral							
On Commission as Admiral							
Further description if necessary							

2

Name HEALEY, Stanley James

Name of Ship. (Tenders to be inserted in brackets)	Substantive Rating	Non-Substantive Rating	From	To	Cause of Discharge and other notations authorized by Article 606, Clause 9, K.R. and A.L.
"Strike"	Stoker 2nd		14 July 43	22 Sep 43	
"History"			28 Sep 43	7 Dec 43	
"The Great Britain"			8 Dec 43		
"Victoria"			8 Dec 43	14 Dec 43	
"Bagley (Fishing)"			15 Dec 43	29 Feb 44	
"Roubaix (---)"			1 March 44	17 May 44	
"LANKA (Lantry)"	Stoker 1		16 May 44	7 Jan 45	
"Mangia"			8 Jan 45	18 June 45	
"Lanka (Test)"			19 June 45	23 Aug 45	
"Mangia"			24 Aug 45	29 Aug 45	
"Lanka"			29 Aug 45	27 Sept 45	
"Victoria"			29 Sept 45	13 Dec 45	Released Home

D.V.A. FOI
02 JUN 2016

Date	Wounds received in Action and Hurt Certificate, also any meritorious Service, Special recommendations, Prize or other Grants temporary advancements to local (rating) ratings, with inclusive dates.	Captain's Signature
29 Nov 45	W. E. AND P. W. C. AUTHORISED	



Stan was a special individual.

He always had a smile on his face and loved the company of his mates.

At 91 years of age he defied Father Time by remaining an active member of the Gym Group since its inception in 2004.

He will be sadly missed by all members of the sub-Branch who were privileged to know him.

Our sincere condolences go out to his wife Joyce and his much-loved children and grandchildren.

Phill Evenden
Gym Coordinator

DAY CLUB



It has been a busy few months at Day Club with many varied activities. We have had some great entertainment, especially when the Rookwood Rockers performed some energetic and lively songs and tap dances. Then on another day one of our volunteers performed a Tongan/Hawaiian dance in the costume of the Islands.

Our guest speaker in March was Bill Strutton who gave a talk on the work of Legacy and in April we had a presentation on Reminiscing – bringing back lots of memories of days past. Our ANZAC service was held later in April, ably led by Chas Naylor.

We held two raffles this year and raised \$300 for our club, and recently we had lunch out at the Tavern in Castle Hill.

During each Monday we have gentle exercises, quizzes, song time, card games and various board games.

We always welcome new members along to our club on Mondays. We also provide transport.

Further information about the Club can be obtained from Bill Driver (Assistant Coordinator) on 0413 455 526 or myself on 0420 440 095.

Jenny Kington
Day Club Coordinator

SOCIAL SECRETARY



Our June commemorative lunch was very successful, with an excellent presentation from Captain Jonathan Earley CSC, Commander of HMAS *Adelaide*. See photo report in this issue.

At the close of the lunch we took the opportunity to take some group photos. We managed one with all the Navy veterans and current Navy personnel. Also, this one shows some of the members and partners who will be participating in our tour to Europe next year.

Our Christmas in July lunch took place on Tuesday 18 July at the Burning Log Restaurant at the Windsor Conference Centre, where we enjoyed a great day out. See separate report from Malcolm Botfield.



On 4 October, sub-Branch members are going on a very special one-day bus trip to visit the AWM warehouses where we'll have the opportunity to view a lot of historical equipment that is not open to the general public. In the late afternoon, we will visit the AWM where we'll attend the Last Post ceremony before heading home.

Our last 'not to be missed' event is our Christmas Lunch which will be held at our Club on Sunday 26 November. Cost; just \$20 per person for an excellent three-course meal, drinks, and entertainment.

I encourage all members to attend our varied social events, which are subsidised by your sub-Branch.

Regards – Barry Parezzer
Social Secretary

CHRISTMAS IN JULY 2017 – Malcolm Botfield

Xmas in July at the Burning Log – Windsor

Our group kicked off at 0945 for the coach trip to the venue at the Windsor Function Centre.

We were welcomed by the host Tom McDonald, our MC for the day.



After we were all seated with coffee and drinks the entertainment from the '60s started. This was memorable movie clips of artists of old performing what they do best, entertain. We went down memory lane with Elvis, Liberace, Debbie Reynolds, Dean Martin, John Wayne, Bob Hope, and Jimmy Durante, to name a few.



To these were added stories from our host of his experiences with some of the artists and in the entertainment industry, as Tom is a promoter.

Lunch served was a two meat roast followed with pavlova, drinks from the bar and coffee.

During lunch, more requested movie clips of Cliff Richards, Johnny Devlin, Boogie Woogie, Fred Astaire, and Ginger Rodgers. Post lunch the host's son Allan, provided the live entertainment singing songs of the '60s.

There was plenty of participation from the group with Lance and Iris doing the Boogie Woogie after Iris's request was screened. Lance and Iris received special attention once it was learned that they were in their 90's and are still married after 70 years.



To add to the fun for the day, our host renamed some of us, with Lance and Iris being "Jock Strap" and "Robin Banks". Barry being the leader became "Master Bates", and of course Bill Dokter was dubbed "Short Ass". Marie was known as "Amanda Screw" and Arthur had to deal with the tag of "Pat MacGroin".

On entering the venue and seeing the sign



Mal declared Lindsay the duty drunk and would you believe his nominated name was "Chucked Doubt". Mal however was the first to be named, with a handle of "Rippie Zarsoff" an aristocratic Russian name.

All those renamed were called to the floor and performed the twist to Cubby Checkers song. The highest applauded were Lance and Iris, who were declared the winners.

Our journey back to Castle Hill RSL was through all the new developments around Riverstone and Schofields. Quite an eye opener to what is taking place these days.

Thanks to Barry for a great day.

Malcolm Botfield

2017 COMMEMORATIVE LUNCH

Held in the Phoenix Room at Castle Hill RSL Club on 25 June. Guest speaker was Captain Jonathan Earley CSC, Commander of HMAS Adelaide.



2017 COMMEMORATIVE LUNCH



2017 COMMEMORATIVE LUNCHEON ADDRESS – Captain Jonathan Earley CSC

Good Afternoon Mr President Brigadier Bridie, Minister Elliott, Directors of the sub-Branch, veterans and members of the Castle Hill RSL, ladies and gentlemen, I am Captain Jonathan Earley, the Commanding Officer of the LHD, HMAS Adelaide. It is an honour to be invited to attend your mid-year Commemorative Luncheon and to share a few words with you here today.

As you know, I have been asked to talk to you over the next 15 minutes or so about one of our nation's most important naval battles, the Battle of the Coral Sea. I've also been asked to talk about one of our nation's most important strategic assets, the Landing Helicopter Dock or LHD in which I understand some you have an interest. But first, let me focus on a naval battle that some have argued was the Battle that Saved Australia.

It was just over 75 years ago that the Battle of the Coral Sea took place over several days in a bit of water approximately 900nm NE of Townsville.



This year a special commemorative service was held onboard HMAS *Choules* in the area in which the Governor-General, the Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, US, and Japanese representatives, as well as our Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Navy, attended to mark the occasion. Some you may have noted in the news a similar event was also held in the US on board the former WW2 aircraft carrier, USS *Intrepid*, berthed in New York, where the US President Donald Trump and our PM attended along with the few remaining veterans who were onboard the ships during the battle itself. These were indeed auspicious occasions, and justifiably so, not only for the strategic significance of the battle's outcome in the Pacific theatre, but what it meant in strengthening the Australian/US alliance we now enjoy today.

So, what happened, why is this battle was so significant for Australia and what did it we learn from it.

The genesis of the Battle of the Coral Sea began in early 1942, when Japan made a decision to send a large strike and amphibious invasion force south to Port Moresby in PNG and to Tulagi in Solomon Islands. At the time, the Japanese were riding a wave of confidence after the bombing of Pearl Harbour in late 41 and successfully occupying Singapore in early 42. Australia, on the other hand, was the opposite in terms of morale. On top of the shock of the Pearl Harbour attack and fall of Singapore, we had lost HMAS *Sydney* with all her crew, we lost HMAS *Perth* with half the crew lost and Darwin had been repeatedly bombed by an almost unstoppable Imperial Japanese force, bringing the war directly onto our shores.

In an attempt to retain their strategic and offensive initiative, the push of the Japanese invasion force south sought to effectively isolate Australia from the US by cutting supply lines, which would enable Japan to remain unchallenged in the Pacific area. From there, the Japanese campaign plan would shift towards destroying the US Fleet at Midway followed by Pearl Harbour – forcing the US out of the war.

The Japanese invasion force itself was formidable. It consisted of a large fleet of combat ready aircraft carriers (some of the newest in its inventory), cruisers, destroyers and amphibious transport ships broken up into several main Task Groups.

For Australia, it was a desperate time and we desperately needed a breakthrough.

Fortunately for us, that breakthrough came from the intelligence world – in that the Allies had managed to break Japanese naval code. On 25 April 1942, the Combined Operational Intelligence Centre, located in Melbourne, concluded from intercepted Japanese signals that an invasion of Port Moresby was imminent. This was to be the trigger that would set the stage for the Battle of the Coral Sea.

Based on this key piece of intelligence, the Allies subsequently sailed two carrier task groups to the Coral Sea, the *Yorktown* and *Lexington*, as well as a joint US/Australian cruiser force from Sydney that included the heavy cruiser HMAS *Australia* and light cruiser HMAS *Hobart*, under the command of an Australian, Rear Admiral John Crace – the first Australian to do so in WW2.

The actual battle itself took place over a period of about 4 days, from 4 to 8 May 1942 during daylight hours. For much of the time, the opposing forces did not know where the enemy was. The carriers from both sides routinely sent their aircraft up to search, but the limited range of the planes, limited skills of the aircrew in ship identification, poor wx and

massive areas of ocean to search, made it difficult to locate their targets.

After a series of cat and mouse skirmishes between the opposing Fleets, the main engagement took place on 8 May, whereby reconnaissance aircraft found their opposing carriers almost simultaneously. Although opposing fleets were separated by over 150nm, both launched their attack aircraft, pushing pilots and aircraft to their maximum endurance to get the first strike in. It has been noted in some accounts of the battle that opposing aircraft actually passed each other on the way to their respective targets.

Once the attack aircraft reached their targets, carnage ensued. I will read a quote from a crewman onboard HMAS *Australia* at the time, SMN Jack Langrell, whose eye-witness account depicts the events:

“All of a sudden all hell broke loose, so I quite realised then this was definitely the enemy coming in. I turned around to go down the hatch I’d come up, only to find it was securely locked. I was caught on the upper deck, so I just stood behind the turret. One of the Japanese torpedo bombers would have been 100 feet from the ship’s side and level with the upper deck as it passed down the port side. Unbeknown to me they were spraying the ship with machine-gun bullets”.

Hundreds of men died that day. In terms of relative capability lost in the Battle, the Allies suffered greater losses than the numerically superior Japanese with:

- One major CV destroyed, one damaged, one tanker and one destroyer sunk, over 60 aircraft lost and over 500 men killed or wounded, whereas the Japanese lost one small CV, with one severely damaged, 1 DD, 3 small auxiliaries sunk, over 90 aircraft lost and over 900 men killed or wounded

Although the ledger may show the Japanese forces lost less capability at the tactical level, the significance of the Battle was that the Allies won back the strategic initiative. The engagement succeeded in halting the Japanese amphibious invasion force’s advance south to Port Moresby – representing the first time Japanese experienced failure in a major operation. The battle was also significant for a few other reasons worthy of note.

First – it represented the first naval engagement to be conducted with opposing fleets of out sight from one another, emphasising the importance of the aircraft carrier over the former mainstay of naval weaponry, the battleship.

Secondly - it set the foundation of a strong bond between Australia and the United States as key strategic and security allies.

And thirdly - It also set the stage for over 40 US and Australian amphibious operations as part of the Pacific campaign and became the basis for our current joint and combined operational doctrine that we use today.

The arrival of our Landing Helicopter Dock ships, has put a renewed interest in the amphibious domain, as we now have ships of a size and tonnage that almost equal that in the USN Fleet. Shortly we will participate in our largest bi-lateral exercise with the US called *Talisman Sabre*, to be held off Queensland and in and around Shoalwater Bay. Amphibious operations will play a central part of this activity and it will witness the first time an Australian LHD will participate in this exercise, led by my sister ship *Canberra*. Regrettably, *Adelaide* won’t be there, as we will be conducting engineering trials at that time, however, I have no doubt the LHD will clearly demonstrate what a capable and versatile platform it is, in holding its own with the US.

So, what do I mean about capability and versatility? And it’s now I shift to the second part of my talk to you today focussed on the LHD.



Adelaide is one of the largest ships ever built for the Royal Australian Navy. She is an Amphibious Assault Ship and together with HMAS *Canberra* provides the Australian Defence Force with one of the most capable air-land-sea amphibious deployment systems in the world. In his speech at the *Adelaide* commissioning, the Chief of Navy said that *Canberra* and *Adelaide* allow the Australian Defence Force to project both hard and soft power to a degree and with a level of confidence that has never before been enjoyed. And last year we witnessed that with *Canberra* providing primary HADR support to Fiji following the devastation left by TC Winston.

I will now proceed through a broad overview of the platform that will hopefully answer some questions and broaden your understanding of what these amazing ships can do.

Operational Capability - HMAS Adelaide is designed to conduct Ship to Objective Manoeuvre (STOM): This is the ability to seamlessly project the land component ashore direct to the desired target or assembly position without an operational pause.

Surface Ship to Objective Manoeuvre (STOM):

With the facility to “dock down” and flood the stern area with water HMAS Adelaide can carry its own LHD Landing Craft (LLC). She carries four of these craft and these are capable of operating out to a range of 190nm, have a top speed of 23Kts and can carry 110 Soldiers in fighting trim or 1 Main Battle Tank or 2 x Bushmasters and 1 Mercedes G-Wagon.

Aviation Ship to Objective Manoeuvre (STOM):

Capable of carrying a total of up to 18 aircraft within the hanger, the LHD is fitted with 6 landing spots which is reduced to four when operating heavy lift rotary aircraft.

Aviation Capabilities & Limitations

- ▣ **Aviation**
 - 6 x medium (or 4 x heavy) spots
 - Can operate 4 spots for 10hrs in 24hrs
 - 24 hr CASEVAC capability
 - Hangar – up to 18 aircraft
- ▣ **Types**
 - MRH 90 Troop lifters
 - MH60R – SeaHawk 'R'
 - CH47 – Chinook
 - S70A – Blackhawk
 - ARH – Tiger
 - V-22 / CH53 / UH-1




The deck is capable of surge operations for a set duration of time to facilitate the initial off load of any amphibious force, reducing to a more sustainable rate of flying to provide 24/7 support for land forces.

The LHD carries the logistics tail across all classes of supply for 10 Days of land operations. The ship can carry 1.6 million litres of diesel and 1 million litres of aviation fuel and produces 156,000 Ltrs of water a day. Elevators for vehicles, aircraft, personnel and casualties assist with the movement of troops as well as increased width gangways along assault routes. The ship has 1000 bunk spaces for an embarked force and the galley can support 1400 personnel with a meal 4 times a day if required with its own integral bakery and 4 service lines.

Being the Commanding Officer of such an amazing ship, crewed by equally amazing people, doing something important for our Country is an honour and a privilege.

As a former ANZAC frigate CO, I often get asked what has been different between the two Commands and I can probably sum this up in one word – size.



Across all facets of Command everything is probably quadrupled compared to the frigate. What does that mean for me? Well I am a hell of a lot busier. Although I am supported by a considerable staff, 450 of them to be exact, being a capital ship (and the most senior ship) in the Australian Fleet it does carry a workload.

Nonetheless, it is a challenge I relish and I would not wish to be anywhere else.

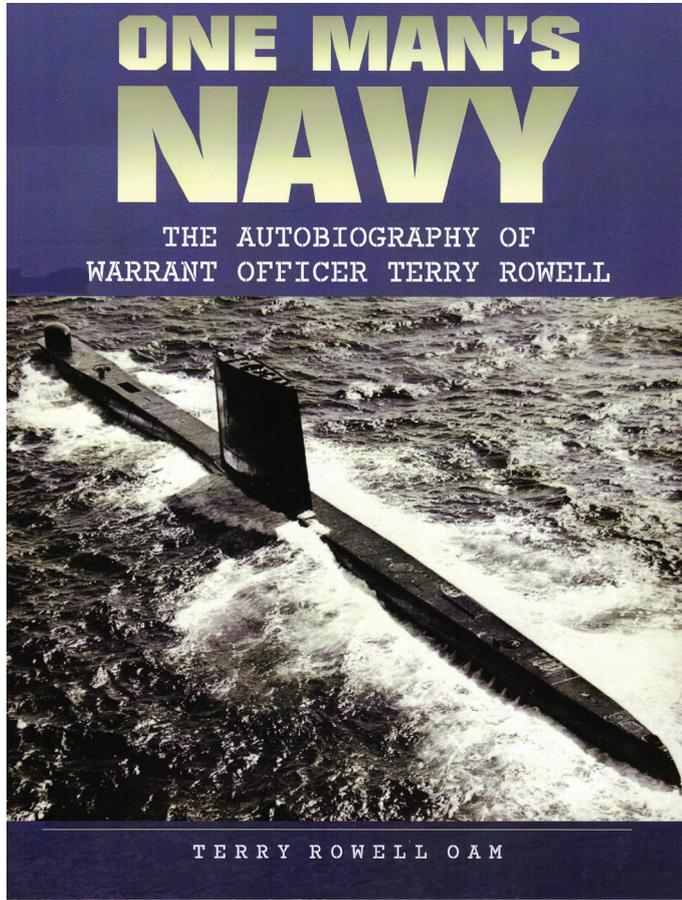
And on that note, I'll conclude by thanking you for inviting me here today. I hope I've managed to broaden your understanding of a naval battle that arguably not only saved Australia, but changed the way we fight at sea and secondly, outlined the versatility of one of Australia's most important strategic assets, the LHD.

Again, thank you for having me.

Captain Jonathan Earley

BOOK REVIEW – Brian Walters

Title: "One Man's Navy"
Author: Terry ROWELL OAM
Published: 2016
Pages: 187



This book tells the story of a remarkable Navy career that spanned 47 years from Junior Recruit to retired Warrant Officer.

A great deal of attention is devoted to the author's first love of submarines but does not downplay how tough a job that was for those brave enough to go below the waves.

Terry Rowell came from a working class background in the Bankstown region of Sydney and was the son of a World War 2 veteran, a background that would be familiar to many in the armed services.

Incredibly, he started in the Navy at just 15 years old and was removed from his home to the training establishment HMAS Leeuwin in Western Australia. As a result of such a young start he had some great experiences by his early and mid-20s.

He eventually became a submariner with the prized twin dolphin insignia on the chest but that was not an easy task at all.

He went on to serve on several of the "O boats" including HMAS *Oxley* and *Otway*, once again, a very tough and demanding place to work.

It would be difficult to list all the various postings that Terry had over a 39-year period in the Permanent Navy but he certainly spent time in many establishments in several countries including both here and the United Kingdom.

The recounting of various stints of leave in places such as the old Singapore has been cleaned-up for his readers!

He even received an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) from Prince Charles in St James' Palace in London.

To top off such a long career, he spent a further 8 years as a permanent Reservist with some of his time spent at the Defence Force Plaza in Sydney.

The book has a very good structure that is easy to follow with a good number of chapters and a sufficient selection of photos to enhance various parts in the story.

The language is adequate, especially considering some of the very technical aspects of the postings.

There is a lot of detail in regard to dates which shows that an enormous amount of research and effort has gone into the compilation and writing of this book.

In conclusion, this was a very surprising book that will appeal to many ex-Service people, and, especially those who wore the twin dolphins - the submariners.

Brian Walters
June 2017

HMAS PERTH

Editor's Note

In the March issue of The Veteran I mentioned that I planned to have coverage of the Navy in the June issue, but I was overtaken by events and so coverage has had to be in the September issue. However, no sooner had the magazine gone out in the mail in March than I received a phone call from Iris Futcher asking if I was interested in looking at her late father's photo album records from some of his time on HMAS Perth.

To say that I was interested would be an understatement, so I drove round to borrow the albums from Iris and Lance Futcher. The albums contained a stack of photos taken by Iris's father, Electrical Artificer 2nd Class Henry Charles Bryce Porter; who sadly went down with the ship in Sunda Strait on 1 March 1942.

I discovered that the family had previously loaned the albums to the Australian War Memorial, who scanned a number and added them to their collection. The AWM's scanning capability is superior to mine, so I've been on to their website to use the photos contained in this article.

What a great gesture by Iris and the family to loan the albums to AWM; so, if you have similar items, you might want to check to see if AWM have an interest in capturing items for their collection.

The photos provided an amazing coverage of HMAS Perth's sea voyages, battle activities, and the land locations visited. Truly a great photographic record – and so good that it has not been lost.

There are three ships that have carried the name *Perth*:

- HMAS *Perth* (D 29), a modified Leander-class light cruiser. Commissioned into the Royal Navy as HMS *Amphion* in 1936, she was sold to the RAN three years later. The ship served until 1 March 1942, when she was sunk during the Battle of Sunda Strait.
- HMAS *Perth* (D 38), the lead ship of the Perth-class guided missile destroyers. Built as a Charles F. Adams-class destroyer derivative for the RAN and commissioned in 1965, the ship served until decommissioning in 1999. She was sunk as a dive wreck off the coast of Albany, Western Australia, in 2001.
- HMAS *Perth* (FFH 157), an Anzac-class frigate commissioned in 2006.

Interestingly, our sub-Branch has connections with all three of these ships. We have Iris's father

on *Perth* (I), our Social Secretary Barry Pareezer on *Perth* (II) during the Vietnam War, and current serving RAN Officer Paul Garai who did a stint on *Perth* (III).

However, back to *Perth* (I). While sailing to Australia, *Perth* was off the coast of Venezuela when World War 2 broke out. As she was initially the only British Commonwealth warship in the Caribbean and western Atlantic, the cruiser began searching the region for German shipping. *Perth* did not leave the area until March 1940, sailing via the Panama Canal to reach Australian waters for the first time on 31 March.

On arrival, *Perth* was assigned to convoy escort duty and patrols along the Australian coasts. These continued through November 1940, when she was sent to the Mediterranean Sea to relieve sister ship *Sydney*. *Perth* reached Alexandria, Egypt on 24 December, and she was assigned to the 7th Cruiser Squadron.

During January 1941, *Perth* carried out patrols of the Aegean Sea, and she supported the convoys to Malta. *Perth* survived air attacks on several occasions. February saw the cruiser patrolling around Greece and Crete, and then during March, she supported the Allied reinforcement of Greece by transporting soldiers from Alexandria, Egypt, to Piraeus.

On the night of 28/29 March, *Perth* played a major role in the Battle of Cape Matapan.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01915.004

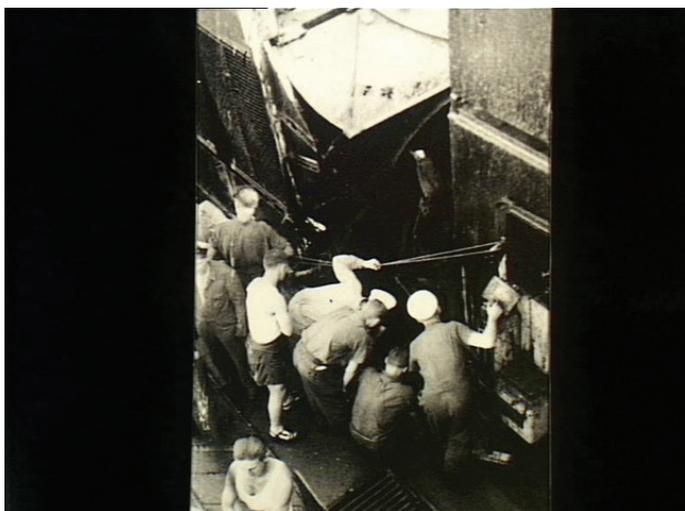
The cruiser was involved in the evacuation of Allied troops from Greece in April.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01915.008

The cruiser was also involved in the Battle of Crete during April and May, and she was bombed on 30 May, with four of her sailors and nine of the 1,188 embarked soldiers killed when a bomb exploded in the "A" boiler room.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01915.016

During June and July, *Perth* fought against Vichy French forces in Syria, and on one occasion, she avoided a friendly fire attack by Allied bombers. *Perth* was relieved by sister ship *Hobart*, and she returned to Australia for overhaul and upgrades to her anti-aircraft armament in August. After completion, *Perth* and the heavy cruiser *Canberra* steamed on 12 December 1941 from Sydney to Brisbane. Three days later, they met with the light cruiser HMNZS *Achilles*, and formed up as the heavy escort for the Pensacola Convoy. *Perth* continued convoy escort duties in home waters until the end of January 1942.

On 31 January 1942 *Perth* sailed from Sydney, reaching Fremantle on 10 February and on 15 February, relieved HMAS *Adelaide* as ocean escort for the convoy of four empty oil tankers and two cargo vessels (designated Convoy MS4) on a mission to claim as much oil from the Netherlands East Indies as

possible before the Japanese invaded.

After Singapore was captured, all but *Perth* and the cargo vessel *Jacob* were ordered to return to Fremantle. Although joined en route by the Dutch ships *Swartenhondt* and *Karsik*, the operation was cancelled on 21 February, when the ships were 600 nautical miles from Sunda Strait. *Perth* escorted the three other vessels back to within 700 nautical miles (1,300 km; 810 mi) of Fremantle before turning north to join the ABDA force. She arrived at Tanjong Priok on 24 February, in the middle of a Japanese air raid.

Perth then proceeded the next day, in company with HM Ships *Exeter*, *Jupiter*, *Electra* and *Encounter*, to Surabaya, where they met the ABDA fleet under Rear-Admiral Doorman. On receiving reports that a Japanese convoy of eight cruisers, twelve destroyers, and thirty transports was heading for Surabaya, the ABDA ships sailed to meet them. The Japanese ships were located on the afternoon of 27 February, and the Allied ships opened fire, with *Perth* setting a Japanese cruiser on fire with her second salvo. Later in the engagement, *Perth* successfully fired on a Japanese destroyer.

The forces broke apart after the British cruiser HMS *Exeter* was disabled, then later re-engaged; during this, the Dutch cruisers *De Ruyter* and *Java* were torpedoed and sunk. *Perth* and the United States cruiser USS *Houston* were the only large Allied ships to survive the Battle of the Java Sea, and retreated to Tanjong Priok, where they arrived on 28 February. The two ships attempted to resupply, but fuel shortages meant that *Perth* took on only half her normal fuel capacity, and a lack of shells left the cruisers with what little ammunition was left over from the previous day. *Perth*, *Houston*, and the Dutch destroyer *Evertsen* were ordered to sail for Tjilatjap via the Sunda Strait.

Perth and *Houston* sailed at 19:00 (*Evertsen* was delayed), with *Perth* leading. The Allies believed that Sunda Strait was free of enemy vessels, but a large Japanese force had assembled at Bantam Bay. At 23:06, the two cruisers were off St Nicholas Point when lookouts on *Perth* sighted an unidentified ship; when it was realised that she was a Japanese destroyer, *Perth* engaged. However, as this happened, multiple Japanese warships appeared and surrounded the two Allied ships.

At midnight, with ammunition running low, Captain Hector Waller ordered his ship to try to force a way through. Just as *Perth* settled on a new heading, four Japanese torpedoes hit the cruiser in the space of a few minutes. The first hit on the starboard side and damaged the forward engine room, the second

caused a hull breach near the bridge, the third impacted in the starboard aft area, and the fourth struck on the port side.

Waller gave the order to abandon ship after the second torpedo impact. After some further close-range fire from the destroyers, *Perth* heeled to port and sank at 00:25 on 1 March 1942, with 353 killed: 342 RAN (including Waller), five Royal Navy, three Royal Australian Air Force, three civilian canteen workers, and the ship's mascot - a black cat called Red Lead. *Houston* was torpedoed and sank about 20 minutes later.

Of the 328 survivors, four died after reaching shore, while the rest were captured as prisoners of war. 106 died during their internment: 105 naval and 1 RAAF, including 38 killed by Allied attacks on Japanese "hell ships". The surviving 218 were repatriated after the war.

Editor: Iris told me that news of her father was unknown for the duration of the war. There were several Navy families around Abbotsford in the same situation and the usual greeting was "have you heard anything?". It was only when the surviving POWs were repatriated that the full news about all of the ship's company became known.

HMAS *Perth* Memorial



Cheryl Hill, our new Welfare Officer and ex-Navy, visited the HMAS *Perth* Memorial at Geraldton in

Western Australia and has provided some photos and comments.

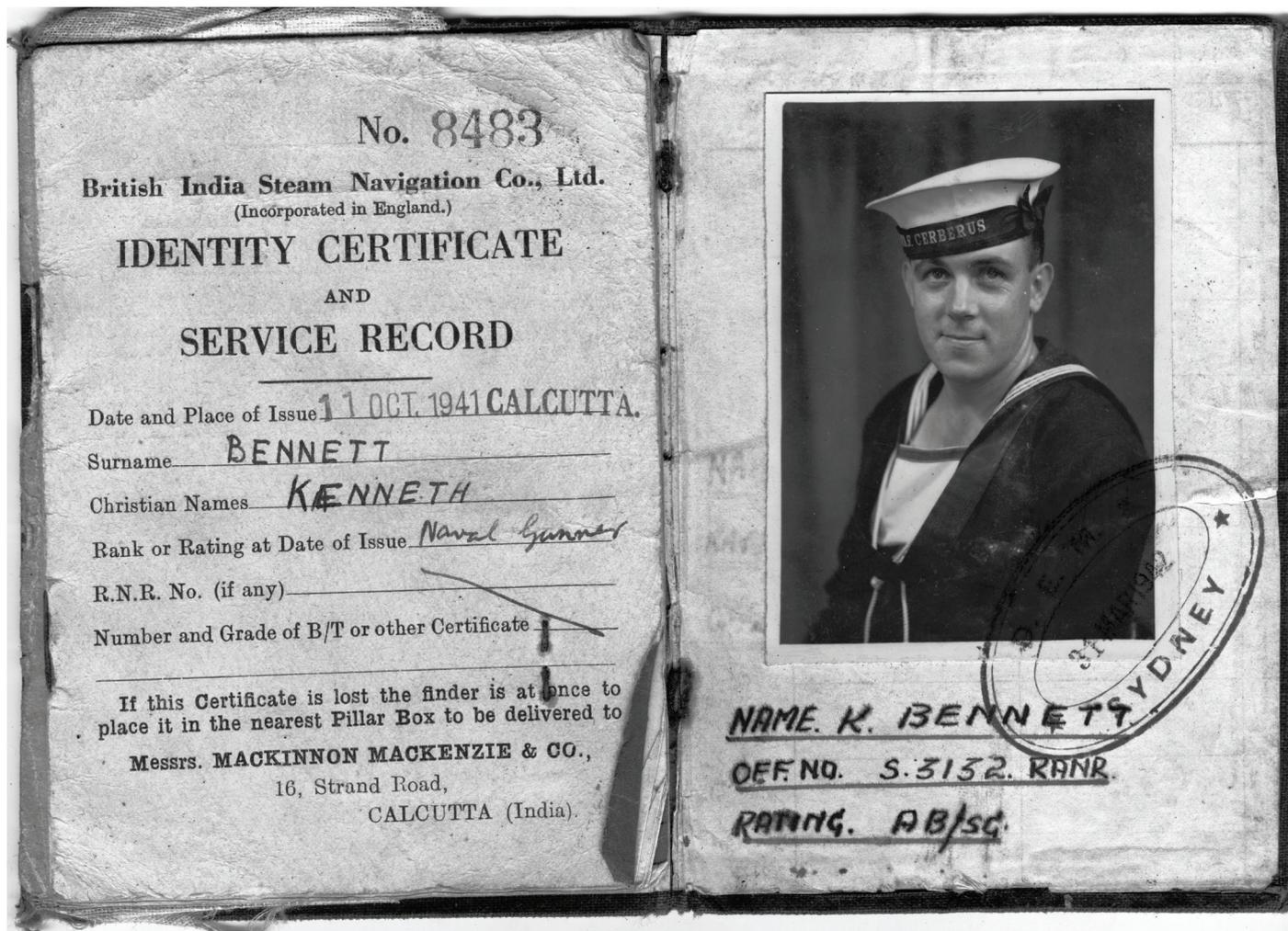


A few photos we took at the Memorial of HMAS *Perth*. The whole memorial was very moving, the bow of the ship and the dome with the 465 seagulls.



I found the statue of the Woman looking out to sea waiting for her sailor to return quite moving.

Editor: Cheryl's final comment reflects the anguish that Iris and others must have suffered as they waited years for news of their loved ones.



Until my father's death in 1998 I was unaware of the letter with the information below. However, I was aware of my father's War Service and was inspired to join the RANR.

I joined the RANR, not RAN, because at the time I was an indentured apprentice, with the intention of joining the full time RAN in the long run. I served from 1965 to 1971. But a career in management and marriage changed my direction in the 6th year. I am ever thankful to the Navy for my training as an N/S2 and the rating of Petty Officer which gave me a great deal of confidence to proceed in Civi Street.

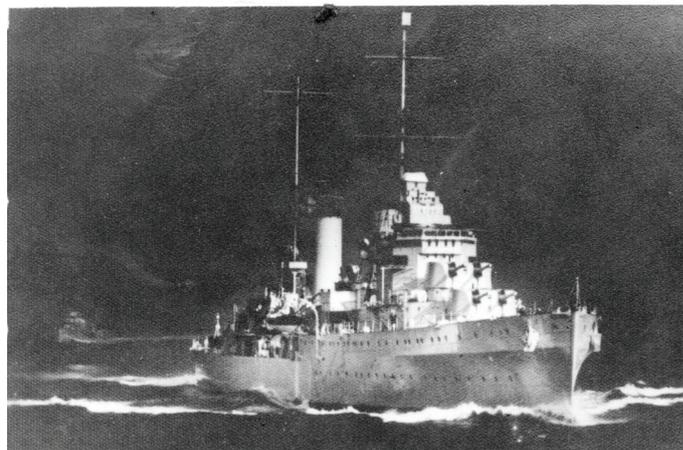
Dad served as a naval gunner AB/SG in DEMS, during WW2 mainly in and out of Calcutta. The following is an excerpt from a letter Dad wrote:

"I served 12 months straight on DEMS Mundra in India and the Middle East. Left Australia in August 1941 and returned on DEMS Wautapou in January 1943. My service in the Middle East included 3 trips from India to Egypt. I also served 6 months on DEMS Rona in the Pacific Islands.

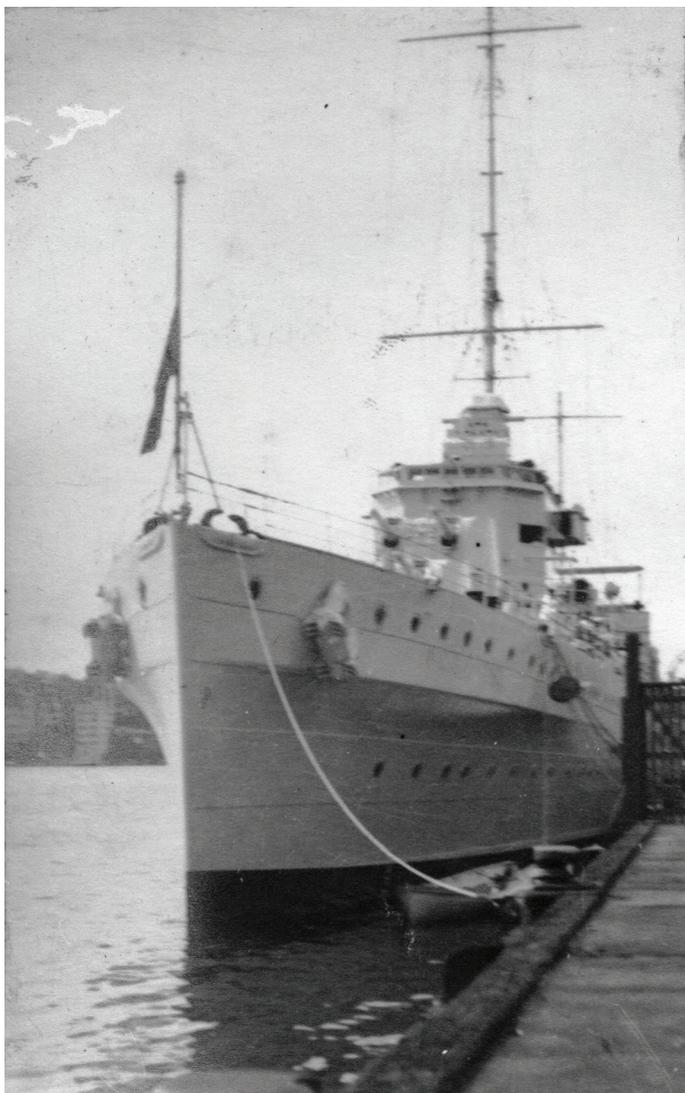
My service in the Middle East was at a critical time of WW2 and conditions were very hard. There were

only 3 RANR Ratings on the 'Mundra' and when at sea we had to work in 4-hour surface watch – 2 hours off, 2 hours aircraft watch and 2 hours off. I went through a number of air raids in the Middle East. I also left India to return to Australia at the time of the invasion of Singapore. Ships were being sunk all round us. I spent 3 months in the Pacific Islands, also at a bad period of the war."

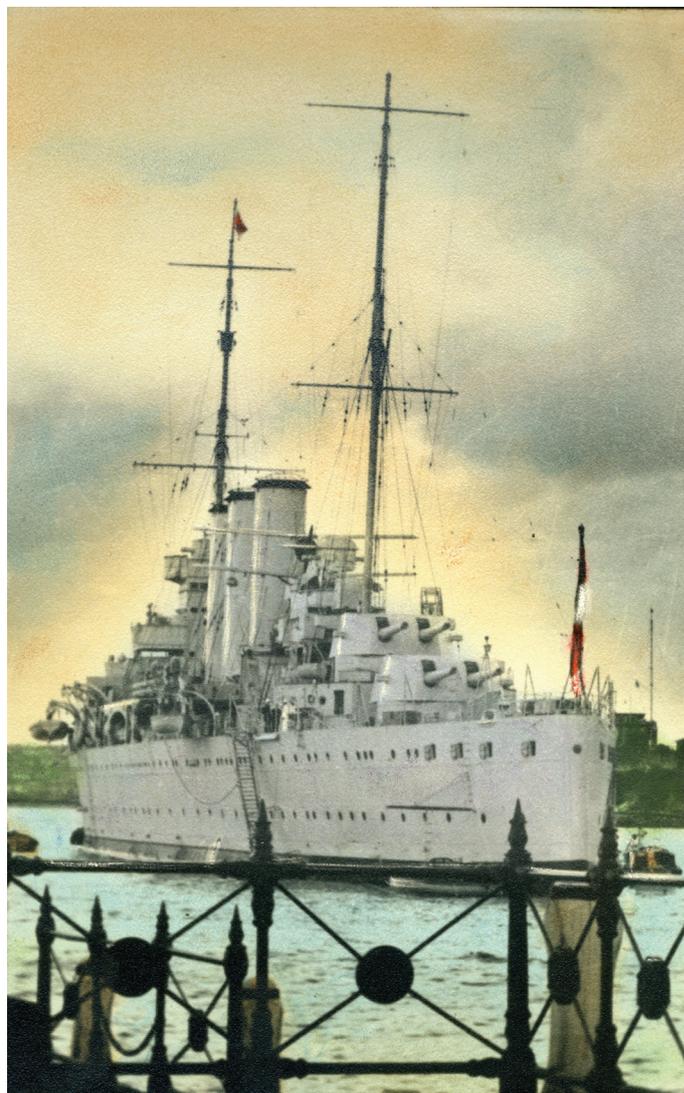
My Dad collected the following photos:



HMAS Sydney infra-red photo at night 1937



HMAS Sydney 1938



HMAS Australia 1939

RAN, RANR and RANVR, including the Dominion Yachtsmen Scheme, who served in the Royal Navy 1939-45.

About five hundred Australian volunteers (the Yachtsmen Scheme) were sent for officer training to the United Kingdom from 1940-42, prior to the outbreak of war with Japan. On commissioning the men were posted throughout the Royal Navy, mostly serving in smaller ships.

They served in the Atlantic and Arctic seas, on convoy duty, the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf, in Special Operations and Rendering Mines Safe (bomb disposal). Towards the end of the war many were involved in the landings for D-Day while many also served in the South-East Asian theatre. After four or more years away they returned to an Australia in the throes of the final stages of the Pacific war and a much smaller navy.

While most of the men were posted back to the Royal Australian Navy, many found themselves serving in more junior positions of responsibility than they had in the Royal Navy. Nor on their return, were they accorded any acknowledgement by the

Australian public for their contribution to the final Allied victory.

Over the next sixty years the men made real efforts to build a collective identity and without this continuity of contact the material for this research would not have been accessible.

Only the men could tell their story about their service and only, over a number of interviews, were the threads of the Yachtsmen Scheme story brought together.

Their feelings of disillusionment and melancholy about the lack of public recognition for their war service were voiced and by the early twenty-first century the men sought similar recognition to their Australian compatriots.

The men are proud of their service in the Royal Navy as Australians and believe that as a group they are the most highly decorated servicemen

of World War II. The Australian Government paid for their contribution in World War 2 and the Department of Veterans' Affairs readily accepted the responsibility for their care. Yet there is no official nominal roll of this group in Australia or the United Kingdom.

It is time that their story was told for future generations to understand and acknowledge their endurance and sacrifice in the terrible years of service in the war at sea on the other side of the world, far from their homeland.

Over 1,100 Australians served in the Royal Navy during World War II. Most served as volunteers, RANVR, although a handful of RAN personnel were included. Approximately five hundred served through the Yachtsmen Scheme and there were

also a number of Anti-Submarine officers who trained at HMAS *Rushcutter* in Sydney. The Yachtsmen Scheme and the Anti-Submarine Scheme ran concurrently.

The group of Yachtsmen Scheme volunteers were awarded 4 George Crosses (GM), 10 George Medals (GM), 31 Distinguished Service Crosses (DSC), 1 Distinguished Service Medal (DSM), 34 Mentioned-in-Dispatches (MiD), 3 Orders of the British Empire (OBE), 3 Members of the British Empire (MBE) and a Conspicuous Gallantry Medal (CGM), the only one ever awarded to an Australian.

© **Janet Roberts Billett MA (Melb)**
Historian
April 2017

The Battle of the Coral Sea, 4-8 May 1942: Turning the Japanese Tide

Why did the Japanese come so far south, far beyond their strategic objectives in South East Asia? Japan had already captured the oil and mineral resources it craved and expelled non-Asian powers. Why then embark on a risky operation far into the South Pacific?

The answer was Australia and the threat it posed as a vast staging base for an allied counter-offensive. The Japanese Army favoured invasion and the Navy isolation which led to a plan to seize Port Moresby and use bombers to attack the supply route between Australia and North America. The Japanese had already cut communications to the west with bombers in Timor, forcing Britain-bound ships to route far south around South Africa.

While the USA had entered the war, it was not obliged to provide for the defence for Australia (despite Prime Minister Curtin's historic 'look to America' speech), however the USA had already started building forces in Australia under General Douglas MacArthur and accepted that mutual defence was the only way. The Americans decided to block the Japanese in the Coral Sea so as to seize the strategic initiative and to also begin reducing Japanese strength through bringing them to a decisive battle, especially their aircraft carriers.

The Australian government was largely ignorant of developments in the Coral Sea, despite several Australian warships forming part of the allied force, and the Commander of the Australian Fleet being in command of one of the three allied naval groups. The government received information through General MacArthur, responsible for the combined defence of Australia. But even MacArthur was only an observer due to US Admiral Chester Nimitz reporting directly to the US President, like MacArthur himself. The Australian government

was told that a major Japanese naval force would attempt to land at Port Moresby and that a combined US/Australian force would oppose it. But neither Australia or MacArthur attempted to reinforce Port Moresby before the attack.

The Battle of the Coral Sea is an especially historic action for several reasons. It was the first defeat of a Japanese offensive since December 1941. It was also the first time that a naval battle was fought without any ship-on-ship gunnery duels. The weapons were aircraft launched from carriers, in which both the Japanese and Americans were highly skilled and had spent the inter-war years intensely practising to cover the vast expanses of the Pacific Ocean.

Finally, it remains the largest battle that has been fought in close proximity to Australia, involving 15 allied warships (including 2 aircraft carriers) and 121 aircraft, against 9 Japanese warships and 180 aircraft (3 aircraft carriers). The Battle of the Coral Sea was a tactical victory for Japan, but a strategic victory for the allies.

The Japanese planned to land at Port Moresby on 10 May 1942 by using three separate forces split into an invasion group that would run close down the east of New Guinea, an invasion support group with one light carrier that would parallel the invasion group further to the east, and a heavier blocking group with two large carriers that would swing far east and south of the Solomon Islands to block any allied counter-moves.

The Allies had long cracked Japanese communications codes (through an Australian/US intelligence centre in Melbourne) and were able to unlock the Japanese plans. This gave the allied force the tactical advantage and the US admiral

in overall command, Rear Admiral Frank Fletcher, was able to position his only two precious carriers for maximum advantage, supported by a force of Australian and US heavy cruisers commanded by Rear Admiral Jack Crace, Commander of the Australian Fleet. Fletcher realised that the Japanese had made a grave error in splitting their forces so widely, and decided to concentrate his force on one Japanese group at time, supported by land-based bombers from Australia. Constantly informed by cracked Japanese messages, he was able to position in advance, whereas the Japanese relied on patrol aircraft for accurate information.

The allied force assembled in the Coral Sea in advance of the Japanese, and the first Japanese group to enter the Coral Sea on 4 May was the aircraft carrier blocking force south of the Solomons (after landing troops in the Solomons the day before).

The first air strike of the battle was by USS *Yorktown* at extreme range which sank some Japanese escorts, and the Japanese were now alerted to the presence of American carriers.

There were no further engagements due to range and weather until 7 May when both sides located each other at close range and launched air strikes. However, the Japanese mistook an isolated oil tanker and destroyer as a carrier and escort and concentrated on destroying both, missing the main US carrier force. The single light carrier covering the invasion force did locate the US carriers and prepared a strike, however, the Japanese then turned away the invasion group until the US carriers were neutralised.

It was not only the Japanese who missed opportunities; the main US strike also mis-identified some minor Japanese warships and attacked in strength, missing the main force. The first full day of air strikes ended in frustration with neither side making a decisive blow.

In the meantime, the Australian-led cruiser force, including HMA Ships *Australia* and *Hobart*, was sent north to block the invasion force and came under heavy air attack by land-based bombers and torpedo aircraft. No ships were damaged due to violent manoeuvring and numerous aircraft were shot down.

At the centre of the action was the heavy cruiser *Australia* under the command of Captain Harold Farncomb. He handled the heavy cruiser like a speedboat through numerous attacks, sometimes being lost to sight by geysers of bomb splashes as the Japanese aircraft concentrated on the large ship with three distinctive funnels.



Despite some mis-steps and minor victories, both sides now had each other's measure and prepared for a decisive showdown the following day.

The Coral Sea may appear to be a calm tropical lake, but the reality is far different. I know from experience that the Coral Sea can be a brutal maelstrom, especially in the winter, and bad weather hampered both sides until 8 May when it finally dawned clear and bright for the Americans, but, the Japanese remained shrouded in squalls.

The four remaining aircraft carriers, the US Ships *Lexington* and *Yorktown*, and the Imperial Japanese Ships *Shokaku* and *Zuikaku* (which had been present at Pearl Harbor six months before) were equals in most ways – aircraft numbers, size, and ability. The carriers frantically launched their scout planes at dawn so as to be the first to attack, locating each other's fleets almost simultaneously between 0815 and 0838. The carrier decks became crowded with throbbing aircraft and bustling crews hurrying to launch the first strikes.

There was one vital difference between the two sides – the Japanese preferred torpedoes and had spent many years refining torpedo tactics, whereas the Americans preferred dive bombers and had notoriously unreliable torpedoes. Bombs will do significant damage, but torpedoes are an almost certain ship kill.

Both sides launched a furious series of air strikes using bombs and torpedoes in repeated attempts to destroy each other's carriers. At one point the 43 000 ton *Lexington* successfully evaded a fan of eight torpedoes. Soon, however, the Japanese got through and, faced with a sophisticated torpedo attack simultaneously from both bows, *Lexington* was hit by two torpedoes to port which slowed her speed, followed by a successful attack by dive bombers. Yet, *Lexington* remained operational, recovered her air wing and re-set for another strike. Her Chief Engineer even joked with the Captain about taking the next torpedoes on the starboard side. That was until the first, cataclysmic, internal

explosion. An unexploded bomb had holed a fuel bunker and escaping fuel vapour suddenly ignited at 1247, an hour after the last attack. Despite heroic efforts to contain the fires, another massive explosion tore through the ship at 1445. Aircraft were flown off to *Yorktown* as fire took hold of the ship. At 1630 *Lexington* was dead in the water, on fire from stem to stern and completely defenceless.

The order to abandon was given and survivors were rescued in an orderly manner by escorts, even the ship's dog was rescued. At 1956 *Lexington* was torpedoed by a US destroyer and sank, her boilers exploding underwater in a final act of destruction.

The Battle of the Coral Sea was over. The Japanese invasion of Port Moresby had been thwarted and all Japanese units were in retreat to the north and away from the Coral Sea. Japanese pilots enthusiastically reported all the US carriers were sunk and the Japanese withdrew without attempting further strikes. They were wrong and they would never return.



The Japanese sank more ships, but lost more aircraft than the allies, however, their strategic objective of seizing Port Moresby had been decisively thwarted. Two of their powerful fleet carriers escaped and the Americans lost one of their few precious fleet carriers. However, the mighty American industrial machine was gearing-up to deliver 22 aircraft carriers by 1945, whereas the Japanese did not build another carrier ever again.

Most importantly for Australia, the Japanese decided to seize Port Moresby overland using the Kokoda track. Soon after, large Japanese forces were landed in the north of New Guinea and started marching over the rugged Owen Stanley Ranges, leading to Australia's momentous defence of Port Moresby and the legendary Kokoda campaign.

Coral Sea was Japan's first defeat at sea and Kokoda was Japan's first defeat on land.

About the author:

Sub-Branch member Paul Garai is an active duty Commander in the Royal Australian Navy. He is a mine warfare specialist with extensive experience in joint and amphibious operations in East Timor, Sumatra and the Middle East and holds Masters degrees in strategy, defence, and management studies from ANU and UNSW as well as a BA in politics and strategy. He is also a graduate of the Australian Command and Staff College.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2017 SERVICE

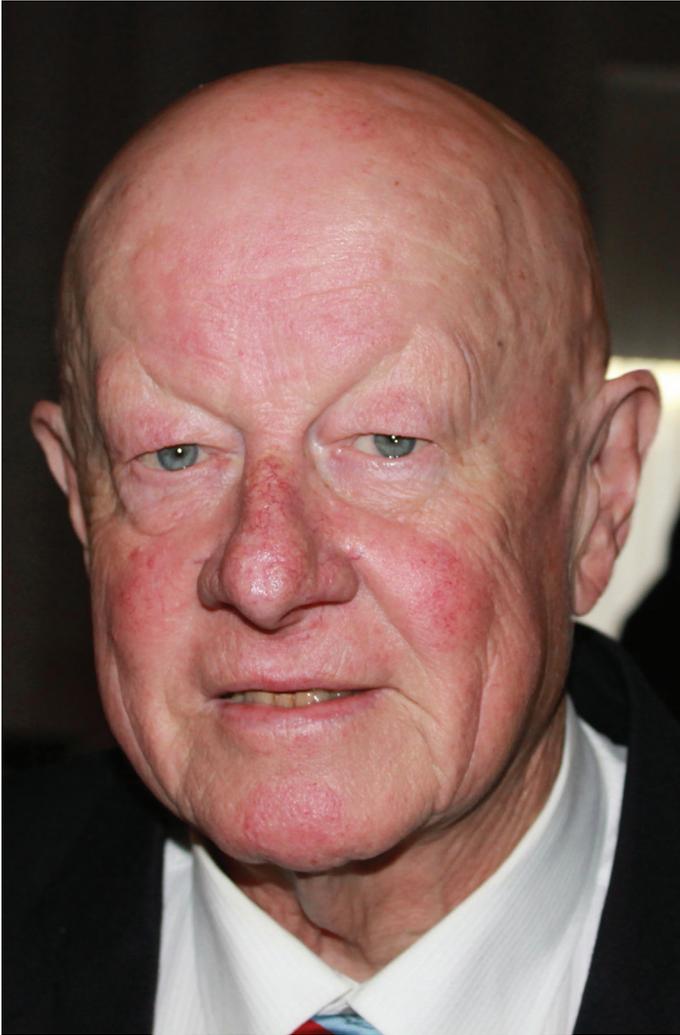
This year's Remembrance Day service will be held at Castle Hill RSL Club on Saturday 11 November, at the entrance to the Club.

Please be seated by 1045. In the event of wet weather the service will be held upstairs in the Club on the first floor.

Morning tea will be served in the Club after the service.



PENSIONS



PENSIONS & OTHER PAYMENTS

Over recent months I have had several queries in respect of Pension Rates and Allowances – generally in respect of pensions and allowances payable under the **Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986** (VEA).

A few queries however relate to compensation benefits under the **Safety, Rehabilitation & Compensation Act, 1988** (SRCA) and **Military Rehabilitation & Compensation Act 2004** (MRCA).

I will try to summarise what is not easy to summarise!

VEA – VETERANS' ENTITLEMENTS ACT 1986 – DISABILITY PENSIONS

The aim of disability pensions is to compensate veterans for conditions caused or aggravated by war service or some defence services on behalf of The Commonwealth – taking into account the medical impairment involved and the effects of such impairment on the veteran's lifestyle.

The initial assessment happens automatically after a condition is accepted as being war or defence caused.

The lower levels of disability pensions are known as the **General Rate** which rise in 10% multiples up to the maximum rate payable per fortnight (at time of writing the General Rate pension is \$55.43 per fortnight for 10% disablement rising up to \$485- per fortnight at 100%).

Veterans with some specific disabilities (generally involving amputations or blindness) can receive additional disability pension for such disabilities; however, the amount of pension **cannot exceed the Special Rate Pension**.

When the degree of incapacity reaches 100%, the DVA is required to consider increasing payment to the **Special or Intermediate Rates** – or whether payment of the **Extreme Disablement Adjustment** should apply:-

Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA) is currently \$753.60 per fortnight. This rate is payable to veterans who are severely incapacitated by service related incapacity but who are not eligible for pension at either the Special or Intermediate Rate.

The veteran must be at least 65 years of age, have a degree of incapacity of 100%, have a medical impairment rating for accepted disabilities of at least 70 points and a lifestyle rating of at least 6.

Intermediate Rate is currently \$926.20 per fortnight. The criteria for the Intermediate Rate is the same as for the Special Rate outlined below except that the veteran must be incapacitated for work other than on a part-time basis or intermittently.

Part-time work is considered to be no more than 50% of the time normal for the occupation or if there are no ordinary working hours 20 hours per week applies.

Special Rate and Temporary Special Rate is currently \$1,364.30 per fortnight. This rate is paid to a veteran who is totally and permanently incapacitated for paid work of more than 8 hours per week because of war/defence caused incapacity alone.

SRCA - SAFETY, REHABILITATION & COMPENSATION ACT, 1988.

At the time of writing compensation payment rates are: -

Permanent Impairment (SRCA) – maximum non-economic loss lump sum is \$69,667.68 with

maximum lump sum of \$185,780.36.

Incapacity Payment (SRCA) – first 45 weeks – 100% of normal earnings and subsequently – 75% of normal earnings. Lump sum redemption level is \$116.16.

Financial Advice Compensation (Defence Act) – maximum \$1,674.36.

Severe Injury Adjustment (Defence Act) Maximum \$79,409.41 with additional amount for each dependent child \$87,465.21.

Compensation following death for dependent – maximum lump sum (SRCA) is \$539,002.37 with additional death benefit (Defence Act) being \$59,506.61. Dependent child - compensation following death lump sum (Defence Act) is \$87,465.21 or weekly payment (SRCA) of \$148.23.

Other payments include household services, attendant care services, funeral expenses.

MRCA – MILITARY REHABILITATION & COMPENSATION ACT, 2004

At the time of writing compensation payment rates are: -

Permanent Impairment – maximum weekly benefit \$340.77 (payment may be taken as a lump sum calculated according to age).

Benefits for incapacity for work – first 45 weeks after discharge 100% of normal earnings subsequently 75% of normal earnings. Lump sum redemption level \$219.31. Remuneration loading for discharged members \$161.32.

Compensation for cost of financial/legal advice – up to \$2,587.55.

Special rate disability pension – maximum per week (before offsets apply) – \$682.15 (includes Energy Supplement).

Household services – \$482.50 maximum per week.

Attendant care services – \$482.50 maximum per week.

Funeral expenses - Maximum \$11,828.87

Under MRCA there are many other compensation payments relating to dependent partners, eligible young persons, other dependents, education allowances for eligible young persons, income support bonuses as well as student start-up and relocation scholarships.

I can provide a listing of these compensation payments on request (too many to list in this publication!).

My contact details for copies of documents as mentioned above are phone 9686 3119, mobile 0427 201 541 or email Pensions@chrslsubbranch.org.au

Graeme Banks OAM
Pensions Officer

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2017 SERVICE

This year's Remembrance Day service will be held at Castle Hill RSL Club on Saturday 11 November, at the entrance to the Club.

Please be seated by 1045. In the event of wet weather the service will be held upstairs in the Club on the first floor.

Morning tea will be served in the Club after the service.



WELFARE



I have now taken over the role of Welfare Officer, following the recent resignation of our long-term Welfare Officer, Mike Lee. Mike has been the Welfare Officer for the last 18 years and his expertise and experience will be sadly missed; thank you for your tireless service.

Mike will still assist the Welfare Team when he can, especially in his new role. Mike has been invited onto the ATDP Regional Management Board for NSW, ACT, and Western Australia. We wish him well in his new venture.

Warren Grant and Troy Park have also resigned from the Welfare Team and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all their hard work over the years; we will also miss their expertise and experience.

This year we have started a new venture, sending care packagers to our members serving overseas once every three months and these have gone down very well.

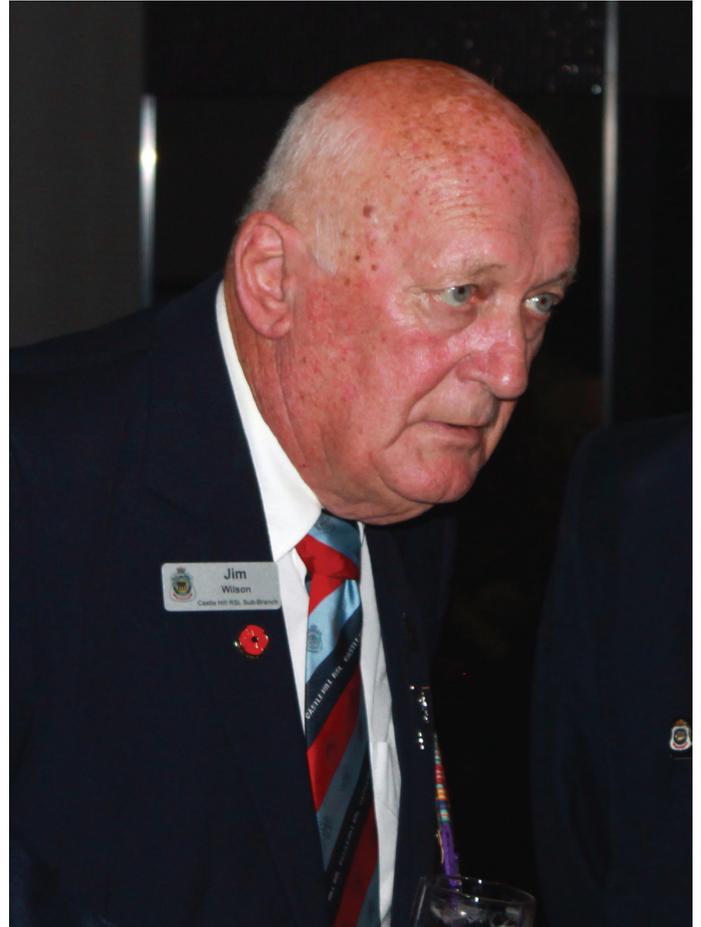
Our Christmas Hampers to our War Widows/ers are well under way and this year we will be extending the hampers to include the families of our members serving overseas.

Some of the Hospital Wards and Retirement Villages have been shut down because of the winter flu so our visitation numbers were down for the

month of August.

We always try to make sure our Team is up with the latest training - and we have five members beginning their Advocacy Level One Course in September.

With the departure of David Cronan to Queensland, we now have a new Welfare Funerals Coordinator – Jim Wilson.



Jim reports Vale over recent months for the following: Robert Maxwell Kell, Ronald Wayne King, Tad Maciejewski, Peter William Jones, John Wilson, James David Payens, Rex Anderson, Peter Gluhin, Stan Healey, and Neill McDonald.

Following the departure of several members of the Welfare Team, it would be good if we could recruit additional Team members.

If anybody is interested in joining the Team, please contact me so that I can discuss our activities in more detail.

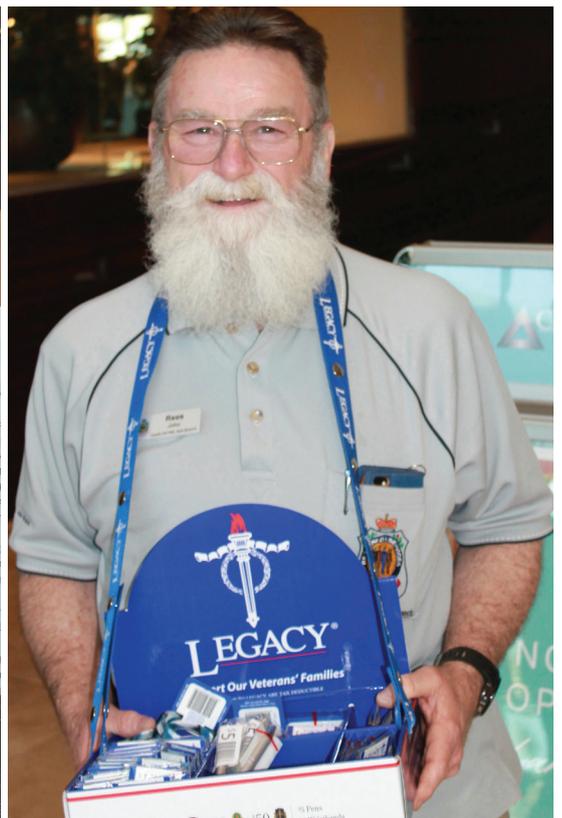
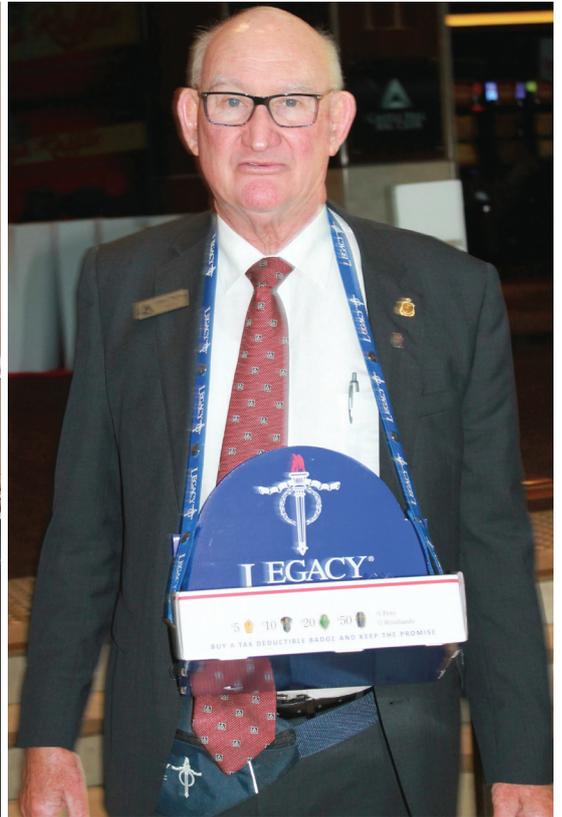
“Lest We Forget”

***Cheryl Hill
Welfare Officer
0412 297 027***

VOLUNTEERS

Some of the volunteers who helped with Legacy Week on 31 August and 1 September in the foyer at Castle Hill RSL, under the guidance of Peter Westwood.

Peter reports, as follows: "A big thank you to all those who were able to volunteer selling badges for Legacy. Over the Thursday and Friday period we raised \$4,285.25 for Parramatta Legacy, which I'm sure they will be able to put to good use. Everyone involved was most generous with their time, as was the Club in letting us use their facilities."



From the Editor

At last, the Navy issue has arrived, albeit as another issue of *The Veteran* and another apology. I'm sorry that this issue is late but I've been heavily distracted by the sale of our home where we have lived for the past 30 years. I can confirm that selling your home is very much a high-stress activity, although the auction on 16 September delivered a positive outcome. In March, Judith and I will be moving into a new development at Terrey Hills. However, it is my intention to remain in the sub-Branch and also continue as Editor until my term expires in 2020.

So, if anybody would like to take over as Editor I would be happy to tell you all about the role and, ideally, lead you into a seamless transfer in 2020.

One element of the preparations for the sale of our home exposed me to the wonderful world of "decluttering". I don't know about you, but I seemed to accumulate a huge collection of "things" over the 30 years. I ignored the pundits, who say that if you haven't used an item for six months then you should be ruthless and throw it away. Instead, I went for a more pragmatic approach and worked my way through the range of items and sorted them into various streams.

Yes, some stuff did get thrown out – either into rubbish or into recycle. I threw out two sets of race gear (helmets, suits, gloves, boots, etc) but did sell the old race car. 35 years of diaries and day books have been through the shredder. Lots of plastic and glass, plus paper, went into the recycle bin.

However, I was more selective with some items. Old car parts and body panels are now in store at my mechanic's workshop, to be offered to specific marque car clubs. Seven years of photographers' proofs from Bathurst, plus old car workshop manuals, posters, regalia, etc have been donated to a motoring/motorsport history foundation. We have also donated small bits 'n pieces to Vinnies and the Salvos. When we move out we will donate some larger pieces of furniture to the Salvos.

Why do I tell you all this? Because it is always unfortunate when items of historic interest get "binned", usually by members of the family.

So, if you are decluttering maybe there are items that you might not send to the tip but instead donate and if you have items of military history, maybe they can be donated to your service arm's museum(s) or to the Australian War Memorial; that way they can be kept for posterity as reference material so that

future generations understand who did what, when, and how in the services.

Iris Futcher loaned her late father's photo albums from HMAS *Perth* to AWM so they could be selectively scanned and added to AWM's collection – and I've used some of those photos in this issue.

Thanks to our regular contributors and special thanks to Bill Dokter, Brian Walters, Cheryl Hill, Chris Bennett, Iris Futcher, and Paul Garai for their contributions.

Also, recognition/acknowledgement for photographs to Andrew Pursey, Australian War Memorial archives, Cheryl Hill, Chris Bennett, CHRSL Photography Club, Malcolm Botfield, and Royal Australian Navy.

I ran out of space in this issue but some of the photos from Iris and Chris may well get a run in later issues. The reason being that they don't just cover military activities in the period but they also provide an interesting snapshot of the social history of the period – and some of the scenes in Egypt, Malta, Crete, etc were quite something.

Finally, thanks to Brian Walters for doing proofreading (we did let some items through in the interests of time), and, to Alison Benson for sorting out the graphics ready for printing.

I'm always seeking articles for *The Veteran* – and have been fortunate recently to have received some unsolicited items. However, I can always take more articles and/or photos – so, not that I'm pressing you, oh gentle reader, maybe you can pass on something of interest to our readership.

If you have any reports or photos that you would like to send me, I'll be happy to include them in the December or later issues.

All text should be submitted as a Microsoft Word (doc or docx), Rich Text File (rtf) or Plain Text (txt) file. Don't bother with fancy formatting and don't add images to your document – attach images as separate items, preferably as jpg/jpeg.

Please use my sub-Branch email address editor@chrslsubbranch.org.au to send me reports, or, call me on 0407 922 693 to discuss prior to submission.

Andrew Pursey