

AMC/LSI Association of Vic

Armed Merchant Cruiser / Landing Ship Infantry

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Patrons: Bruce Candy (dec), Hiram Ristrom & Norm Tame.

Wreath Laying Ceremony for AMC/LSI Association of Victoria Saturday 7th December, 11am Shrine of Remembrance Sanctuary.

Once again the time is approaching for our annual pilgrimage to the Sanctuary at the Shrine of Remembrance where we hold a ceremony dedicated to those who served on HMAS WESTRALIA, KANIMBLA, MANOORA and ASSAULT. It's a unique, precious and humbling experience to stand inside Melbourne's magnificent sanctuary and pay tribute to those who served on the above ships and who paid the ultimate sacrifice in a time of war and peace.

After the service, we move to Bentleigh RSL for our annual Christmas Get-Together Lunch

RSVP By 1st December: contact our committee Chris 0412 390 686 or Max 0413 753 473 or email:

amclsivic@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you Saturday 7 December 2019 @ 11am



Thomas Harold Fowler of Nunawading Vic who served on HMAS Kanimbla and HMAS Westralia during WW2 as a Officers Cook , celebrated his 100th Birthday on 2nd September 2019, to Tom from all your shipmate at AMC/LSI Association of Vic, **A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU.**

On Wednesday 28th August our committee invited Tom out for lunch at Box Hill RSL Bistro to celebrate his birthday. A very good time was had by all, the service and food was outstanding.



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Chris Harvey, Vice Admiral M. Noonan AO CN, Thomas Fowler, LS Thomas Taylor ET, AB Rhiannon Hodge , David Dwyer.



13/09/2019 Vice Admiral Michael Noonan AO CN visited Thomas Fowler to wish him a Happy 100th Birthday.



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Nelson Bay trip

On the 20th May this year Mac Hay, our Secretary and myself, Chris Harvey, flew to Sydney for a three day trip and drove to Kincumber, Gosford to visit **Brian Sullivan**, a WW2 Veteran who served on HMAS Westralia. We took him out for dinner for his 95th birthday at the Kincumber RSL.

Brian remembers the day in January, 1945 at Lingayen Gulf when a Japanese **Kamikaze Plane** attacked HMAS Westralia. He was on 20mm Oerlikon Anti-Aircraft gun on the aft deck. The Kamikaze plane disintegrated in mid-air under fire from all ships guns; the engine hit the rear of the deck and then crashed

into the sea ten feet astern. The ship was officially credited with the kill; her only kill for the war.

We stayed at the Gosford Hotel which has the oldest elevator I have ever seen. The food, rooms and parking were great and breakfast across the road was top-notch. On Tuesday morning Mac and I drove to Nelson Bay, Port Stephens, on the M1 freeway which was under construction at the time. We arrived at 10.30am. The view as we drove in was breath-taking. We were both struck by the beauty of Port Stephens, its bays and islands and the clear waters and pristine beaches of Shoal Bay, Fingal Bay, Salamander Bay where HMAS Westralia was anchored in 1943. We drove to Soldier's Point and look-out towards Lemon Tree Passage, Mallabula Bay, Taniba Bay and Janilba.

On our way back from Soldier's Point, we stopped at Assault Basin; a housing estate at Salamander Bay that was officially opened during the HMAS Assault reunion in September 1993. As a result of the Navy's involvement in the area, the streets have been named as follows; Kanimbla Dr, Westralia Close, Manoora Close, Warramunga Close and Arunta Close.

We drove back to Nelson Bay and the Seabreeze Hotel for lunch, which was an outstanding Seafood Linguine and a glass of Chardonnay; 5 star's all round. Back on the road and a short drive to Fly Point, the



home of HMAS Assault Training Centre for all Royal Australia Navy Amphibious Landing Ships Infantry during WWII. A Ship Anchor and Plaque are at Fly Point, photo left.

We drove on to Port Stephen's light house which has a museum and a room dedicated to our three ships and HMAS Assault with her banner hanging proudly on the wall with lots of photos and memorabilia all around. But the view from the light house of Tomaree & Yacaaba Heads and surrounding bays of Great Lakes Marine Park are magnificent.



AB Brian Sullivan PA 2973



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VICTORIA CROSS for AB SEAMAN TED SHEEAN, H1617.



Over the years since the 1st December 1942, that's 77 years, there has been a cry of injustice from Navy Veterans, Navy Family and Navy Descendants for AB Ted Sheean to be awarded the Victoria Cross for Deed of Valour of which he most certainly did. One of the reason why the Australia government didn't recommend the VC to Ted Sheean, was because a VC must be awarded during a war not after one. But with Royal Navy Midshipman Charles Lucas case he received a VC, one year after the end of the Crimean War for a Deed of Valour which happened on the 21st June 1854, Charles Lucas was invested with his Victoria Cross by Queen Victoria on the 26th June 1857, that one year and four months after the Crimean War and in doing so setting a **PRECEDENT**. (*London Gazette, 24 February 1857*)

On the 30 November 1942, HMAS Armidale left Darwin Harbour with supplies of timber, food, medical and Javanese Commandos to be landed on the southern coast of East Timor, in company with HMAS Castlemaine and HMAS Kalgoorlie both Bathurst Class Corvettes. They were spotted by Japanese aircraft soon after leaving Darwin and came under constant Japanese air attack. The ships were very slow, 15 Knots at best and badly armed with 3 x 20mm Oerlikon anti-aircraft guns and 1 x 4 inch gun.

Heavy rain and high seas delayed the beach landing, and when the ships did arrive no one was on the beach to supervise the landing. The ships withdrew under air attack, Commodore Pope RN ordered HMAS ARMIDALE back to the beach landing at Betano Bay and said that air attack is to be accepted as ordinary routine secondary warfare. All ships tried again over a two day period to make a landing to no avail, Japanese aerial torpedoes and Zero fighters finally sunk the HMAS ARMIDALE on the 1st December 1942.

AB Ted Sheean helped to free one of the ship's life rafts, wounded in the leg and back and he strapped himself to the 20mm Oerlikon anti-aircraft gun and kept on firing at Japanese Zero as the Ship went down. Shooting down one aircraft, AB Ted Sheean was seen still firing his gun as HMAS Armidale slipped below the waves. Only 49 of the 149 sailors survived the sinking after a two day battle. Clung to whatever they could, covered in oil many badly injured survived. Japanese aircraft returned and strafed the survivor's with machine guns but they were in the water for eight days before a RAAF Catalina appeared above them. The next day HMAS Kalgoorlie found 27 survivors, and returned to Darwin under Japanese air-attack, but HMAS Kalgoorlie survived.

The first Royal Navy VC was awarded to Midshipman Charles Lucas in the Crimea War, when on the 21st June 1854, a shell landed on the upper deck of HMS Hecla. Midshipman Charles Lucas, with coolness and presence of mind, picked up the red hot shell and hurled it into the sea. It exploded before hitting the water. Two sailors were slightly wounded and Midshipman Lucas was promoted to Lieutenant on the spot, by Captain Hall. **Three years later**, he receive the Victoria Cross for Deed of Valour by Queen Victoria and later, he was promoted to the rank of Rear-Admiral. He died in his family home in 1914 at 80 years of age and buried in Mereworth, Kent, England.

AB Seaman Ted Sheean, whose grave is the Timor Trench, was not promoted in field of battle; he received no medals, he was posthumously mentioned in dispatches for Bravery and Devotion. Age 18 years, he fought to the bitter end, he was bold, brave, gallant and showed great courage in the face of battle. He gave his life for his mates, Navy, King and Country. No Australian sailor has ever received a VC.

And yet our politicians and government don't show the same courage or respect to the men and women who serve our Nation; raising a serious question why!!

The Shrine of Remembrance is holding a Commemoration service on the 1st December 10.00 am for Corvettes and HMAS Armidale with Star of Sea College, all are welcome.

by Chris Harvey

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CLIK

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Planning ahead kit

Planning Ahead is a publication designed to help veterans and their families prepare for bereavement.

Download a copy from either of the following links:

- [Planning Ahead: A guide to putting your affairs in order \(PDF 2.38 MB\)](#)
- [Planning Ahead: A guide to putting your affairs in order \(DOC 170 KB\)](#)

If you are unable to download or print a copy of *Planning Ahead*, contact DVA on 1800 555 254 or visit your local VAN office to request a copy.

There is also a checklist that can be used to record the contact details of important people, businesses and organisations that may need to be notified in case of your death.

[Planning Ahead: Checklist \(PDF 56 KB\)](#)

See related forms

- [Personal Information Sheet — a Private Record D8729 \(PDF 79 KB\)](#)
- [Medical Details of a Veteran — a Private Record D8730 \(PDF 353 KB\)](#)

This will help your family with personal information in the difficult time following bereavement.

If you choose to complete and retain this form, the information might eventually be of assistance if, in the event of your death, your partner makes a claim for war widow(er)'s pension.

Download help

Some documents on this page are published in Portable Document Format (PDF). For information about PDF readers and using PDF files, go to a [PDF information page](#) on the DVA website.



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Veterans Support and Welfare Officers

We at AMC/LSI Association understand that lodging a claim to DVA can be daunting and extremely complex, so we have put this together in the hope, that it will help you.

The RSL, and its volunteers, provide assistance to past and present service personnel when needed or with a range of financial and non-financial support services. You do not have to be a member of the RSL to receive assistance: you only have to be a current or former member of the Australian Defence Force; our Allies or a dependent of either group. The money raised through the Appeals enables the RSL to financially assist members by reducing the burden of expenses such as:

- * Grocery shopping, with transport and a carer if needed.
- * Outstanding household bills.
- * Medical and hospital expenses.
- * The cost of mobility aids such as wheelchairs, scooters and walking frames.
- * Household repairs, small maintenance jobs & gardening is available.
- * Funeral costs, funeral service assistance officers and legal aid.
- * Veterans' home care, assistance with house cleaning and lawn mowing for elderly Veterans'.

In addition, volunteers offer non-financial support to members in the form of home visits and hospital visits providing both physical and emotional care, support and assistance for Veterans and widows.

Recently one of our AMC/LSI members (HMAS Kanimbla & Australia II) who had only a outside toilet at his home, with the help of Grant Knott President of Australia Association, provided funding for tradesmen to remodel the bathroom with a toilet that saved our Norm Tame a long walk in a cold winter which was quite a relief.

One ex-W.R.A.N.S. WW2 veteran who is in her 90s, had paid a lot of money to have her lawns mowed, asked if the Waverley RSL could help. The RSL provided a volunteer to mow her lawns at no cost, and also for help to keep household bills down.

RSL Welfare Officers.

Maryborough QLD, RSL; George Mellick & Julie McCarthy & George Mellick 07 4122 2321.

NSW Hornsby RSL; Roslyn Hutchinson 02 9485 3204. / Dandenong Vic RSL 03 9792 1535 Vladimir.

Wagga Wagga NSW RSL; David Gill 02 6921 1971. / Rosebud Victoria RSL; 5986 1066.

Sale Vic RSL; Jennie Tanzer 03 5144 2538. Bentleigh & Cheltenham Vic RSL 03 9557 4547 Sylvia Lindsay.

Frankston Victoria RSL; 9783 2288 Brent Clyne and Tony Grice. Beenleigh RSL QLD 07 3287 4000.

Hervey Bay RSL QLD 07 4184 9496 email- welfare@herveybayrsl.com.au

RSL Victoria, Pensions, Advocacy and Support

Jeff Jackson 03 9655 5531, e-mail: ijackson@rslvic.com.au

RSL N.S.W. Defence Care 02 8088 0388, e-mail: info@rsldefencecare.org.au

RSL S.A. Advocacy and Welfare Payneham 0439 963 550, Large Bay 0407 155 102.

RSL W.A. 08 9287 3799 Rosalind Howat. **RSL Tasmania** 03 6242 8900 New Town.

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I SHALL RETURN

The year was 1942 and the Japanese forces had successfully invaded vast area of the Philippines, causing great concern to the U.S. government, due to the many interests it had in this region and the realization that the Japanese threat was moving ever closer to Australia. General Douglas Macarthur at this time had been appointed Major General commanding all American and local forces in the Philippines. In March, 1942 President Roosevelt ordered Macarthur to leave the Philippines and go to Australia. As he left he made that well know statement, "I Shall Return". However it was not until two years later on October 20, 1944, when U.S. forces and their allies were able to fulfil his promise and Macarthur now appointed Supreme Commander Southwest Pacific area was able to wade ashore at Leyte Gulf, considered to be the largest Naval battle of WWII ending in the eclipse of the Imperial Japanese Navy. Leyte Gulf was also the scene of the first organized use of the Kamikaze (Suicide) aircraft by the Japanese.

Our ships Kanimbla, Westralia and Manoora were to play an Important role in this amphibious landing assault, transporting troops of the US 21st Regimental Combat Team. Their point of disembarkation was to be the island of Panaon at the South East Point of Leyte. The seas were calm as the ships well escorted by U.S. Cruisers and Destroyers slowly made their way toward Green Beach commanded by U.S. Rear Admiral A.D. Struble. A strange tenseness aboard was felt by both sailor and soldier alike, which the sailors regarded as the invasion prelude. The convoy was within easy range of enemy reconnaissance aircraft but none were detected, everyone in HMAS Kanimbla was full of expectancy, it was felt that the Jap would surely show this time. "Hands to Breakfast" sounded, at 0715 hours as everyone was partaking of a breakfast of eggs and bacon, a lone Japanese dive bomber screamed out of the clouds, and a bomb narrowly missed a Rocket L.C.I. (Landing Craft Infantry) Ack Ack fire from the destroyers drove the plane off to the South West. "Action Station" sounded, and in almost a twinkling everyone is at his allotted post, despite the fact that many were in the cafeteria having breakfast, while others were soaped up under showers. The Jap is cursed for not coming at a more convenient time.

Despite the attack, the convoy moves slowly to the invasion area, "Away All Boats" will not be sounded until HMAS Kanimbla reaches the inner transport area only a thousand yards from the shore. Word has been received that there are no Japanese on Panaon island; they had cleared away from that section of Leyte island some weeks before. At 0912 hours "Away all boats" and fourteen minutes later twenty five landing craft are in the water, with troops disembarked. Kanimbla Navy Beach Commandos went ashore in the first wave to make sure the beach was secure, and Green Beach was found to be an excellent landing beach. The landing was un-opposed, and instead of the Assault Troop being met by hostile forces, they were greeted on the shore by friendly and overjoyed Filipinos when the Japs departed they left the Filipinos villages with very little food, and many were close to starving. Shortly after the first waves of troops had been landed, from the beach came scores of native craft manned with smiling men, women and children seeking food, cigarettes, and clothing. Many of the sailors went into their mess-decks and emptied the bags to give the clothes to the visitors. Ashore, the immediate beaches were full of bustle and activity, as barge after barge from three ships ran up to the beach to discharge their load of men, ammunition, rations, vehicles, equipment and petrol.

Shortly after 1700, hours the last net of cargo was unloaded and the Navy beach Commandos party had returned to the ship. Away to starboard the air was suddenly filled with anti-aircraft flak; action stations was sounded, and the convoy weighed anchor as a Japanese twin engine torpedo bomber attempted to penetrated the destroyer screen. The Japanese made his run from various directions but each time he is turned back by the wall of flak thrown up. This is the first time that H.M.A.S. Kanimbla's guns have been fired in anger since the ship was commissioned as an Assault Ship. Darkness gradually engulfed the ships and everyone onboard was relieved when "Secure Action station" was sounded off and then "Hands to Supper". It has been a long day!

The cargo was discharged at a high rate, averaging 90 tons per hour this is considered the maximum possible. Prompting a message from the U.S. Task Group Commander and the Captain- I wish to thank the entire Ship's Company for the efficiency and speed in which the embarked troop and equipment were discharged during Friday's attack on the Philippines. The congratulatory message received from Attack Group Commander was due to the co-operation of all ranks.

Signed A.V. Bunyan Commander R.A.N.R (S)

Story by Max Tozer Vice President of
AMC/LSI Association of Vic.

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We wish you a "Very Happy Birthday" from the committee And member's of AMC/LSI Association of Vic.

July: Jim Davison, Frank Barrile, Ronald Dixie Lee, Don Eglington, Allan Booth, Jack Austin, John Hooper.

August: Reg Baggs, Ron Kleinig.

September: Tom Fowler 100th, Cecil Browning, Norm Tame, Les (Snowy) Barton, Ern Tyler, David Nelson, Bill Baird.

October: Graham Knight, Reg May, Sam Aitchison, Ken Kemp, Cyril Bayley-Pike. **Frank McGovern 100 years**

VALE

We regret of the passing of the following Veterans and or their wives. Our sincere condolences go to their family, friends and shipmates.

Doris Hicks wife of Joe, 13/06/2019 Vic

Stan Price, 17/06/2019 age 97 Rosebud Vic.

William Robinson 11/05/2019 age 94 Shepparton

Cedric James Bowerman August 2019 age 93 QLD

Keith Brown 29/08/2019 age 95 Lang Lang Vic.

Lt Richard Alan Coyle, age 96 Brighton Vic.

John (Jack) Daniel Wighton, age 95 Qld.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS

We wish to thank & acknowledge the following generous donations received from our members.

If you wish to donate to AMC/LSI Association of Vic, you can send a cheque to :- The Treasurer 2 Clyde street Oakleigh Vic 3166 or

Transfer funds to Westpac Bank

BSB No 033 070 Account No 42 2541

In description box state your name or donation for.

- * **Brian Sullivan of Gosford N.S.W.**
- * **Harold Hiram Ristrom of Vic.**
- * **Jack Austin of Hasting Vic.**
- * **Mac Hay of Vic.**
- * **Chris Harvey of Vic.**
- * **Ian Gardner of Brighton QLD.**
- * **In memory of John Wedderburn HMAS Kanimbla from Isabel.**
- * **Doug & Ross Hooley in memory of their father Alan Hooley.**

I wish to thank all who donate to the Lingayen Gulf Plaque Fund. Total \$1,000

If you wish to have your ASHES committed to the sea by the Royal Australian Navy (serving or ex-Navy members only) make your wishes known to family beforehand, and families may request to commit the ASHES of their family Navy member to sea, by contacting Defence community Organisation, Locked Bag 18, Darlinghurst N.S.W. 2010 or send an e-mail to LCDR Mark Burton at mark.borton4@defence.gov.au

Caps from \$25 each + P & H

MERCHANDISE

Caps from \$25 each + P & H

To order phone **Max Tozer 03 9782 8353 or e-mail amclsivic@gmail.com**

New Kanimbla Caps \$ 30 + P & H

1 Manoora Cap left \$25 + P & H

Westralia \$ 25 + P & H



Max Tozer Vice President & Merchandise Manager 03 9782 8353

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: This newsletter has been a collaboration of team work from the AMC/LSI Association of Vic Committee Carol Zeuschner, Mac Hay, Max Tozer, Robert Lewis, Hiram Ristrom and Chris Harvey.

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