

AMC/LSI Association of Australia

Armed Merchant Cruiser / Landing Ship Infantry

ABN 64 106 175 155
E: amclsivic@gmail.com
www.amclsi.navyvic.net



President Chris Harvey
2 Clyde St Oakleigh Vic 3166
M: 0412 390 686

AB Anita Hogan RAN Rtd
Veterans Welfare officer

Patron:- Hiram Ristrom & George Hinton

Vice President Max Tozer
M: 0413 753 473

ANZAC Day 2022

Dawn Service

No change to the format. Start time is **6.00 am.** 30,000 people are allowed to attend. For the first time, a Smoking Ceremony will occur at **5.30 am** just before the Dawn Service.

The March

We have been advised that unfortunately for descendants, this year the ANZAC Day Marshalls will be strictly enforcing the rule that has been in place for some years, that a ship's Banner must be accompanied by a Veteran. Should the banner only have 2 descendants as banner bearers they must wait till the end of the march to proceed to the Shrine. We only have one Veteran who may have intentions of marching behind the Kanimbla banner. This year the march starts at the earlier time of **9.00 am** at **Princess Bridge.** All WWII Veterans must be in wheelchairs or car, Veterans chauffeured in RACV vehicles start at **8.30 am.**

Our Tree

No service will be held at our tree in the Shrine grounds this year.

COVID Requirements and COVID plan

Very limited restrictions will be in place. QR stations and social distancing signs will be in place. Masks are optional because it is a outdoor event. But if you feel unwell on the day please don't attend.

RAN

HMAS Adelaide III, will be docked in Melbourne that weekend and they have been invited to the ANZAC day march.

Shuttle bus

If you take the train into the city, a bus shuttle will operate in the morning between the Shrine grounds, and the corner Flinders Street & Russel Street Federation Square (opposite the Duke of Wellington Hotel) and after the march, you can catch the bus back to Federation Square from Birdwood Avenue.



Mission Statement

To honour and remember those who served with the AMC/LSI including but not limited to
HMAS WESTRALIA, KANIMBLA, MANOORA & ASSAULT

The Gallant bravery of Armed Merchant Cruiser

Before the end of WW2 the British Commonwealth would lose in sinkings 2,426 merchants ships and 19,426 seamen in the North Atlantic alone, a rate of 66 a month, by German U-boats and surface raiders.

At the start of WWII, Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canadian Navy all had a shortage of Warships light and heavy Cruiser plus Destroyers mainly for convoy escort duty's in the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean's. To help fill the gap, on the 25 August 1939 the Admiralty was authority to requisite British passenger liners for conversion of 57 to Armed Merchant Cruiser, and were armed with ancient 19th century 6 inch and 3 inch guns with no shielding for protection and no radar, 14 AMC were sunk during WWII. The first British AMC was *HMS Hecla*, converted from the SS British Crown in 1878.

In the Britain navy *HMS Jervis Bay* was the most famous AMC, on November 5, 1940, when *HMS Jervis Bay*, under the command of Captain Fogarty Fegen VC, RN., did battle with the German pocket-battleship *Admiral Scheer*, only 65 of the crew serviced, 201 men and her Captain of *HMS Jervis Bay* went down with the ship.

On the 23 November 1939 *HMS Rawalpindi* was patrolling north of the Faroe Islands, she investigated a possible enemy sighting and encountered two German battlecruiser *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, trying to break through the GIUK gap into the Atlantic, both armed with nine 11-inch gun and a top speed of 31 knots. Despite being outgunned Captain Edward C. Kennedy RN of *HMS Rawalpindi* decided to fight it out, the German demanded he surrender, he said **We'll fight them both, they'll sink us, and that will be that. Good-bye.** Captain Kennedy ordered a change in course and speed, but the two battlecruiser closed on Rawalpindi rapidly firing a waring shot across her bow's with a order to "Heave to, she ignored the signal to "Abandon ship" and open fire with a salvo. The German sank *Rawalpindi* in 40 minutes. She managed to score one hit with of her four 6 inch guns on the German Battlecruiser *Gneisenan* amidship, which caused minor damage. 238 men died on *Rawalpindi*, including her Gallant Captain Kennedy. Twenty-seven men were recued by the German ships, and 11 more were pick up by the AMC, *HMS Chitral* the next day.

On the 13 June 1940 HMS *Scotstoun* Captain Smyth was torpedoed and sunk by *U-25*, 80 miles west of Barra Island Outer Hebrides, 7 dead and 345 survivors.

At 00.29 hours 16 June 1940 HMS *Andania* Captain D. K. Bain RN Rtd was hit aft by one of two Torpedoes from UA an Turkish built Submarine German Captain Hans Cohausz 230 miles west northwest of the Faroe Islands, two injured and taken off by Icelandic trawler.

At 04.00 hours on 13 May 1941 HMS *Salopian* F94, Captain Sir John Meynell Alleyne, DSO, DSC, Rtd RN was spotted by *U-98* while escorting convoy SC-30 about 400 miles southeast of Cape Farewell and missed with a first spread of two torpedoes because the ship was zigzagging. The next two torpedoes also missed and *U-98* had to reload two bow tubes running on the surface at high speed to search for the vessel in the fog. At 07.20 hours the Armed Merchant Cruiser came in sight again and five minutes later both reloaded bow torpedoes were fired on a surface run. The torpedoes hit amidships and in the bow but the U-boat had to dive because the ship opened fire. At 08.00 and 08.50 hours, two torpedoes were fired that both hit in the engine room, but the ship remained afloat.

The U-boat then reloaded the tubes and observed how more then ten boats were launched and a motor boat tried to cover the ship by laying a smoke screen.

At 10.43 hours, a coup de grace was fired that struck amidships and caused the ship to break in two and sink in two minutes, 3 dead and 278 survivors.

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At 13.13 hours on 6 June 1940 HMS *Carinthia*, Captain J.F.B. Barrett RN in command was hit aft by one G7e torpedo from U-46 west of Galway Bay. The Germans then observed how the ship turned apparently uncontrolled in circles and dropped depth charges from stern. At 13.47 hours, a G7e coup de grace was fired which missed and was answered by gunfire from the armed merchant cruiser. U-46 Commanding Officer was **Engelbert Endrass** he was first officer on U-47 when they sunk the battleship Royal Oak at Scapa Flow on the 14 October 1939. Endrass decided not to waste another torpedo and left the area because the burning ship was settling by the stern and the crew began abandon ship, she was taken in tow but foundered 34 miles east of Bloody Foreland, two officer and four rating died in the attack.

On the evening of 27 August U-46 **Officer Commanding E. Endrass** attacked *Dunvegan Castle*. She was 120 miles southwest of Cape Clear Island when the first torpedo struck her aft of her bridge and kept under way. At 2212 hrs U-46 torpedoed her again, hitting her in the engine room. At 2251 Hrs U-46 torpedoed Dunvegan Castle a third time, hitting her just forward of the bridge she caught fire and stop sinking the next day, three officer and 24 ratings were killed.

Commander Engelbert Endrass Oak leaves /Knight Cross of U-46 and U-567, sank 22 ships and 4 damaged, his last boat U-567 was depth charges and sunk with all hands by the Britain Sloop HMS Deptford and the corvette HMS Samphire northwest of the Azores 21 December 1941.

At 21.40 hrs on the 3 November 1940, U-99 torpedoed the unescorted merchant ship RMS Casanare west of Bloody Foreland. Her SOS distress messages brought the armed merchant cruisers HMS Laurentic (Captain E.P. Vivian) and HMS Patroclus (Captain G.C. Wynter) to the scene and the U-boat began a dramatic battle at 22.50 hrs the first torpedo stuck the engine room of HMS Laurentic. At 23.28 hrs a second torpedo hit the vessel, but didn't explode. A third torpedo was fired into the hold opened by the first torpedo, at this time the lookout spotted the U-boat on the surface and Commander Kretschmer of U-99 had a hard time in evading the gunfire from the 6 inch guns.

In the meantime, HMS Patroclus began picking up survivors as Laurentic was still afloat but in very poor condition, Patroclus moved around and dropped a couple of depth charges to scare off the sub, instead of participating in the fight against the U-boat and her lookout did not see U-99 only 300 metres away. The first torpedo stuck HMS Patroclus 00.02 hrs, a second at 00.22 hrs and a third at 00.44hrs. 14 minutes later, U-99 opened fire with her deck gun and hit with two of the four fired rounds, before Command Otto Kretschmer had again to evade the gunfire and hit the AMC with a fourth torpedo a 01.18 hrs.

After that U-99 searched for RMS Casanare to give the crew time for reloading the torpedo tubes, but only found two lifeboats at her position and questioned the survivors, at 02.39 hrs, a Sunderland flying boat suddenly appeared over the U-boat, which had to dive, no bombs were dropped by the Sunderland. At 04.04 hrs U-99 surfaced went back to the armed merchant cruisers at high speed and fired a coup de grace at the HMS Laurentic. The torpedo stuck the stern and ignited the depth charges stored there, the ship sunk by the stern in minutes. TTP

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Around this time the destroyer Achates had received the SOS call from Laudentic, **U-99** Commander Otto Kretschmer had spotted destroyer and had to sink the HMA Patroclus in a short time. A fifth torpedo had no effect, but the sixth torpedo at 05.25 hrs broke the ship in two the stern capsized and the bow sank slowly. **U-99** was attacked by HMS Hesperus (Lt Cdr McIntyre RN) but the destroyer soon left to pick up 76 survivors out of 306 from Patroclus lost their lives, including her Commander, Captain Gerald Wynter a veteran of WW1 where he commanded the destroyer HMS Magic that fought in Jutland.

Commander Otto Kretschmer sunk 33 ships, on the 22 February 1941 on her 8 patrol **U-99** was attacked by the former commander of HMS Hesperus, Captain McIntyre, now commanding HMS Walker, **U-99** was depth charge severe damage and surrendered and scuttled by her crew who were taken prisoner March 1941.

HMS Transylvania F 56 (Captain F.N. Miles, OBE, RN) was hit aft of the stack by one G7e torpedo from **U-56** about 40 miles northwest of Malin Head, Co, Donegal, 10/08/1940. The ship of the 10th Cruiser Squadron on Northern patrol had been spotted by the U-boat only 15 minutes before and the Germans had left her behind because they had no more torpedoes left. Taken in to tow but foundered, while nearby trawler rescued about 300 officers and ratings, Three officer and 33 men were lost.

HMS Forfar Torpedoed and sunk 2 December 1940 by **U-99** west of Ireland, Thirty-six officer and 136 men lost their lives.

HMS Hector sunk 5 April 1942 by Japanese Carrier-base aircraft Colombo in Ceylon.



Captain Edward C. Kennedy RN who engaged two German Battle Cruiser, Scharnhorst and Gneisenau.

Saturday, April 26, 1941

THE HALIFAX

Rajputana's Guns Defiant

Rajputana Survivors Reach Canada

Tribute Brave M Armed

Officers and Crew Members Saved By Warship

AN EAST COAST CANADIAN PORT, April 25. — Glowing tribute to the courage of sailors aboard the ill-fated armed merchant cruiser Rajputana, sunk by enemy action in the North Atlantic, was paid here by Commander Paul Cross, former Halifax businessman and senior surviving officer of the Canadians aboard.

Saved By Destroyer

When the Nazi undersea craft hurled two torpedoes at the one-time Oriental passenger liner, officers and men of the ship behaved as if the incident had been purely routine, the commander said.

Forty men went down with the ship. Two had been killed by the torpedo explosion. Others drowned. Arriving at this port were 12 officers and 22 men, all Canadians with the exception of two who came from Newfoundland.

Survivors were picked up by a destroyer which arrived at the scene of the sinking two or three hours after the ship went down.

Singing Seamen

Commander Cross, who left his business to take a sea appointment with the Royal Canadian Navy shortly after the outbreak of war, recounted how sailors on the aft deck of the stricken vessel sang "Roll Out The Barrel" as the ship went down.

Most of the ship's company managed to get in the boats. Those who didn't, jumped. It was probably the majority of the 38 were lost then.

There were only two Canadian casualties. They were Lieut. Victor Bussereau, former resident of Hamilton, Ont., and lately of Halifax, and Midshipman Frank Johnston, Saint John. The other victims were mostly British sailors and officers.

Canadian naval officers and midshipmen who survived the H.M.S. Rajputana sinking are shown (top) after their arrival at an East Coast Canadian Port. In front centre holding a lifeboat nameplate is Commander Paul B. Cross of Halifax, senior officer of the group. In the second row seated left to right are: Sub-Lieutenant M. W. Knowles, Saint John; Midshipmen W. C. Gardner, Winnipeg; Murray H. Cooke, Galt, Ont.; Ian B. Chenoweth, Westmount, Que. (standing), and Engineer Sub-Lieut. D. L. McGillivray, Sarnia, Ont.; standing at the rear are Sub-Lieut. E. E. Large, Crapaud, P.E.I.; Midshipmen D. L. Hanington, Saint John, K. E. Meredith, Vancouver; J. A. Clarke, Toronto; and G. F. Gower, Calgary. BOTTOM, from left to right: C. Warford, Glace Bay; Frank Davidson, Salmon River; T. A. Maloney, Shubenacadie; Roy Canavan, Halifax; Albert Saulnier, St. Alphonse, and Gilbert Tanner, Lunenburg.

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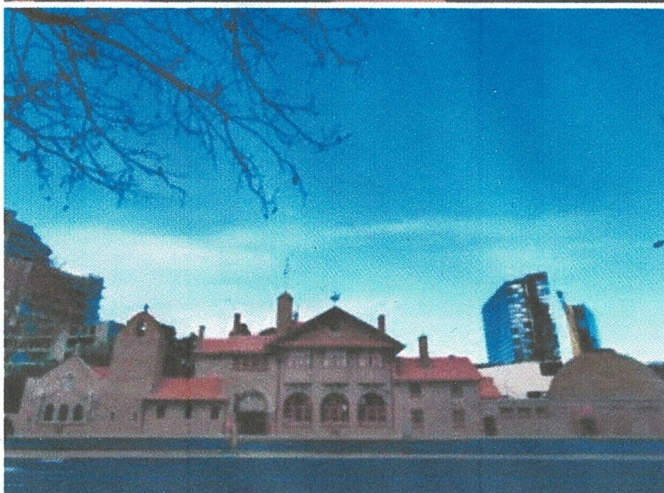
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Stolen from the roof of the Mission to Seafarers- Our weathervane ***Can you please help us put out a public appeal.***

Sad news for all of the lovers of the Historic Mission building. Last night (March 6, 2022) thieves stole the iconic weathervane from the roof. If you saw anything get in touch or if you see it, let us or the police know. A 100 year-old copper weathervane in the form of a galleon-style sailing ship has been stolen from its rightful place atop the historic Mission to Seafarers building in Docklands.

Local master craftsman Henry Alfred Saw crafted the weathervane in 1917, when copper was expensive due to World War 1. After a century on rooftop in high winds, the weathervane was in need of repair. In 2020 through grant from the Victoria Heritage Restoration Fund as well as private and public contributions it was restored and secured to the top of the building. The weathervane is unusually intricate, and represents the high levels of both craftsmanship and artistry, ' Sue Dight -CEO commented; The way the metal of sails incurve as though billowing in the wind, the bulging hull of the ship, and the delicate rigging details make it quite a special object for something that is also structurally robust, and was intended to serve use as meteorological instrument.

The historic weathervane is included as part of the Mission to Seafarers building's heritage significance on the Victoria Heritage Register, along with its chapel, dome and archives, which is open everyday to the public.



Any help would be greatly appreciated, please contact police or Mission to Seafarers Docklands: T + 61 3 9629 7083

717 Flinders Street, Docklands Vic 3008



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

December— John Boyd, George Hinton, Bob Elliot.

January— Nev Phillips, Leon Beech, Jock Inglis.

February— Martin Marks.

March— Frank Byrne.

April— Ian Gardner, Kelvin Smibert.

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 and name please.

D.W. McKenzie to the Association.

R.J. O'Keffe Memorial.

S.B. Harvey for his mates,

VALE

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

AB Danny Bolton Age 97, 27/02/21.

AB John Jack Macartney Age 97, 14/10/21.

Burial at Sea

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 CPO Anita van Der Meer (MSO) Defence Community Organisation, Locked Bag 7005, Liverpool N.S.W. 1871, or send an e-mail to LEUT Jimmy Fitzgerald Building 478 HMAS Cerberus Vic 3920, Phone 0429 770 071, email james.fitzgerald1@defence.gov.au

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

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