The Navy League of Australia - Victoria Division Incorporating Tasmania

NEWSLETTER



February 2015 Volume:4No:2

"The maintenance of the maritime well-being of the nation"

is the principal objective of the Navy League of Australia

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NAVAL HISTORY

The months of January & February are indeed a memorable period in terms of Naval History, as we cast our thoughts back in time or browse through the history books.

January 1942

The Battle of Lingayen Gulf in the Philippine Islands against the Japanese took place in January 1945.

The following RAN units together with U.S. Forces were involved in

this operation.

CRUISERS HMAS AUSTRALIA, SHROPSHIRE DESTROYERS HMAS WARRAMUNGA, ARUNTA

FRIGATE HMAS GASCOYNE SLOOP HMAS WARREGO

INFANTRY LANDING

SHIPS HMAS WESTRALIA KANIMBLA, MANOORA During this battle HMAS AUSTRALIA suffered further attacks from Japanese suicide planes.

February 1942

February 2015 marks the 73rd anniversary of the bombing of Darwin by the Japanese on Thursday 19th February 1942.

The attack which was the first of 64 air raids on Darwin throughout the period 1942-1943 has been likened by some as Australia's Pearl Harbour.

February 1964

The 10th February 2005 marked the 51st anniversary of the loss of HMAS VOYAGER Australia's greatest peacetime naval disaster in which 82 personnel perished, when VOYAGER and HMAS MELBOURNE collided on the 10th February 1964.

February 1980

It was on the 29th February 1980 that the last RAN Second World War Two ship the Frigate HMAS DIAMANTINA paid off for disposal at Garden Island Sydney.

HMAS DIAMANTINA, a River Class Frigate saw wartime service bombarding Japanese batteries throughout the Solomon Islands, as well as providing naval gunfire support to Australian Troops operating in Bougainville.

Following VJ Day, Diamantina transported Senior Officers to accept the local surrender of Japanese forces on a number of Pacific Islands, including Ocean Island and Nauru.

HMAS DIAMANTINA concluded her RAN service as an Oceanographic Research Vessel, but DIAMANTINA still provides a community service as a museum ship in Brisbane in a dry dock on the Brisbane River.



HMAS DIAMANTINA

The Leagues CMDR John Wilkins OAM,RFD has once more provided a most interesting story detailing the distinguished service of Codebreaker LEUT Eric Nave.

We share that story with you:-





NAVE, Theodore Eric Lieutenant RN **(RAN) OBE** *For distinguished services during the war.*He is included as an outstanding RAN Officer who transferred to the RN before WW2 and returned to Australia in 1942.

He served in the RAN from 1917 as a midshipman. In the 1920s, required to learn a foreign language for his Lieutenant's promotion he chose Japanese as: "with French and German you got sixpence a day extra, (but) for Japanese you got five bob" (ten times as much). So Nave from February 1921 went to Japan to study for two years as an interpreter attached to the British Embassy. He obtained the highest final exam score of any RN, RAN or Service interpreter. He was seconded to RN Sigint section in 1925, then in 1927 to the UK Government Code and Cypher School in London. 1930 he was posted to Far East Combined Bureau, Hong Kong, later serving in Singapore. Invalided to Melbourne in 1940 he (possibly with DNI CMDR Longs support) established a small RAN cryptographic unit in Victoria Barracks Melbourne with a core of RAN personnel, together with a number of university academics and graduates who specialised in classics, linguistics and Mathematics, e.g. Athanasius Treweek and Arthur Dale Trendall. This unit in February 1942 moved to the Monterey Apartments in Queens Road, Melbourne which housed Fleet Radio Unit, Melbourne (FRUMEL) a United States-Australian-British signals intelligence unit, founded in Melbourne, Australia when the Japanese entered the war.

Lieut Rudolph J.(Rudi) Fabian USN, the ex-US Philippines Station CAST leader arrived in Melbourne with his fifty staff, evacuated by submarine on 8 April 1942, fleeing the Philippines ahead of the Japanese invasion forces. In late April he took charge of FRUMEL and Nave and the Australian and British staff Nave had assembled including the evacuated Singapore code breaker staff.

FRUMEL was one of two major Allied (UK-US-Australian) signals intelligence units, called Fleet Radio Units in the Pacific theatres. The other being FRUPAC, known as Station HYPO, in Hawaii. FRUMEL inter-navy organisation, was subordinate to Commander United States Seventh Fleet. The separate Central Intelligence Bureau in Melbourne (later Brisbane) was attached to Allied South West Pacific Area US - Australian Army Command headquarters.

FRUMEL, was established by Nave in early 1942, nearly two months prior to Fabian's arrival at the Monterey Apartments in Queens Road, Melbourne. It eventually comprised three main groups-

- 1. Commander Eric Nave's small RAN cryptography unit relocated from Victoria Barracks in February 1942 to FRUMEL, in Monterey Apartments. Nave's unit comprised a core of RAN personnel, with locally recruited assistants comprising university academics, graduates specialising in linguistics and mathematics and including Arthur Dale Trendall, Athanasius Treweek, Eric Barnes, Jack Davies and Ronald Bond.
- 2. British Foreign Office linguists (Henry Archer, Arthur Cooper and Hubert Graves), and Royal Navy (RN) and Far East Combined Bureau (FECB) support staff, evacuated from Singapore.
- 3. Lieutenant Rudolph J. (Rudi) Fabian USN and his 75-man Codebreaker Unit, formerly based at United States Navy's Station CAST, Philippines, from which they had evacuated as Japanese forces advanced. He arrived Melbourne as the USN's 7th Fleet appointed Officer-in-charge of FRUMEL's two existing groups. Fabian had left behind (destroyed) all his files in Manila Bay as the US retreated from Corregidor. His lost filing resource was quickly replaced in Melbourne using IBM (punched-card) equipment.

Nave and Fabian's personal relationship soon became difficult. Fabian, born in Butte, Montana in 1908, and his deputy John Lietweller, now manned the office, 24 hours a day. Fabian "a highly professional officer with an air of authority and a hint of Central European sophistication regarded co-operation with anyone who was not US Navy, or under its command, as poor security". This assessment to him was important for he had in CAST one of the US Purple machines that was reading Japanese Diplomatic signals and he was suddenly confronted with British Australian and civilian staff who posed a threat to his need for secrecy. So he adopted an inflexible US inter-service attitude about everyone not USN. However in the Philippines he provided intelligence to the US Army command45.

However this was a war where the enemy had the upper hand so his rigid attitude may have reduced the effectiveness of FRUMEL that was supposed to achieve the best co-ordinated intelligence from all sources, including those outside of the US Military sphere, to ensure victory and reduction of casualties. The problem that arose was that Fabian did not appreciate that there were two quite significant and separate areas "Intelligence" and "Security". Both equally important but each having different objectives but with a basic need to rely heavily on one another if they were to succeed. Fabian's attitude seemed to give an impression he was primarily a 'Security' man not an 'Intelligence' man. One senior British officer said the atmosphere at FRUMEL was "What is yours is mine, and what is mine is my own", Fabian not being interested in any exchange of material with General Macarthur's US Army Central Intelligence Bureau, the joint Australian-US Army codebreaking unit in Brisbane.

This unco-operative "Security" attitude between Allied service organisations with similar objectives had been experienced by Stewart Menzies in the UK during WW1, and this attitude reappeared in WW2 when Churchill's, spy master "C" (now Sir Stewart Menzies) intelligence organisation, saw other UK intelligence groups adopting, on occasion, alarming competitive attitudes that seriously threatened the work and safety of rival UK intelligence groups, when all were supposed to be on the same side. The German Intelligence Chief 'Gahlen' also had similar experiences in Germany as revealed in post war publications₄₆.

Eventually Fabian's USN rigid attitude was successful in ousting Commander Nave RN (RAN) who he regarded as a "security risk" for wanting to cooperate with the Australian-US Army codebreaking unit in Brisbane. Nave transferred to the Australian Army's Central Bureau at Brisbane. Joe Richard commenting that "if Fabian did not want Nave, the US Army codebreakers were very happy to have him ... Fabian's dislike of Eric Nave was very fortunate for us. Nave became an indispensable person" in "reading air-to-ground messages containing the weather" which "gave away the intended target for the day."

According to Jenkins, Fabian wasted no time in getting rid of Nave's civilian intelligence supernumeraries at Monterey, including the many British service wives who worked in the Crypto area and had been evacuated from Singapore. He then squeezed out the British diplomatic corps types, such as Cooper and Archer, who transferred to the Central Bureau. One hopes Fabian's parochial attitude did not damage the flow of intelligence in the war against Japan. Jamieson (A.B. Jamieson, Nave's second recruit) and (Athanasius) Treweek, managed to achieve cordial relations with USN, and remained with FRUMEL throughout the war and one wonders whether they were there to maintain surveillance of Fabian's actions.

Lieut Fabian's comment about Nave having difficulties with his superior, Commander Long, RAN, Director of Naval Intelligence, gave the appearance of him deliberately trying to denigrate Nave's standing. However CAPT Ian Pfennigwerth RAN in his book on Nave entitled "A Man of Intelligence" (2006) gives a vastly better understanding of Nave's work and corrected the damage done to Nave's post war reputation by James Rusbridger in their joint publication "Betrayal at Pearl Harbour 1991". This reflected Rusbridger's views rather than Nave's, including a claim that Churchill concealed warnings about Pearl Harbor from Roosevelt to lure America into the war. Nave's 1991 interview on Japanese television saw him "repudiate a large slice of what Rusbridger had written (which Nave had no prior knowledge of before publication) calling it speculation." CAPT T.E. Nave OBE RN (RAN) World famous Japanese codebreaker WW2 Wearing white between the braid for Supply Brach.

Nave and his codebreaker department were largely responsible for warning the US Navy on 2 December 1941 that by the end of that weekend USA would be at war with Japan. The US response was that there were no hostile acts west of the date line.

After Japan entered the war Nave's input assisted in giving Intelligence the means to give US General MacArthur the ability to predict Japanese military moves, such as Milne Bay. The code breakers had warned him Milne Bay (part of Australia's New Guinea Protectorate) was to be invaded in one month's time -, late August 1942. This enabled a hurried reinforcement of Milne Bay. The ensuing Battle of Milne Bay was decisively won, mainly by Australian soldiers and the US engineers; the first time the Japanese had been defeated on land by the Allies. General MacArthur must have appreciated this vital and timely Australian intelligence from code breakers as well as the RAN's Director of Intelligence CMDR R.B.M. Long's Coastwatcher network behind enemy lines.

CAPT Ian Pfennigwerth RAN in his book on Nave entitled "A Man of Intelligence" (2006) records "the official view of Eric Nave's contribution to the secret world ... encapsulated in words provided by the Director of the Defence Signals Directorate was delivered in Nave's eulogy by the Naval Association president Ron Clarke" - "Much of what he (Nave) did in support of Australian national interests during World War 2, helping to establish the Central Bureau in Melbourne (the precursor of today's Defence Signals Directorate,) and assisting General Douglas MacArthur, cannot be made public, even today.he played a vital role in breaking Japanese naval and diplomatic codesleading up to the outbreak of hostilities in the Pacific with the attack on Pearl Harbor. After the war, Nave continued his distinguished career in Australian intelligence."

Nave was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1946 and retired. (Summary by CMDR John M Wilkins OAM RFD* RANR, SONID at HMAS Lonsdale RANR 1980-1985)

AS IT WAS"

Once again we invite you to join us as we take a look at more recent naval history, at items that involved or caught the eye of Navy League over the years on our "Keep Watch" brief. This time we go back 10 years as we browse through our records and reports to January and February 2005.

- 1. HMAS KANIMBLA assists Tsunami survivors
- 2. HMAS BALLARAT aground
- 3. First of Class Nuship ARMIDALE launched

HMAS KANIMBLA LPA:51 ASSISTS TSUNAMI SURIVORS

On New Year's Eve 2004 HMAS KANIMBLA L51 sailed from Fleet Base East Sydney bound for Indonesia to the Tsunami devastated area of Aceh on the Island of Sumatra.

HMAS KANIMBLA deployed on operation "Sumatra Assist" to provide aid to the survivors of the Tsunami, calling at Darwin en route to collect earthmoving equipment and 100 engineers.

During KANIMBLA'S 1990's conversion from US Newport Class Tank Landing ship to RAN Amphibious Landing Platform, the new modifications at Forgac's Newcastle Dockyard included:-

Alternations to deck areas to support additional helicopter operations, an increase in the ships water making capability and the provision of a primary care facility

Amongst numerous other capabilities, her primary roles now also included:-

To provide a complete medical facility onboard to conduct medical treatment for all types of casualties and to provide an operational base from the ship in regional waters in the form of providing assistance, logistics and relief to the civilian community in the event of a natural disaster. KANIMBLA or her sister ship HMAS MANOORA should be well suited to the task in hand.

Under the command of CMDR Stephen Woodall RAN, HMAS KANIMBLA was due to arrive in Sumatra on January 14th 2005. Her motto is "Cry Havoc" and no doubt, she would encounter plenty of what her motto describes in the tsunami ravaged areas of Indonesia.

HMAS BALLARAT TO AUSTRALIAN MAINLAND

The RAN'S latest Anzac Class Frigate, HMAS BALLARAT returned to Western Australia's Fleet Base West under its own power on February 3rd 2005, after running aground on 22 January 2005 while on "*Operation Relex* 2" patrol, off Christmas Island.

It has since been reported that BALLART was sailing backwards when it ran aground causing \$2M damage. Inspection of the 3600 tonne Frigate revealed that the hull had not been holed. BALLARAT departed for Garden Island South of Perth.

The ship's Commanding Officer CMDR David Hunter advised that BALLARAT had maintained speeds of 15 knots in 6 metre seas and gale force winds during the 10 day voyage.

Navy divers and engineers were conducting assessments to determine whether HMAS BALLARAT could continue to Williamstown Victoria where the ship is scheduled to undergo routine maintenance.

CMDR Hunter said he was confident damage to the new vessel was not as severe as first thought. He also said that the reason for the grounding was subject to a board of inquiry investigation.

HMAS BALLARAT eventually arrived back in Melbourne on 14th February 2005 at the builders Tenix yard in Williamstown where she is currently undergoing routine maintenance and repairs to the damage caused by the grounding.

HMAS BALLARAT arrived in Port Phillip under her own power and is expected to depart from Williamstown during mid-April 2005.

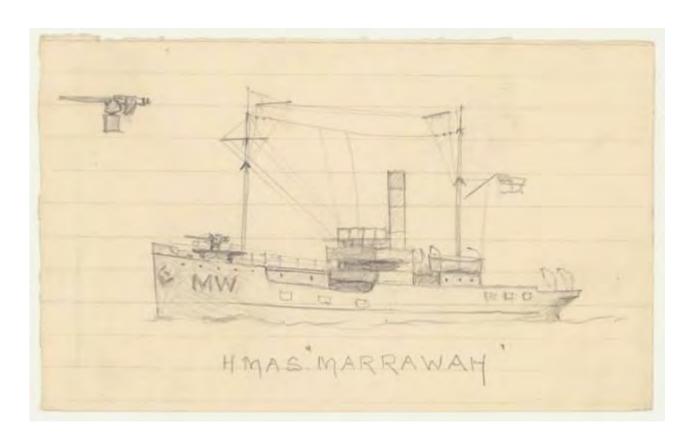
"AS IT WAS C'TND"

NUSHIP ARMIDALE LAUNCHED AND NAMED

The first of the RAN'S Armidale Class Patrol Boats, Nuship ARMIDALE, was launched on January 5th 2005 and christened in a naming ceremony at Austal Ship Construction Facility, Western Australia on January 22nd 2005. The Minister for Defence Senator Robert Hill was represented at the ceremony by the Minister for Environment and Heritage Senator lan Campbell, who said that he was sure that the sea trials over the next two months would see the vessels ability to meet the required performance.

The vessel was named by Ms. Jana Stone, the eldest daughter of ordinary seaman Donald Raymond Lawson, who served on the original HMAS ARMIDALE a Bathurst Class Minesweeper-Corvette, during WWII. Following sea trials, Nuship ARMIDALE is scheduled for acceptance in May 2005.

HMAS Marrawah was an auxiliary minesweeper operated by the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) during World War II. She was launched in 1910 by Van Vliet & Company, Hardinxveld. Her engines were fitted in Glasgow. The ship operated in Australian waters from 1910, and was requisitioned by the RAN on 12 December 1941. In 1943 she was transferred under the control of the US Army small ships section and allotted pennant number S-178. She was returned to her owners after the war, sold to Riverside Dock & Engineering Company and hulked. Her hulk was scuttled by the Royal Australian Air Force off Sydney on 10 May 1951.



OUR STORY OF TASMANIA'S NAVAL HISTORY CONTINUED

TASMANIA & THE NAVY

The Great Depression affected the naval presence in Tasmania in other ways as well. HUON and SWAN both decommissioned in 1928 and, at the turn of the decade, staff levels were gradually reduced from April 1930, only one officer, a surgeon lieutenant commander, was posted to the Sub-District Naval Office in Launceston. The onset of World War II led to an increase in naval staff in Hobart. An examination service and Port War Signal Station were in place on 3rd September 1939, and five requisitioned ships acted as examination vessels over the course of the war. The signal station was moved from Mount Nelson to Cape Direction, overlooking Storm Bay, on 20th November 1939.

The naval depot in Hobart had gone without a name since its establishment nearly three decades earlier. On 27th August 1939, the depot was commissioned as HMAS CERBERUS VI following the naming convention applied to other naval depots around the country. When the decision was made to abandon this convention, the depot was renamed HMAS DERWENT on 1st August 1940. However, the Royal Navy had a Hunt class destroyer, HMS DERWENT also in commission so the establishment was again renamed, becoming HMAS HUON on 1st March 1942.

Tasmanian shipbuilders also made their contributions to the war effort E.A. Jack of Launceston and Purdon & Featherstone of Hobart each building three harbour defence motor launches for the RAN. Purdon & Featherstone built the first vessel of its type in Australia HDML 1321, which served in enemy waters under the control of the Allied Intelligence Bureau supporting Coastwatcher's in the Pacific. In April 1944 she landed eight members of the Z-Special Unit on Muschu Island in New Guinea for a reconnaissance mission; only one returned.

As with the previous war, many Tasmanians made the ultimate sacrifice during WWII. At least 1349 Tasmanian sailors gave their lives including 36 aboard HMAS SYDNEY. Many also perished in other ships lost during the war such as PERTH, YARRA, CANBERRA & PARRAMATTA. Four Tasmanians were lost in HMAS ARMIDALE including Ordinary Seaman Teddy Sheean who was born in Barrington and last seen defiantly firing his gun at enemy aircraft as ARMIDALE slipped below the waves. Three Tasmanians were amongst the 30 officers and sailors killed aboard HMAS AUSTRALIA at Leyte Gulf, including the Commanding Officer, Captain Emile Dechaineux, DSC RAN, from Launceston, who was killed when a kamikaze struck the ship's foremast causing an explosion and fire on the bridge.

NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA COMMUNITY AWARD

Congratulations to CMDR Stacey Porter RAN and her ships company at Navy Headquarters Tasmania for winning the Navy Leagues Community Award.

The Award was presented by the Navy Leagues Federal President Mr. Graham Harris, in the presence of RADM Stuart Mayer, at NHQ-Tasmania during November 2014.

NEWS IN BRIEF

YOUNG ENDEAVOUR

On Monday 22nd December 2014, the Sail Training Brigantine of the RAN, Young Endeavour, set sail form Sydney on a 12 month circumnavigation of the World. The first time the vessel has undertaken such a task in 20 years.

24 young men and women are on board as the first of eight such crews who will embark during the around the World cruise.

On board to teach the young crew members the ropes are 12 RAN crew members with LCDR Gavin dawe in command.

The highlight of the deployment will be at Gallipoli, where Young Endeavour will be an Australian representative for the 1915-2015 Centenary Commemorations.

One of the RAN personnel onboard for this first leg of the voyage is LEUT Adam Farley, Navigator who was a guest of the League's Victoria Division at the Tall Ships Celebrations in Williamstown in September 2013. To farewell Young Endeavour at Garden Island were the Governor General Sir Peter Cosgrove, Chief of Navy VADM Tim Barrett, Fleet CMDR RADM Stuart Mayer plus family and friends of the Brigantine's crew.

RAN BAND

One of the highlights of Williamston's Australia Weekend 2015 celebrations was the Seawork's Maritime Festival, which focused on the 150th anniversary of the visit to Williamstown by CSS SHENANDOAH.

The Confederate Navy arrived in Melbourne during January 1865 and following her refit and refurbishment at Williamstown sailed the following month to continue her fight in the American Civil War.

Rating highly amongst the 2015 program of celebrations, which included American Civil War Memorabilia, cannon firing re-enactments, displays etc., was the outstanding performance by the RAN band.

Under the baton of Lieutenant Cassandra Mohapp RAN the 35 piece band presented stirring marching music which included "National Emblem", "RAN", "Serving in Harmony", "On the Quarterdeck", plus a composition by one of the band members "Fight to Win".

With the backing of the band, the performance concluded with vocalist Able Seaman Laura Nicholls renditions of "I am Australian" and "Waltzing Matilda". An excellent all round performance by "The Royal Australian Navy Band from HMAS CERBERUS.



CANNON FIRING AT WILLIAMSTOWN 2015

NEWS IN BRIEF C'TND

OAM TO LEAGUE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

We offer congratulations to our Navy League Victoria-Tasmania Division Executive Committee member Allan Paull. Allan received an OAM in this year's Australia Day Honours.

The Order of Australia Medal was awarded to Allan for his service to the community through charitable and social welfare organisations Well done Allan.

CRESWELL ORATION 2015

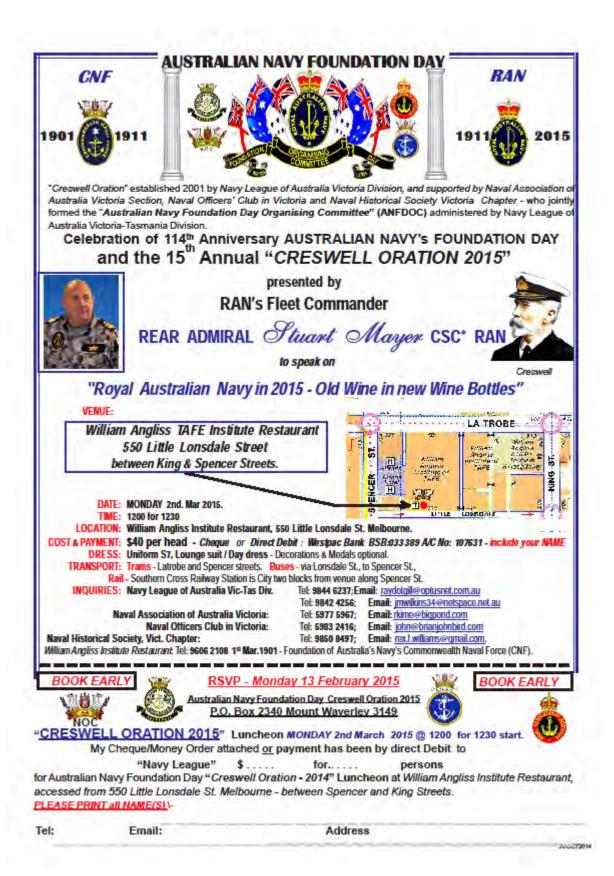
This edition of the Leagues newsletter contains details of the forthcoming "Australian Navy Foundation Day" commemoration, a key feature of which will be the "Creswell Oration" to be presented by Rear Admiral Stuart Mayer CSC* RAN.

The venue for the "Creswell Oration" is the William Angliss Restaurant. The event is to be held on Monday 2nd March 2015.

You are encouraged to book now for the luncheon-presentation in line with the contact details listed below.

Bookings now open All enquires to CMDR John M Wilkins OAM RFD*RANR Ret"d jmwilkins34@netspace.net.au

Telephone 9842 4256



Membership

Any person with an interest in maritime affairs, or who wishes to acquire an interest in, or knowledge of, maritime affairs and who wishes to support the objectives of the League, is invited to join.

OBJECTIVES

The principal objective of the Navy League of Australia is" The maintenance of the maritime well-being of the Nation" by:

- Keeping before the Australian people the fact that we are a maritime nation and that a strong Navy supported by
 maritime elements of the Air Force and Army and other Government Maritime agencies are indispensable elements
 of our national well-being and vital to the freedom of Australia.
- Promoting defence self-reliance by supporting maritime research, defence industry, Australian shipping, ship-building, port and transport infrastructure and off shore resource exploration and development.
- Promoting and encouraging the interest and training of youth in the sea.

ACTIVITIES

The Navy League of Australia works towards its objectives in a number of ways:

- By including in its membership leading representatives of the many elements which form the maritime community.
- Through soundly- based contributions by members to journals and newspapers, and other media comment.
- By publishing *The Navy*, a quarterly journal reporting on local and overseas maritime happenings, past, present, and projected.
- By organizing symposia, ship visits and various other functions of maritime interests throughout the years.
- By supporting Australian Navy Cadets, and assisting in the provision of training facilities.

Member participation is encouraged in all these activities.

POLICY

The policy of the League can be found at the back of *The Navy*.

Correspondence:- All articles for publication in the Navy League of Australia (Vic.Div.) Newsletter, should be addressed to the Editor, Frank McCarthy, email:-(alistle@bigpond.com). All other correspondence should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Navy League of Australia (Vic.Div.) P.O.Box 2340, Mount Waverley, Victoria 3149: (raydotgill@optusnet.com.au).

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Joining the League

To become a Member of The League, you do not need to have had any previous maritime experience. You merely need an interest in maritime affairs. Simply complete the Application Form below, and post it, together with your first annual subscription of \$35.00 (which includes the four quarterly editions of The Navy), to the Hon Secretary of the Division of the Navy League in the State in which you reside, the address of which are as follows:

New South Wales Division: GPO Box 1719, Sydney, NSW 2001. Victorian Division: PO Box 2340, Mt Waverley, Vic 3149. Queensland Division: GPO Box 1481, Brisbane, QLD 4001. South Australian Division: PO Box 3008, Unley, SA 5061. West Australian Division: 3 Prosser Way, Myaree, WA 6154.

If you live in Tasmania, please post the form to the Hon Secretary of the Victorian Division. If you live in the Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory, please post the form to the Hon Secretary of the New South Wales or South Australian Division respectively,

Subscriptions are due on 1 July in each year, and your membership will be current to 30 June immediately following the date on which you join the League, except that if your first subscription is received during the period 1 April to 30 June in any year, your initial membership will be extended to 30 June in the following year.

THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA



I wish to join the Navy League of Australia, the objectives of which I support, and I enclose a remittance for \$35.00 (including \$3.18 GST) being my first annual subscription to 30 June next.

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