



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

is the principal objective of the Navy League of Australia

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AUSTRALIAN NAVY FOUNDATION DAY 113th ANNIVERSARY MARCH 1901-2014

The Navy League of Australia Victoria Division, The Naval Officers Club Victoria, The Naval Association of Australia Victoria, Naval Historical Society of Victoria together with their supporters, celebrated the 113th anniversary of the Foundation of the Australian Navy when they gathered at Melbourne's William Angliss Restaurant Friday 28th February 2014.

This year's chairman for the celebrations was Past President of Navy League of Australia Victoria Division CMDR John Wilkins OAM, RFD.

The Creswell Oration was delivered by Fleet Commander Rear Admiral Tim Barrett AM, CSC, RAN. His excellent presentation entitled "The significance of the arrival of the Royal Australian Navy First Fleet" in which he drew parallels to the "then" and "now" of the RAN, took us through the history of the Australian Navy to the present RAN activities and future plans and programs.

He recalled navy's amphibious operations in New Guinea in the early days of WW1, and explained how the RAN'S future amphibious operations will be streamlined with the introduction of the two new Landing Helicopter Dock Ships HMA ships CANBERRA and ADELAIDE.

Coupled with a "Question and answer" session RADM Barrett's presentation covered a wide range of topics including the forthcoming "Air Warfare Destroyers now to be known as "DDG'S"

RADM Barrett also advised that in September of this year the search would resume for the RAN'S submarine HMAS AE1, lost in September of 1914 whilst on patrol in New Guinea waters during WW1. He further added that it was most probable that HMAS YARRA IV would lead the search.

This year the RAN commemorates 100 years of submarine service to the Nation.

RADM Barrett advised that current manning levels for Navy were approximately 11,900. He expected the total manning level to fluctuate over the next three years, in line with the introduction of new vessels to the fleet including the LHD'S and DDG'S and the phasing out of the Heavy Landing Craft and HMAS TOBRUK. The major fighting force will be 8 Anzac FFH'S and 3 DDG'S.

In addition to Rear Admiral Barrett's presence the RAN was also represented by Senior Naval Officer of Victoria and Commanding Officer of HMAS CERBERUS Captain Steve Bowater OAM together with 20 members from the crew of HMAS YARRA VI, including her CO. LCDR Brendan O'Hara and XO Richard Brickacek DSM.

Other guests in attendance included Vice Admiral Creswell's granddaughter Mrs Elizabeth Sevier, family member Mrs Rosemary Creswell, and the grandson of Rear Admiral Tickell Mr Murray Wright, the Leagues Federal President CMDR Graham Harris, Mr Rex Williams, Mrs Jenny Smyth, CDRE Jim Dickson, LEUT Russell Pettis, CMDR Terry Makings, CAPT Paul Willee, CMDR Warren Kemp, CDRE Peter Habersberger, LCDR Roger Blythman, Reverend Dr Andreas Loewe and many others swelling the total attendance numbers to in excess of 90.

Vice Admiral Creswell's cocked hat, sword, medals and decorations and other memorabilia were on display for all guests to view and admire.

It was indeed fortunate on the now rare occasion that Melbourne receives a visit from a naval vessel that HMAS YARRA IV was able to rearrange her schedule to arrive one day in advance of her programmed visit date to join in the Navy Foundation Day Celebrations. All members of YARRA'S crew received memento gifts from the Navy League to mark the occasion. In addition to all guests receiving souvenir table brochure, gifts were also presented to RADM Barrett and to Creswell family members Mrs Rosemary Creswell and Mrs Elizabeth Sevier.

The 2014 Australia Navy Foundation Day 114th Anniversary celebrations were again an outstanding success, with due thanks to the senior organiser, the Navy Leagues CMDR John Wilkins and his loyal band of helpers.



HMAS YARRA IV



RADM TIM BARRETT AM CSC RAN PRESENTS THE 2014 CRESWELL ORATION



RADM TIM BARRETT AM CSC RAN PRESENTS GIFTS TO CRESWELL FAMILY MEMBERS

NAVAL HISTORY

The birthdate of the Australian Navy is 1st March 1901 and so it is that the month of March is an important month for the Australian Navy, for in addition to the first of March being the Australian Navy Foundation day, it is a period to reflect upon other significant events during the month, as we recall the tragic loss of the light Cruiser HMAS PERTH in the early hour of March 1st 1942 now 72 years ago.

HMAS PERTH was lost during the battle of the Sunda Strait in WW11, together with many of her complement including her Commanding Officer Captain Hec Waller RAN. A memorial to honour Captain Hec Waller was erected in his home town of Benalla, Victoria on 14th March 2010.

Lost also in the same month of the same year, was the Sloop HMAS YARRA, again with a large loss of life also including her commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Robert Rankin. HMAS YARRA like HMAS PERTH was overpowered by a large Japanese naval force.

*See HMAS YARRA unit citation in this issue; (Editor.)

In this month, we also remember that it was on the 1st March 1967, now 47 years ago, that the RAN first flew their own Australian White Ensign from their ships and from their shore establishments.

The first ship to fly the new RAN Ensign was the ANL shipping company freighter MV BOONAROO, requisitioned by and commissioned into the RAN for service to Vietnam, during the conflict in that country, as HMAS BOONAROO.

It was also the 1st of March in the year of 2003, that the 4th and current HMAS YARRA a Coastal Minehunter, MHC87, was commissioned in New South Wales. So it can be gleaned from the foregoing that the month of March for the Royal Australian Navy is indeed an important period for us to reflect upon and to remember.

SHRINE REPORT FEBRUARY- MARCH 2014

Navy League of Australia Executive Committee member , Mr Ken Crook, has kindly made available a report detailing the redevelopment work currently being carried out at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance, Ken's report as follows:-

The extensive redevelopment work at the Shrine of Remembrance is ahead of schedule with major construction works expected to be completed in March 2014. Covering earthworks have commenced on some surface areas in preparation to match the original landscaping. The fit-out of permanent and temporary artefacts, exhibitions, displays, staff and education facilities, will then occur until October and the logistical tunnel to service these activities has now been covered over. The new south-east and south-west courtyards are well under way, with a large tree already positioned in the south-west courtyard. After ANZAC day this year, the existing northern undercroft visitors' centre and audio-visual area will be removed and temporarily transferred to the new southern undercroft extension. Additional lifts and stairways will be installed in anticipation of a surge in public interest and increased visits from schools to the education centre. In August, the new retail and exhibition area will be completed and the whole redevelopment finished by October 2014, in time for the World War I and Remembrance Day Centenary

commemorations. The original Shrine building which was constructed between 1927 and 1934 has remained and is not visibly altered as a result of the new works.

“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 March 2004. We note that it was around this time we reported on the following:-

- Nu Ship BALLARAT to Commission
- HMAS STUART to the Gulf
- USS PORT ROYAL pays a visit

MARCH 2004

The Anzac Class Frigate Ballarat, Pendant No.155 is expected to commission in Melbourne during June of this year, 2004.

Nuship Ballarat with CMDR Dave Hunter as CO and LCDR Steve Dryden as XO, is ship No.6 of a class of 8 for the RAN plus 2 for the Royal New Zealand Navy already in service.

NEXT RAN SHIP TO THE GULF

The Anzac Class Frigate HMAS STUART Pendant No.153, will replace Adelaide Class Frigate HMAS MELBOURNE Pendant No.05, currently on patrol in the Arabian Gulf. League members may recall a morning tea reception and tour of the STUART during July 2003.

VISIT TO USS PORT ROYAL CG73

During the February 2004 visit to Melbourne by the Ticonderoga Class Cruiser USS PORT ROYAL CG73, the CO Captain Patrick Allen USN played host to guests at an onboard reception with the ship alongside at Port Melbourne. The USS PORT ROYAL made Melbourne her first Australian port of call following a 6 month deployment to the Arabian Gulf.

PORT ROYAL'S visit to Melbourne was followed by a brief stopover in Sydney, prior to the ship returning to her home port of Pearl Harbour Hawaii.

Included in the Cruisers tasks in the Gulf, was guard patrol duty of Iraq's most important oil refinery, plus anti-smuggling patrols. On one such occasion, the crew of PORT ROYAL discovered illicit hashish valued at \$3million hidden under many tons of ice in a freighters cargo hold.

However, the prime task of the USS PORT ROYAL'S deployment to the Arabian Gulf was to participate as a unit of the first “expeditionary strike group ESG-1.

The USS PORT ROYAL together with 5 other ships and a Submarine arrived in the Gulf area of operations in September 2003.

Heading up this group was the assault Carrier USS PELELIU LHA5, together with 2 other assault ships USS OGDEN LPD5 and USS GERMANTOWN LSD42, plus the Arleigh

Burke Destroyer USS DECATUR DDG73, AND THE Oliver Hazard-Perry Class Frigate USS JARRET FFG433.

The 13th marine expeditionary unit deployed into Iraq from the assault ships while the other ESG ships including USS PORT ROYAL remained close-by to provide support, also to conduct vessel boarding search and seizures and maritime interception operations.

The expeditionary strike group was formed during mid-2003, and became a spin-off of the USS PELELIU Amphibious Ready Group (ARG.)

The formation of the ESG-1 and their deployment to the Gulf with their surface, subsurface and air warfare cover meant that they could basically proceed to any part of the Gulf in order to accomplish their mission.

Whilst berthed in Melbourne PORT ROYAL flew her colours at half-mast as a mark of respect for the passing of one of the group's marine crew from USS PELELIU.

Following her departure from Darwin, the PELELIU proceeded to Guam where she was engaged in offloading tracked tanks for cleaning and maintenance purposes.

It was while one of the tanks was being off-loaded from PELELIU, at anchor, to a waiting barge that the tank was lost overboard with the marine driver still at the controls. The tank sank in 90 feet of water resulting in the loss of the marine. This unfortunate accident occurred onboard the PELELIU on the day of PORT ROYALS arrival in Melbourne.

During my discussions with PORT ROYALS Supply Officer at the ships on-board reception, he spoke of his admiration and fond memories of the US Navy League, he recalled with pride and pleasure his time at the US Naval Academy when as top of the class in his particular division, he was presented with a Navy League Award for his efforts. This award he still retains and cherishes amongst his prized possessions.

UNIT CITATION FOR GALLANTRY

On March 22nd last year (2013), the Governor General HE Quentin Bryce AC, CVO announced the award of a "*Unit Citation*" for gallantry to the crew of HMAS YARRA II "For extraordinary Gallantry in Action off Singapore on February 5th 1942 and again on March 4th 1942 South of Java".

HMAS YARRA II was vastly outnumbered and outgunned by a force of Japanese Cruisers and Destroyers. HMAS YARRA II turned towards the enemy and was sunk in action, whilst trying to protect the convoy she was escorting to Fremantle.

The Royal Australian Navy was formally invested with the "*Unit Citation*" for gallantry by the Governor General in a ceremony held in Melbourne on March 4th 2014, with the current HMAS YARRA IV berthed nearby in Melbourne Docklands precinct in front of an audience of 450 attendees.

The "*Unit Citation*" ceremony proceeded in line with the following format:-

1. March on the Guard: accompanied by RAN Band.
2. Welcome: MC LCDR Des Woods.
3. Arrival of official party: HE Governor General and VADM Ray Griggs AO, CSC, RAN CN.
4. Governor General inspects the guard.
5. Address by HE Governor General...
6. Reading of "*Unit Citation*" Mr. Stephen Brady Secretary to Governor General.
7. Presentation of Citation to Chief of Navy.

8. Presentation of Burgee by Chief of Navy to CO HMAS YARRA IV.
9. Address by VADM Griggs Chief of Navy.
10. Hoisting of Burgee by crew of HMAS YARRA IV.
11. Presentation of dress embellishment and Citation copies. : To relatives of HMAS YARRA II Crew by HE Governor General and CN as the nominal roll of HMAS YARRA II was read by MC.
12. National Anthem – Departure of official party – March off the guard.

Following the investiture ceremony, invited guests joined the Governor General and CN at morning tea, which was followed by an invitation from HMAS YARRA'S CO LCDR Brendan O'Hara, with XO LCDR Richard Brickacek DSM, to visit HMAS YARRA IV MHC87.

Included in this issue is a copy of the "HMAS YARRA II, Royal Australian Navy Unit Citation for Gallantry".



**HE GOVERNOR GENERAL QUENTIN BRYCE
ADDRESSES THE ATTENDEES AT THE HMAS YARRA II UNIT CITATION**



**VADM RAY GRIGGS CHIEF OF NAVY ADDRESSES THE ATTENDEES
AT
THE HMAS YARRA II UNIT CITATION**



HMAS YARRA IV AT DOCKLANDS



HMAS *Yarra* (II), Royal Australian Navy Unit Citation for Gallantry

For acts of extraordinary gallantry in action off Singapore on the 5th of February 1942 and in the Indian Ocean on the 4th of March 1942.

On the 5th of February 1942 a convoy, about to enter Singapore harbour, was attacked by Japanese aircraft and the troop transport *Empress of Asia* was severely damaged, resulting in major fires and the ship began to sink. Despite the threat from continuing air attack and the explosions in the *Empress of Asia*, HMAS *Yarra*'s Commanding Officer, Commander Wilfred Hastings Harrington, RAN, manoeuvred the ship alongside the stern of the sinking transport, enabling 1334 men to be directly transferred across to *Yarra*. *Yarra* then proceeded to rescue a further 470 men from life rafts and floats in the vicinity. In doing so, *Yarra*'s crew showed conspicuous devotion to duty, outstanding seamanship and ship handling skills, and extraordinary courage in the face of immediate danger, directly from the enemy and from the burning troop transport.

On the 4th of March 1942, *Yarra* and her convoy of three merchant vessels were proceeding to Fremantle, having departed Java two days before. In the early hours of the morning, *Yarra*'s lookouts sighted a Japanese surface action group, consisting of three heavy cruisers and two destroyers. Each individual Japanese warship was greatly superior to *Yarra* in fighting strength and speed. Without concern for his own or his ship's safety, *Yarra*'s Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Commander Robert William Rankin, RAN, immediately manoeuvred the ship between the enemy and the convoy, made smoke to screen the convoy and closed to engage.

Despite the obvious fate that awaited them, *Yarra*'s ship's company conducted themselves with distinction and utter professionalism throughout the action that followed. They showed extraordinary courage, skill and conspicuous devotion to duty in the face of a far superior enemy as they turned towards them and engaged against overwhelming odds. *Yarra* was struck by heavy enemy shellfire, badly damaged and set on fire yet continued to engage the enemy. When it was obvious the ship was about to sink, the order to abandon ship was given. Despite this order the last remaining gun crew continued to engage the enemy until silenced by direct fire. From a ship's company of 151 men there were only 13 survivors.

Through their actions, the ship's company of HMAS *Yarra* (II) displayed extraordinary gallantry in the face of overwhelming odds, which is in keeping with the finest traditions of the Royal Australian Navy.



Combined Nominal Crew List for HMAS Yarra (II) on 5 February 1942 and 4 March 1942

| | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|------------|-----|-----------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| Survivors | | CRESSWELL | HL | LAKE | LJ | ROWE | FA |
| ARCHIBALD | JR | CROSBY | W | LANE | GE | RUSHTON | WH |
| BRAZIER | V | CROSS | ML | LINDSAY | EG | RYAN | JJ |
| BROMILOW | GG | CURTIS | HF | LLOYD | GJF | SALISBURY | FN |
| BUCKLEY | KP | CUSACK | LD | LOSEBY | GL | SANDERSON | S |
| CAIRNCROSS | FJ | DALTON | S | LYE | JE | SHEPPARD | GE |
| CLARK | WG | DARLING | JG | LYNCH | GT | SIMPSON | CJC |
| HARRINGTON | WH | DARWIN | RG | LYNCH | HC | SMART | GW |
| LATHAM | EA | DAWSON | KL | MALLARD | H | SMEDLEY | LW |
| MANTHEY | RL | DEWHIRST | TJ | McCARTHY | DW | SMITH | AH |
| ORTON | AG | DONHARDT | GH | McILROY | JJ | SMITH | FE |
| RAMSDEN | EL | DOYLE | AW | McLAREN- | | SMITH | NL |
| STEVENSON | DL | DUNN | CL | ROBINSON | WJ | SMITH | WE |
| WAGLAND | HG | EDWARDS | E | MEHEUX | FR | SMYTH | FT |
| WITHERIFF | WD | EDWARDS | FX | MEIKLE | R | SOMERVILLE | D |
| | | ENSTONE | RE | MEYERS | JE | STANSFIELD | WH |
| | | FRASER | N | MILLING | J | STEELE | H |
| Missing or Killed In Action | | FULSTON | GR | MOFFITT | EG | STRANG | JA |
| ADAMS | JA | GARTSIDE | CV | MOXEY | AWB | SYME | LW |
| ANDERSON | NM | GILLIES | WE | MUNDAY | WS | TANSELL | CF |
| BAKER | WM | GOFF | RJ | MURRAY | RCE | TAYLOR | FJ |
| BANKS | KJ | GORDON | CJ | NEAL | DO | TAYLOR | R |
| BARBER | RC | GRAY | DJ | OAKES | JH | THOMPSON | RS |
| BASEY | GCM | HABERFIELD | VH | OLIVER | JR | TOLE | MO |
| BOUCHER | HL | HARDING | EF | O'NEILL | A | TURNER | LR |
| BRIGGS | AWB | HARDY | RL | O'REILLY | SF | TURVEY | C |
| BROOK | RH | HARRINGTON | KR | PAGE | LJ | WAINWRIGHT | SG |
| BROOKER | HC | HOBBINS | JH | PARISH | CH | WHEAR | LJ |
| BROWN | WH | HODGES | AW | PARSONS | RG | WHEELER | E |
| BULL | RWD | HOLMES | WT | PEDERSEN | CF | WIDDOWSON | WG |
| CAMPLING | W | HOPLEY | EWD | PERRIN | SD | WILKS | CJ |
| CARLEY | KL | HORWOOD | RJ | PETERSON | RT | WITZERMAN | CAF |
| CAVE | SJ | HOSKINS | RJ | PIPER | CA | WOOLSTENCROFT | DJ |
| CHATLAND | VW | HUDSON | CD | POWELL | FC | WRIGHT | GL |
| CHISHOLM | DF | HUGHES | HH | PRATER | CF | | |
| CLARK | CG | HUTTON | RJ | QUICK | AH | Civilian | |
| CLARK | JW | JAMES | NH | RANKIN | RW | | |
| CLARKE | AL | JOHNSTON | GJ | RAYNE | HJ | BURKE-CLOSE | DJ |
| COOKE | O | JOSH | F | RIDGWAY | NF | | |
| COVENTRY | PJ | KELL | JJ | ROBERTSON | JA | | |
| | | KERNAGHAN | JM | ROSS | DI | | |

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*.

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.
Tasmanian Division: 40 Fleetwood Drive, Speyton, TAS 7310.
West Australian Division: 3 Prosser Way, Myaree, WA 6154.

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.

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| THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA | |
| APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP | |
|  | |
| To: The Hon. Secretary The Navy League of Australia | |
| Division _____ | |
| 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. | |
| Name: [Mr] [Mrs] [Ms] [Rank] _____ | |
| PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY | |
| Street _____ | |
| Suburb _____ | State _____ P/code _____ |
| Phone _____ | Mobile _____ |
| Email _____ | |
| Signature _____ | Date _____ |
| 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. | |

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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