



# NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

## VIC-TAS DIVISION

APRIL - JUNE 2020

Editors Ken Crook & Lynda Gilbert

Email: [nlavictasdiv@gmail.com](mailto:nlavictasdiv@gmail.com)

Web Address: <http://navyleague.org.au/>

P O Box 146 Warrandyte Vic 3113

Phone 03 9844 0106

*"Keeping Watch over the Maritime Wellbeing of Australia"*



*"Between 1939 & 1945 almost one million Australian men and women served in the Second World War. Initially, the war centred on campaigns against Germany, Italy and the Vichy French in Europe, the Mediterranean and North Africa, but in December 1941, Japan's entry into the war saw much of Australia's military return to fight in the Asia-Pacific. The 'War in Europe' ended with Germany's surrender on 7 May 1945. Japan's surrender came on 14 August 1945. Australia paid a price for freedom. The names of 39,652 men and women who died in, or as a result of, the Second World War will live forever on our National Roll of Honour."*

[www.militaryshop.com.au](http://www.militaryshop.com.au)

Due to COVID19 pandemic, your Executive Committee has not had any meetings and Navy news has been scarce. In this edition, there are some interesting items, including the commissioning ceremony of **HMAS SYDNEY V** and the virtual tour available at the Shrine. Commemoration services are still being held, but they are also virtual and may be viewed online.

### VALE COMMANDER JAMES HENRY SPEED DSC, RAN (RETD)

Commander Speed passed over the bar on 15 May 2020. A page has been devoted to his memory in this edition.

Welcome New Member  
Mr Vaughan Millar

**75th Anniversary World War II**  
There are 5 podcasts available on the Shrine website. Go to youtube to watch the veterans Pamela Nichollo, Ray Leonard, Norm Tame, Jim Paizis and Hiram Ristrom - or click on the link below to hear the Words from Our Navy Veterans Podcast

<https://www.shrine.org.au/Special-pages/Royal-Australian-Navy-on-the-Shrine-Podcast>

## CONTENTS

VALE COMMANDER JAMES HENRY SPEED DSC, RAN (RETD) ..	2
WARSHIP SYDNEY COMMISSIONS AT SEA .....	3
EXERPTS FROM THE STRATEGIST .....	5
WHAT HAPPENED TO HMAS MELBOURNE & HMAS NEWCASTLE? .....	7
MARITIME TRIVIA CHALLENGE.....	8
SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE REPORT .....	9

# VALE COMMANDER JAMES HENRY SPEED DSC, RAN (RETD)

*Photo provided by Jane Teasdale of Commander Speed at the Creswell Oration*



**FROM: THE CHIEF OF NAVY VICE ADMIRAL MICHAEL NOONAN AO RAN 20<sup>th</sup> May 2020**

## **VALE: COMMANDER JAMES HENRY SPEED DSC, RAN (RETD)**

1. IT IS WITH GREAT SADNESS THAT I INFORM YOU OF THE PASSING OF COMMANDER JAMES (JIM) HENRY SPEED, DSC RAN RETD. HE WAS AWARDED A DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS (DSC) FOR HIS COURAGE UNDER FIRE ON SWORD BEACH ON 5/6 JUNE 1944 DURING OPERATION OVERLORD, THE NORMANDY LANDINGS.
2. BORN IN 1924, HE ENTERED THE RN AS A MIDSHIPMAN IN 1942 AND WAS SELECTED FOR TRAINING AS A COMBINED OPERATIONS COMMANDO PREPARING FOR D DAY.
3. AGED JUST 19 HE LED A TEAM WHO MARKED WITH SIGNS THE SAFE PASSAGE WHERE UNDERWATER OBSTACLES HAD BEEN CLEARED BY DIVERS FOR BRITISH LANDING CRAFT. THE LARGE SIGNS HELD ALOFT BY THE COMMANDOS GUIDED LANDING CRAFT COXSWAINS BUT ALSO BECAME OBVIOUS TARGETS FOR GERMAN FIRE.
4. DESPITE THE LOSS OF MEMBERS OF HIS TEAM HE ASSISTED WITH GETTING THE FIRST BRITISH TROOPS ASHORE AND OFF THE BEACH. THIS ACTION WAS REPEATED ALL DAY AND RESULTED IN FURTHER CASUALTIES TO THE BEACH MARKING PARTIES.
5. HE CONTINUED IN THIS ROLE ON SWORD BEACH FOR A FURTHER MONTH COMING UNDER FREQUENT FIRE FROM WELL HIDDEN GERMAN HOWITZERS.
6. HE WAS DEMOBILIZED FROM THE RN IN 1946, BUT REJOINED AS AN ABLE SEAMAN IN 1954. A JUNIOR SAILOR WITH A DSC, AN OFFICERS DECORATION, WAS CONSIDERED ANOMALOUS AND HE WAS SWIFTLY COMMISSIONED AS A SUB LIEUTENANT.
7. SUB LIEUTENANT SPEED WAS SENT ON EXCHANGE POSTING TO HMAS COOTAMUNDRA IN 1957. HE MARRIED AND SOUGHT TO TRANSFER TO THE RAN BUT THIS WAS NOT PERMITTED BY THE RN FOR A FURTHER THREE YEARS AFTER HIS RETURN TO THE UK IN 1960.
8. IN 1963 HE LEFT THE RN AND JOINED THE RAN AND SERVED IN A NUMBER OF POSTINGS INCLUDING HMAS TARANGAU ON MANUS ISLAND AND IN HMAS MELBOURNE (II).
9. IN 1982 ON PROMOTION TO ACTING COMMANDER HIS LAST POSTING WAS AS COMMANDING OFFICER OF HMAS LONSDALE, THE NAVY'S DEPOT IN MELBOURNE. HE LEFT THE NAVY IN 1984 AND REMAINED AN ACTIVE MEMBER OF THE NAVAL OFFICERS CLUB AND WAS A GUEST SPEAKER ON HIS TIME ON SWORD BEACH.
10. ON BEHALF OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY I EXTEND CONDOLENCES TO COMMANDER SPEED'S WIDOW NATALIE AND HIS FAMILY ON THE PASSING OF THIS DECORATED OFFICER WHO GAVE A LIFETIME OF SERVICE TO TWO NAVIES.
11. A MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR COMMANDER SPEED WILL BE HELD IN MELBOURNE AT A TIME AND PLACE TO BE ANNOUNCED.

# WARSHIP SYDNEY COMMISSIONS AT SEA

Published on 19 May 2020 LEUT Ryan Zerbe (author), POIS Tom Gibson (photographer), LSIS Shane Cameron (photographer), ABIS Jarrod Mulvihill (photographer), ABIS Benjamin Ricketts (photographer)



*The crew of HMAS Sydney (V) 'cheer ship' inside Jervis Bay, NSW following the ship's commissioning ceremony at sea.*

The Royal Australian Navy has welcomed its newest Air Warfare Destroyer into the Fleet in the first commissioning of an Australian warship at sea since the Second World War.

The ceremony, conducted off the coast of New South Wales on Monday, 18 May 2020, marked the moment the 147-metre long Air Warfare Destroyer HMAS Sydney (V) became one of Her Majesty's Australian Ships. Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Michael Noonan, and Commander of the Australian Fleet, Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead, were aboard the guided missile destroyer, to officially welcome Sydney into service.

Vice Admiral Noonan told the commissioning crew that Sydney's history was of a legendary pedigree. "You will all form part of the HMAS Sydney fabric. You are sailors and officers who will all continue the proud Sydney legacy."

"It is a great responsibility - one I know each and every one of you is capable of honouring and carrying forward into the future."

"HMAS Sydney, welcome home, welcome back to our Fleet. Your name once again takes pride and its rightful place in Her Majesty's Fleet," Vice Admiral Noonan said.

During the ceremony the ship received a blessing and Sydney's Commanding Officer, Commander Edward Seymour, read the ship's commissioning order before the Australian White Ensign was hoisted, signifying completion of the commissioning.

The crew also watched video messages of congratulations from Governor-General David Hurley, Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Minister for Defence Linda Reynolds, and the ship's sponsor, Mrs Judy Shalders.



Commander Seymour said he was proud to lead the ship's company and carry forward the legacy of previous Australian warships that carried the name.

"It isn't often in a naval career that you are part of commissioning a brand new warship, but to do so at sea and carrying the significant legacy behind the name Sydney, is a special feeling for the entire ship's company."

"A lot of hard teamwork has led us to this moment of bringing a world-class warship into the fleet and we're eager to now prove what Sydney can do."

"She brings an outstanding, Australian-built air warfare capability over an exceptional range and gives Navy a surface combat capability like never before."

Sydney is the last of three Hobart Class vessels built for Navy at Osborne in South Australia and is based on the Navantia F100 frigate design.

She is equipped with advanced combat systems, providing the ship with layered offensive and defensive capabilities to counter conventional and asymmetric threats.

Sydney will now undergo her test and evaluation period where she will integrate into the fleet and Navy personnel will develop their proficiencies with her cutting-edge Aegis combat system.

Sydney's sister ships, *Hobart* and *Brisbane*, commissioned in 2017 and 2018 respectively and all three vessels are homeported at Fleet Base East in Sydney.

The first Royal Australian Navy vessel to be commissioned at sea was HMAS *Matafele*. The World War II stores carrier was commissioned on 1 January 1943.



HMAS Sydney (V)'s piping party pipe the side as the Chief of Navy prepares to become aboard ahead of the ship's commissioning ceremony at sea. From right, Lieutenant Ben King, Leading Seaman Electronic Warfare Jakeb Morrison, Leading Seaman Combat Systems Operator Nicholas Bates and Petty Officer Electronic Warfare Stephan Taylor.

Reference: <https://news.navy.gov.au/en/May2020/Fleet/5862#.Xsdfh25uLIU>

## EXERPTS FROM THE STRATEGIST

*Thanks to LCDR Roger Blythman RAN for passing on this information from "The Strategist".*

'The Strategist' is the commentary and analysis site of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, an independent, non-partisan think tank based in Canberra. ASPI is one of the most authoritative and widely quoted contributors to public discussion of strategic policy issues in Australia and a recognised and authoritative Australian voice in international discussion of strategic issues, especially in the Asia-Pacific. The Strategist aims to provide fresh ideas on Australia's critical defence and strategic policy choices as well as encourage and facilitate discussion and debate among the strategy community and Australian public.

The views expressed on *The Strategist* are those of the individual authors and don't represent the views of ASPI or the institutions to which the authors are attached.

*The Strategist* is run by Brendan Nicholson, Executive Editor.

Please click on the links provided to read the article in full.

### **Nuclear-armed submarines and the balance of power in the Indo-Pacific**

**James Goldrick | 14 May 2020**

The maritime strategic balance in the Indo-Pacific is changing rapidly. The future of undersea nuclear deterrent forces has strategic, operational and force structure aspects for all major powers in the region. Strategic competition in an ...([Read more...](#))

### **Australia needs strategy, not suppliance, in dealing with China**

**Peter Jennings | 14 May 2020**

A major disruptive crisis can force countries to adapt in ways that are deeply uncomfortable to the authors of the old order. That is what is happening with the Covid-19 pandemic. The world is being ...([Read more...](#))

### **It's time for Vietnam and ASEAN to challenge Beijing in the South China Sea**

**Nguyen Quang Dy | 13 May 2020**

On 14 April, as China's Haiyang Dizhi 8 survey group sailed into the South China Sea again, Taiwan scrambled ships to monitor the passage of the Chinese navy's Liaoning aircraft carrier strike group as it ...([Read more...](#))

### **In a crisis, Australians might soon be running on empty**

**John Coyne, Tony McCormack and Hal Crichton-Standish | 13 May 2020**

Most Australians have no idea how quickly they'll be running on empty if our fuel supplies from overseas are cut in a crisis. For decades, the nation has relied on risky, just-in-time deliveries of the ...([Read more...](#))

### **The five-domains update**

**Tracy Beattie, Hal Crichton-Standish, Daria Impiombato, Alexandra Pascoe and Albert Zhang | 12 May 2020**

Sea state The Department of Defence has launched 'Plan Galileo', which outlines a program for establishing regional maintenance centres, maturing supply chains and building a skilled workforce to support the Royal Australian Navy and its ...([Read more...](#))

## **Darwin and Townsville complement each other in defending Australia's north**

**David Burke | 12 May 2020**

Walter Cronkite, the American broadcast journalist, was an avid sailor and explorer of the United States coast. He wrote books of his voyages and, in his twilight, returned to familiar haunts along the northeastern seacoast ...([Read more...](#))

## **China's actions in Papua New Guinea provide an opening for Australia's 'step-up'**

**Jeffrey Wall | 11 May 2020**

Australia's 'step-up' program in the South Pacific may already be having an impact, at least in Papua New Guinea. The program was developed to enable Australia to work with other nations, including New Zealand, the ...([Read more...](#))

## **Australia needs to train for disasters like this one**

**Tony McCormack | 11 May 2020**

In a nation as prone to disasters as Australia, it's surprising that no day is set aside to remind people to check their own disaster preparedness. Nor is there a regularly scheduled exercise to test ...([Read more...](#))

## **The future of China's nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine force**

**Adam Ni | 8 May 2020**

China finally achieved an operational underwater nuclear capability in recent years, almost six decades after it first launched its nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) program in the late 1950s. The deployment of the Jin-class (Type ...([Read more...](#))

## **Nuclear-armed submarines and US defence strategy: the future of the maritime deterrent**

**22 May 2020 | James J. Wirtz**

Today is an age of acceleration, a time when Moore's Law is creating profound changes at diminishing intervals, making it difficult to anticipate strategic, social and technological developments. Some organisations facing these cascades of change, ...**READ MORE**

Reference: <https://www.aspistrategist.org.au/>

# WHAT HAPPENED TO HMAS MELBOURNE & HMAS NEWCASTLE?

Thanks to Tim Ryan for sending the Maasmond press clippings published by Piet Sinke featuring photos of the former HMAS MELBOURNE and HMAS NEWCASTLE sold to Chile and now named ALMIRANTE LATORRE FFG 14 and CAPITAN PRAT FFG 11 respectively.

There has been so little news on these vessels since they were decommissioned last year so Tim was pleased to see the pictures below of both vessels in their new guises and Pennant numbers.

The former HMAS MELBOURNE FFG 06 shown as FFG 14 ALMIRANTE LATORRE and former HMAS NEWCASTLE FFG 05 shown as CAPTAIN PRAT FFG 11. The two ships were handed over to the Chilean Navy on the 15 April. They are currently doing trials on the NSW coast before heading to Chile.

Photos : Ian Edwards [www.shipphoto.com.au](http://www.shipphoto.com.au) ©



Reference <http://newsletter.maasmondmaritime.com/ShippingNewsPdf/magazine.pdf>



# MARITIME TRIVIA CHALLENGE

Dr Jackie Watts OAM, **Chair of the Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network** has provided this Maritime Trivia Challenge to tease your brain. Email your answers to the 25 questions to: [info@mmhn.org.au](mailto:info@mmhn.org.au) Those participating will submit and will be rewarded – virtually – and those with totally correct answers will be in a draw for some actual real prizes! Some of you may wish to forward other, possibly even more obscure, maritime questions, for inclusion in the next WISTA/MMHN Maritime Trivia Challenge also [info@mmhn.org.au](mailto:info@mmhn.org.au) (with answers please!) Results will appear in forthcoming MMHN Updates.

1. Where are the wrecks of the *Barbara*, the *Amazon* and the *Cerberus* located?
2. Who designed the Cerberus Class Warships and for what primary purpose?
3. Who designed the plan to eliminate the tight curve of the Yarra at its lower reach?
4. When did excavation of the Victoria Harbour commence?
5. Name 7 of the 17 Member organisations of Maritime Museums of Victoria (MMV)?
6. Name 3 Antarctic Division ‘Dan’ ships, where they departed from in Melbourne and when did this cease?
7. The propeller installed between Melbourne Aquarium the Yarra in Enterprize Park is from what ship?
8. What is the name of vessel depicted in brass embedded the footpath outside Melbourne Town Hall?
9. What is the maritime significance of Flagstaff Hill in the CBD?
10. Where is Central Pier, who is responsible for it and when was it built?
11. What year did the construction of the Coode Canal commence?
12. What do these acronyms stand for - MUA, AMSA, MIAL, AMOU, AIMPE and OSSA?
13. What is the current name of the bridge on the Yarra closest to the rocky bar or barrier which once separated the freshwater from the salt?
14. Where in regional Victoria is the Clifty Island ‘Canon’ and what was its purpose?
15. In what year was the present Princes Bridge opened?
16. Which came first – Charles Grimes’ survey of Port Phillip or the settlement by Lieutenant Colonel David Collins at Sullivan Bay – and where is Sullivan Bay it anyway?
17. What was a “Tructor”?
18. Name three Maritime Experience Centres located in SW Victoria along the Shipwreck Coast and how many shipwrecks underpin the name?
19. What is the connection between Apollo Bay Museum and Tasmania?
20. Name two seafarer service organisations in Melbourne and the year when each was each established?
21. A heritage vessel on Collins Wharf is currently engaged in major caulking works – what is its name, where is it located and what is used for caulking?
22. Gem Pier in Williamstown had many earlier names. Name two of them, what is the significance of the current name and what two maritime museums are located nearby?
23. When was the Port Phillip Sea Pilots formed?
24. Which has the greater volume of water: Port Phillip Bay or Sydney Harbour and how many times more?
25. Name five types of specialist ships currently operating in Australian waters.
26. What is a defining characteristic of The Port of Melbourne – Port of Osaka Yacht Race?
27. The vessel *Blackbird* operating in the Maribyrnong River specialises in views of maritime infrastructure. Name two Docks, two bridges, a harbour, two wharves and an island likely to be encountered en route?
28. What is the name of the first European ship to enter Port Phillip Bay?
29. What is the name of the Dry Dock in which the vessel *Polly Woodside* floats and what is significant about this Dock?
30. What does the RAN and the RAAF have in common at Point Cook?



# SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE REPORT



## THE SHRINE AT HOME

We are happy to share that we can now welcome you virtually—thanks to the innovative team at Macutex. The result of an extensive 3D mapping project means you can now visit the Shrine from home, as we all do our part to stay together, while apart.

This can be used as an education tool for schools around Victoria and regional schools have shown a lot of interest in the virtual tour. You can click and zoom on any area, look at the displays and read the text.

There are opportunities to engage with stories of service and sacrifice, with podcast links and additional information. In the final months of these exhibitions being on display, you can also view our *Cinderella Service* and *Through the Eyes of the Son* exhibitions. Click on the link below for the virtual view.

**[Take the tour.](#)**

## PODCASTS

Extra World War II podcasts of interest are:

- RAN in the Pacific War - Speaker CMDR Ian Pfenningwerth RAN, released 5 December 2017.
- Flagship HMAS Australia – Speaker Mike Carlton, released 4 May 2017
- Bellbottoms & Lids – Speaker John Perryman (Seapower Centre), released 11 August 2017

# ANZAC DAY REFLECTIONS: VISITOR SERVICES OFFICER GLEN (Ex RAN)



"Howdy folks, I hope you are all keeping well.

My ANZAC story is about reflecting on my first dawn service when I had joined the Royal Australian Navy back in 2007. Before this, I was still attending high school and working for the Kangaroo Island ferry company in South Australia. Although I was initially prone to sea sickness, something told me "Glen you probably should join the navy".

Thankfully after I had enlisted, I was posted to HMAS Success in Garden Island (Sydney), which is a tanker that had a nice gentle roll to it (in rough seas). About 4 months after being recruited, I had my first proper Anzac Day dawn service. I remember waking up early, before dawn to make my way to the service, where I noticed hundreds of other sailors streaming out of the many accommodation blocks at HMAS Cerberus. All together in the dark we made our way down to the parade ground.

I remember the solemn atmosphere when the service started, there were nearly a thousand of us young sailors standing there in silence. I felt instant chills when the Bugle sounded the last post.

After the service, the Senior sailors of HMAS Cerberus invited us all over for a Gun Fire Breakfast - a BBQ breakfast, and a shot of rum and milk. That is the first day in the navy I recall a more relaxed approach to rank. On that day, intimidating senior sailors made junior sailors feel more like equals. I remember the junior sailors had the opportunity to have a beer while playing two up with the senior sailors and officers that we would not usually socialise with in a casual setting.

On Anzac Day I reflected on the young men and women that had joined the RAN seeking adventures as I did but ended up making the ultimate sacrifice. When I joined the Navy, I was fresh out of high school and only 18 years of age, I saw it as a bit of an adventure and the opportunity to make lifelong friends. I think about the times when I found it to be challenging in the Navy and wondered how others before me had the challenges of being away from home for so long, being at sea for long periods and getting sea sick. On top of that they were at war as well, so they could not just give up.

I started my working life in the RAN and served for 5 years. I was able to gain an even greater appreciation of the sacrifice that our fallen service men and women have made for our country. I always took great pride in participating in ceremonies with the RAN and respect the continuing traditions, which is why I am privileged to have the opportunity to work at the Shrine of Remembrance."

## Services

Until further notice the Services are by podcast only.

Refer <https://www.shrine.org.au/Remembrance/Services>

- **Battle of Crete and Greece service on Behalf of the Creatan Federation of Australia & New Zealand**  
24 May 2020, 11:00am  
Wreath laying in the Sanctuary  
A wreath will be laid at the Shrine for your Association on 24 May at 11:00 am, your members will be able to join us via our livestream.  
[Read More](#)
- **American Ex-Servicemen Association 2020**  
24 May 2020, 11:00am  
Wreath Laying in the Sanctuary  
A wreath will be laid at the Shrine for your Association on 24 May at 11:00 am, your members will be able to join us via our livestream.  
[Read More](#)
- **RAN Recruits May 2020**  
24 May 2020, 11:00am  
Wreath Laying in the Sanctuary  
A wreath will be laid at the Shrine on 24 May at 11:00 am, your members will be able to join us via our livestream.  
[Read More](#)
- **Last Post Service May 2020**  
24 May 2020, 4:30pm  
The Last Post service has been postponed and will resume after the Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted  
[Read More](#)
- **Boer War Commemoration 2020**  
31 May 2020, 11:00am  
Wreath Laying in the Sanctuary  
A wreath will be laid at the Shrine for your Association on 31 May at 11:00 am, your members will be able to join us via our livestream.  
[Read More](#)
- **Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service 2020**  
31 May 2020, 11:00am  
Wreath Laying in the Sanctuary  
A wreath will be laid at the Shrine for your Association on 31 May at 11:00 am, your members will be able to join us via our livestream.  
[Read More](#)