



Victorian Chapter

President's Musings – December 2020

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a safe and healthy New Year!

Our function held at Waverley RSL on December 14 was a great success and our MC Marty did a superb job as per normal. As I write this he is journeying to Sea power Canberra to deliver the wonderful model crafted by Gerry Shepherd of HMAS Bataan. Great gestures both by Gerry, in gifting it to our Navy, and by Marty, who is delivering it to Canberra at his own expense.

Our sincere thanks go to our Speaker WO Ray (Pedro) Rich OAM BEM RAN Ret for sharing his experiences on that fateful night of February 10 1964 when HMAS Melbourne II collided with and sank HMAS Voyager II. It was very moving to hear his story.

During the function we paid tribute to Team Cronin who produce our Three Headed Dog each month. Margaret and their daughters fully support our Frank. The THD has kept us in touch during those long months of lockdown. BZ team Cronin. It was so fitting that the person who won the YUMMY Lynda Christmas cake was our Frank! BZ Lynda and Ken. Whilst I am handing out Bravo Zulu's, I extend a heartfelt BZ to the Hooley Family who continue fund the production costs of the THD, thus providing to you dear colleague and friend your THD copy each month free of charge.

WHAT DOES 2021 HOLD IN STORE FOR US?

It is our 50th birthday this year, but we weren't able to celebrate last year HMAS Cerberus turning 100 or our beloved Naval Historical Society achieving their 50th anniversary. Added to that we had to cancel the Creswell Oration and celebrations of Navy's birthday in 2020 and again it is cancelled this coming year! Maybe we can repair the situation next March and have a 'Big Wing Ding'. I don't know if we will be able to do it or if we will be able to have reasonable numbers in the Sunset Room at Waverly RSL next March. In pre-Covid 19 times you could have 100 seated at tables. I have spoken to the RSL and our friend Mike Black, the new President of the RSL is enthusiastic about it. Darryl, the function Manager feels that optimistically we might be able to hold a function catering for 80 by March. We nominated March because March 1 is the birthday of both the Commonwealth Navy in 1901 and our RAN in 1911 when King George V 'made it so'. The plan is to open it up to the naval family. Watch this space!

At our February meeting we plan to screen for you the DVD on the sinking of the hospital ship Centaur. We purchased a new copy of the video as a number of you were disappointed in February 2020 when we were unable to screen it. Nomination forms are

available for our AGM which will take place at our February 22nd meeting. Your President is unsure if he will renominate or not. Seventeen years is a good innings and I intended to lay down the burden after our fabulous function on December 6 2019 when CN was our guest. This year Our Chief of Navy, VADM Noonan sent us his best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to us which is very much appreciated and reciprocated.



Volunteers from the Cerberus Museum with Melissa Bowers, Director Navy Heritage Operations (top row third from the right) and renowned maritime artist Randall Wilson (first left, bottom row).

A delightful lunch at Seaford RSL to celebrate Christmas was hosted by Melissa.

Mellisa Bowers is Director Business and Heritage Operations for the Sea Power Centre and therefore she controls the Management of the Navy Heritage collections which of course includes our Museum in HMAS Cerberus where I am a volunteer. Mellisa took us to a Christmas lunch at Seaford RSL on December 12 and an enjoyable time was had by all. During the lunch we were visited by Santa and said farewell to our colleague Niels Rutzou who is heading back to Perth. I've met Mellisa a couple of times previously and am impressed by her dedication to the job at hand.

Yours Aye!

Rex Williams