

PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS JUNE 2016

This month we remember the 'D Day' landings of 1944 and I'd like to share with you a video filmed in colour from HMS BELFAST. Those of you not familiar with computers should view this, *somehow!*

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/world-war-two/> **World War Two as you have never seen it: extremely rare colour footage of D-Day invasion released...**

Publicity of the activities of our Victorian chapter of the NHS of Australia depend mainly upon two websites, that of the NHS and also of the Navy Victoria Network. Over the years I have enjoyed *fantastic* co operation from both Ted Bell of the NHS and Laurie 'Lozza' Pegler from Navy Vic.

Those of you who were at our meeting held on August 25th 2014 were very fortunate to hear the account by CMDR Jim Speed DSC RAN Ret. of his adventures as a Sub. Lt R N V R Beach Commando on Sword beach on that fateful day, June 6th 1944. Lozza recorded Jim's account for posterity and one of those recordings was sent to Ted in Sydney. Always one to strive to improve the offering provided by the Society's website, Ted has been experimenting with 'Pod Casts' with the ultimate aim of having recordings of Speakers to the Society in general being available of the NHS website. This may, or may not happen, however in the interim Ted sent me a copy of CMDR Jim Speed's talk on D Day, plus the Question and answer session, on his email address. A bonus for you is that Ted agreed to share it with fellow members of our NHS: <http://www.tedbell.com.au/historical-society> is Ted's personal website and the audio is just for prototyping, but Jim's address is well worth hearing! I caught up with Jim a few months ago and am pleased to report that he is hale and hearty.

At both this month's meeting, and also our July one, we will enjoy the excellent 'Naval Video time Capsules-episodes of the Royal Navy which have been provided to us by our friend David McFall of the 'Maritime Model Museum in Sydney'. For June we will view 'The Great Armada-Operation Torch' and in July: 'D-Day reflections of operation Neptune' which features the maritime aspects of that campaign.

We have excellent Speakers lined up for the rest of the year' ***Watch this Space'***

The Melbourne Naval Centre has been extremely generous to us over the years. Our current premises are provided for us at no cost, and for this we are very thankful. In addition they assisted us to establish our extensive library by funding the building of the book cabinets. Naval associations in general have benefited greatly from the generosity of this organisation.

With the impending demolition of the ESU building, in which our Melbourne Naval centre is housed, the committee has been faced with two dilemmas, where do we meet and what do we do with the library and those beautiful cabinets? **We have to vacate the ESU Building by October. Our last meeting there will be Monday October 24th.**

I am pleased to report that as from next February we will hold our meetings in the 'Sunset Room' at the Waverley RSL. We are familiar with the venue having used its excellent facilities last November for our end of year function at Waverley RSL.

Our Meetings next year will begin at around 1830 as they do now. Instead of getting together at 1800 for Rodney's fabulous supper, those of us who wish to will gather in the Warramunga restaurant from 1730 (when it opens) and enjoy fellowship together, having a delicious meal and the odd drink together. You'll need to ring the RSL and make your own bookings, however, I suggest you mention you would like to be with the NHS folk if possible. The phone number is 85584700. Our contact at the RSL is Robbie Latour.Robbie@WaverleyRSL.com.au. Robbie will set the room up for us etc. each meeting.

We negotiated this arrangement with the GM, Chris Toohey, who is delighted for us to use their facilities. The deal is that we have the Sunset Room free of charge and that a number of us enjoy a meal prior to the meeting. Chris is extremely generous towards us, and I for one will enjoy having a meal prior.

I would like to acknowledge the assistance the committee received during our quest for a new meeting place and find a home for our library. Peter Williams and John de Cruz Douglas devoted much time and effort into investigating potential premises at the Hawthorn Library and the Prahran Mechanic's Institute. My Vice Presidents Frank and Marty were active as well, Marty checking out the Mission to Seamen, and making trips to the MNC to photograph our library cabinets and collection for us, and Frank providing wise council when requested. Our NHS librarian in Sydney, Liz, was so willing to assist us by taking the collection and incorporating it into our National Library, plus our own Librarian Roger Buxton, who investigated the possibility of incorporating our collection into that of the Royal United Services Library at Victoria Barracks, and by negotiating for our members to have the ability to access our collection if required.

The result of our deliberations is that our Library will be assessed as to which volumes will be placed into the RUSI Library and any such volumes not required will be placed into the Library in HMAS CERBERUS. Roger is currently working on this project for us and his efforts are much appreciated. Marty Grogan was instrumental in negotiating this excellent compromise. It is anticipated that possibly three of the cabinets will be required by the RUSI and the other one will be utilised at HMAS CERBERUS.

Rex's Odyssey – Part 7 – HMS DOLPHIN – Gosport: (August 2015)

Family scuttle-butt decrees that my maternal Great-Great-Grand Father was a Governor of Portsmouth Prison, but try as I may I can't locate him in the records available on the net. Be that as it may, I am always drawn to the Portsmouth area each time I visit the UK. The University of Portsmouth offers great accommodation value at Ree's Hall, and I've got to know the staff. The cradle of the Royal Navy is a fascinating place to visit. A ferry ride over to visit the Submarine Museum at HMS DOLFIN, is included in your all attractions ticket and it certainly is well worth a visit. Main attractions are the Museum and HMS ALLIANCE. ALLIANCE is Britain's only surviving WWII era, ocean going submarine. This A class submarine was commissioned



HMS Alliance at HMS Dolphin

and designed in 1945 as WWII came to a close, for service in the far east. She was launched in 1947, but is typical of the submarines that served throughout WWII. Our Member in Tasmania, Brent Balchin,



HMS Holland

visited her a few years ago and she was in a very sorry state, but today she has been completely transformed as you will see from my photos. Millions of pounds have been invested in her and the results are outstanding. You enter through the hull and for a submarine it's very accessible. The guides are excellent, all ex submariners. The Submarine museum is fascinating as well. The Holland1 Submarine on display was the Royal Navy's first submarine, and is back on display at the

museum after an award winning conservation project. The Falkland war Display was of great interest to me also. One

morning in 1981, Jenny and I saw HMS SHEFFIELD leaving Portsmouth harbour, and I well remember my dismay upon hearing of her sinking during that conflict.

YOURS AYE!!

REX WILLIAMS