



## Victorian Chapter

### President's Musings – October 2020

We are still no wiser as to when we will be able to get together, however a number of us have taken advantage of the Society's Zoom presentations and have found them very informative. This month Colin Randal told us all about the tunnels on Garden Island, the reasons why they were dug during WWII and the actual creation of the complex. We invite you to join us on November 24 at 1000 to view Gillian Lewis and Noel Phelan's presentation entitled 'The *Sydney* / *Kormoran* Battle and Locating the Ships'. **Interested??** Please let me know and I will ensure you get an invitation email to join the meeting. As an added bonus we are to have another presentation in December as well. More information next month.

*This month we celebrate the Battle of Trafalgar and as a special treat we have more excerpts from the London Times which were printed on November 7, 1805 and January 10, 1806 informing the British Nation of the battle, the death of Nelson and his funeral.*

#### **THE TIMES, Thursday November 7, 1805 and Friday January 10, 1806**

*(Excerpts from the accounts of the Battle of Trafalgar and Nelson's death and funeral)*



*Admiral Horatio Nelson,  
1799 portrait by  
Lemuel Francis Abbott*

To the official detail we are enabled to add the following details respecting the death of as great an Admiral as ever wielded the Naval thunder of Great Britain. When Lord Nelson found that by his skilful manoeuvres he had placed the enemy in such a situation that they could not avoid an engagement, he displayed the utmost animation, and with his usual confidence of victory he said to Captain Hardy, and the officers who surrounded him on the quarterdeck, "Now they cannot escape us; I think we shall at least make sure of twenty of them. I shall probably lose a leg, but that will be purchasing a victory cheaply." About two hours before the close of the action his Lordship received a wound in

the shoulder from a musket ball, which was fired from the tops of the *Santisima Trinidad* with which ship he was closely engaged. The ball penetrated his breast and he instantly fell; he was immediately carried below, and the surgeons pronounced the wound mortal. His Lordship received the intelligence with all the firmness and pious resignation, to the will of Divine Providence, of which he has given such frequent and signal examples during his frequent course of peril and of glory. He immediately sent an Officer to Admiral Collingwood, the second in command with his instructions for the continuing the

action which he had so gallantly commenced, and the melancholy bequest of his last farewell. During the short interval between his receiving the wounds and his final dissolution he remained perfectly collected displaying in his last moments the heroism that had marked his every action of his glorious life. In that trying moment, cut off from nature and from glory's cause all his anxiety, all his thoughts, were directed to his country and her fame. A few minutes before he expired, he sent for Captain Hardy; when the Captain came he inquired how many of the enemy's ships had struck. The Captain replied that as many as he could ascertain, fifteen sail of the line had struck their colours. His Lordship then, with that fervent piety which so strongly marked his character, returned thanks to the Almighty; then turning to Captain Hardy he said, "I know I am dying, I could have wished to have survived to breathe my last upon British ground, but the will of God be done!" In a few moments he expired.



*This is where Nelson died.*

The action appears to have been gallantly contested by the French and Spaniards. Their object in risking an encounter with such a fleet, commanded by such a man, must have been one of imperious necessity at this moment; no less, we suspect; than a bold effort to acquire a complete ascendancy in the Mediterranean. Had they succeeded in liberating that portion of the Spanish Navy which is confined to the port of Carthage, by the bare apprehension of an English Squadron, their united force would have amounted to upwards of forty sail of line. There are also some ships off Toulon, and the Rouchfort squadron, with its usual success, might have perhaps also added its troops to the combined force. With such a port as Toulon to take refuge in, a fleet of this extent, under the Commanders of Common capacity, must have occupied a very large portion indeed of our Naval strength.

**Lord Nelson's Last Moments:** When Lord Nelson was shot, and was yet in the arms of



*Victory depicted at St Helen's Isle of Wight  
the morning of Nelson's funeral*

the men who was supporting him, his eye caught the tiller rope which was unusually slack, he exclaimed, with much emphasis - "Tighten that rope there!" An eminent proof that his professional ardour still survived the brilliancy of the flame of life. When he saw his secretary and his friend Mr Scott thrown overboard uncertain of the disfigurement and the confusion of the fight, whether it was him or not, he inquired with affectionate



ardour – “was that poor Scott?” An impression seems to be made on Lord Nelson, for as the men were carrying him down to the cockpit he said “Don’t let me be thrown over-board; tell Hardy to carry me home.”

**Funeral of Lord Nelson January 9 1806:** Yesterday the burial of this illustrious warrior took place in Saint Paul’s Cathedral. An hour before daylight, the drums of the different Volunteer Corps in every part of the Metropolis beat to arms. The summons was quickly obeyed; and soon after, these troops lined the streets, in two ranks, from St Paul’s Churchyard to the Admiralty. The Life Guards too, were mounted at their post in Hyde-park at day break, where the carriages of the Nobility, &c. with the mourning coaches appointed to be part of the Procession began to be assembled, at eight o’clock, in a line from Hyde-park Corner to Cumberland-gate. By ten, about one hundred and six carriages were assembled, of which number nearly sixty were mourning coaches, principally filled with Naval Officers, all of which, under the direction of the proper Officers, were marshalled in their due order of precedence, and proceeded into St James’s Park, to be in readiness to fall into the Procession, on the proper signal. In St James’ Park were drawn, who had served in the glorious campaigns of Egypt, after the ever-memorable Victory of the Nile; and a detachment of flying artillery, with twelve field pieces, and their ammunition tumbrils. At half past ten, the procession commenced from the Admiralty, with the march of several regiments, led by His Royal Highness the Duke of York.

(end excerpts from ‘The Times’, Thursday November 7, 1805 / Friday January 10, 1806)



Then followed detail about the procession and the coffin, the mourning car, the entry into St Pauls plus full detail of the service and internment. It continued for four hours until dusk caused the lights to be lit! He is buried in the crypt. His elegant sarcophagus was originally carved for Cardinal Thomas Wolsey but Henry VIII confiscated it for his own use. Henry’s tomb was never completed and the sarcophagus was previously kept at Windsor Castle until being used for Nelson. His tomb is surrounded by the graves and memorials of other Naval officers. Close by is Vice Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood, his second in command at Trafalgar.



Nelson's Tomb

Yours Aye!

*Rex Williams*

