



BROADSIDE

November 2021

Volume 11 Edition 11

Editorial



In the past 15 months there have been two significant events that have had a positive effect not only on all ex-naval and serving naval personnel, but many families throughout Australia, if not the world.

Firstly, on the 12 August 2020 the Governor-General David Hurley announced the Queen had approved a posthumous Victoria Cross for [Ordinary Seaman Edward 'Teddy' Sheean](#). The first Royal Australian Navy member to be awarded a VC.

Secondly, On 19 November 2021, at a special ceremony held at the Australian War Memorial marking the 80th anniversary of the sinking HMAS *Sydney* II, the Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Mike Noonan, AO, RAN, announced that the unknown sailor found on a Carley Float close inshore to Christmas Island in February 1942 had been identified as Able Seaman Thomas Welsby Clark who had finally completed his long voyage home.

The Unknown Sailor of HMAS *Sydney* (II)

On 6 February 1942 a shrapnel damaged, grey-painted Carley Float, described as being of the same pattern as that recovered from HMAS *Sydney* by HMAS *Heros* during the search for survivors (see below) was spotted drifting close inshore off Rocky Point, Christmas Island (Indian Ocean). The assistant harbour master, Captain E Craig, accompanied by two Malay marine staff, set off in a motor boat and recovered the raft in which was found the remains of a deceased male dressed only in overalls. The raft was lifted ashore by crane and the body, found lying with legs doubled rigidly under at the knee, was removed. This proved to be an important observation made at that time.

Events Calendar

(see [Calendar](#) for full details)

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NOTE: Due to COVID-19, it is advisable to check with the coordinators to confirm whether the event you were planning to attend is still going ahead. We will endeavour to keep the Diary updated as news comes to hand.

At present the Shrine of Remembrance is closed, but ceremonies are still being conducted and they are live streamed on the Shrine's [Facebook page](#).

01 Dec - HMAS Armidale Service

01 Dec - Soundwaves concert - TBC

05 Dec - Pearl Harbour Service

11 Dec - AMC / LSI Service

11 Dec - Knox Christmas carols - RAN band

25 Dec - Merry Christmas

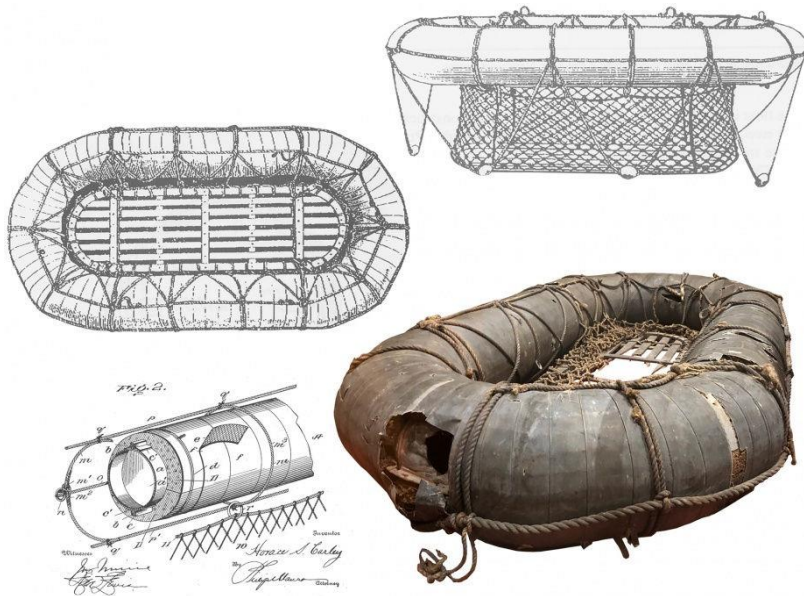
Latest Videos, Podcasts and News Headlines

Keep up to date on all the news by visiting our website: <https://navyvict.net>

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VIDEOS.....

- RAN Band - Military Band Sounds 2021
- HMAS Warramunga In Rough Seas
- HMAS Canberra back home after South East Asia deployment
- 80th Anniversary of HMAS *Sydney* II sinking commemorated in Geraldton



According to Captain Craig, the exposed parts of the body seemed well preserved but the underside, that was partially immersed in water, was not so. The body was clad in blue overalls bleached almost white by the sun and exposure to the elements. They were fastened with press studs and there was nothing present on the person, or in the raft, to identify the body that was removed to the hospital for temporary storage. Captain Craig's assessment of the life raft was that it was a Carley Float typical of those in service with the Royal Navy and Royal Australian Navy. A closer inspection of it revealed markings indicating that it was 'MADE IN N.S.W.'. Other witnesses to the event provided similar descriptions and some additional information concerning footwear found in the raft. The float was marked No. 2 on the outside and the description of it made at the time indicates it was a Type 20 raft measuring 5ft x 10ft. All indications are that it was later disposed of. Captain JR Smith, the island's Harbour Master, was later to file a report encapsulating the incident and many of the particulars that were observed by those concerned at the time.

Amplifying details can be found in Volume II, Chapter 15, of the Official Inquiry into the Loss of HMAS *Sydney* (II), over which Commissioner the Honourable Terence RH Cole, AO, RFD, QC presided in July 2009. The report is readily available online in the public domain and may be accessed in the Cole Inquiry.

With Japanese occupation imminent, the unidentified body was buried in the Old European Cemetery with military honours in an unmarked grave overlooking the sea. The war in the Indo-Pacific then overtook events with the Japanese landing two weeks later.

- *Australia & Japan conduct Exercise Nichi-gou Trident*
- *Lone survivor of 1941 HMAS Sydney sinking finally named and honoured*
- *HMAS Sirius sails a final lap to farewell Sydney Harbour*
- *HMAS Stalwart Commissioning*
- *10 years of shared commitment to the US-Australia alliance*
- *A look at Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2021*
- *HMAS Canberra feasts on the flavours of Indonesia*
- *RAN Band - Once Navy, Always Navy - NAA Centenary*
- *ADF personnel deployed in the Middle East introduce their podcast*
- *Naval News Monthly Recap – October 2021*

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PODCAST.....

Policy, Guns and Money:

Intelligence collaboration, ASEAN and Myanmar, Pacific cyber capacity

Policy, Guns and Money:

COP26, nuclear submarines and vaccine passports

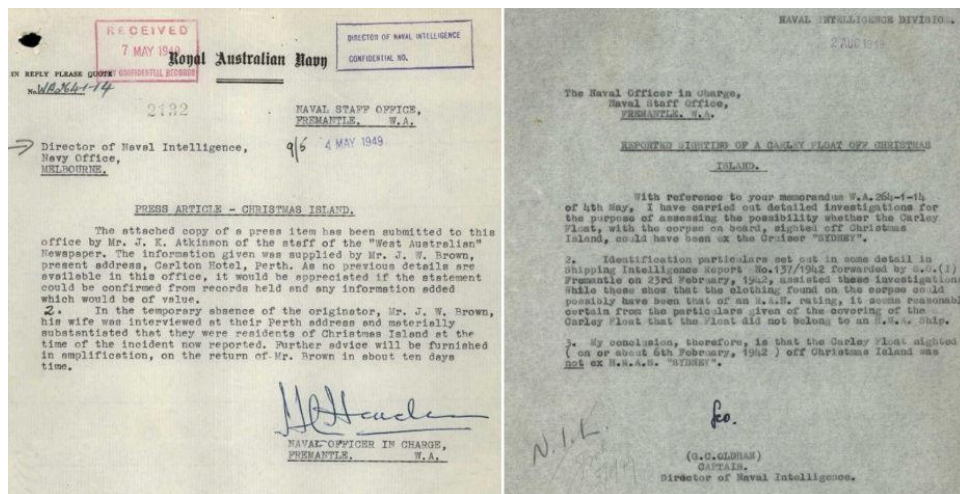
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NEWS.....

HMAS Gascoyne hunted down an opportunity to thank families for their continued support during a rare port visit to Adelaide. After completing route survey operations off Port Adelaide recently, a number of crew who are Adelaide natives were able to invite their families on board for a cruise from Outer Harbour to Glenelg. Commanding Officer HMAS Gascoyne Lieutenant Commander Geoffrey Crane said the cruise was a way to thank families for their ongoing support of their serving loved ones. "It has been almost 20 years since Gascoyne last visited the Port of Adelaide so this family cruise was certainly a rare event and one which took

1949

Interest by the RAN in the Christmas Island episode was rekindled after the war on 4 May 1949. At that time the Naval Officer in Charge - Fremantle, Captain HL Howden, CBE, RAN, a former captain of *Sydney's* sister ship HMAS *Hobart*, wrote to the Director of Naval Intelligence, Melbourne, Commander George Oldham, DSC, RAN requesting a statement or further information in connection with a story submitted by Mr JK Atkinson of the West Australian newspaper. That story featured the recollections of former Sergeant JW Brown of the Singapore Volunteers who was present when the Carley Float washed up at Christmas Island and who confirmed the notion that it held the body of an Australian naval rating. Commander Oldham's response dismissed the notion that the Carley Float could have come from Sydney based on the description provided in shipping intelligence report (No 137/42) of 23 February 1942. This then appears to be the baseline for the Navy's position on the matter until 1998.



The correspondence exchanged between Captain HL Howden, CBE, RAN and the then Director of Naval Intelligence Commander George Oldham, DSC, RAN.

1998

In 1998 a Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade conducted an inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the sinking of HMAS *Sydney* (II) in response to a ground-swell of public opinion wishing to better understand what led to the cruiser's disappearance without trace. Significantly, the story of the Christmas Island sailor was examined closely and the committee concluded:

On the balance of probability, that the body and the Carley Float found off the shore of Christmas Island in February 1942 were most likely from HMAS Sydney (II).

a little more planning to ensure we abided by the local and fleet COVID-19 policies," Lieutenant Commander Crane said. "Family support is vital, especially on long deployments, so the chance to give back to loved ones and showcase what we do at sea was a proud moment for all on board." Families were treated to a tour of the ship, including an opportunity to see the ship's company in action on the bridge during pilotage, in order to give them a true appreciation of life on board.

Australian political leaders have refocused Canberra's attention on developing more asymmetric capabilities necessary to fighting a war far from its shores against "high-end competitor" China, a former senior national security adviser to its foreign minister said Tuesday. John Lee, now a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, described the security situation regarding Taiwan and in northeast Asia "a lot bleaker" than they were five years ago when, for the first time, maritime concerns dominated an Australian defense white paper.

The Royal Danish Navy frigate HDMS Esbern Snare (F342) engaged pirates on Wednesday during an anti-piracy deployment in the Gulf of Guinea off West Africa, killing four pirates and capturing the remaining four. The ship was responding to reports of pirate activity and heading to the scene while sending it's embarked Royal Danish Air Force MH-60R helicopter in advance to observe the area, according to a Thursday news release from the Danish Armed Forces. By the evening, Esbern Snare was close enough to launch rigid-hulled inflatable boats (RHIBs) carrying Danish naval special forces personnel and called on the boat to halt and permit boarding, the news release said. When the boat refused to respond to the call, warning shots were fired, with the pirates responding by firing directly at the personnel in the RHIBs. A brief firefight then ensued, in which no Danish personnel were hit but five pirates were shot, with four of them

The committee recommended that an attempt to locate the grave of the unknown sailor on Christmas Island be made and, if the attempt was successful, there be an exhumation of the remains for the purpose of identification. The recommendation was accepted.

2001 - The First Search

Between 24 August and 7 September 2001 Lieutenant Commander Richard Chartier, RAN, a naval aviator and specialist in air crash investigation, led a small team comprising former Christmas Island resident Mr Ted Lourey; Mr Ted McGown (the brother of one of the ratings who died in Sydney); forensic anthropologist Dr Denise Donlan (Squadron Leader RAAF); forensic dentists Lieutenant Commander Matt Blenkin, RAN; and Dr Russell Lain (Lieutenant RANR) to excavate a site in the Old European Cemetery, Christmas Island, in search of the body from the Carley Float. They were later joined by Dr Alan Cala and Dr Jo Duflou, also Reserve officers in the ADF. It was hoped that by finding the body, the riddle concerning who he was might be solved.

During the first search a total area of 38 square metres of the cemetery was excavated and about 20 cubic metres of material weighing 32 tonnes removed. Disappointingly, in spite of their collective efforts, the search was to prove unsuccessful and thereafter the Australian Government adopted the position that no further search would be conducted unless credible and compelling new evidence concerning the location of the grave was forthcoming.



The 2001 dig team. L-R: Denise Donlon, Russell Lain, Richard Chartier, Professor Johan Duflou and Matt Blenkin.

killed and one wounded.

The long-awaited and much-delayed 2021 China military power report, released by the US Department of Defense earlier this month, makes for interesting reading. The report is full of important analyses of myriad developments in the People's Liberation Army that could occupy several months' worth of 'China military watch'. This article considers the significance of PLA nuclear advancements. This is occurring simultaneously with the construction of large numbers of new missile silos in Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia, noted in August's 'China military watch', and coincides with two tests of a potential intercontinental hypersonic glide vehicle employing a fractional orbital bombardment system-type trajectory over the South Pole to circumvent US missile defences. The report also notes a requirement for new lower yield nuclear weapons that could imply an operational-level or tactical-level nuclear warfighting capability.

In a significant win for veterans across the country, the Morrison-Joyce Government has taken action to ensure no veteran will be made worse off due to a Federal Court decision. The court's decision in Commissioner of Taxation v. Douglas (the Douglas decision) had meant that invalidity pensions paid under the Military Superannuation and Benefits (MSB) and Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) schemes which commenced after 20 September 2007 would be taxed as superannuation lump sums rather than superannuation income stream benefits. The Assistant Treasurer Michael Sukkar said that without a swift response from the Australian Government, the Douglas decision would have had potentially harmful financial implications for some veterans. "The court's decision had meant that invalidity pensions paid under certain superannuation schemes would be taxed differently," Assistant Minister Sukkar said.

In early 2006 advice from two different sources, Mr Ted McGowan and Mrs Glenys McDonald, both avid researchers, citing credible new evidence was received by the RAN and forwarded to the Sea Power Centre - Australia for evaluation. Chief amongst that was the existence of a photograph taken of the burial site in 1950 by Mr Brian O'Shannassy coupled with evidence from a former Christmas Island resident, Mr Say Kit Foo, who had intimate knowledge of the graveyard. These submissions resulted in the Senior Naval Historical Officer Mr John Perryman and Lieutenant Commander John Maddox, RANR, interviewing Mr Brian O'Shannassy and Mr Say Kit Foo, in March 2006, both of whom were happy to reveal what they knew concerning where the unknown sailor was buried.

Mr O'Shannassy, a former RAN signalman, had taken a photograph of the cemetery where the unknown sailor was interred during the post-war period (1950). In the photograph could be seen a line of graves that he claimed included the unmarked grave. He indicated on a map provided by Mr Perryman where he believed it to be. Mr Say Kit Foo, the son of a cook who worked for the British Phosphate Commission, and who used to play in the cemetery as a child also indicated where he believed the body to be by placing a mark on the same map. Both marks were within 3 metres of the other and this was sufficient for Mr Perryman to take the matter forward to government and argue that it constituted new credible evidence and that a further attempt to find the body was feasible and ought to be undertaken.

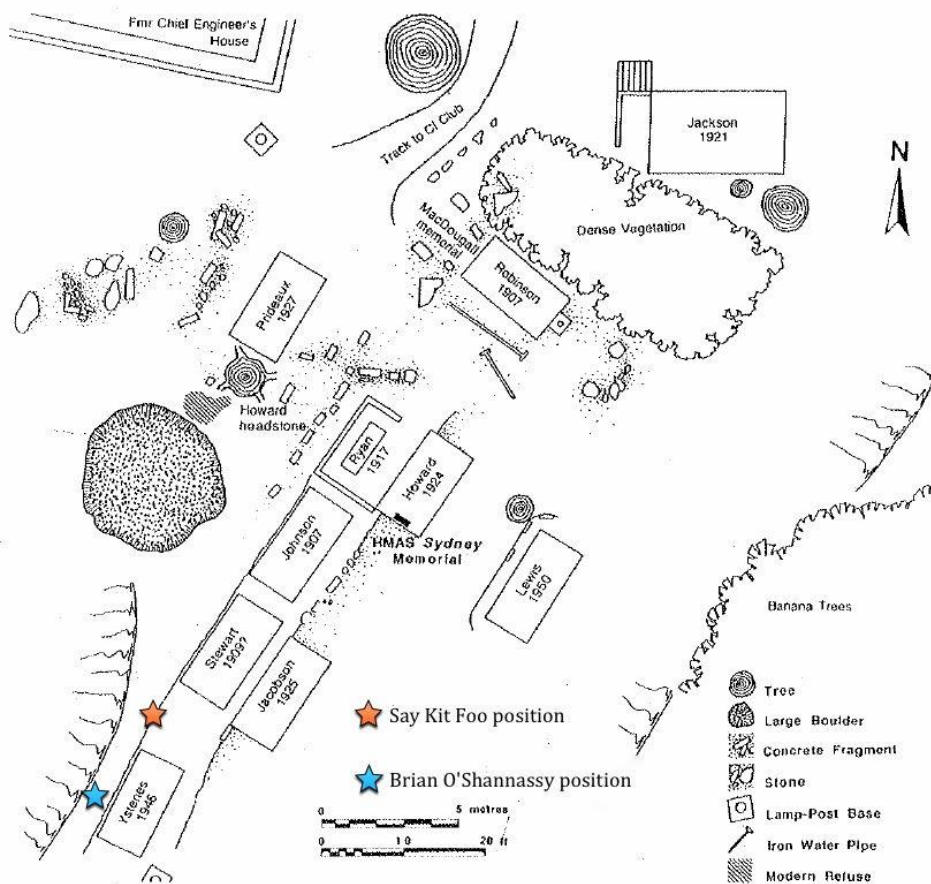


Left: Signalman Brian O'Shannassy, circa 1946. Right: The photograph taken by Brian while working on Christmas Island in the 1950s. The grave in the foreground is the Johnson grave that Brian used as a reference point. Beyond it is the Stewart grave, a space left bare and finally the Ystenes grave.

Personnel can learn about Defence's work in reducing gender-based violence and providing support to victims at a virtual seminar on November 25. The seminar coincides with International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

The Joint Standing Committee on Treaties will hold an inquiry into the agreement between the governments of Australia, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US) for the Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information (ENNPI). The ENNPI Agreement aims to provide a mechanism for Australian personnel to access training and education from the UK and US counterparts, necessary for learning how to safely build, operate and support nuclear-powered submarines. Following the signing of the Exchange of Naval Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement by Minister for Defence Peter Dutton and representatives from the United Kingdom and the United States this week, the committee has announced that it is now accepting submissions to the inquiry until Friday, 26 November 2021. According to committee chair Dave Sharma MP, the agreement will help determine the optimal pathway for acquiring nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy, one of the most important strategic military capabilities for Australia in the decades ahead.

BAE Systems is in the process of transferring two million digital artefacts and 90,000 documents about the UK's Type 26 frigate to their Australian office to support the construction of the Hunter Class frigate as part of the SEA 5000 project. The transfer of the artefacts and files from the UK's frigate program in Scotland to BAE's Osborne Naval Shipyard in Adelaide is expected to support BAE Systems Maritime Australia's construction of nine Hunter Class frigates, which are based on the Global Combat Ship (GCS) baseline design and the Type 26 reference ship



A map of the Old European Cemetery indicating the location of the grave given by Mr O'Shannassy and Mr Say Kit Foo.

The Second Search

In September 2006 the Navy assembled a team of experts led by Captain Jim Parsons, RAN, to conduct an excavation of the identified site. The team again included Dr Denise Donlan, Commander Matt Blenkin, RAN, and Dr Russell Lain, and was further complemented by highly regarded archaeologist Tony Lowe and Brian O'Shannassy who had taken the photograph 50 years previously. The team was given further assistance by residents of Christmas Island who gave willingly of their time, hospitality, equipment and knowledge of the terrain which was to prove difficult at the best of times.

After a week of hard work and digging, a good part of the search area had been excavated and eliminated but had not returned a positive outcome. With time running out, Captain Parsons and his team reviewed and reassessed the evidence, refining their search to an area between the Stewart and Ystenes graves that was closer to the area identified by Say Kit Foo.

that is currently being built for the Royal Navy out of Glasgow. Among the files include design information, drawings, data, videos, diagrams and tools to support the construction of the Hunter Class and a broader sovereign design capability.

The Philippine military undertook a resupply mission for its troops in the Second Thomas Shoal in the Kalayaan Island Group (KIG) on Tuesday, exactly one week after the mission was aborted after two Chinese Coast Guard vessels used water cannons to attack the two civilian boats bringing supplies to the soldiers. The delivery of supplies for the small contingent of soldiers aboard the partly sunken BRP Sierra Madre, which Filipino troops are using as an outpost in securing the Second Thomas Shoal, apparently went along with a scheduled troops' rotation.

Australia, Canada, Germany, Japan and the United States are conducting naval drills in the Philippine Sea off the southern coast of Japan for the next week. The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force exercise, known as ANNUALEX 2021, began on Sunday and will continue through Nov. 30. The exercise is a yearly naval training event led by the JMSDF, with navies from other countries invited to participate in the event. This year's iteration marks the first time the German Navy is taking part in these drills.

Several pleasing announcements as we tentatively set sail, caste off and launch into the post Lockdown 'new normal'. First – an announcement that the new MMHN website is up and running. With a completely new look, the website is easy to use and showcases all our activities. The website was made possible through a grant by the English Speaking Union and we sincerely thank them, and our website designer, Dimity Mapstone. We encourage you to go online and check it out at <https://mmhn.org.au/>

The signing of the Exchange of Naval

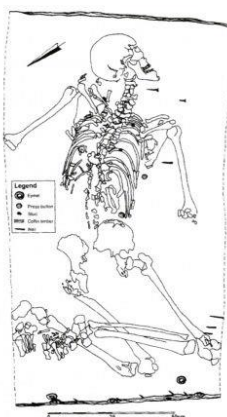


The unusual space left bare between the Stewart and Ystenes graves. (Glenys McDonald)

On 30 September 2006 the grave was located when rotting timber and rusting nails were uncovered and a male skeleton exposed. The remains were buried face down in a position in which it was flexed at the knees as described by Captain Craig in 1942. Also found in the grave were press studs from the sailors overalls and brass eyelets, believed to be from a piece of canvas that was used to place him in the makeshift coffin that was built around him in 1942.



The meticulous process of uncovering the remains. From left: Matt Blenkin. Team Leader Captain Jim Parsons overseeing proceedings. Denise Donlan and Russel Lain, both of whom established a deep commitment to solving the identity of the unknown sailor.



Left: The remains as they were found in the unmarked grave. Right: Tony Lowe, Jim Parsons, Brian O'Shannassy, Denise Donlon, Russell Lain and Matt Blenkin.

Nuclear Propulsion Information Agreement (the Agreement) with our AUKUS partners – the United Kingdom and the United States – is another important step in Australia's pursuit of conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines. Minister for Defence the Hon Peter Dutton MP said the Agreement will further advance consultations by permitting the United Kingdom and the United States to exchange sensitive and classified naval nuclear propulsion information with a third country for the first time. "This Agreement will support Australia in completing the 18 months of intensive and comprehensive examination of the requirements underpinning the delivery of nuclear-powered submarines," Minister Dutton said. "The United Kingdom and the United States will be able to share naval nuclear propulsion information with Australia, which they cannot with any other country, in the determination of the optimal pathway to acquire nuclear-powered submarines for operation by the Royal Australian Navy.

Sit in a quiet room, pop on your headphones, close your eyes, press 'play' and imagine life deep underwater as you enjoy a 3D audio, virtual tour of a submarine. This dream will become a reality for the winners of the Royal Australian Navy's national submariner competition, which is online now.

Commanding Officer HMAS Sirius Commander Christopher Doherty said the ship's last visit to Norfolk Island – the ship's ceremonial home port – was particularly significant for the crew and community.

Defence and national security agencies have enlisted the services of Australian researchers to explore how artificial intelligence (AI) can be used to improve military decision-making.

Eighty years after the Australian warship HMAS Sydney (II) sunk off the West Australian coast, the only body recovered from the tragedy has now been

Under the authority of an exhumation order the body was carefully removed and respectfully repatriated to mainland Australia for further examination. At that time Mr Perryman at the Sea Power Centre - Australia initiated efforts to gather as much personal information as possible from relatives of the crew of HMAS *Sydney* (II) with a view to one day identifying the sailor. The response to that appeal was overwhelming and this work was to quietly continue in the background. At the same time, Commander Greg Swinden, RAN, an officer with a keen interest in RAN war dead and casualities, and one who had considerable research experience in that field, volunteered to spearhead efforts to identify the 'Christmas Island Man' as he came to be known. The next decade would be spent obtaining DNA samples from relatives with Greg working closely with DNA specialists: Associate Professor Jeremy Austin and his team at the University of Adelaide and Associate Professor Jodie Ward and her team at the Australian Federal Police. The involvement of these two groups would eventually prove a turning point.



Left: Commander Greg Swinden who coordinated DNA sampling that was to lead to a breakthrough. Right: Forensic Odontologist Russell Lain, Commander Greg Swinden, Associate Professor Jeremy Austin and Mr John Perryman following news of a DNA match in early 2020.

The process of trying to identify the unknown sailor included examining varying data sets such as personnel and dental records, photographs and descriptions but overwhelmingly the scientific evidence gleaned by the anthropological, dental and forensic specialists who remained involved throughout the entire process. Those data sets directed the focus of effort as new leads and scientific advancements emerged. The initial scientific results of the examination of the Christmas Island body may also be found in the Cole Inquiry.

2008

In March 2008 the wrecks of both *Kormoran* and *Sydney* were located in more than 2000 metres of water about 120 nautical miles west of Steep Point, Western Australia. The discovery saw the then Chief of

identified.

After participating in her final exercise, Exercise Malabar, HMAS Sirius left the latest Regional Presence Deployment task group to embark on a decommissioning tour. With the ship due to decommission in December, the crew has organised a commemorative tour around Australia, fitting of the ship's legacy.

The Royal Australian Navy commissioned its latest ship into service on November 13 at Fleet Base West, Rockingham, Western Australia. HMAS Stalwart, the second of the Supply-class auxiliary oiler replenishment ships, will provide logistics replenishment to ships at sea, while also having the ability to support the Joint Force on a wider scale.

The effects of joint-force firepower have made a good impression with the Minister for Defence Industry Melissa Price during a triservice live-fire demonstration at Lancelin Training Area on November 8. The interoperability exercise showcased the joint capability of Defence in Western Australia, demonstrating how the three services can successfully coordinate and deliver effects on ground-based targets.

The French Navy announced that a sailboat collided with aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle this morning. No injuries were reported, damages are limited to the sailboat which dismasted. According to the Maritime Prefecture of the Mediterranean (Préfecture Maritime de la Méditerranée), the flagship of the French Navy (Marine Nationale), aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle, was at sea for training off Toulon naval base when the collision occurred with a 10 meters-long sailboat flying the flag of Poland.

HMAS Anzac trained with two Indonesian Navy ships this month during Exercise New Horizon, a key biennial maritime high-end warfare

the Australian Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal AG Houston, AC, AFC initiate an official inquiry into the loss of HMAS Sydney (II) and 'consequent loss of life and related events subsequent thereto'. The last sentence was important as it encapsulated the Christmas Island sailor.

2009

In July 2009 the Cole Inquiry was handed down and in matters relating to the Christmas Island sailor it concluding that:

The Carley Float and the body found in it are inextricably linked. Common sense suggests that if either can be shown to have come from SYDNEY so did the other. Together, the evidence in relation to the Carley Float and to the body leave no doubt at all that both the Carley Float and the body found in it came from HMAS Sydney.

[*\(Chapter 15 of the Cole Inquiry report\)*](#)

The remains of the Christmas Island man were re-interred at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Geraldton on 19 November 2008 with full naval honours. His grave was marked as:

A Serviceman of the 1939-1945 War HMAS SYDNEY Known Unto God.



The re-burial of the unknown sailor at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery Geraldton, WA. RAN sailors guarded, carried and lowered his remains with full naval honours. Bottom right: Lieutenant John Perryman, RAN, pays his respects.



engagement. The exercise was conducted in the waters off Surabaya, Indonesia, as the final international activity of Indo-Pacific Endeavour (IPE21).

127 veteran groups around Australia will benefit from more than \$4.35 million in additional funding through the Building Excellence in Support and Training (BEST) Program. Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said the funding would help ex-service organisations (ESOs) continue to deliver the highest quality advocacy services and support.

One of Britain's biggest warships, HMS Albion, was towed through the Channel to help the French test the power of a new specialist ship, according to a Royal Navy press release on 11 November. The FS Garonne hauled huge assault ship HMS Albion past the coast of Devon to assess its pulling strength and abilities – as well as hone Anglo-French naval co-operation and the Royal Navy's own emergency procedures.

The Navy has completed submarine search and rescue exercises alongside Indo-Pacific partners. The Royal Australian Navy's submarine abandonment, escape and rescue system was put to the test as part of Exercise Black Carillon 21 – an annual training exercise aimed at ensuring personnel are equipped to respond to emergency scenarios.

The remarkable contribution of a 99-year-old submarine commander was honoured by the Royal Australian Navy ahead of Remembrance Day. Born on October 17, 1922, Lieutenant Commander (retd) Michael Timothy Hickie joined with family and friends at the RSL Anzac Village in Narrabeen to celebrate his birthday. It was here that he received a hand-delivered letter from the Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Mike Noonan.

The body of a Victorian soldier, killed in action during the First World War, has

A small part of his remains was, however, retained to enable further DNA testing and this proved to be a prescient consideration in light of advancements in that field.

2010-2021

Over more than a decade the Navy's Sea Power Centre, scientific and forensic experts and a significant number of relatives from those lost in HMAS *Sydney* (II), including those of the six RAAF men, four civilian canteen staff and eight Royal Navy personnel, have contributed to unravelling the riddle of who the unknown sailor might be. This work was initially based on the various anthropometric clues revealed by Dr. Donlon and Tony Lowe during the initial examinations of the human remains found in the grave on Christmas Island including approximate age, height, dental features and other idiosyncrasies.

That anthropological data determined that the remains were of a Caucasian male aged approximately between 21 and 31 and with a height of between 5 foot 6 inches and 6 foot 2 inches. He displayed squatting facets on the anterior borders of the distal ends of both tibiae. He also displayed bowing of both fibulae, probably caused by occupational stress due to repetitive movements, possibly carrying heavy weights or undertaking strenuous activity.

The remains were of a man with a long narrow face, exhibiting gracile features, with a prominent chin. Dental experts Russel Lain and Matt Blenkin were to record that nine of his teeth had been repaired with gold fillings and this became a matter of some focus. It is important to note that there was no provision on WWII dental records to record the presence of fillings. If a tooth had been filled it was recorded as being sound. All of that information was compared with data recorded on service records, and surviving medical and dental records to either include or exclude members in order to form a cohort of potential candidates. Over time, isotope testing and DNA testing emerged as realistic means of assisting with identifying the remains. Some of that work, such as the isotope testing, was undertaken as far away as Canada by M Anne Katzenberg in the University of Calgary.

2021

The aggregate of years of research conducted by all those involved rewarded Commander Swinden with a breakthrough in proceedings. DNA testing conducted over a two year period led by

been identified in an unnamed grave in France, more than a century after his death. Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee today confirmed the identification of Lieutenant James Mark Kennedy, 26th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force born 16 April 1879.

A second suspected missile target in the shape of a U.S. aircraft carrier has been spotted in a rural Chinese desert, according to satellite photos obtained by USNI News. The site consists of a single aircraft carrier target, miles from the nearest town in the Xinjiang region, according to photos provided to USNI News by satellite imagery company Maxar.

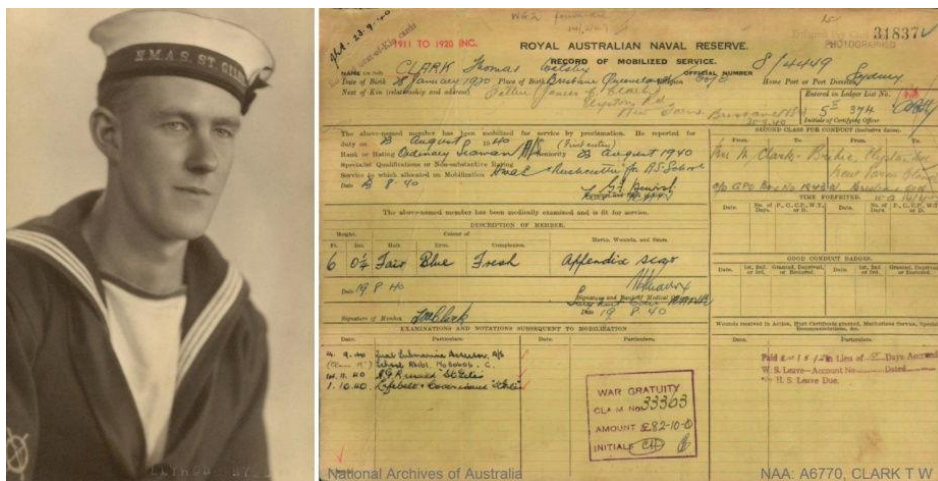
The key reason Australia entered into a new security agreement with the United States and United Kingdom that includes building nuclear-powered submarines is "to project power further up" from the homeland, Canberra's ambassador to Washington said Tuesday. Arthur Simonides, speaking in a Hudson Institute forum, said Australia was also looking at new ways of shaping the security environment in the Indo-Pacific and for a deterrent against China when acting with allies.

'One sits and ponders sadly of those many pals who are "gone to that home from which no wanderer returns." ... The very flower of our manhood have paid the greatest price, not willingly for not one of them but longed to live, return home and forget, yes just forget the horrors of the past ... Please God ... the sacrifices have not been in vain.'
Lance Corporal Roger Morgan, Second Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, 11 November 1918

Commemorative services, restoration of memorials and the installation of a new honour roll are among the notable projects sharing in over \$800,000 of grant funding provided by the Australian Government under the Saluting Their Service (STS)

Associate Professor Jeremy Austin and his team at the University of Adelaide revealed a mitochondrial DNA match. Further analysis led by Associate Professor Jodie Ward and Mrs. Shelley Seddon and their team at the Australian Federal Police National DNA Program for Unidentified and Missing Persons established a Y Chromosome match. This led to identifying living individuals with the same DNA who were found to be direct relatives of S/4449 Able Seaman Thomas Welsby Clark.

Able Seaman Clark's service record confirms that he was a member of HMAS Sydney (II) at the time of her sinking. It also confirms his age as being 21.3 years, caucasian and over 6 feet tall.



Able Seaman Thomas Welsby Clark

Research into Clark's background reveals that he came from a wealthy family. His father was a sheep grazer, a race horse breeder and oyster farmer with an estimated worth of 200,000 pounds at the time of his death. The above is significant as it provided possible explanations for his expensive gold dental work, the squatting facets (horse riding) and isotope testing that revealed the body had been nourished in life chiefly through a sea food diet (oyster farm).

The DNA links were connected to a current day family member maintaining an unbroken female line from the 1830s to present day. The collegiate work of all involved brought this information before an independent Australian Defence Force Casualty Identification Board, chaired by Captain Paul O'Grady, DSM, CSM, RAN, which, after hearing all of the evidence from various experts, took the matter under consideration over a number of weeks. The rectitude and vigour of the board was noteworthy.

The board concluded, based on overwhelming evidence, with a confidence level of greater than 80 percent, that the remains of the

Commemorative Grants Program. Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee said communities across Australia are proud of their military history, our local veterans who have served our nation and their families who have supported them.

The Chinese military has built targets in the shape of an American aircraft carrier and other U.S. warships in the Taklamakan desert as part of a new target range complex, according to photos provided to USNI News by satellite imagery company Maxar. The full-scale outline of a U.S. carrier and at least two Arleigh Burke-class destroyers are part of the target range that has been built in the Ruoqiang region in central China.

The U.S. Navy selected its first woman to go directly from earning designation as a naval aviator to postgraduate flight training in the F-35C Lightning II. Lt. j.g. Suzelle Thomas, assigned to the "Eagles" of Training Squadron (VT) 7, received her Wings of Gold alongside seven fellow naval aviators and one Italian Navy aviator during a ceremony at the chapel onboard Naval Air Station (NAS) Meridian, Oct. 29.

The NSW Defence Innovation Network (DIN) Strategic Investment Initiative is expected to commence research into undersea acoustic communications and sensing technologies. NSW Minister for Industry and Trade Stuart Ayres has recently confirmed that the NSW government will support the development of integrated undersea acoustic communications and sensing technologies, aimed at supporting long-distance covert underwater communications.

The ADF partnered with the PNG Defence Force to conduct maritime surveillance to detect and deter illegal fishing in the Pacific. The Royal Australian Navy's HMAS Wollongong and the PNG Defence Force's HMPNGS Rochus Lokinap recently conducted a

HMAS *Sydney* (II) sailor who washed ashore at Christmas Island on 6 February 1942 are those of S/4449 Able Seaman Submarine Detector Thomas Welsby Clark.

The identity of the ‘unknown sailor’ was jointly announced at the Australian War Memorial Canberra, by the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Defence Personnel, the Hon Andrew Gee MP, and the Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Mike Noonan, AO, RAN, on 19 November 2021, coinciding with the 80th anniversary of HMAS *Sydney* (II)’s last valiant action.

Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Mike Noonan said AB Clark was just 21 when he died and was representative of the many young lives lost in the battle.

“We revere the service and sacrifice of all who perished.” Vice Admiral Noonan said.

“Solving this World War II case involved specialists in DNA analysis, forensic pathology and dentistry, ballistics, anthropology, archaeology and naval history. I commend the combined effort spearheaded by the Sea Power Centre to confirm AB Clark’s identity.

“The Australian Federal Police National DNA Program for Unidentified and Missing Persons was instrumental, as were the Australian National University, Australian War Memorial, University of Adelaide and University of Sydney, not to mention Able Seaman Thomas Clark’s family.

“His long voyage is complete, may he Rest in Peace.”

In the week preceding the official announcement descendant family members of Thomas Welsby Clark were privately advised of the news that the unknown sailor had been positively identified as their missing relative.

A special memorial cairn now marks the location in the Old European Cemetery on Christmas Island where Thomas Clark lay for many years commemorating both him and his shipmates.

two-week maritime surveillance exercise in PNG’s Exclusive Economic Zone to detect and deter illegal fishing in the region, Defence confirmed.

The Royal Australian Navy and United States Navy elements have successfully concluded Exercise Dugong 2021 in Western Australia today. For the past three weeks, specialist Coalition mine warfare units have been exercising in a simulated scenario to test their ability to keep the Port of Fremantle and Indian Ocean accesses open in the event of a hostile action against Australia.

The commander, executive officer and senior enlisted sailor for attack submarine USS Connecticut (SSN-22) have been fired following the results of an investigation into the Oct. 2 underwater collision in the South China Sea, the Navy announced on Thursday. Connecticut commanding officer Cmdr. Cameron Aljilani, executive officer Lt. Cmdr. Patrick Cashin and Chief of the Boat Cory Rodgers were removed from their positions at the direction of U.S. 7th Fleet commander Vice Adm. Karl Thomas. The reliefs follow the completion of the investigation into the Oct. 2 collision in which the nuclear attack submarine collided with an uncharted underwater seamount in the South China Sea.

China has the biggest maritime force on the globe with an inventory of about 355 vessels, according to a Defense Department report released Wednesday. With 355 ships in its fleet, the People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is slated to expand its inventory to 420 ships within the next four years, the Pentagon’s annual China military report estimates. By 2030, the PLAN is expected to have 460 ships. The 355 estimation accounts for “major surface combatants, submarines, aircraft carriers, ocean-going amphibious ships, mine warfare ships, and fleet auxiliaries,” according to the report, which covers events in 2020.



Canberra-based relatives of Able Seaman Clark, Dr Leigh Lehane (niece) with husband Robert, flanked by Commander Greg Swinden, RAN, right and Mr John Perryman.

Source: [RAN website – John Perryman](#)

Yours Aye!
NVN Team



If you know of any of our Navy family that has crossed the bar, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#). We will list their names in perpetuity on our special [Memorial Wall](#) on the website. If possible list their Rank, Name, Number, the date of their passing and their age.

- † WTR K.D.T. Wilson, R65827, 11 November 2021. Aged 73.
- † CMDR D. Webster, O.2870, 10 November 2021. Aged 76
- † CPOAAH J. Green, R35495, 10 November 2021. Aged 89.
- † WOATV R. Collins, November 2021.
- † POME G.A.D. Todd, R64972, 06 November 2021. Aged 75.
- † LEUT J.L. Champion, O.192, 02 November 2021. Aged 91.
- † CPOB T.A. Wilcox, 30 October 2021. Aged 59.
- † CPOETS R.J. O'Brien, R65898, 26 October 2021. Aged 73.
- † SIG R.E. Buzza, PM7694, 23 October 2021. Aged 96.

Lest We Forget

When Royal Australian Navy Band member Petty Officer Nigel Barrett's civilian employer learnt he had nominated them for an award for supporting his Reserve service, it was music to their ears. But the high note came when that workplace, the Western Australian Association for Mental Health, won the not-for-profit category of the state's Reserve Employer Support Awards.

A nuclear-powered submarine has docked in WA as part of a regional deployment in the Indo-Pacific. A Royal Navy Astute Class submarine is conducting a port visit to Perth, joining HMAS Stirling in Rockingham, Western Australia. The vessel's arrival in Perth follows its deployment with the UK Carrier Strike Group, led by air craft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth. The task group was most recently operating in the Indo-Pacific, conducting exercises alongside a number of Royal Australian Navy units and other multinational partners.

A recent training activity between the Australian and Canadian navies in the Indo-Pacific was particularly significant for one Royal Australian Navy member. Lieutenant Commander Stephen Wall spent 16 years as an officer in the Royal Canadian Navy before joining the Royal Australian Navy in 2018. Lieutenant Commander Wall is now HMAS Warramunga's principal warfare officer and is currently at sea on a regional presence deployment.

On September 29, the personnel of Armidale-class patrol boat HMAS Maitland celebrated the ship's 15th birthday while alongside HMAS Coonawarra. Maitland commissioned on September 29, 2006, and is the first Navy vessel to bear the name Maitland after the City of Maitland, NSW, and the World War II naval training establishment in Newcastle, NSW. This was HMAS Maitland's final birthday in service as the ship is scheduled to be decommissioned in April next year.

Our November Hero:

Leading Cook(O) Francis Bassett 'Dick' Emms MID



Francis Bassett 'Dick' Emms was born at Launceston, Tasmania on 28 November 1909 and following his schooling was employed in his father's tailoring shop. He joined the Royal Australian Navy on 14 March 1928 and undertook his initial training as an Ordinary Seaman at HMAS *Cerberus*. On completion of his training he joined the heavy cruiser HMAS *Canberra* in March 1929 and served in her until July 1930. Emms was promoted to Able Seaman in January 1930 and later qualified as a gunnery rating.

On 19 February 1942, Leading Cook Francis Emms was serving onboard the boom defence vessel HMAS *Kara Kara* when the Japanese conducted their first air raid on Darwin. During this raid dozens of Japanese aircraft attacked ships in the harbour, the RAAF airfield and indiscriminately bombed the city. Eight ships were sunk, dozens of aircraft destroyed and nearly 300 people were killed. During the attack, *Kara Kara* was singled out by several Japanese aircraft that commenced strafing the vessel. Emms manned one of the vessel's machine guns and returned fire and continued to do so even after he had been seriously wounded. His mates called to him to take cover, but he stood by his gun as another wave of Japanese zeros and bombers moved in devastating fashion over Darwin. His constant and accurate fire forced the Japanese aircraft to break off their attack and probably saved the lives of several of his shipmates.

Dick Emms was badly wounded as a result of the attack and despite being transferred to the hospital ship *Manunda* he died later that day and was buried at sea. He was subsequently awarded a posthumous Mention in Dispatches "For courage and devotion to duty in HMAS *Kara Kara* during an enemy air raid on Darwin on 19 February 1942". Many of his shipmates believed he should have been awarded the Victoria Cross.

Dick's full story can be found on our Heroes page:

<https://navyvic.net/heroes/emms.html>

A multi-disciplinary taskforce is recruiting 'Australia's sharpest minds' to tackle the herculean task of providing the Royal Australian Navy with eight nuclear-powered submarines, acquiring the technical skills the nation doesn't yet have to maintain them, and training highly specialised crews to drive them. Given the immense complexity of this project revealed in September's bombshell announcement by US President Joe Biden and Australian and UK prime ministers Scott Morrison and Boris Johnson, and the scale of Australia's strategic shift, those sharp minds will have their work cut out.

During a routine mid-morning COVID-19 compliance check in Wellington, NSW, earlier this month, COVID-19 task force member Able Seaman Matthew Mu was faced with a life-or-death situation. When Able Seaman Mu arrived at one of the homes, the concerned family inside asked for help with their relative. A man in the COVID-positive household lay on the floor, struggling for breath. Able Seaman Mu and the NSW Police Force officers he was accompanying immediately put on full personal protective equipment, including gowns and face masks, to help the man who had COVID-19. It was a situation that swiftly deteriorated.

FlyBy – A periodical of the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia.

[November issue.....](#) (Note: right mouse click link and download document)

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