



# VICTORIAN MARITIME CENTRE



**Patron:** HRH The Princess Royal,

**Chief Executive:** Neil Armstrong, OAM (JP)

**Governors:** Maj. Bruce Jarvis (Ret), Lt Cdr Roger Blythman RAN (Ret)

**Ambassadors:** Dennis Gist, Heidi Victoria,  
Spring 2020

## Members & Friends

Welcome to our Spring newsletter,

### From The President's Desk

Your Association has been going through a major management restructure to give us the experienced team to take our project forward. We are pleased to welcome a new CEO, Mr Neil Armstrong OAM (JP). We welcome two new Governors, Maj. Bruce Jarvis (Ret) and Lt Cdr Roger Blythman RAN (Ret) to our team. We welcome Heidi Victoria as an Ambassador.

Neil is an experienced Chief Executive having had roles in Leadership with Local Governments and the private sector; he has a strong commitment to local communities. He has also received several awards for his service to several Not for Profit Associations.



Bruce is experienced in developing and leading successful teams to produce above average results due to his expertise. His background includes time spent in defence and commercial business. Specialties: Team Building Leadership, Mentoring, Business support, Networking, HR Support, Cash Flow and OH&S Policy.

Rodger graduated with a Bachelor of Laws from The University of Melbourne in 1971. He was admitted to practice as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria in 1972. He served for twenty years as a navy reserve officer and was awarded the Reserve Force Decoration. Roger is the Federal Vice President of the Navy League of Australia.

Heidi Victoria, a former state Minister for the Arts, Women's Affairs and Consumer Affairs In 2014, she became Shadow Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Arts and Culture, and Aboriginal Affairs. No longer involved in politics Heidi has her own photography business.

We were very sorry to lose Ian Heraud who unfortunately had to give up his position as Chairman of Governors due to his work commitments. Ian has made a huge contribution to the project and his support and friendship for me personally has been incredible and I thank him very much for his support. I am hopeful Ian will return to the project sometime in the future, in the mean time we wish him well in his future endeavours.

It is time for membership renewals I cannot stress how important it is to remain a member of the Association. With the new team going forward it is critical that we show support and that means in membership numbers. Politically as you know it is a numbers game so the more members the stronger the voice.

Like most businesses the Covid 19 pandemic hit and we had to close our museum to the public. We have taken a financial hit but nothing compared to commercial businesses however it still hurt us.

**Please Note Due to the Covid 19 crisis the committee made the decision that the AGM will be held in the New Year**

Cheers Max



Edward 'Teddy' Sheean died protecting his crewmates on the HMAS Armidale in the Timor Sea in WW2 but it took nearly eight decades for the young sailor to be recognised with the nation's highest military honour. We all signed a petition for Teddy Sheean to be awarded the VC, this has been successful. See YouTube video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDxXyibmqmo&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0vI8sP8W5-26w7kj4gLtbrG-8MPlgKXD1mMcndznJU9jz1GtFGJa0Nu0s>

## Vale

**Don (Titch) Parsons** left us on eternal patrol. Titch, a member of Otama's Commissioning Crew passed away in his sleep on Friday the 2nd of May. Many will remember him visiting the museum recently for the opening of the AE2 exhibit. From the committee and members we wish to pass on our condolences to his family and friends, he will be sadly missed by all. The picture enclosed shows HRH The Princess Royal when she came to Hastings. Titch standing to attention with other Otama commissioning crew members reminiscing with HRH when they last met at Otama commissioning.



**Frank Finch OAM** passed away in March, he was a Merchant Navy icon, Mr Fredrick (Frank) Finch the father of our esteemed member merchant seaman, Wayne Finch. Frank from the northern NSW town of Kyogle where he created the Finch Family Maritime Museum now run by Wayne. Frank will be sadly missed and he sailed across the bar in a rather unique coffin, note the port hole. It was Frank's wish, so he could see who turned up for the funeral. We extend our belated commiserations to Wayne and the entire Finch family, sail on Frank.

Frank received the medal of medal of the order of Australia in the general division Australia Day 2017 Mr Frederick Bradley FINCH, Kyogle NSW 2474 For service to maritime history preservation. Service includes: Founder and Coordinator, Finch Family Maritime Museum, 'for over 60 years until 2015. Co-Author, 'Forgotten Fleet', 1995 (dedicated to Australian mariners who served with the U.S Army Small Ships Section during World War II). Awards and recognition includes: Recipient, Third Gold Laurel Clasp, Australian Merchant Navy Service Cross, 2008 (for 60 years contribution to the Australian Merchant Navy)



## Bill Collins

We are very saddened to hear of the passing in England of our dear pommy mate and fellow member Bill Collins. Bill passed away quietly surrounded by family after a two year long battle with cancer. Bill was still buying lottery tickets until his passing with the hope of winning a few pounds to bring Otama ashore and Wyuna home. Our thoughts are with his wife, Sheila and family at this sad time. I remember when he was asked to paint the name on Wyuna he said "that's right you are trying to kill off the old bastards first" naturally we agreed. Bill not long after returned to his home in England and was later diagnosed with cancer. I think I speak for all when I say we will miss giving it to the pom, but rest assured he gave plenty back. Rest in Peace Billie, sail on.



# Reports

## The Otama

Some months ago we had a visit from Department of Defence whereas the person in charge made several threats to the members present. It is very disappointing that DOD members resort to such bullying tactics and only discredits the credibility of the Department of Defence. DOD are proposing we allow them to tow the boat to South Australia and have it cut in to 55 pieces, the world's largest jigsaw. They would then return whatever sections they deem practical to us, but no guarantees. The committee are most adamant that we cannot agree to such an open ended proposal as is the majority of members. In sections the integrity of the boat would be destroyed and therefore, of little value as a museum exhibit. Otama is owned outright by WPOA and is to be the major drawcard attraction for which the feasibility of the project is based. DOD would obtain a far better result for defence in the eyes of the general public by assisting us to get Otama out of the water and on public display, discussions are ongoing

## Wyuna

Sadly our majestic Wyuna remains stranded in Tasmania laying on anchor in the mouth of the Tamar River. With travel restrictions we have been heavily reliant on our local volunteers led by Max Cassidy the former boson of Wyuna. Thanks to Bobby Turnbull using his boat with Max keeping an eye on the welfare of the vessel. It has taken a very long time to have an agreement finalised with Tasports so Wyuna can come back alongside at Inspection Head to be made seaworthy again for the voyage home. Unfortunately Covid 19 put a stop to all plans and until travel restrictions have be removed. We have had a proposal from a Chinese consortium for them to lease Wyuna from us. This group is proposing a tourism facility in Georgetown adjacent to where Wyuna is anchored at present. They have the former Devil Cat berth and are proposing we bring Wyuna alongside at this berth. They would like a 99 year lease which is unacceptable and will not happen. We are still working to find a berth in Melbourne so the ship can come home. If unsuccessful then we may have to negotiate further with the Chinese group for a far better outcome.

## Duncan MacKinnon Library News.

As we have not been in the library for several weeks there really is no news. Other than none of us are infected with the virus, as far as I know...so good news !!

Jacki and I have covered all the shelves, so hopefully everything will be OK.

I have bought a copy of Fairmile Ships Part 2, we already had Part 1.

Anyone interested in second-hand books should have a look the Brotherhood Books website.

They have hundreds of books on every topic, plus rare and collectible books, all reasonably priced, if you buy 3 books ....free shipping...well worth a browse.

Let's hope by the time of the next newsletter we have something to write about and we are back at work. Kaye

## Media

Hi Wayne here from Media!

I would like everyone to welcome Nick Brownell aboard. Nick has over 50 years in television and what he has not worked on in that time is not worth mentioning! He has decided to join us and now spends two days a week with me – Wednesday and Saturday. I am honoured to be working with Nick!

We are working on a number of projects – but the most important is Podcasting as it is our voice. We intend to shoot the first one in two weeks – so stay tuned!

### **VMC POD CASTS**

Over the last few weeks we have all been busy setting up an area like a stage set, where we can film interviews with people and send them out as a "pod cast."

We hope to broadcast every fortnight, each one lasting for about 10-12 minutes.

Both Nick and I are very familiar with this method of communication and our set looks very professional, 2 cameras, 2 microphones 2 armchairs and 2 people. Nick will do the interviewing.

We hope you enjoy.... We will publish the links as soon as they are done, so keep an eye on your emails.

Wayne and the media team have made a video about the podcasts and videos that they are going to make in the future, you can see it here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nH7QXMP7tW4&t=15s>

## Museum

We had to close the museum for about 10 weeks due to Covid 19 shutdown and reopened for a few weeks in June, but then had to close again when the second Corona Virus wave hit and we are still closed until further notice. ***But we need more volunteers to help run our museum;*** we are desperately short of volunteers to keep the museum





open on the Sundays so please consider helping out by going onto the Sunday Roster, if we get enough people it can be one Sunday every 6 weeks, just contact Rosey or Max.

**Right** Anzac Day this year there was no march held at Crib Point but Max went and laid a wreath.



**Left**

Max doing the Zoom meeting for the Tidy Towns awards, we submitted the Gallipoli room project and the judges were very impressed, so keep your fingers crossed. Update, we made the finalists but unsuccessful in our bid voting is rather more environmental focused.

We were successful in obtaining a grant to build a new diorama based on HMAS Australia 2 through Saluting Their Service under the banner Victory In The Pacific. A little known fact is that Aussie 2 was the most kamikazed ship during the second world war. We hope to have the diorama completed by early December keep an eye out for your invitation to the opening.

# Story

## The Story of SM UC-5 German mine layer submarine

Seiner Majestat Unterseeboot translation His Majesty's Submarine

Ordered November 1914.....Launched on the 13 June 1915  
Commissioned into the German Imperial Navy 19 June 1915.

**Built** by AG Weser, Bremen:

**Displacement** 168 tons surfaced...182 tons submerged.

**Length** 33.9 metres...29.62 metres Pressure hull.

**Beam** 3.15 meters

**Draft** 3.04 meters

**Speed** 6.49 knots, surfaced. 5.67 knots, submerged.

**Complement** 14 men

She served in WW1 under the Command of

**Oberleutnant Herbert Pustkuchen.....** 19 June – 18 December 1915

His decorations..Iron cross 2<sup>nd</sup> class..Iron Cross 1<sup>st</sup> class

Royal House Order of Hohenzollern

**Oberleutnant Ulrich Mohrbutter.....** 19 December 1915 – 27 April 1916

His decorations..Iron Cross 2<sup>nd</sup> class..Iron Cross 1<sup>st</sup> class

He was a prisoner of war from April 27, 1916. Mohrbutter was promoted to Kapitänleutnant on May 17, 1917.

Retroactive seniority on May 24, 1917 as if he hadn't been taken prisoner.



**UC -5** was the first submarine to penetrate into the English Channel on August 21 1915. Laying 12 mines off Boulogne, one of which sank the **SS WILLIAM DAWSON** later that same day.

**UC-5** laid six more mines off Boulogne and Folkstone on 7 September, sinking the cable layer **MONARCH**.

During her career she took part in 29 Patrols: The loss of Navy and Merchant ships was enormous  
sunk... 29 Merchant Ships sunk( 36,861 GRT)

7 Merchant Ships Damaged

1 Warship sunk(380 tons)

**UC-5** ran aground 27 April 1916 with two mines on board. Her crew were captured by **HMS FIREDRAKE**. Captain Young and Lieutenant Paterson working with teams from Harnich & Chatham salvaged the U-Boat, a hazardous procedure because of the two mines.

Captain Mohrbutter had rigged up explosives charges to wreck his submarine in the event of abandoning her. Paterson was able to find and disarm then after an alert by one of the prisoners.

**UC-5** was towed first to Harwich then on to Sheerness in July 1916, where approved journalists and two war artists were allowed to inspect the prize.

**24 July 1916.** UC-5 lashed to tug **PRINCESS** and towed by tug **BRUNO** to be displayed at Temple Pier, London, over 200,000 paid a few pence to see the prize.

### **Reported in the Sydney Evening news..Sat.22 July 1916**

“Submarine **UC-5** which will be exhibited at Temple Pier is a small vessel, which was used exclusively for mine laying. She worked from Zeebrugge for 4 months in the spring and in that time laid 240 mines. When she was captured the crew jumped overboard to avoid their explosive bombs, which an English officer gallantly extinguished.”

The following year 1918 **UC -5** was transported in 3 Pieces to be used in New York's Central Park for propaganda purposes. She was draped with a banner reading “BUY LIBERTY BONDS” and “U-BUY-A-BOND”

**UC-5** was scrapped in 1923.

The most terrible loss of all was the Hospital Ship **HMHS ANGLIA** (1862 tons, originally a passenger ferry) smaller in number of casualties, but more dreadful in detail...

17 November 1915 the **SS LUSITANIA** (1834 tons, built in Blythe in 1903) while on a voyage to Cadiz carrying general cargo went to aid the Hospital Ship **ANGLIA**, she was transporting 366 wounded from France to Britain, 166 of the wounded were cot cases. 1 mile east of Folkstone Gate **ANGLIA** had hit a mine laid by **UC-5**. So badly damaged they could only get 1 life boat away with 50 people. Even though the radio operator on **ANGLIA** was injured and his radio damaged, Lusitania and several other ships came to help rescue.

Lusitania hit a mine while involved in the rescue, so her crew now also needed to be rescued by the other ships. 164 were dead from this horrific incident.

**SS Lusitania** was positively identified from the recovery of the ship's makers plate. by P.G. Weatherley in 1983.

### **Wreck report UC-5 - Jan Lettens 2007**

Stern is blown off behind the boilers, presumably by the mine explosions. At the bow, it is possible to explore the inside, where the deck is missing.

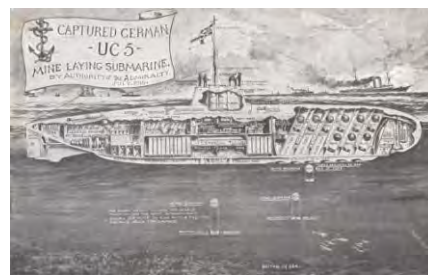
**\*\*This ship is not to be confused with the RMS LUSITANIA (3877 tons ocean liner) she ran aground off Newfoundland Coast more than 350 passengers escaped in life-boats 26 June 1901.**

Ships master – William Mc Nay



I bought this post card in 2017 off EBay. I have since learned that they were produced in the UK for when the Submarine was on display in London.

Mine has a pencil written note on the back...from Jim to his family. It needed a half-penny stamp to send. Kaye.



# Joke



Merchant Navy War Service League Newsletter.....Feb 2010

**New direction for any war:** Send Service Vets over 60 !

I am over 60 and the Armed Forces thinks I am too old to track don terrorists. you can't be older than 42 to join the military. They've got the whole thing ass-backwards.

Instead of sending 18 year olds off to fight, they ought to take us old guys, you shouldn't be able to join a military unit until you're at least 35.

Rationale:

Researchers say 18 year olds think about sex every 10 seconds. Old guys only think about sex a couple of times a day, leaving 28,000 additional seconds a day to concentrate on the enemy.

- Young guys haven't lived long enough to be cranky, and a cranky soldier is a DANGEROUS soldier. "My back hurts! I can't sleep! I'm tired and hungry!" We are impatient and maybe letting us kill some asshole that deserves it will make us feel better and shut up for a while.
- 18 year old do not like getting up before 10am. Old guys always get up early to pee, so what the hell. Besides, like I said, "I'm tired, can't sleep and since I'm already up I may as well be up killing some fanatical so-and-so.
- If captured we couldn't spill the beans because we'd forget where we put them. In fact, name, rank and serial number would be a real brain teaser.
- Boot camp would be easier for old guys, we're used to getting screamed at and yelled at, we're used to soft food. We've also developed an appreciation for guns. We've been using them for years as an excuse to get out of the house, away from the screaming and yelling.
- They could lighten up the obstacle course however. I've been in combat and didn't see a single 20ft wall with a rope hanging down the side, nor did I ever do any pushups after completing basic training.
- Actually the running part is a complete waste of energy too. I've never seen anyone outrun a bullet.
- AN 18 year old still has the whole world ahead of him. He's still learning to shave, to start a conversation with a pretty girl. He still hasn't figured out that a baseball cap has a brim to shade his eyes, NOT the back of his head.
- These are all good reasons to keep our kids at home to learn a little more about life before sending them off into harm's way.
- Let us old guys track down those rotten terrorists. The last thing the enemy would want is to see a couple of million of pissed off old farts with attitude and automatic weapons who know their best years are behind them. If nothing else, put us on border patrol...we will have it secured the first night !!!

In May we have achieved 500 likes on the VMC facebook page so thank you to everyone who has liked our page.

In June we had a visit from Doug Symes a Crib Point local veteran 94 years old, he was awarded a life membership of WPOA. Thanks to Crib Point RSL president Geordie Ord for arranging the visit.



Well that is it at this time; I hope that you have all enjoyed this newsletter. We still need more items for the next newsletter, a story of the sea, articles, photos and jokes so please write up your memories, it could be your experiences working in the Navy or the Merchant Navy, or a fishing story, or a cruise that you have been on, or a funny story but remember to keep them Maritime related. So please get writing and send in your stories and Maritime related info. And don't forget to "like" us on our facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/victorianmaritimecentre/> Cheers Rosey

## A Reminder From The President

To all members I say to you, please keep up your membership and remain a financial member of Western Port Oberon Association. Remember as a member you own the assets and therefore have a say in what happens to those assets. Spread the word and get more people to become a member, remember the bigger the number the bigger the voice.