



NVN News

incorporating NCCV's newsletter Rogues' Yarn

Navy Victoria Network

April 2016

Volume 6 Edition 4

Editorial

NVN current membership: 1029

Another Anzac Day has come and gone and many of us have enjoyed our yearly get-togethers with ex-shipmates while remembering those that were lost. It is of paramount importance we forever remember the men and women who have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

The 14th May 2016 marks the 73rd anniversary of the sinking of the Australia Hospital Ship (AHS) *Centaur*. She was attacked and sunk by a Japanese submarine off the coast of Queensland. Of the 332 medical personnel and civilian crew aboard, 268 died, including 11 of the 12 nurses. The 64 survivors spent 35 hours on rafts before being rescued. Sister Ellen Savage was the only nurse to survive and although badly hurt herself, she concealed her injuries and while sharks circled their raft, and when ships and aircraft passed by without seeing them, she gave what help she could to the other survivors. For her "conspicuous gallantry" Sister Savage was awarded a George Medal.

The ship had been appropriately lit and marked to indicate that it was a hospital ship and its sinking was regarded as an atrocity. The Australian Government delivered an official protest to Japan over the incident. The Japanese did not acknowledge responsibility for the incident for many years and the War Crimes Tribunal could not identify the responsible submarine. However, the Japanese official war history makes clear that it was submarine I-177, under the command of Lt Commander Nakagawa who had sunk the *Centaur*. Lt Commander Nakagawa was convicted as a war criminal for firing on survivors of the British Chivalry which his ship had sunk in the Indian Ocean. Nakagawa refused to ever speak on the subject of

Calendar Events

(see calendar for details of all events)

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01 May – RAN Recruits Pilgrimage, wreath laying in the Sanctuary

06 May – HMAS Castlemaine with Tecoma primary school, wreath laying

08 May – Battle of Coral Sea commemoration service

23 May – NHS Meeting (all welcome)

29 May – RAN Recruits Pilgrimage, wreath laying in the Sanctuary

03 Jun – 47th Anniversary of the Melbourne / Evans collision. 74 lives lost.

12 Jun – 'N' Class Destroyers wreath laying in the Sanctuary

Latest News

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NOTE: The full articles of the news items listed below can be found on our website:

<http://navyvic.net/news/news.html>

Future submarine program

The Turnbull Government today announces that the next generation of submarines for Australia will be constructed at the Adelaide shipyard, securing thousands of jobs and ensuring the project will play a key part in the transition of our economy. DCNS of France has been selected as our preferred international partner for

the sinking of the *Centaur*, even to defend himself, until his death in 1991.

Centaur entered operation as a hospital ship on 12 March 1943. The early stages of *Centaur*'s first voyage as a hospital ship were test and transport runs; the initial run from Melbourne to Sydney resulted in the Master, Chief Engineer, and Chief Medical Officer composing a long list of defects requiring attention. Following repairs, she conducted a test run, transporting wounded servicemen from Townsville to Brisbane to ensure that she was capable of fulfilling the role of a medical vessel. *Centaur* was then tasked with delivering medical personnel to Port Moresby, New Guinea, and returning to Brisbane with Australian and American wounded along with a small number of wounded Japanese prisoners of war.

Arriving in Sydney on 8 May 1943, *Centaur* was re-provisioned at Darling Harbour, before departing for Cairns, Queensland on 12 May 1943. From there, her destination was again New Guinea. On board at the time were 74 civilian crew, 53 Australian Army Medical Corps personnel, 12 female nurses from the Australian Army Nursing Service, 192 soldiers from the 2/12th Field Ambulance, and one Torres Strait ship pilot. Most of the nurses had transferred from the hospital ship *Oranje*, and the Army personnel were all medical staff.

At 0400 on the 14 May 1943, without warning, she was torpedoed.

The media were notified of *Centaur*'s sinking on 17 May 1943, but were ordered not to release the news until it had been announced in Parliament by Prime Minister John Curtin on the afternoon of 18 May. News of the attack made front pages throughout the world, including The Times of London, The New York Times, and the Montreal Gazette.

The initial public reaction to the attack on *Centaur* was one of outrage, significantly different from that displayed following the loss of Australian warships or merchant vessels. As a hospital ship, the attack was a breach of the Hague Convention, and as such was a war crime. The sinking of *Centaur* drew strong reactions from both Prime Minister Curtin and General Douglas MacArthur. Politicians urged the public to use their rage to fuel the war effort, and *Centaur* became a symbol of Australia's determination to defeat what appeared to be a brutal and

the Respect of Disabled Veterans.

In a damning display of political arrogance the Coalition Government has lost the respect and the support of the nation's 130,000 disabled veterans by continuing to ignore their concern at the erosion of the value of their compensation payments, especially those affecting our most severely disabled war veterans.

808 Squadron return from Operation FIJI ASSIST

Personnel from 808 Squadron returned to HMAS Albatross recently after a five-week deployment on Operation FIJI ASSIST. The aircrew, engineers and three MRH90 helicopters formed part of the Australian Defence Force's humanitarian assistance relief to Fiji in the aftermath of Tropical Cyclone Winston.

Arrival of the 5th rotation of US Marines in Darwin

The next rotation of US Marines will begin arriving in Darwin from today to commence their fifth rotation through Northern Australia as part of the US rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region. This year's rotation will include around 1,250 US Marines, a detachment of four Bell UH-1Y Venom helicopters and a range of equipment.

Space Surveillance Telescope for Harold E Holt

Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Marise Payne today visited Defence's Naval Communication Station Harold E Holt, which is set to gain a highly advanced Space Surveillance Telescope. The telescope will soon be moved from its current location in the United States to a new purpose built Australian facility near Exmouth.

Sea Power Centre: Semaphore – Issue 2, 2016

Operations Hurricane and Mosaic

uncompromising enemy. The Australian Government produced posters depicting the sinking, which called for Australians to "Avenge the Nurses" by working to produce materiel, purchasing war bonds, or enlisting in the armed forces.



It is on occasions such as this 73rd anniversary of the loss of the *Centaur* that the Naval Ode becomes relevant for all those who have gone down to the sea in ships.

*They have no grave but the cruel sea,
No flowers lay at their head,
A rusting hulk is their tombstone,
Afast on the ocean bed.*

LEST WE FORGET!

Yours Aye!
NVN Team

VALE

- † LEUT R. Forsyth RAN, 26 April 2016.
- † LSMTPSM R. Cameron, 19 April 2016. Aged 75.
- † CERA T. Decini, 16 April 2016.
- † CMDR G. Bond RAN, 12 April 2016. Aged 70.
- † CERA D. Hinton, R42370, 10 April 2016.
- † G. Nason, R94700, 09 April 2016.
- † Ex-JR W. Nissell, R94274, 07 April 2016.
- † TEL R.D. Bergin, R29521, 05 April 2016. Aged 88.
- † J. Flood, R59570, 03 April 2016.
- † ABRO N.A. Old, R52563, 29 March 2016. Aged 75.
- † ABFC W. Claxton, R57026, 24 March 2016. Aged 75.
- † CMDR R.E. Bourke RAN, 23 March 2016.
- † ABMTH F.J. O'Donahoo, S124983, 06 March 2016. Aged 53.
- † TEL K.W. Primmer, S5758, 03 January 2016. Aged 90.
- † CK(O) J.E. Rees, PM5753, 02 January 2016. Aged 90.

Lest We Forget

To all who read this: If you hear of any of our Navy family that has crossed the bar, please don't hesitate to let us know. We would like to list their names in perpetuity on our special 'Vale' wall on the website. If possible list their Rank, Name, Number, the date of their passing and their age.

On 3 October 1952, a nuclear device with a reported yield of 25 kilotons exploded just off Trimouille Island in the Montebellos group some 130km off the Pilbara coast of Western Australia. It was the first of several nuclear tests conducted in Australian territory in the 1950s, and the first ever conducted by the United Kingdom.

Seapower Centre: Sounding Papers.
Sounding Paper #8 – Examining Maritime Insecurity in Eastern Africa
A spate of escalating hijackings in and around the east African coast between 2005 and 2012 thrust the Horn of Africa into the global spotlight and triggered an unprecedented international response.

Sounding Paper #9 – Dominion, Trade and the Maritime Silk Road: A Review of the Issues

Because of its utility as the safest and cheapest way of transporting goods and people, the sea has always been a basis - and many would say the basis - for trade. On the other hand, control of the sea can also be an important source of political and military dominion.

Sounding Paper #10 - Some Capability and Operating Implications Arising from Australia's Antarctic and Southern Ocean Interests

Introduction

This paper considers the capability implications for the Department of Defence and the ADF of:

- * current and changing policy and issues in relation to the Antarctic and Southern Ocean*
- * the impact of related planning, environmental and other change.*

Future ADF training helicopter arrives at HMAS Albatross

The first of 15 Airbus EC135

BRAVO ZULU

Honours and Awards
to Australian Naval People

Volume 1
1900-1974

Ian
Pfennigwerth



Between 1900 and 2014 nearly 3,800 Australian naval people received honours and awards for their efforts, courage, sacrifice and service to the nation. Whether earning a George Cross for defusing mines during the World War II 'Blitz' of the UK, an American Silver Star for flying helicopters into intense enemy fire in Vietnam, or a Conspicuous Service Medal for quietly 'just getting the job done', these are the stories of the men and women who have been recognised for their service to the Royal Australian Navy. Some give an insight into the daily running of our Navy. Others recalling inspiring feats of courage under fire or bravery in risking their own lives in saving others, on and off duty.

For the past seven years Ian Pfennigwerth and a team of dedicated volunteer researchers have explored the background of these honours and awards – Imperial, Australian, and foreign. The outcome is a book crafted so that even those with no knowledge of things naval will appreciate the significance of each award while becoming acquainted with the history of Australia's naval forces – and enjoying a good read.

Now on Sale at:

<http://www.nautilushistory.com.au/navy-history-books/>

Naval Commemoration Committee of Victoria's newsletter, "Rogues' Yarn" is attached below

helicopters has arrived at the Naval Air Station, HMAS Albatross, destined to train future ADF aircrew.

Navy Simulation Training Centre Opens

A state-of-the-art simulation facility has been opened in Sydney today that will enhance training for Royal Australian Navy technical sailors.

Ex-HMA Ships Tobruk and Sydney to be offered as Dive Wrecks

Minister for Defence Senator the Hon Marise Payne today announced that the decommissioned vessels, ex-HMA Ships Tobruk and Sydney, will be offered to the States and Territories for the creation of dive wrecks.

Press conference with Vice Admiral David Johnston – Update on Australian Defence Force operations

I'd like to start with – in the ADF contribution to Fiji, and just update you on the nature of the role we have performed there.

Specialist counselling for veterans

Veterans who may be concerned following the release of the Senate Committee report into the mental health of Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and veterans are encouraged to call the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) on 1800 011 046, DVA Secretary Simon Lewis PSM said today.

Navy League of Australia(Vic & Tas)

April newsletter – [download.....](#)

NHSA(Vic) President's April Musings – [download.....](#)

NAVY NEWS – [The latest edition.](#)

Don't forget to visit the [website](#) as there are many more news articles that may be of interest to you but are not included in this newsletter.



Naval Commemoration Committee of Victoria

ROGUES' YARN

'Let Us Be Daring'



**During May,
there are services
you should
consider attending:**

**RAN Recruits
Taylor Division
Wreath Laying Service
1MAY16@1000
In the Sanctuary
Shrine of Remembrance**

**HMAS Castlemaine
Wreath Laying Service
6MAY16@1000
In the Sanctuary
Shrine of Remembrance**

**Battle of the Coral Sea
Wreath Laying Service
8MAY15@1130
At the Cenotaph
Shrine of Remembrance**

**RAN Recruits
Emms Division
Wreath Laying Service
29MAY16@1000
In the Sanctuary
Shrine of Remembrance**

**The next NCCV
meeting will be held on
the second Tuesday
14JUN16@1030 venue
for this meeting will be
Mission to Seafarers.
Associations, please
send along a REP.**

Audamus, 'Let us be daring' the motto of HMAS *Vampire*. The first *Vampire* was one of our legendary Warships deployed to the Mediterranean at the outset of WWII. Five Warships, *Stuart*, *Vendetta*, *Voyager*, *Waterhen* and *Vampire*, under the command of Hec Waller RAN arrived to assist the strong Royal Navy and French Navy maintain their supremacy over the Axis Powers in the Mediterranean. Joseph Goebbels, Minister of propaganda - German Third Reich quickly labelled the Warships as Scrap Iron, a title proudly claimed by the men of those Warships for all time. Three of the Scrap Iron Flotilla were lost during WWII: HMAS *Waterhen* on 30JUN41 after a bomb exploded near the ship damaging the hull; HMAS *Voyager* after disembarkation operations ran aground on the beach in Betano Bay 23SEP42; HMAS *Vampire* sunk after being bombed by the Japanese off Trincomalee on 9APR42. A commemoration service for the nine crew members who made the supreme sacrifice, when *Vampire* was bombed was held at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne. Members of the CPO John Carey family attended as did past members who served in the Daring Class Destroyers: *Vampire II*, *Vendetta II* and *Duchess*.

Vampire was a WWI vintage Warship, loaned from the Royal Navy, commissioned HMAS in 1933. *Vampire* was put into the Reserve Fleet one month after arriving in Australia and remained there until being sent to *Cerberus* for training purposes, remaining alongside until 1938 at which time she was put back into operational service. *Vampire* had begun her Mediterranean service

on 21DEC39. *Vampire* in company with *Voyager* departed Port Said on escort duties toward Malta. *Vampire* continued escorting convoys between Marseilles and Malta. The living conditions aboard proved very trying for the crew, experiencing the tropics and now freezing temperatures. For instance, Marseilles was minus 11°C.



Vampire, pictured in 1942, after her Mediterranean experience. *Vampire* joined Force Z in the Indian Ocean in JUN41. In DEC41 *Vampire* escorted *Prince Of Wales* and *Repulse* on their ill fated attempt to interrupt the Japanese invasion of Malaya. Both capital ships were sunk by Japanese bombers. *Vampire* survived and in FEB42, escorted merchant ships to Colombo, joining the East Indies Station. On Station, *Vampire* screened for HMS *Hermes*. Command of the East Indies Station became aware that a significant Japanese force was deployed to attack Colombo. This resulted in the Squadron being separated with *Hermes* and *Vampire* positioned off Trincomalee. The Japanese discovered and sunk *Hermes*, then turned their sights on *Vampire*, which was sunk on 9APR42



Disclaimer

Articles contributed are the Authors thoughts only. An article may be edited to meet the space available. Political articles will not purposely appear in R's Yarn.

Navy Victoria Network

The NavyVIC website is there for all to see, in particular it is for anyone with an interest in Navy. Also, if you are involved in arranging a Navy specific function why not provide information on the activity to the wider Navy Victoria Community. This is an opportunity not to be missed.

Melbourne Naval Centre

MNC is an organization that has provided much needed financial support to Ship Associations over many decades. Need assistance, contact the MNC.

President's Report

April, always a busy month with ANZAC Day commitments demanding attention. For instance, the ANZAC Commemoration Service at St Paul's Cathedral occurred on Sunday, 17APR16 with a rather small contingent of ex-Service people in attendance. The occasion was significant enough for Her Excellency The Hon Linda Dessau AM, Governor of Victoria to accompany the State President of the RSL MAJGEN David McLachlan AO (Ret'd).

There was also the opportunity to witness the opening of the AE2 replica display that was organised in Holbrook on Saturday, 23APR16. A very interesting addition to the community's support of Submariners.

The closure of the English Speaking Union facilities at Toorak Road West, South Yarra will mean changes for many ex-Service organisations that have enjoyed support of the Melbourne Naval Centre (MNC). The MNC is currently assessing opportunities as a consequence of the ESU closure, your organisations opinion will be important as a decision will be made that impacts on whether there will be a central meeting place for ex-Navy interests or not. There is a possibility that a venue could be determined that will result in the dispersment

of meeting places. Meeting at a number of venues has the potential to further distance our collective voice. We already struggle to hear a collective voice from the ex-Naval community. A central venue is crucial if we are to overcome the existing division of interests. Encourage your organization to advise MNC of your opinion on this matter to assist them make a decision that will maximize the wellbeing of all within our community. We need to acknowledge the great support provided by MNC over many decades. Their financial support has been instrumental in enabling many Navy and ex-Navy activities to happen.

If you have read Rogues Yarn over recent months you will be aware that the NCCV is again arranging Navy Week Victoria - 2016. The aim being to have Navy entities with a common interest arrange an activity that promotes Navy and the wellbeing of Service and ex-Service men and women. There is a small article in this edition as well to explain current intentions and most importantly advises the dates to set aside so that you might participate.

Yours aye, Terry Makings

Operation F1J1

The RAN Communications Branch Association have been very successful at arranging cruises and is currently planning Operation F1J1 - 2017.

Procedure Alfa on leaving Sydney on 21Aug17, returning to Sydney on 2SEP17. The Itinerary:

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| [Days numbered] | 1 Embark Sydney; |
| 2 & 3 fun days at sea; | 4 Noumea; |
| 5. Mystery Island Vanuatu; | 6 fun day at sea; |
| 7 Suva; | 8 Port Denarau; |
| 9 fun day at sea; | 10 Isle of Pines; |
| 11 & 12 fun days at sea; | 13 Sydney. |

Prices are yet to be finalised, however, a small deposit of \$125 per person is required when you book. Best to book your cabin ASAP through Kath at Helloworld Travel Rowville, ring Kath at 03 9764 8487 during working hours to ensure you maximise any benefits being allocated to Operation F1J1. Other travel agents will not be able to transfer bookings through them to the Comms Group. See more information at navyvic.net.

Navy Week

We continue to promote Navy Week Victoria - 2016. The objective is to demonstrate our support of Navy. We do so by broadening our knowledge of Navy, as well as extending our goodwill amongst like minded Service and ex-Service men and women. We intend to commence the week with a social event on Saturday, 15OCT16, followed on Sunday 16OCT16 by the Seafarers Church Service at St Pauls Cathedral. We are working on a lawn bowling tournament, not sure what day this will be at the moment, but we are sure that the golf tournament will be held on Friday 21OCT16 at the Mornington Golf Course. A seminar will be held on Wednesday 19OCT16, this will be an opportunity to improve our understanding of Defence. The annual Navy League CMDR Geoffrey Evans Yatch Race on Saturday 22OCT16 and the finale will be Open Day at HMAS Cerberus, Sunday 23OCT16. There should be something of interest across Navy Week, so we encourage each organisation to consider how they might engage. Alternatively, plan something yourselves!

Honours and Awards

Book title: *Bravo Zulu: Honours and Awards to Australian Naval People 1900-2014*. Between 1900 and 2014 nearly 3,800 Australian naval people received honours and awards for their efforts, courage, sacrifice and service to the nation.

Whether earning a George Cross for defusing mines during the World War II 'Blitz' of the UK, an American Silver Star for flying helicopters into intense enemy fire in Vietnam, or a Conspicuous Service Medal for quietly 'just getting the job done', these are the stories of the men and women who have been recognised for their service to the Royal Australian Navy. Some give an insight into the daily running of our Navy. Others recall inspiring feats of courage under fire or bravery in risking their own lives in saving others, on and off duty.

For the past seven years Ian Pfennigwerth and a team of dedicated volunteer researchers have explored the background of these honours and awards: Imperial, Australian, and foreign. The outcome is a book crafted so that even those with no knowledge of things naval will appreciate the significance of each award while becoming acquainted with the history of Australia's naval forces - and enjoying a good read.

The stories will be published in two volumes, with the first to be released in August 2016. Volume 1

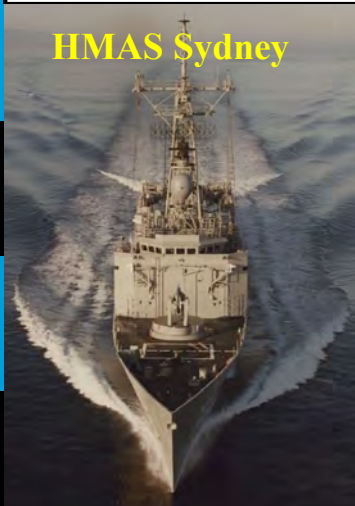
covers the period 1900 to 1974 and is an 800 page book with 24 maps and 250 illustrations. It traces, through the recipients' stories, the formation and development of the RAN, its fortunes during World War I, its resurrection from the depths of the Depression, and its fine fighting record during World War II. Post-war the stories tell of our Navy's growth toward independence, the exploits of its men in Korea, Malaysia, Indonesian Confrontation and Vietnam, and its development of ships and weapons system like the famous Ikara anti-submarine missile. There are also stories about the loss of *Voyager* and of spectacular feats in naval flying and diving.

Volume 1 comes in two editions; the hardcover has retail price of \$70 and the paperback will sell at \$60. Postage will be \$13.50 for domestic purchasers. Overseas postage rates depend on the purchaser's address.

For those who wish to order the book for earlier delivery, until 30 June 2016 the hardcover edition is offered at an attractive \$60, and the paperback at \$50. These copies of *Bravo Zulu* Volume 1 will be delivered in advance of the official launch and will be inscribed by Ian Pfennigwerth if so desired. Orders can be placed on Ian's Website at www.nautilushistory.com.au.

Diving Wrecks?

HMAS Sydney



The following comments were recently issued by The Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Marise Payne regarding the decommissioned vessels, ex-HMA Ships *Tobruk* and *Sydney*. They will be offered to the States and Territories for the creation of dive wrecks. After decades of invaluable service in the Royal Australian Navy,

Tobruk and *Sydney* were decommissioned in July 2015 and November 2015 respectively. *Tobruk* was used extensively during regional peacekeeping and humanitarian operations as well as border protection in Northern Australia. *Sydney* was deployed to the Persian Gulf on five occasions in support of operations during the Gulf War, War in

Afghanistan and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Closer to home, *Sydney* was involved to support Australia's response to regional uprisings and humanitarian operations. "There are significant challenges with preparing ex-Navy vessels for dive wrecks to assure the safety of recreational divers, however I appreciate the tourism and economic benefits that the creation of a dive wreck can have to local communities," Minister Payne said.

HMAS Tobruk



FESR WAR MEMORIAL

Sponsorship is requested for a new FESR War Memorial to be located in the Sculpture Garden, Australian War Memorial. It took fifty years for campaign medals to be awarded to veterans that served in the FESR and an Honour Roll at the AWM was completed recently. A considerable number of individual awards for gallantry, distinguished and meritorious service were won during service in the FESR. Service in FESR is recognized as a battle honour in those RAN Warships, Royal Australian Army Corps, and RAAF squadrons. Recognition across Australia, including the AWM is minimal. In 2015, the Federal Government granted Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, through the auspices of the AWM. This will assist organisations and individuals that contribute to this most worthy cause. Cheques payable to **FESR War Memorial Foundation Inc.** should be posted to: **FESR War Memorial Foundation Inc.**, PO Box 1038, HAWTHORN BC VIC 3122.



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Special Notes

Bringing Our Stories Home. There is a collection of six short films that explore the wide ranging impacts of WWI on Australians at home. From shell shock and war induced disability, to food shortages and racial discrimination within the Australian Imperial Force, these films offer a strong local perspective to the war. For information go to: <http://www.openchannel.org.au/production/bringing-our-stories-home/> where advice on availability of DVDs and other sources of information are listed.

Battle of the Coral Sea. The Australia/America Association in conjunction with NCCV will arrange the Battle of the Coral Sea Service to be conducted at 1130, Sunday, 8MAY16 at the Cenotaph, Shrine of Remembrance. This service commemorates the stopping of the Axis Power [Japan] as it moved south towards Australia. A major American naval force was instrumental in changing the fortunes of Australia. It was also the first battle where the Warships did not come within sight of each other.

Battle of the Atlantic. 1MAY16 denotes the 74th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic. It should be remembered that over 30,000 Merchant Seafarers lost their lives during the Battle of the Atlantic.

HMAS Bataan Reunion - 2016. The Association's Annual General Meeting and Reunion will be held at the 'Bayview On The Park', 52 Queens Road, Melbourne from Thursday 15SEP16 to Sunday 18SEP16. For more information contact John F. Laughton JP by email to johnfl@aapt.net.au or postal to 90/2 Cameron St, Cranbourne East, VIC 3977. You can even telephone John by landline 03 59 049 457 or Mobile 0417 336 423.

Charity Lunch. HMAS Bataan Association has put its weight behind a charity lunch 13MAY16 to be held at the Noble Park RSL, 1128 Heatherton Road, Noble Park. Leon Wiegard, Olympian and comedian Oscar Swarov will entertain attendees. At \$30/person, this presents good value. Contact John Laughton, details above at Bataan Reunion.

Adam Brandt MP. RUSI have another interesting presenter, Adam Brandt MP delivering an address at 1230, on Thursday 28APR16. The venue is Defence Plaza Melbourne, 661 Bourke Street, Melbourne. Security measures require you to advise RUSI, email to secretary@rusivic.org.au or phone 9282 5918 by 2pm Wednesday 27th April. Cost is \$10 and you also get a few sandwiches.