

# THE NAVY

Print Post Approved PP247978/0013

\$3.50  
October-December 1994



ISSN 1322-6231



9 771322 623000

01

## IN THIS ISSUE

Sea Kings Update .....	5
Training and Helicopter Support Ships .....	10
New Coastal Minehunters Named .....	12
Army Water Transport: Part Four .....	15
ADELAIDE and the 1927 Malaita Expedition .....	24
HMAS NEWCASTLE Interview .....	29
The GRAYBACK and the GROWLER .....	31

## The Magazine of the Navy League of Australia Vol 56 No 4

### Regular Features

Viewpoint .....	1
Naval News .....	6
Naval Matters .....	23
History Revisited .....	28
Book Reviews .....	32



# THE POWER TO OWN THE ROAD IS ON THE PLATEAU.

## N14



**A**lmost all you need to know about the 94 Cummins N14 is obvious the moment you hit the accelerator. This is power. This isn't just power for power's sake. This is power with a purpose. And that purpose is productivity. Power from 410bhp to a top rating of 500bhp. Power to handle any load.

## THE 1994 CUMMINS N14

The new N14 provides even higher standards of reliability and durability resulting in greater productivity for your business and more dollars to your bottom line.

That's a lot to ask of any engine, but the N14 delivers.

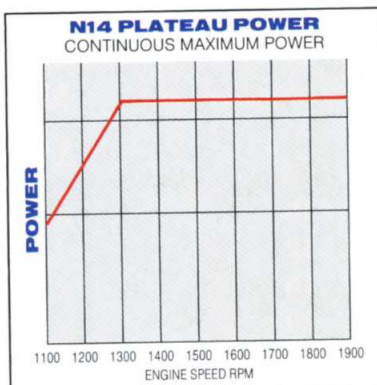
And it's backed by the best service and support network in Australia.

So having the power to own the road comes down to one simple decision...

Own a Cummins N14.

MODEL	MAXIMUM HP	PEAK TORQUE	GOVERNED RPM
	BHP (KW)	LB.FT. (Nm)	
94N14-410E	410 (306)	1650 (2237)	1900
94N14-435E	435 (325)	1650 (2237)	1900
94N14-460E	460 (343)	1650 (2237)	1900
94N14-500E	500 (373)	1650 (2237)	1900
94N14-ESP I (L)	410 (306)	1450 (1966)	1900
	(H) 460 (343)	1650 (2237)	
94N14-ESP II (L)	435 (325)	1500 (2034)	1900
	(H) 500 (373)	1650 (2237)	

Please check with chassis manufacturer for model availability.



**Celebrating the past and the future  
75th Anniversary – 1994**



# THE A.N.L. MUST REMAIN AUSTRALIAN

*As a long-time advocate for a locally owned merchant shipping industry, the Navy League has observed with dismay recent government actions involving the Australian National Line which cast doubt on the future of the Line and can only serve to destabilize the industry generally.*

**T**he ANL is not one of the world's great and famous shipping lines nor is it the largest Australian flag ship owner, that distinction belongs to BHP. The ANL is nevertheless a significant industry operator with a good mix of container, dry bulk and RO-RO ships, comparatively modern and well maintained, and manned by competent, and increasingly multi-skilled crews. The Line is engaged in both foreign and coastal shipping operations, has on-shore facilities and is widely acknowledged to be well managed.

Importantly, ANL is the only Australian flag operator amongst the International liner shipping operators who carry almost the totality of Australia's value added external trade. As such, it is the only Australian window into the carriage of Australia's external trade and the only voice arguing the Australian case against the many conflicting interests of the international ship owners. Whilst it is hard to put a value on this aspect of ANL's international operations, it can hardly be argued that Australia should deny itself access to this "intelligence" concerning the carriage of the trade upon which the whole of our economy rests.

As a commercial operator the fortunes of the ANL have fluctuated since it was formed as the trading arm of the Australian Shipping Commission by the Menzies government in 1956, the

first venture of its kind since the demise of the Commonwealth Shipping Line (owner of the famous 'Bay' steamers) in 1928.

The first chairman of the ANL, the late Captain Sir John Williams, a well-known seafarer and successful businessman, made it quite clear in his autobiography "So Ends This Day", that he would only accept the appointment of chairman "provided I was left alone to run it, clear of political interference and on the basis of success or the sack". The redoubtable Sir John was in fact left alone for most but not all of the fifteen years he spent as chairman under a succession of Shipping Ministers: the writer does however recall him grumbling on one occasion that he was "expected to serve ports that no-one else will touch and still show a profit". The extent of government intervention, or attempts to intervene in the Line's operation, has had a significant influence on the ANL, not least on its profitability.

The ANL embarked on a number of ventures and saw the introduction of many innovations during Sir John's chairmanship; they included the Sea Road service to Japan in partnership with that country, the first use of RO-RO ships in overseas trade; the installation of greatly improved cargo handling equipment in ships and administrative consolidation.

Largely untroubled by political interference until towards the end of his third five year term of office, Sir John proved that a government trading enterprise could operate profitably.

*Continued on page 3*

## THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

### FEDERAL COUNCIL

**Patron in Chief:** His Excellency, The Governor General.

**President:** F. Geoffrey Evans, OBE, VRD.

**Vice-Presidents:** Rear Admiral A.J. Robertson, AO, DSC, RAN (Rtd); John Bird.

**Hon. Secretary:** Roger Blythman, PO Box 309, Mt Waverley, Vic 3149  
Telephone: 629 5383 (W) Fax: 888 1083.

### NEW SOUTH WALES DIVISION

**Patron:** His Excellency, The Governor of New South Wales.

**President:** R.O. Albert, AM, RFD, RD.

**Hon. Secretary:** J.C. J. Jeppesen, OAM, RFD. GPO Box 1719, Sydney, NSW 2001  
Telephone: 570 8425.

### VICTORIAN DIVISION

**Patron:** His Excellency, The Governor of Victoria.

**President:** G.M. Harris RFD.

**Hon. Secretary:** Neil Meaden, 4 Eleanor Court, Donvale, Vic 3111 Telephone: 841 7064.

### QUEENSLAND DIVISION

**Patron:** Her Excellency, The Governor of Queensland.

**President:** I.M. Fraser.

**Hon. Secretary:** R.D. Poulton, RFD, PO Box 170, Cleveland, Qld 4163. Telephone: 345 2174.

### AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY DIVISION

**Patron:** Admiral Sir Victor Smith, AC, KBE, CB, DSC, RAM (Rtd)

**President:** H.A. Josephs, AM.

**Hon. Secretary:** E.M. Mahoney, 45 Skinner Street, Cook, ACT 2614. Telephone: 251 1833.

### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION

**Patron:** Her Excellency, The Governor of South Australia.

**President:** D.M. Schrapel.

**Hon. Secretary:** Miss J.E. Gill, GPO Box 1529, Adelaide, SA 5001. Telephone: 347 1985.

### TASMANIAN DIVISION

**Patron:** His Excellency, The Governor of Tasmania.

**President:** M.J. Cooper.

**Hon. Secretary:** Mrs J.M. Cooper, 42 Amy Road, Launceston, Tas, 7250. Telephone: 44 1531.

### WEST AUSTRALIAN DIVISION

**Patron:** His Excellency, The Governor of Western Australia

**President:** A.H. Hewitt, JP.

**Hon. Secretary:** Mrs G Hewitt, 23 Lawler Road, Attadale, WA 6156. Telephone: 330 3600.

### NORTHERN TERRITORY DIVISION

**Patron:** His Honour, The Administrator.

**President:** Don Milford, Telephone: 81 9332.

**Hon. Secretary:** Dave Mallyon, GPO Box 2612, Darwin, NT 0801. Telephone: 22 3636.

### FEDERAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Wm. Bolitho, AM, Chairman ANMA

Vice Admiral David Leach AC CBE, LVO, RANEM

Vice Admiral Sir Richard Peek, KBE, CB, DSC, RAN (Rtd)

John Strang, Chairman Strang International Pty Ltd

## OUR COVER PHOTO:

The RAN's seven Sea King Helicopters will undergo a major update to allow the aircraft to operate until 2008. See story page 5. (Photo NAS Nowra).

## CORPORATE MEMBERS

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL MARITIME ASSOCIATION

COMPUTER SCIENCES OF AUSTRALIA PTY. LTD.

BTR AEROSPACE AUSTRALIA

HAWKER DE HAVILLAND LIMITED

ROCKWELL SYSTEMS AUSTRALIA PTY. LTD.

STRANG INTERNATIONAL PTY. LTD.

## THE NAVY

Editorial enquiries to:  
The Editor, Ross Gillett,  
4 Dela Close,  
Dee Why NSW 2099.

All Navy League magazine subscription and membership enquiries to:  
The Hon. Secretary, NSW Division,  
NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA,  
GPO Box 1719, Sydney, NSW 2001.

**Copy Deadline for next issue: 21 October 1994**

The opinions or assertions expressed in articles in *The Navy* are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of the Federal Council of The Navy League of Australia, the Editor of *The Navy* or The Royal Australian Navy.



Dear Sir,

I would like to make comment on the Royal Australian Navy's recent purchase of two Newport Class Tank Landing Ships from the U.S. Navy. (I am assuming of course that the U.S. Congress finally approves the sale). To replace H.M.A.S. TOBRUK and JERVIS BAY.

I do not believe this purchase to be economically or operationally viable. The purchase seems to have been a case of the navy rushing to try and make the best of a bad political/military situation.

In the long term the project will be very expensive. Apart from purchase costs, (the quoted \$70m does seem expensive for two old ships) money will be spent on converting the ships to air capable standard. The LST's are much older than TOBRUK, although JERVIS BAY is about the same age. I have no doubt the better hull form on the LST's would make them more seaworthy but age does seem to be a serious drawback. Since both LST's are the same age Navy will face a block obsolescence problem when the ships need replacing in approximately 10 years.

When both LST's are in service and converted to air capable ships, the total increase in capability, over the

present ships will be limited. The only area of significant increase will be in helicopter carrying capacity, approximately 30%, and hanger space - 100% (no hangers on either TOBRUK or JERVIS BAY). Troop and vehicle lift would not be significantly increased.

Although assault capability would be increased this would be of limited value to the ADF as the ships' main roles would be training, transport and peacekeeping. This limited increase in capability does not seem to be worth the cost involved.

Some money will be made by the sale of JERVIS BAY and TOBRUK. How much a 25 year old training ship with a blown engine is worth I do not know, not much I suspect. The proposed sale of TOBRUK to New Zealand is a sound idea. With New Zealand and Australia cooperating TOBRUK would not be completely lost to Australia. A better idea for Australia would be to keep TOBRUK in service with the LST's and rotate one of the 3 ships thru Reserve/Refit to reduce overall fleet wear and tear. This would limit block obsolescence and provide a useful naval reserve training ship when each ship took its turn in reserve. It would also provide a real

increase in capability when needed by commissioning all three ships.

The original ADF Plan for an air capable ship would of course have been much better. This ship would have fulfilled the roles much better and been built or converted in Australia. This would have saved sending Aussie dollars to the USA and provided Australian jobs. This ship would also have been a useful flagship and ASW vessel. This sound plan seems to have been scuttled politically for two reasons.

1. Obviously to save money but as I have shown this is not the case.

2. So that Australia does not have an aircraft carrier (yes I have called it what it is).

It seems that the Australian Government is too sensitive to what our neighbours in Asia think and say about Australia. Therefore the ADF cannot have anything that even looks like an aircraft carrier (presumably that would give Australia an "offensive capability"). I believe that attitude should change and the real needs of the ADF and Australia should be looked after.

Yours sincerely,  
Mark Meredith  
Berkeley Vale 2261

The Hon-Secretary,  
Dear Sir,

Re The Navy July-September, which I receive through my newsagent. In the article Viewpoint there is a story on the Army Steam Launch "MARS". I have quite a knowledge on this vessel as my father was leading deckhand on her for 20 years. In 1942 the Army purchased a 35 foot wooden motor launch from J. Savage Boat Builder Williamstown and named her M.L. "RAE".

She worked in conjunction with the MARS transporting troops and stores and general work to Pt Nepean and Portsea. They made my father staff sergeant skipper of the launch. The MARS was sold after the war for £350 or \$700. She was used as a fishing boat (converted) and was lost at Kangaroo Island SA in the late 50s. The RAE was sold for £1300 (\$2600) in Melbourne.

The boats which the Army had at Queenscliff over the years were:

MINOR (steam)  
VULCAN (steam)  
MARS (steam 30hp)  
RAE (diesel 30hp).

Hoping this is of some information.

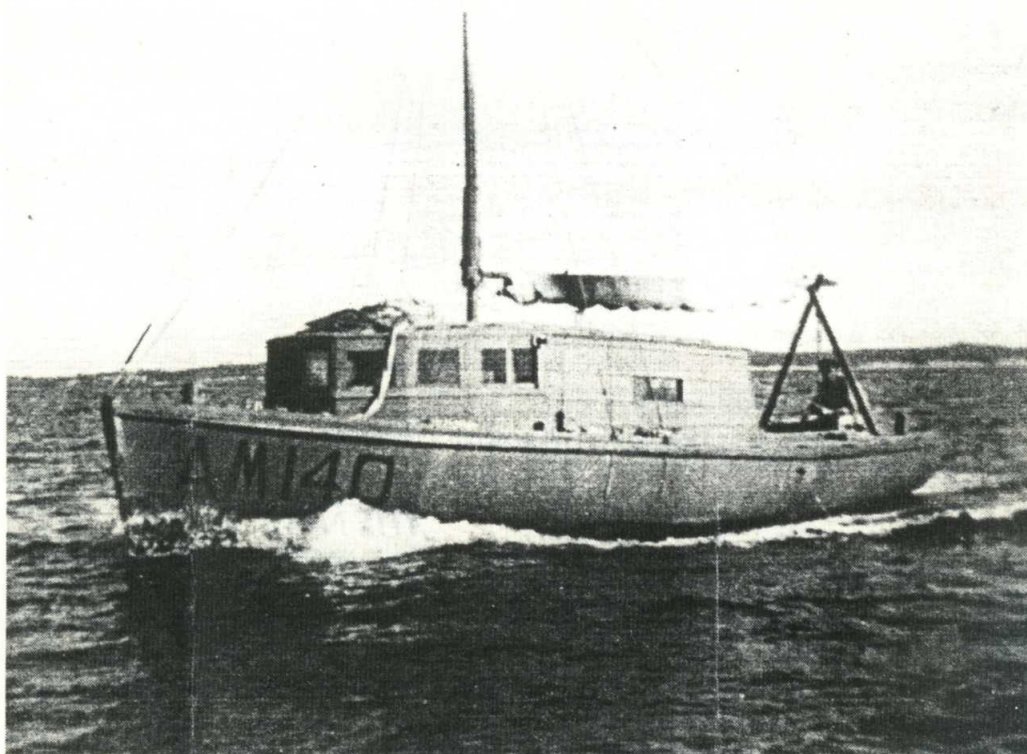
Yours faithfully,  
John R. Beazley  
Queenscliff Vic

Dear Sir,

Reading through your Navy Journal July-September, I read with interest the story of the Army Steam launch MARS, Queenscliff Vic. In 1942 I was stationed at Queenscliff and had many trips assisting as deckhand on the MARS. Then in late 1942 the Army took delivery of another craft which was named the RAE, taken from the Royal Australian Engineers, R.A.E. nicknamed Ray. I was qualified and made the Engineer, having some twelve months service on her I later went to the 41 St Australian Landing Craft, and served in New Guinea.

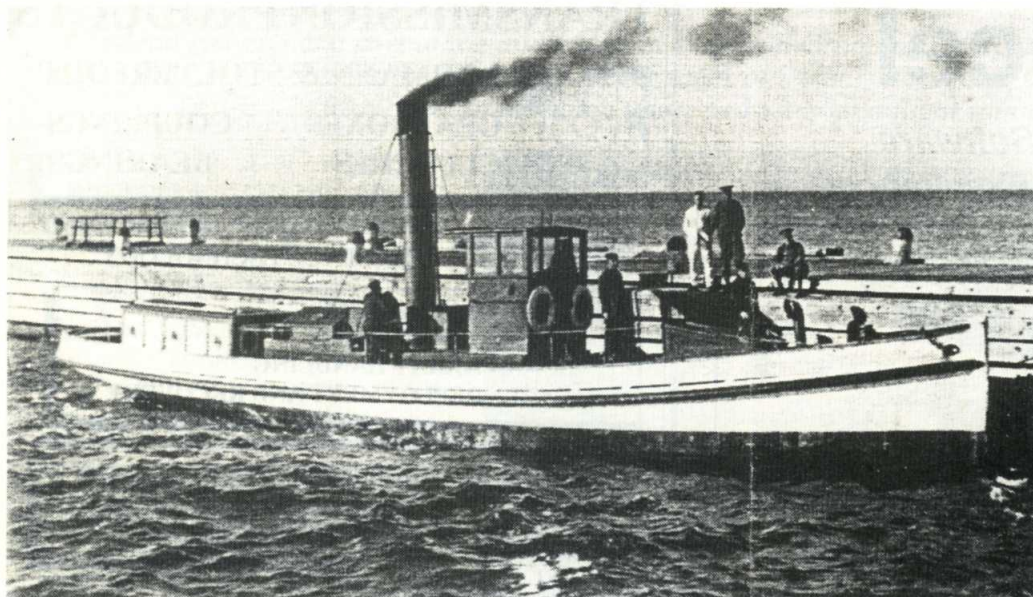
To my belief the MARS was sold to three fishermen soon after the War ended.

Yours faithfully,  
Frank Dean  
Wonthaggi 3995



The Army launch RAE in Port Phillip





Steam launch MARS at Queenscliff

Dear Sir,

In the July/September 1994 issue of *The Navy* I was most interested to see a photograph on page 30 (centre) to which the caption reads, 'Navy diver operating off HMAS ANZAC, enters the waters of Jervis Bay'.

I research and write articles about the history of diving and the suit used in this photograph is of particular interest to me. It is an experimental 'double dress' invented by a man named Clifford and tested by the Navy in the 1930s.

Could you please let me know where this photograph is held, how I can look at it and

others in the collection, along with any other information that may assist me.

Yours sincerely,  
Jeff Maynard  
Yarraville 3013

**Editor: The photos were obtained from the Naval Photo Unit, Garden Island, Sydney 2000.**

Dear Sir,

I refer to the photo on page 2 of *The Navy*, July-September 1994 edition, showing the MARS which was used to ferry stores and personnel from

Queenscliff to Point Nepean Fort.

I recall happy times spent on school holidays at my friend's home in Queenscliff with regular daily trips across with Captain McDonald of the MARS. The last holiday there coincided with the declaration of war on 3rd September 1939.

I later served in the RAN being commissioning crew on HMAS STAWELL 1943/4 and HMAS BUNBURY 1944/5 as a Supply Assistant.

Yours sincerely,  
S.W. Yates  
Melbourne 3000

Dear Sir,

I was most impressed with the current number, July-September and in particular the article on Australian Army Watercraft. Please, more on the smaller vessels that service the Fleet around ports in Australia.

On a sadder note, I gather that HMAS DERWENT is soon to be 'paid off' for use (of all things) as gunnery and target practice. What a sad end to a ship that had given sterling service over the years and brought so much enjoyment to so many. It is a fact that ships cost money but with the gradual phasing out of all the River Class frigates it would be remiss if at least one should be saved and kept as a museum and exhibition ship!

Australia is currently poorly served by way of naval historical ships – DIAMANTINA in Brisbane and of course CASTLEMAINE at Williamstown aside – and it is important that one or more of the post-war class, preferably a River Class be preserved.

I would therefore urge yourself and the League to do what it can to ensure the preservation of our national and important naval and marine heritage.

Yours sincerely,  
C.J. Piper  
Williamstown Vic

## THE A.N.L. MUST REMAIN AUSTRALIAN

*Continued from page 1*

The "hands off" attitude of governments appeared to change early in the 1970s and for this and other reasons the ANL entered into a period of financial difficulty from which it has not yet emerged; this despite a return by the Hawke government in 1983 to the earlier policy of non-interference and the appointment of a chairman experienced in the industry, Mr William Bolitho. The present government has now replaced Mr Bolitho and his fellow directors with a new group chaired by a former NSW Premier, charged with 'restructuring' the ANL, a familiar exercise but not one likely to achieve stability.

The Navy League has noted and trusts the new ANL directors will do likewise, a recent (1993) World Bank discussion paper entitled "The Maritime Transport Crisis". The very detailed report refers to over-age and unsafe ships which must soon be replaced at great cost; over-regulation and protection in many countries (mostly Western) contrasting with lack of regulation and standards in others; traders seeking the cheapest possible way of shipping their goods with little regard to the overall national interest.

It would be easy to gain the impression from the World Bank paper that countries operating fleets with sound ships, well-trained and well-paid crews could never compete successfully

against sub-standard, poorly crewed flag-of-convenience shipping. This is probably so, but the 'high standards' countries including Australia could do much to help themselves by acting in concert and enforce higher standards on all ships visiting their ports. Insurance companies will no doubt note the loss of ships and their cargoes and one might expect increased premiums to encourage shippers to use ships more likely to take cargoes safely to their destinations.

**Given Australia's absolute dependence on sea transport to sustain the national economy and the fact that the country possesses a small but modern merchant fleet well suited to take advantage of the trading opportunities opening in our region, it would be an incredibly shortsighted government that disposed of an important part of the fleet or weakened it in any way. If the ANL was to go, the privately owned remainder of the fleet would almost certainly follow.**

**Australia is in every sense a maritime country; for national security as well as commercial reasons it must act like one.**

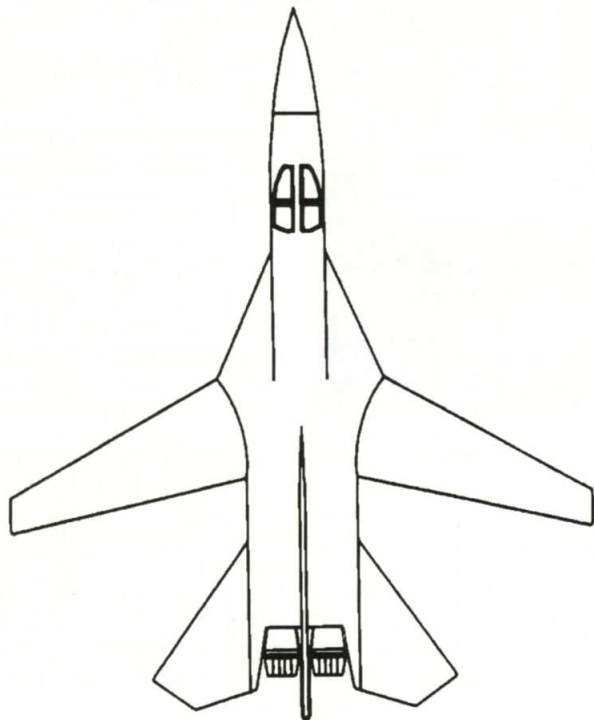
Geoffrey EVANS  
Federal President  
The Navy League of Australia



Contractors to the Department of Defence

# Adacel

**Australian Software  
Engineering Excellence**



- Real-time Systems
- Air Traffic Control
- Simulators
- Air Defence
- Automated Test Systems
- Communications
- C31
- Validation and Verification
- Safety Critical Software
- DoD-Std-2167A
- AS3563
- OOD
- Ada
- C++



250 Bay Street, Brighton,  
Victoria, Australia 3186  
Telephone: +613 596 2991  
Fax: +613 596 2960

## GIBSON BATTLE MARINE TRANSMISSION PRODUCTS



**LOHMANN & STOLTERFOHT**  
**GEARBOXES      COUPLINGS**  
**CLUTCHES        BEARINGS**

**WESTECH**  
GEAR CORPORATION

PROVEN MARINE DEFENCE AND  
AEROSPACE TECHNOLOGY.

**CUSTOMISED PRODUCTS:**

MARINE PROPULSION  
SONAR ARRAY HANDLING  
CABLE DEPLOYMENT AND RECOVERY

**WALTER**  
EST. 1887

DIRECT AND INDEPENDENTLY  
MOUNTED V-ANGLE MARINE  
TRANSMISSIONS

FRESHWATER CLOSED  
KEEL COOLERS

### GIBSON BATTLE & CO.

A Division of BOWATER/Tuttt Industries P/L



Sydney    Newcastle    Melbourne  
684 5600    (049) 694 155    315 9044  
Brisbane    Perth    Adelaide  
277 4544    279 4511    346 2622

*Proud to be Associated and Best Wishes to  
All Navy Personnel from*

# HEWLETT PACKARD

17-23 Talavera Road,  
North Ryde NSW 2113

Telephone  
**(02) 950 7444**

Fax  
**(02) 888 9072**



# Sea Kings Update

*Westland Helicopters, part of the international Westland Group of aerospace companies, has won a \$58 million contract from the Australian Department of Defence to update the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) fleet of maritime utility Sea Kings and flight simulator.*

**T**he Life of Type Extension programme (LOTE) involves a major avionics update and airframe modifications that will extend the service life of the helicopters until at least 2008.

The seven RAN helicopters were supplied by Westland in 1974 and 1983.

The aircraft provide maritime medium lift utility helicopter support to the Australian Defence Force. They have also featured prominently in civil aid tasks over the past 20 years including land and maritime search and rescue work, fodder drops to starving livestock during times of drought, aid to the flood-stricken Nyngan community some years ago and, more recently, the massive effort to fight the Sydney bushfires in January.

The Australian order follows a £4.5 million contract from the Belgian Air



Force to upgrade its fleet of five Westland SAR Sea Kings and a £15 million order for two new Mk.43B SAR Sea Kings from the Norwegian Air Force.

Westland Helicopters, which is also upgrading the ten strong Norwegian Sea King fleet to Mk.43B standards, is building six new SAR Sea Kings for Britain's Royal Air Force.

Scheduled for completion by mid-1996, the RAN's LOTE programme will be undertaken by Westland Helicopters, working with British Aerospace Australia Limited and other local companies, at HMS Albatross at Nowra in New South Wales.

Mr Tony Quick, Exports Sales Director of Westland Helicopters, described the decision to extend the life of the RAN Sea Kings well into the next century as "a cost effective investment in a proven helicopter and an endorsement of the unique capability and durability of the Westland Sea King".

For 20 years the Westland Sea King has undertaken a variety of demanding roles for the Australian Defence Force including ship-to-ship replenishment, submariner training, support for amphibious operations and search and rescue as well as bringing aid to civilian communities.

The introduction of new avionics will increase the Sea King's reliability and reduce maintenance while the modifications to the airframe, including new cargo floors, increased cabin spaces, additional seating, improved self start capability and engine foreign object damage protection will enhance the capability of the Sea King in its maritime utility role.

The major subcontractor is British Aerospace Australia (BAeA) which will be helping with the work on both the helicopters and the flight and weapons system simulator used to train aircrew to operate them.



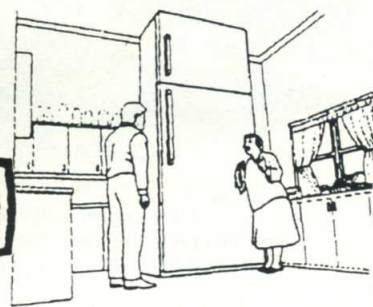
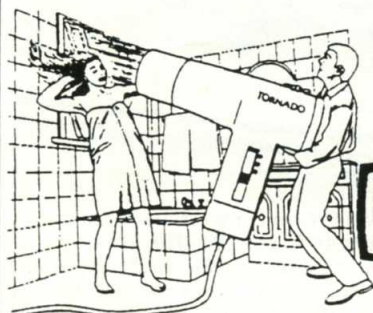
*For friendly service & advice on all your electrical appliance needs, come & talk with us at*

## **WALKERS**

### **RETRAVISION**

**96 Kinghorn Street, Nowra 2541**

**Telephone: (044) 21 3755 Facsimile: (044) 21 4764**





## Darwin Returns From Marathon Deployment

**T**he HMAS STIRLING-based guided-missile frigate HMAS DARWIN berthed at Fleet Base West on Friday 5 August after six months away.

Since sailing on 7 February, DARWIN participated in an RAN Fleet Concentration period off Australia's east coast before sailing to Hawaii where the ship excelled itself in the multi-national RIMPAC '94 exercise.

The exercise included HMA Ships HOBART, SUCCESS, SYDNEY and DARWIN and involved 1000 Australian naval personnel as well as the navies of the United States, South Korea, Canada and Japan.

During Phase One of the exercise, working with a RAAF P3C Orion aircraft, HMAS DARWIN successfully fired a Harpoon missile at a hulk target from over the horizon on the United States Pacific Missile Range Facility off the island of Kauai, DARWIN achieving a direct hit.

This missile-firing on 25 May coincided with the 30th anniversary of the first missile-firing in the Royal Australian Navy.

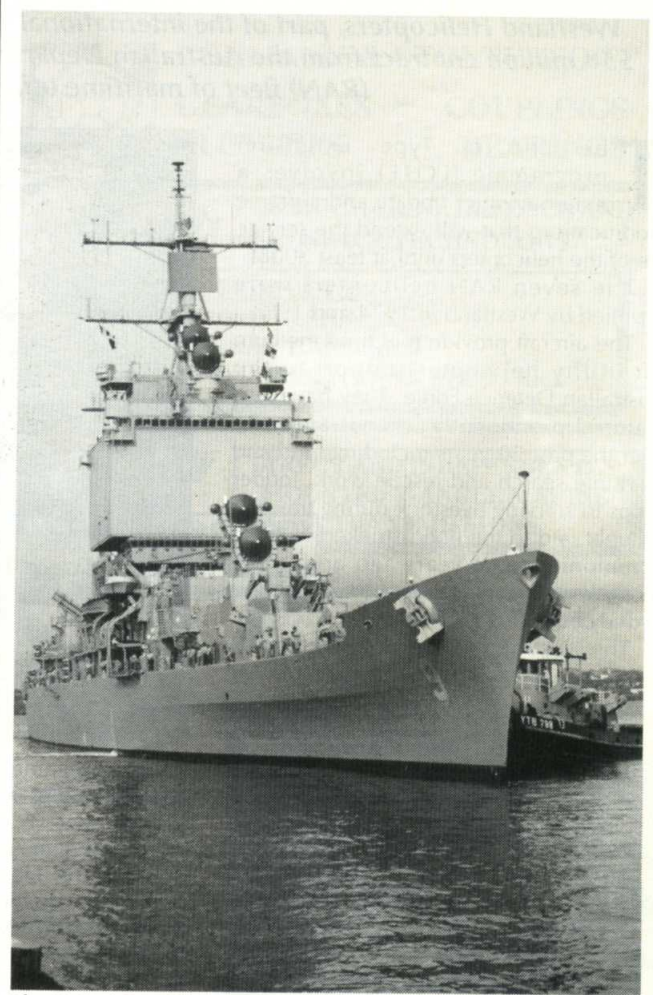
One of DARWIN's successes during the RIMPAC Exercise was surprising a Japanese submarine after its periscope was spotted from the bridge wing.

## Seahawks Over Esperance

**T**hree Royal Australian Navy Seahawk S70B2 helicopters of the Fleet Air Arm No. 816 Squadron operated in the Esperance area during August 8-9.

Anti-submarine warfare and anti-ship surveillance helicopters, the drab grey painted Seahawks worked with an RAN submarine in the Southern Ocean.

Seahawk's have a sophisticated computer, data and flight management system which is controlled by a crew of three; one pilot, a tactical co-ordinator and a sensor operator.



*The United States Navy recently decommissioned its largest cruiser, the nuclear powered USS LONG BEACH at Norfolk, Virginia. (Photo - Chris Cavas).*

The aircraft are fitted with up to 30 acoustic surveillance sonobuoys and acoustic processor as well as radar and magnetic anomaly detector.

## BUSY DAYS IN THE WEST



*Fleet Concentration Period 2 of 1994 has seen a great deal of naval activity at HMAS STIRLING and in West Australian waters. Seen alongside the main wharves at Fleet Base West on 12 August were the guided-missile frigates HMA Ships ADELAIDE, DARWIN and MELBOURNE; the replenishment ships HMAS WESTRALIA with HMNZS ENDEAVOUR outboard; the hydrographic survey ship HMAS MORESBY with the submarine HMAS ONSLOW outboard; and the destroyer escort HMAS TORRENS. Late that day the submarine HMAS ORION and the frigate HMNZS WELLINGTON sailed for exercises. At the same time on HMAS STIRLING's football oval were four SEA KING utility helicopters of 817 Squadron and at Jandakot airport on the mainland, three SEAHAWKS of 816 Squadron. (Photo ABPH Simon Poynton, RAN.)*



## Ships Make First Visit to HMAS STIRLING

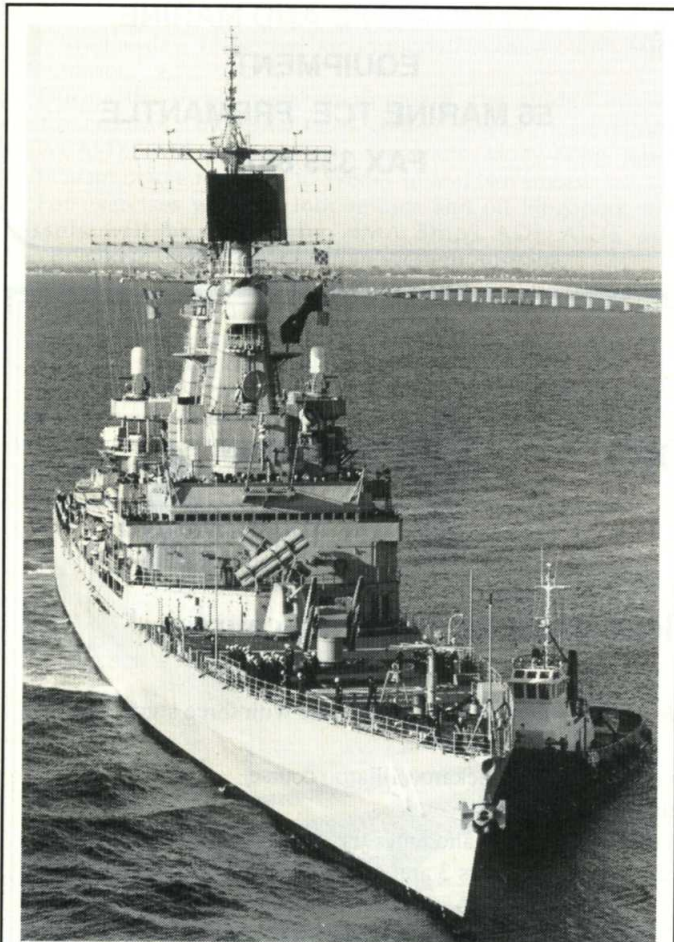
**T**he Royal New Zealand Navy frigate HMNZS WELLINGTON and the Royal Australian Navy guided-missile frigate HMAS MELBOURNE arrived at HMAS STIRLING for their first visits to Fleet Base West on Monday, August 1 for a two day stopover.

The ships visited Western Australia for a series of Fleet activities, conducted off the West Australian coast.

HMNZS WELLINGTON is a 3188 tonne Leander-class frigate carrying a complement of 233 and HMAS MELBOURNE which has visited Fremantle twice before, displaces 4000 tonnes and carries a complement of 213.

A third visitor was the Royal New Zealand Navy replenishment ship HMNZS ENDEAVOUR which has also made her first call at Garden Island. Displacing 12,000 tonnes, ENDEAVOUR carries a complement of 42.

The ships later sailed in company with HMA Ships ADELAIDE, TORRENS and WESTRALIA for Fleet Concentration Period 2/94.



*Making her second visit to HMAS Stirling, the nuclear-powered guided-missile cruiser USS Arkansas is seen berthing at Fleet Base West on 15 July, 1994 for a five day stopover with assistance from the medium naval tug Tammar. (Photo LSPH S. Hibbitt, RAN)*

## End of the Line

**M**onday, 8 August was the end of an era in the RAN, when the veteran Royal Australian Navy destroyer escort HMAS DERWENT decommissioned at HMAS STIRLING, Garden Island in WA.

## TANKER FIRST



*When the Royal New Zealand Navy oiler HMNZS Endeavour berthed outboard of HMAS Westralia at HMAS Stirling on 1 August, 1944 it was a first.*

*This was the first occasion that there had been two fleet oilers alongside at Fleet Base West at one time and was HMNZS Endeavour's first visit to the base.*

*The largest ships in their respective navies, they departed two days later for a Fleet Concentration Period off the west coast.*

*(Photo LSPH Shaun Hibbitt, RAN)*

In a ceremony conducted on the wharf alongside the ship, the Australian White Ensign was lowered for the last time, ending a resplendent 30 year career which saw HMAS DERWENT steam 883,946 nautical miles (more than 1.6 million kilometres) in the service of her country.

Among the large number of ex-HMAS DERWENT personnel of all ages attending was retired admiral, Rear Admiral R.C. Swan, the first commanding officer when the ship joined the fleet way back on 30 April 1964.

Homeported in Western Australia since January 25, 1987 the 2750 tonne DERWENT, (last commanded by Commander Russ Crane), was the first RAN ship to fire a guided-missile. The Seacat anti-aircraft missile was launched by the ship on 25 May 1964. In 1989 the ship was awarded the prestigious Gloucester Cup as the most efficient ship in the Australian Fleet.

After her decommissioning, DERWENT will be destored over the ensuing six weeks before commencing a series of "survivability trials" while moored at a special buoy in naval waters in Careening Bay off HMAS STIRLING.

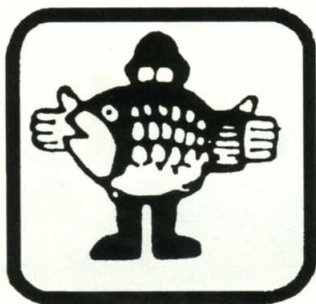
These destructive tests which will be administered by the Defence Science and Technology Organisation are designed to help Australia with future warship designs and survivability. Tests will include monitored onboard explosions and fires.

Options for DERWENT include scrapping, sinking in deep water or being scuttled as a dive wreck in local waters, an idea which is drawing a tremendous amount of interest.



*The United States Navy nuclear-powered Los Angeles-class submarine USS Ashville berthing at HMAS Stirling in Western Australia for a 10 day stopover on 15 July 1994. She arrived in company of the nuclear-powered guided-missile cruiser USS Arkansas. (Photo LSPH Shaun Hibbitt, RAN)*





# TAYLOR MARINE

(INC. TROPICAL TRADERS)

**ALL YOUR BOATING NEEDS  
(09) 335 5733**

**008 198 251 – For Callers Within WA Outside Perth Metro Area  
FREE CALL**

## FURUNO MARINE ELECTRONICS

RADAR • SOUNDERS • RADIOS ETC

ELECTRONIC SALES AND SERVICE

- ANCHORS CHAIN ROPE NETTING
- FISHING TACKLE • ALL SAFETY REQUIREMENTS
- AGENTS FOR FREEMAN HATCHES AND DOORS

## COMPLETE RANGE OF FISHING

ELECTRONIC AND MARINE

EQUIPMENT

56 MARINE TCE, FREMANTLE

FAX 335 8872



## NORTHERN TERRITORY RURAL COLLEGE



**The Northern Territory Rural College offers the following courses**

**Associate Diploma of Applied Science Tropical Beef Cattle Management** A two year course with three study and work options to suit individual needs.

**Semester 1:** Certificate in Stock and Station Skills – a practical 13 week Jackaroo/Jillaroo course

**Semester 2:** Advanced Certificate in Tropical Beef Cattle Management

Successful students may depart after Semester 1 or 2 with the relevant award and enter the work force (with the choice of returning at a future date) or continue into the second year (Semesters 3 and 4) in order to gain the Associate Diploma.

### NTCE

The Northern Territory Certificate of Education is a two year course for students who have completed Year 10 and wish to obtain a year 12 school leaving certificate. It has a practical emphasis and is designed to equip students for employment in the automotive, metals and rural industries as well as providing credit towards a variety of TAFE courses.

**For further information,** application forms or course and college handbooks Please contact  
the Associate Director Mr. Geoff Gaskell Phone 089-721377

Fax 089-723562 or write to **The Director** NT Rural College PO Box 1196 Katherine NT 0851





## RAN Ships Sail for Asia

**T**wo Royal Australian Navy ships sailed from Sydney on Wednesday, 10 August, for a round of exercises with Asian navies.

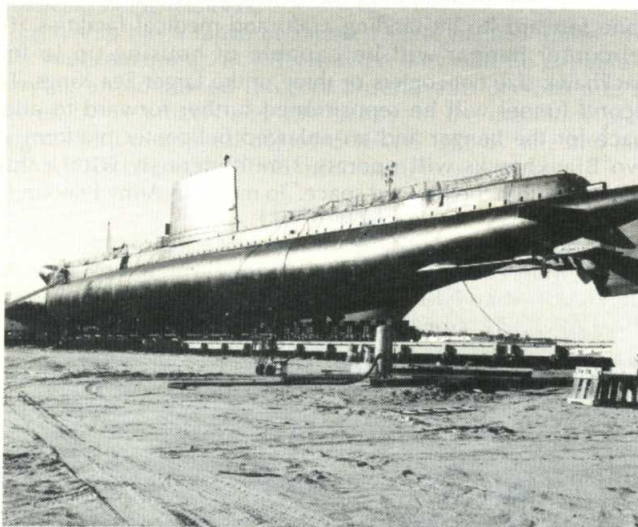
During the three month deployment, the guided missile destroyer HMAS BRISBANE and guided missile frigate HMAS NEWCASTLE will visit Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan and Guam before returning to Sydney in mid November.

For exercises with the Indonesians and off Singapore, the vessels will be joined by HMA Ships ADELAIDE and MELBOURNE which departed from Western Australia.

The trip is NEWCASTLE's first overseas deployment since commissioning on 11 December 1993. While in Japanese waters, she will visit the city of Ube which has a sister city relationship with the City of Newcastle, NSW.

Both BRISBANE and NEWCASTLE have recently undergone intensive work-up periods. The former following a major refit and the latter as a new ship leading to formal "acceptance into naval service" as an operational unit on 8 August.

## SUBMARINE HIGH & DRY



*The HMAS Stirling-based submarine HMAS ORION presented an impressive sight during a recent mid-cycle survey docking at Transfield Western Australia's shipyard at Henderson in Cockburn Sound.*

*Affectionately known as the "West Coast Warrior", HMAS Orion underwent the survey, a hull clean and painting with many of her systems being inspected, overhauled, tested and refitted.*

*(Photo LSPH Shaun Hibbitt, RAN)*

## A Day in the Navy

**T**wenty five children have experienced life in the Royal Australian Navy spending a day and night aboard HMAS TOBRUK. The winning class in Ashton Scholastic's "Join the Navy" competition, the Grade Five students came from Kingston Primary School in Tasmania.

The group will arrive at the ship around 1.15pm on Tuesday, 9 August, to begin their "day in the Navy".

Weighing 5800 tonnes and 126 metres in length, TOBRUK was built by Carrington Slipways at Tomago, near Newcastle and launched on 1 March 1980. First commissioned on 23 April 1981, the ship has a crew of 130 officers and sailors led by Commander John Wells.

During their "time in the Navy" the children lived in the ship's mess decks. After settling into their new home, a tour of the ship was organised. Divided into four "watches" they "worked" with sailors as part of the ship's company.

## HMAS WESTRALIA TAKE A DIVE



*The underway replenishment ship HMAS WESTRALIA presented an eye-catching sight at HMAS STIRLING recently. Largest ship in the Fleet, the 40,000 tonne (full load) WESTRALIA drew many curious glances from RAN personnel who are used to seeing ships berthed alongside normally in horizontal positions. Undergoing maintenance on after external shaft seal, WESTRALIA had her forward tanks ballasted to enable the propeller area of the ship to be raised clear of the water.*

*This is the first time this maintenance has been undertaken at Fleet Base West and the activity was supervised by Dawson Industries. (Photo LSPH Shaun Hibbitt, RAN)*

## Navy Medal for Veterans

**O**n 28 July, the Navy General Service Medal with Minesweeping Clasp was presented to Mr Leo Evans, a survivor from the Second World War corvette HMAS WARRNAMBOOL. The ship sank on 13 September 1947, after striking a mine during post-war minesweeping operations off the North Queensland coast. Four sailors lost their lives.

Twenty seven survivors, including Mr Evans, were deemed eligible for the medal under a short service clause, although they had not completed the 180 days on minesweeping operations normally required to qualify.

The Navy's Staff Officer Medals, Mr Keith Freemantle, said, "To date, the Navy has been unable to contact 23 of the survivors and wishes to hear from them, to arrange issue of the medal". Mr Freemantle may be contacted in Canberra on (06) 265 3321. Those crew members killed or injured were automatically awarded the medal.

Leo Evans was presented with his medal in a simple ceremony at HMAS WATERHEN, Waverton, by the commander of Australia's Mine Warfare and Diving Force, Commander Russ Baker.





Australia's new Training and Helicopter Support Ships at Little Creek in Virginia. At left is USS FAIRFAX COUNTY and on right, USS SAGINAW. (Photo - ABPH).

# Training and Helicopter Support Ships – Now Smooth Sailing

By Ross Gillett

## HMAS MANOORA

More than ten months have now passed since the decision was announced that the Royal Australian Navy would purchase two former United States Navy ships for conversion to the dual roles of training and helicopter support ships (THSS').

After some delays in the US Congress, it was announced in early August that the USS FAIRFAX COUNTY would depart from the Little Creek Amphibious Base in Virginia and arrive at the Fleet Base East in Sydney on Monday, 19 September, crewed by 17 officers and 143 other ranks including an RAN detachment of four officers and six crew.

USS FAIRFAX COUNTY sailed from Virginia on 16 August, after approval of the sale to the RAN being passed by President Bill Clinton. The ship is now scheduled to decommission as a USN unit on 27 September and be formally commissioned into the RAN as HMAS MANOORA (THSS 52) on 25 November. During this period the US ship's company will disembark for return to the USA by the end of September.

HMAS MANOORA will begin operational service in mid 1995, after undergoing conversion to the training and helicopter support ship role.

## HMAS KANIMBLA

THSS 51, USS SAGINAW was formally commissioned as HMAS KANIMBLA during a brief ceremony in the USA on 29 August and will arrive in Sydney with her Australian crew on 18 November.

To coincide with the commissioning of HMAS MANOORA on 25 November an official welcome into the Australian Fleet for the crew of HMAS KANIMBLA will be held at the Fleet Base on the same day. Following Christmas leave, KANIMBLA is expected to sail on her first training cruise on 9 January 1995 and then participate in Exercise Tasman Link.

## Background

After inspecting a number of available hulls, the Navy selected two tank landing ships (LSTs) to be modified in Australia. Built as members of the 20 strong Newport class

amphibious ships in the early 1970s both spent most of their careers in the Atlantic Ocean as part of larger amphibious groups.

The RAN ships were selected as the best preserved to operate for another two decades and after modification, the most effective design to satisfy both the training and helicopter support missions.

## Upgrades

It is planned each THSS will be in dockyard hands for up to six months for installation of the helicopter hanger amidships, a crane forward (to lift landing craft) and medical facilities. The helicopter hanger will be capable of housing up to four Blackhawk size helicopters or three of the larger Sea Kings. The second funnel will be repositioned further forward to allow space for the hanger and an enlarged helicopter platform aft. Two Blackhawks will operate simultaneously with a third helicopter from the forward space. To move an Army Platoon (30



USS FAIRFAX COUNTY (Photo - USN)



soldiers) the full lift will be achieved by three Blackhawks.

To ensure enough space is provided for the forward operating helicopter or the carriage of two Army LCM 8 landing craft, both ships will be modified via the removal of their 34m bow ramps and horns, originally fitted for the "over the beach" amphibious role. The 70 tonne crane would be installed forward of the bridge to "lift-on/lift-off" the LCM 8s with another smaller crane aft for other lift demands. Equipment fitted along the main decks will be deleted or re-sited to sponsons along the sides of the forward and aft helicopter decks.

With helicopter operations possible up to sea state-five, bilge keels are to be added for greater stability. A thirteen foot stern extension is being considered to provide additional deck space for the operation of the two helicopters aft. For flying operations, 230 tonnes of aviation fuel will be embarked, sufficient for three Blackhawks flying six hours per day for one month.

### Helicopter Capacity

Seahawk and Blackhawk helicopters will be capable of moving through the superstructure via the original vehicle passageway for operations from either deck. The tunnel will also provide additional space for truck storage. Below the main deck, the tank deck could be utilised for aircraft stowage with a total of sixteen helicopters embarked. Alternatively, four Blackhawks could be parked in the tank deck with three Sea Kings and the Command and Control cell (to support Army units ashore) in the top hangar. For aircraft maintenance at sea, limited facilities will be provided, with one sea chest per helicopter.

### Training and Medical

Classrooms will later be added behind the bridge structure or in the hangar for up to 34 trainees. Another possible addition is a training bridge added above the present structure. Each ship may be provided with a medical facility to handle initial wound surgery and intensive care support. Triage will be performed in the helicopter hangar with a 100 bed hospital established in each ship. To conform to modern day standards a standard omnipure septic system will be installed in each of the ships.

### Equipment

Both KANIMBLA and MANOORA are armed with a single Vulcan Phalanx Close-in-Weapons-System (CIWS), with the weapon mounted atop the superstructure of each ship. The tank deck will be utilised for the stowage of Army vehicles which can enter and depart through the stern gate. Storage space on the tank deck is 810 square metres. A side door on the starboard side of the tank deck may be fitted adjacent to the forward turntable with the forward internal ramp between the main and tank decks being retained.

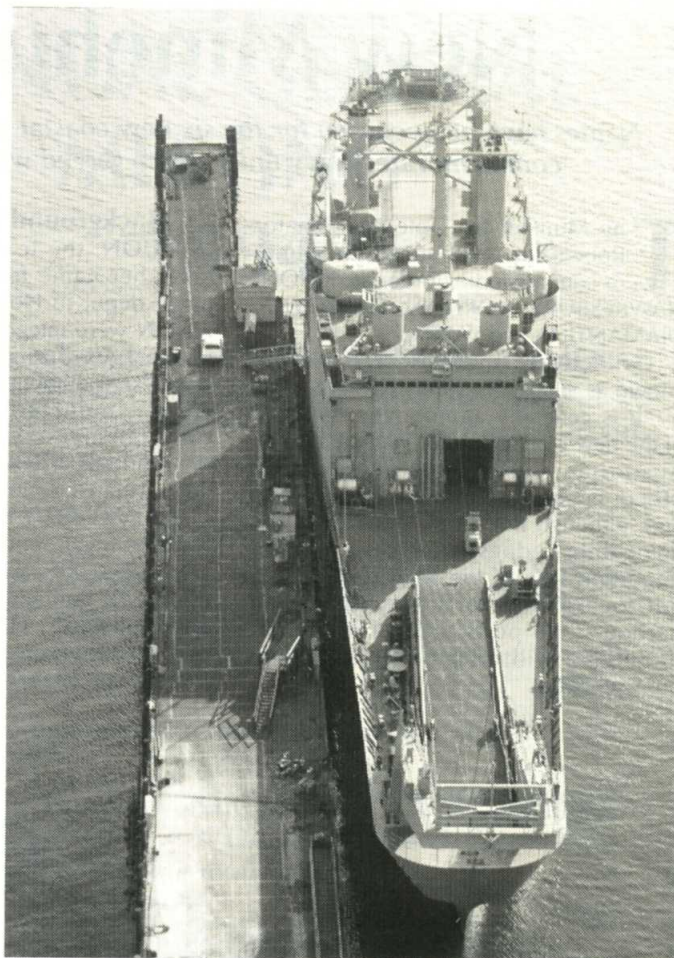
Each ship has a range of almost 13,800 nautical miles, with 30% fuel remaining. In RAN service they will be capable of carrying an embarked force of around 450 persons and be crewed by 11 officers and 159 sailors. In the meantime plans progress for the disposal of HMAS JERVIS BAY by sale and later HMAS TOBRUK, as the THSS' become fully operational.

### Historical

The names KANIMBLA and MANOORA were formerly carried by two infantry landing ships of the RAN from 1943 to 1949. Built as passenger ships for the coastal trade, KANIMBLA was owned by McIlraith McEacharn Ltd and MANOORA by the



*FAIRFAX COUNTY under construction in 1971.  
(Photo - A.D. Baker III)*



*FAIRFAX COUNTY fitting out. (Photo - A.D. Baker III)*

Adelaide Steamship Company. Both were requisitioned for war service and experienced long careers in the Pacific theatre. Prior to their service as infantry landing ships, KANIMBLA and MANOORA were commissioned in late 1939 as armed merchant cruisers in the Royal Navy (manned by RAN reservists) and Royal Australian Navy respectively. KANIMBLA entered RAN service in October 1943.

KANIMBLA and MANOORA later participated in the largest amphibious operation of the Second World War, the invasion of Borneo in 1945 and represented the RAN around the Philippines during 1944-45 including the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Post war the ships assisted in the repatriation of Australian servicemen and served around Japan in support of the Occupation Forces. After these duties both were returned to their original owners, KANIMBLA on 13 December 1950 and MANOORA on 31 August 1949.

Battle honours awarded to the ships include:

KANIMBLA: New Guinea 1944, Leyte Gulf 1944, Lingayen Gulf 1945 and Pacific 1945.

MANOORA: Indian Ocean 1941-42, New Guinea 1944, Leyte Gulf 1944, Lingayen Gulf 1945 and Pacific 1942-45.



*Detailed view of the USS SAGINAW, underway in the Atlantic Ocean,  
1983. (Photo - A.D. Baker III)*



# New Minehunters Named

*Names have been chosen for the six new coastal minehunters (MHCs) to be built in Newcastle. Each commemorates Navy units which served with distinction during the Second World War.*

**T**he Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Ray, announced the names in commissioning order as: HUON, HAWKESBURY, NORMAN, GASCOYNE, DIAMANTINA and YARRA.

Collectively, the new craft will be known as 'Hyon Class minehunters'.

"It is generally appropriate that each of the new craft should be named after an Australian river," Senator Ray said, "There is obviously one from each State and, although not all of these rivers are navigable, it does emphasise that the important task of the MHCs – keeping our focal points for trade, Australian harbours and ports, free of the threat of mines – will be performed close to our waterways.

## Background to the Names

**HUON**, the lead ship of the class, takes her name from the long serving naval depot in Hobart. Depots such as HUON were integral to the mobilisation of the RAN during the Second World War. Large numbers of Australian sailors were inducted through these establishments and at war's end demobilised. They were also important administrative centres.

**HAWKESBURY** remembers the wartime frigate built in Sydney. The first HAWKESBURY saw extensive service in the Pacific during the Second World War and afterwards. HAWKESBURY formed part of the supporting forces for the invasion of Tarakan and Brunei. She also

NORMAN formed of the escorting force when Royal Navy aircraft carriers launched air strikes against the Japanese home islands. She was returned to the Royal Navy in October 1945.

**GASCOYNE** was commissioned for service on November 18, 1943. After early service as a convoy escort the ship was assigned to the Hydrographic Unit of the US 7th Fleet for the invasion of the Philippines. GASCOYNE was operational in the vicinity of Leyte Gulf some two days before the actual invasion. Following service at Leyte she departed in January 1945 for Lingayen Gulf and her second major invasion.

During the voyage north she, in company with the USS BENNION and

### Key features of the Gaeta Variant for the Royal Australian Navy

#### Dimensions

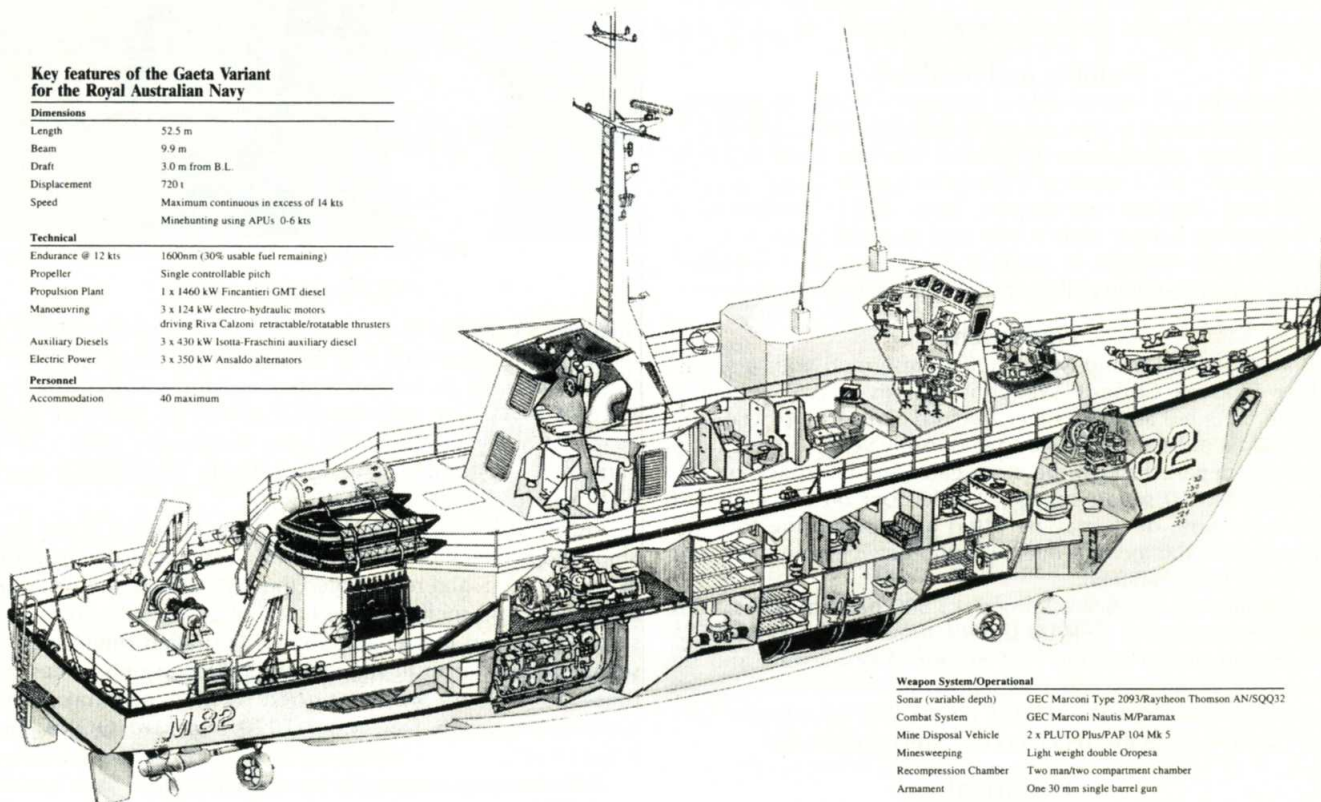
Length	52.5 m
Beam	9.9 m
Draft	3.0 m from B.L.
Displacement	720 t
Speed	Maximum continuous in excess of 14 kts Minehunting using APLUs 0-6 kts

#### Technical

Endurance @ 12 kts	1600nm (30% usable fuel remaining)
Propeller	Single controllable pitch
Propulsion Plant	1 x 1460 kW Fincantieri GMT diesel
Manoeuvring	3 x 124 kW electro-hydraulic motors driving Riva Calzoni retractable/rotatable thrusters
Auxiliary Diesels	3 x 430 kW Isotta-Fraschini auxiliary diesel
Electric Power	3 x 350 kW Ansaldo alternators

#### Personnel

Accommodation	40 maximum
---------------	------------



#### Weapon System/Operational

Sonar (variable depth)	GEC Marconi Type 2093/Raytheon Thomson AN/SQQ32
Combat System	GEC Marconi Nautis M/Paramax
Mine Disposal Vehicle	2 x PLUTO Plus/PAP 104 Mk 5
Minesweeping	Light weight double Oropesa
Recompression Chamber	Two man/two compartment chamber
Armament	One 30 mm single barrel gun

#### Capacities

Fuel oil	> 50 t
Fresh water	> 13 t
Dry provisions	> 20 days

"Of greater significance is that all of these names recall Second World War ships or naval establishments: their release coinciding with the 49th anniversary of the end of the war in the Pacific". The decision to call them the Hyon class marks the very special place that the name enjoys in our naval heritage.

"The extensive and valuable service rendered by these ships and establishments epitomises the service and sacrifices of over 40,000 Australians who served in the RAN during World War II."

served as an escort for ships taking troops and supplies to Leyte Gulf and the Philippines.

In August 1945 she accompanied the troopship DUNTROON to assist in the repatriation of Australians from Singapore to Darwin. The post war years were spent on showing the flag duties and assisting in the collections of hydrographic information. She was paid off in February 1955 and sold in 1961.

**NORMAN** was one of five N Class destroyers loaned to the RAN by the RN. She saw extensive service in the North Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans.

HMAS WARREGO, engaged two Japanese destroyers at long range. Following the successful assault at Lingayen Gulf she was reallocated to escort duties. GASCOYNE ended the war in the Borneo area.

After the war she was converted for use as a hydrographic ship and served in this capacity until finally paid off on February 1, 1966.

**DIAMANTINA**, the River Class frigate and wartime sister to HAWKESBURY and GASCOYNE, was built by Walkers Ltd at Maryborough, Queensland and commissioned into the RAN on April 27,



1945. Most of DIAMANTINA's war service was spent bombarding Japanese positions around Saposia and Bougainville during July 1945. After the end of hostilities she was pressed into service as a surrender ship. During this time she was directly involved in the surrender of Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands, Nauru and Ocean Island.

DIAMANTINA's post war duties were to see her utilised extensively for scientific and oceanographic duties. She spent much of this time in West Australian waters. After 35 years service the venerable old warship was paid off on February 29, 1980.

Today DIAMANTINA survives as a museum ship located in Brisbane.

**YARRA** of World War II was the second ship of the RAN to carry this name. She was built at Cockatoo Island in 1935 and commissioned into the RAN on January 21, 1936. During the opening months of the Second World War she saw service as an escort and patrol vessel in Australian waters before being despatched to the Red Sea area.

In May 1941 YARRA served with British forces in a short but decisive war against a pro-German Iraqi regime. Following the successful conclusion of this she was once again in action this time in support of operations in Iran in order to secure that country's oil supplies. On conclusion of operations in Iran YARRA was transferred to the Mediterranean where she was employed on the Tobruk Ferry Service. From the Mediterranean she was sent to Singapore.

From her arrival in this new theatre of war YARRA was to serve on convoy and patrol work. On March 4, 1942 while escorting a convoy towards Fremantle, YARRA was intercepted by a Japanese cruiser force consisting of ATAGO, TAKAO and MAYA. Lieutenant Commander Rankin immediately ordered the convoy to scatter and turned to engage the enemy. After a short and one-sided fight the courageous little ship was sunk. The valour of this ship and her commanding officer will be remembered in the new YARRA and the Collins Class submarine RANKIN.

# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1994

**NOTICE** is hereby given that the **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA** will be held at the **NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, 16 National Circuit, Barton, ACT**, on Friday 11 November, 1994 at 8pm.

## BUSINESS

1. To confirm the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held in Melbourne on Friday, 12 November 1993.
2. To receive the report of the Federal Council, and to consider matters raised therefrom.
3. To receive the financial statements for the year ended 30 June, 1994.
4. The following Director, being over the age of seventy two years, seeks re-election as a Director (Federal Councillor) in accordance with the Corporations Law:  
**A.H. HEWITT (WA Division)**
5. To elect Office Bearers for the 1994/1995 year as follows:
  - a) **Federal President**
  - b) **Federal Vice-President**
  - c) **Additional Vice-President (1)**
  - d) **Auditor**Nominations for these positions are to be lodged with the Honorary Federal Secretary prior to the commencement of the Annual General Meeting.
6. **General Business:** To deal with any matter notified in writing to the Honorary Federal Secretary by 28 October, 1994.

## ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

PO Box 309  
Mt Waverley, Victoria 3149  
Tel: (03) 888 1977  
Fax: (03) 888 1083

BY ORDER OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL  
ROGER BLYTHMAN  
Honorary Federal Secretary

Proud Contractors to the RAN

## DAWSON INDUSTRIES PTY LTD

484 Albany Highway, Victoria Park, WA 6100

**Telephone: (09) 470 4000 ♦ Facsimile: (09) 362 2905**

*"A Recommended Service"*



# BEST WISHES TO ALL NAVY PERSONNEL

From

**INN THE PINK MOTEL**

**263 Sheridan St**

**Cairns 4870**

**PH: (070) 51 4800**

**FAX: (070) 31 1526**

**Cottee's Foods**

*A Division of Cadbury Schweppes Pty Ltd*

*Suppliers of*  
COTTEES Cordials, Jams,  
Toppings, Jellies, Puddings,  
Fruit Snacks, and  
Maxwell House Coffee

*For all Enquiries Telephone:*

**Sydney: (02) 602 6166**  
**Melbourne: (03) 646 5866**  
**Brisbane: (07) 345 5077**  
**Adelaide: (08) 366 9111**  
**Perth: (09) 444 5166**  
**Hobart: (002) 49 0111**

## Made to measure services for the Services.

National Australia Bank is proud to offer its specialised range of products and services to all DEFCOM members. These include:

- National FlexiAccount with more fee-free transactions and lots of convenient features.
  - DEFCOM MasterCard with lower interest rates, a choice of accounts and more.
  - Personal Loans at preferential rates.
  - National Defence HomeOwner is the subsidised home loan for eligible DEFCOM members.
- Take advantage of your privileges at National Australia Bank today by calling your local branch for more information.

**Nowra Branch**  
29 Kinghorne Street  
(044) 21 0077  
Contact: Noel Quanchi  
or Steve Wilkinson



**Tailoring banking to your needs.**

*Proud suppliers to the Royal Australian Navy*

**ALCAN ALUMINIUM  
CENTRES**



**A Division of Alcan Australia Limited**

**• INDUSTRY, TRADE, DO-IT-YOURSELF**

Stockists and Suppliers of a Comprehensive Range of:

- Sheet and Plate • Extrusions • Alcan Architectural Systems and Suites
- For all your Product and Service needs call us now

**EAGLE FARM: 692 CURTIN AVENUE**  
**Telephone: (07) 260 1770. Fax: (07) 260 1146**  
**THE EASY PLACE TO BUY ALUMINIUM**

*Proud Contractors to the RAN*

**J.N. TAYLOR & CO**

Unit 41-9 Powells Road Brookvale, NSW 2100

**Specialising in all Marine &  
Navigational Equipment**

**Telephone: (02) 938 3099**  
**Facsimile: (02) 905 5543**



# Australian Army Watercraft

## Part Four

### Army Vessels (AV)

By Brian Alsop

*This article will discuss those Army craft that have worn the AV hull number prefix. These were the larger, sea-going members of the Army's fleet. In conclusion, a general review of Army watercraft operations will be undertaken.*

#### Army Vessels (AV)

In many areas of the South West Pacific where Australians served during the War, the only way of providing combat supplies and stores in quantity was by sea. Even when transport aircraft became available in adequate numbers as the War progressed, there remained several areas that could not be adequately serviced by air. Merchant or naval stores vessels to carry the supplies for the land battles were often too large for operation in restricted island and coastal waters. The only solution was for the Army and RAAF to operate their own cargo vessels of suitable design.

As with other types of Army craft, the first AV's employed were requisitioned civil vessels. Seven such ships were requisitioned, but only six entered service. They ranged from the 127 foot 6 inch AV664 ZEPHYR based at Fremantle (a coaster formerly operated by McIlwraith McEacharn), to the small 64 foot 10 inch AV507 PANUCO used by ANGAU (Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit). The other four were between 103 and 118 feet long. All were rated nominally as having a 300 ton cargo capacity. The last of these to take up Army duties was AV708 KING BAY which served the Royal Australian Navy as an examination and tender vessel from August 1940 until transferred to Army control on 17 February 1944.

Initially, AV281 ROWITTA and AV316 TARNEIT were used as training vessels at Hobart and Melbourne respectively. AV279 GUNDIAH operated from Sydney carrying general cargo.



AV279 GUNDIAH, a coaster requisitioned from Tasmanian owners in June 1943.



AV1379 TARRA was the last 125 foot wooden cargo vessel in Army service. She is shown here during the late 1950's.

In 1945, it was decided TARNEIT would see further duty with the Services Reconnaissance Department (SRD). Following conversion to her new role, she was to be transferred to the Royal Australian Navy for SRD service. At war's end, however, the conversion work was incomplete, thus she remained an Army vessel.

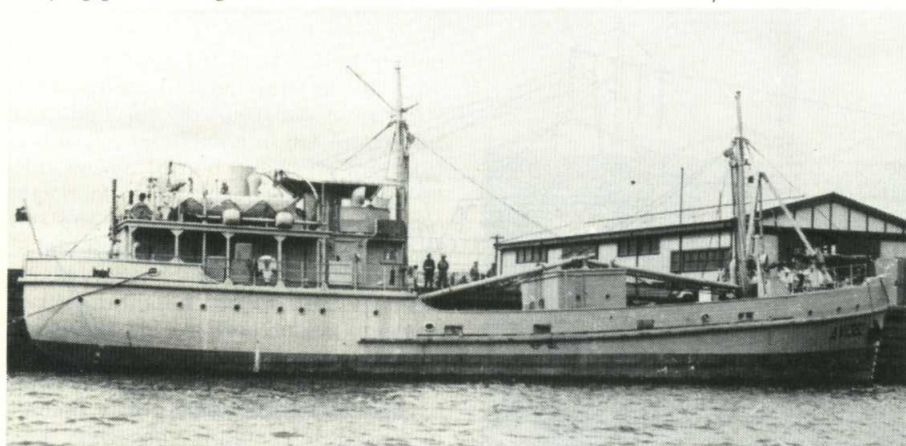
Since only a handful of suitable ships were available for requisitioning from civil sources, the only viable alternative

was for the Australian Government to arrange building of suitable vessels. Seven designs adopted by the Australian Shipbuilding Board and the Small Craft Construction Directorate during the Second World War were to carry the AV hull number prefix in Army service. They ranged in length from 56 to 200 feet. One other type also wore the prefix between 1959 and 1971.

#### 125 Foot Wooden Cargo Vessel.

Thirty two of these small ships were initially ordered for the Army in two variants; a standard type termed "Vessel Cargo Wooden, 125 ft" and a refrigerated type with an additional small deckhouse on the well deck for plant. Two shipyards were involved with building the class. The Western Australian State Shipbuilding Yard at North Fremantle built 12 vessels, while 20 (including the six refrigerated vessels) came from the Tasmanian Government Yard at Prince of Wales Bay, Hobart. Both yards ultimately came under Commonwealth Government control. A further two ships were later added to the programme to compensate for two transferred to the Navy for the SRD. By 30 September 1945 when the requirement for such vessels was reduced to 22, twelve had been delivered to the Army, with a further 22 ships building, including several near completion.

The original design was modified, as the first ships hogged and sagged badly in a sea-way during initial trials. As a result, hulls were stiffened with additional stringers and frames added. Other problems with the "300 tonner" building programme included shortages of seasoned timber, suitable engines, auxiliary sets and the provision of



125 foot refrigerated wooden cargo vessel, AV1362 RANNAH.



## AUSTRALIAN ARMY WATERCRAFT



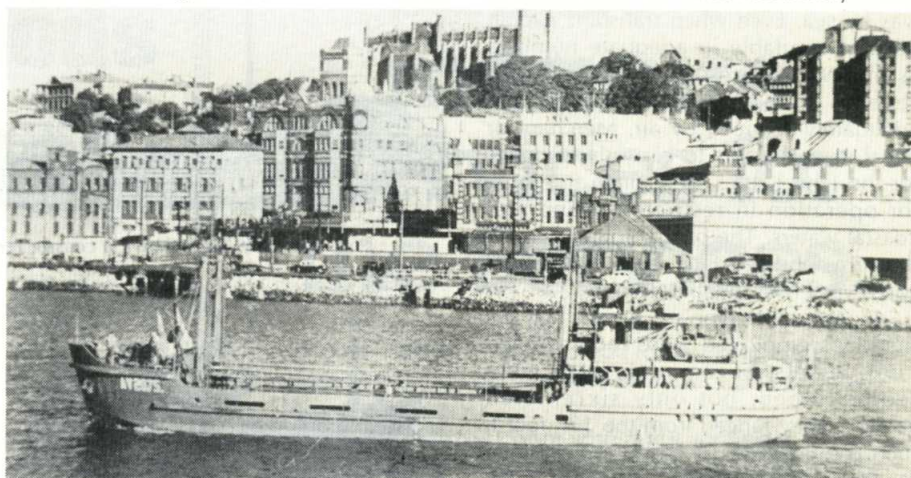
120 foot steel cargo vessel, AV2050 ELSPETH

electrically operated winches, windlasses and ventilation equipment. These shortages combined with the lack of skilled shipwrights significantly hampered the construction effort. As a result of problems encountered, the last five craft ordered incorporated design changes to increase longitudinal strength against hogging, use local timbers more effectively and increase cargo space in keeping with available horsepower. They were also intended to fulfil Board of Trade requirements as far as possible, with a view to post war use. It appears that these last five ships ordered may never have been completed. The last two built by the Fremantle yard, AV1359 MURRAY and AV1360 CANNING, were completed for UNRRA (United Nations Refugee Relief Administration) and never saw Army service.

Most of the class were sold within five years of war's end. AV 1356

October 1960 following an internal explosion. Two of the ships, AV1351 VASSE and AV1379 TARRA, lasted till the 1960s in Army service as training and general cargo vessels. VASSE was sold out of service in 1962. TARRA was the last to go, being sold on 14 April 1965.

**Army Numbers:** AV1349-1381.  
**Construction:** Wooden-Zincanear Sheathing.  
**Dimensions:** Length overall 125ft (waterline 120ft). Breadth 24ft. Depth (moulded) 12ft 6in. Draft, Loaded 12ft 6in. Light 7ft 6in.  
**Engines:** 2 x Gardner 8L3 marine diesel, 136/150 bhp, or 2 x Ruston & Hornsby



AV2075 EMILY moving down Newcastle Harbour shortly after entering Army service.

ASHBURTON transferred to the Navy on 23 January 1946, becoming HMAS WOOMERA. She sank off Sydney on 11

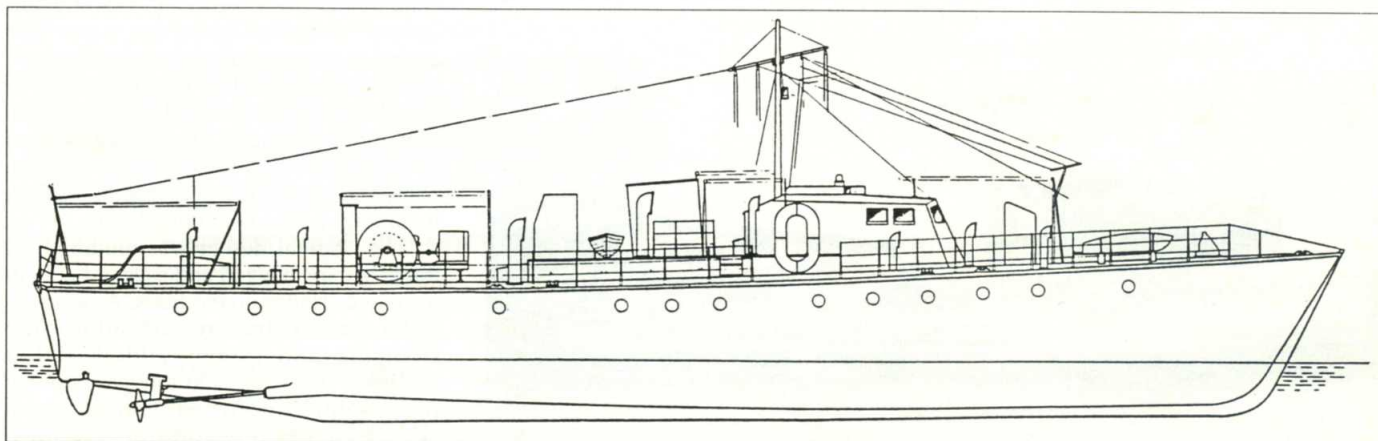
5VCBM diesel, 153/170 bhp, or 2 x Ruston & Hornsby 6VCBM diesel, 183/204 bhp, or 2 x Blackstone EPVMG 4 marine diesel, 160 bhp, or 2 x Vivian marine diesel, 160 bhp.

**Auxiliary Engines:** 1 x Ruston 1VSOZ diesel, 7.5 hp driving 110V, 4.5kW generator, air compressor and bilge pump. 1 x Southern Cross VGB 4 cyl engine, 42 hp driving 20kW generator.

**Speed:** 8.5 to 10 knots according to



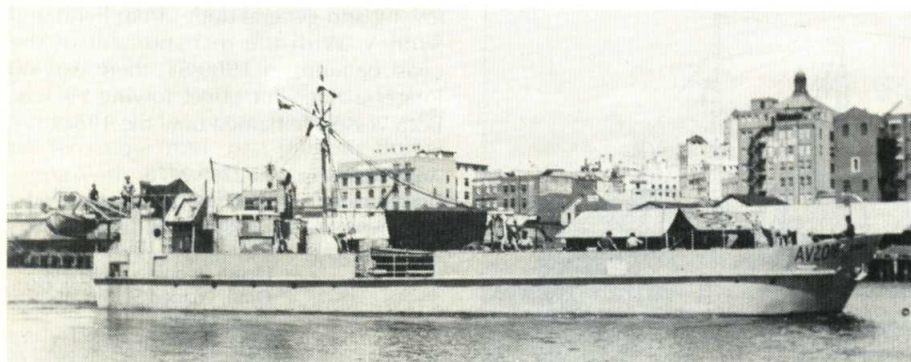
112 foot target towing vessel, AV2770 SANDRA.



Profile of the 112 foot target towing vessel. These craft were a variant of the Fairmile B motor launch operated by the Royal Australian Navy.



## AUSTRALIAN ARMY WATERCRAFT



106 foot steel cargo vessel, AV2016 DAPHNE. In this view she is painted grey.

<b>Fuel &amp; Oil:</b>	engines fitted. Diesel fuel - 3280 gallons (6 tanks). Lubricating oil - 213 gallons.
<b>Range:</b>	2400 miles approx.
<b>Cargo Capacity:</b>	Standard vessel - 300 tons dwt (11240 cu ft). Refrigerated vessel - 194 tons dwt (7750 cu ft).
<b>Accommodation:</b>	Cabins - 6 single berth, 1 two berth, 1 four berth. Forecastle - 8 berth. (Total 20 berths).
<b>Crew:</b>	Standard vessel - 14. Refrigerated vessel - 16.

New South Wales, Johnstone's Tyne Foundry in Melbourne, Victoria and Structural Engineering Co. at Perth in Western Australia.

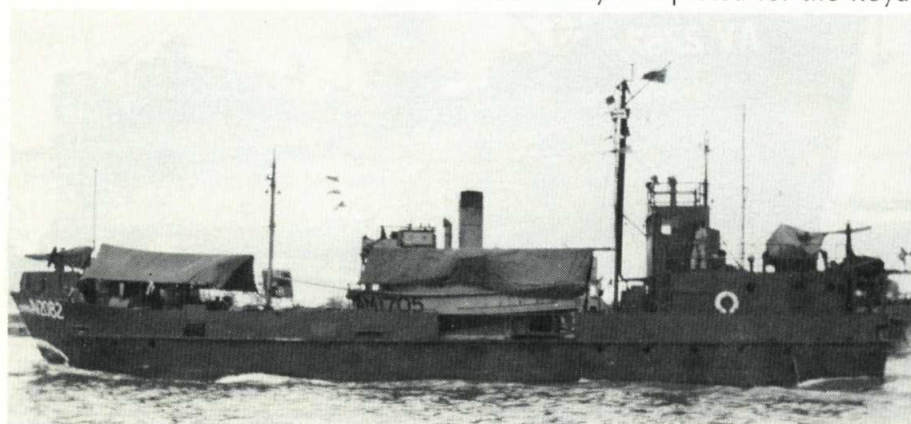
Thirty one of these ships had been ordered for the Army prior to September 1945. By 30 June 1945, only seven had been delivered to the Army with a further 24 under construction. All had names beginning with 'E'. With a reduction in requirement to 18 ships as of 30 September, orders for 13 craft were cancelled. Some cancelled vessels were eventually completed for the Royal

Australian Navy who operated a total of eleven such ships, while three craft, AV2066 ELLEN, AV2067 ENDEAVOUR and AV2080 EBBTIDE transferred while building to the Royal Navy as MSL41, MSL42 and MRL21 respectively. Five ships of this type saw RAAF service.

While construction records indicate some vessels displayed poor quality welds and workmanship, most were well built, robust craft.

All Army 120 footers were disposed of within a few years of war's end. A small number were left in Victoria Harbour, Brunei for some time, while others were sold for further service in Australian and Papua New Guinea waters. The last Navy vessel of this type, MRL253 (later TV282 GAYUNDAH), lasted as a sea-going ship until 1982 when she became an alongside training vessel at HMAS CERBERUS. She was eventually sold in 1988 and once again put to sea.

<b>Army Numbers:</b>	AV2050-2080.
<b>Construction:</b>	Steel-welded.
<b>Dimensions:</b>	Length overall 120 ft. Breadth 24ft. Depth (moulded) 9ft. Draft, Loaded 7ft 5in aft, 7ft 2in fwd. Light 6ft 4in aft, 2ft 7in fwd.
<b>Engines:</b>	2 x Crossley HR4 marine diesel, 220 bhp, or 2 x Atlas M45E marine diesel, 200/265 bhp, or 2 x Ruston & Hornsby 6VCBM diesel, 183/204 bhp, or 2 x Atlas Imperial marine diesel, 165 bhp, or 2 x Fairbanks Morse 4 cyl marine diesel, 120 bhp.
<b>Speed:</b>	8 to 11 knots according to engines fitted.
<b>Fuel:</b>	Diesel - 6000 gallons (4 tanks).
<b>Range:</b>	3000 miles approx.
<b>Cargo Capacity:</b>	250 tons (9760 cu ft).



AV2082 DORA, a 106 foot steel cargo vessel, carrying a 26ft motor dory, AM1705 GUNNEDAH.

<b>Armament:</b>	3 x 20mm Hispano MG.
<b>Purpose:</b>	Transport of general and refrigerated cargo.

**120 Foot Steel Cargo Vessel.**  
Designed by the Australian Shipbuilding Board following a requirement from the United States of America Forces in Australia (USAFIA) for a self propelled ocean-going lighter, ships of this type were built for the Australian Army, RAN and RAAF, in addition to the Americans. This design turned out to be the most important of the "standard" cargo vessel designs prepared by the Australian Shipbuilding Board during the Second World War and built in large numbers.

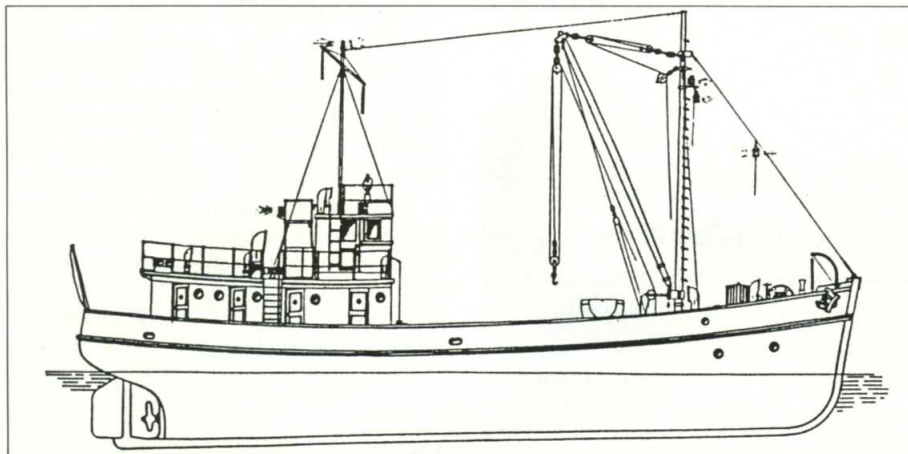
Prefabricated sections for 120 foot steel cargo vessels were built at structural steelyards at a variety of locations, however assembly and fitting out was limited to the State Dockyard at Dyke End, Newcastle, Tullochs at Rhodes in Sydney and Goodwins at Port Kembla in



The first Army 85 foot wooden cargo vessel, AV2280 BARBARA.



## AUSTRALIAN ARMY WATERCRAFT



Profile of the 85 foot wooden cargo vessel. At least five of these ships saw Army service.

**Accommodation:** Cabins - 2 single berth,  
2 two berth.  
Hold - accommodation flat  
for 8 men.  
(Total - 14 berths).

**Crew:** 12.

**Armament:** 3 x 20mm Hispano MG, or  
1 x 40mm Bofors and  
2 x .303 Twin Vickers MG.

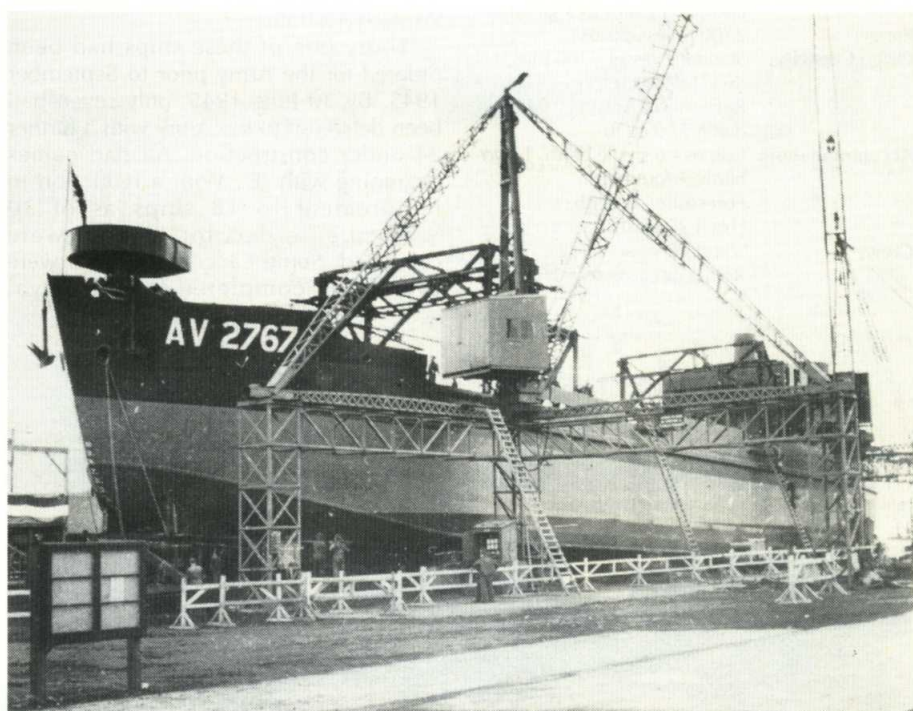
**Purpose:** Transport of general cargo,  
dock tenders, and floating  
workshops.

**112 Foot Target Towing Vessel.** A variant of the Fairmile B motor launch used by the Royal Australian Navy, three of these vessels were originally ordered for the Australian Army, the first being laid down on 5 December 1944. One order was cancelled in September 1945, with two under construction by Lars Halvorsen & Sons at that time as specialist target towing vessels. It was intended for these craft to operate in support of the Garrison Artillery.

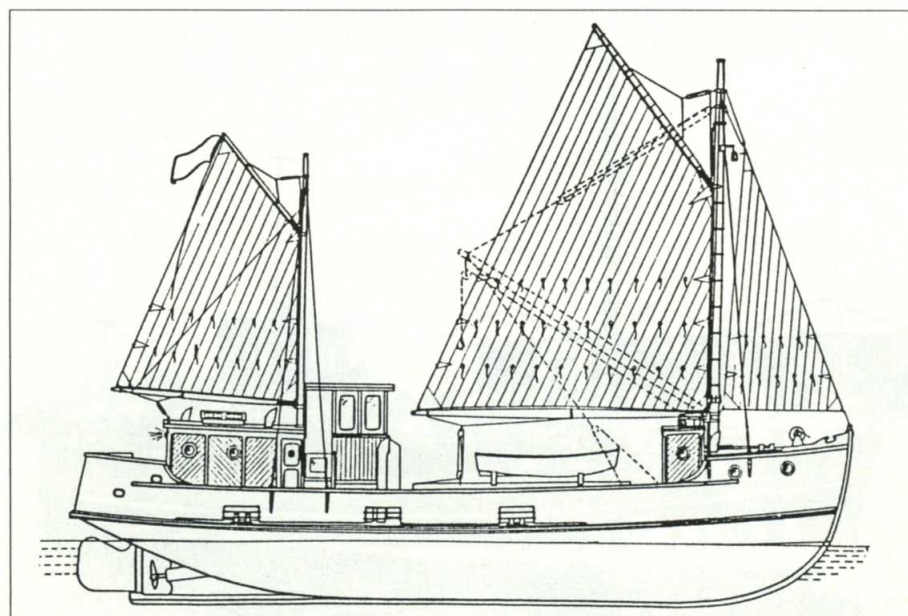
The two Fairmiles, AV2769 MAUREEN and AV2770 SANDRA, entered service during July and August 1946. They operated post war on target

towing and general duties from Perth and Sydney. With the disbandment of the coast batteries in 1960/61, there was no longer a need for target towing vessels. Both vessels remained until the 1960s.

**Army Numbers:** AV2769-2770.  
**Construction:** Wooden - copper sheathed.  
**Dimensions:** Length overall 112ft.  
Breadth 17ft 10in.  
Depth (moulded) 11ft 3in.  
Draft, Loaded 5ft 6in aft,  
4ft 6in fwd.  
Light 5ft aft, 4ft fwd.  
**Engines:** 2 x Hall Scott defender  
marine, 650 bhp.  
**Speed:** Cruising 12 knots,  
Maximum 20 knots.  
**Fuel:** Petrol - 2305 gallons.



Largest Army vessel to be built during the Second World War was the heavy lift ship AV2767 CRUSADER, shown here on her launching day, 8 August 1945.



Profile of the 56 foot wooden cargo vessel. This design dates back to 1913.

**Range:** 1500 miles.  
**Accommodation:** Officers - 3 berths.  
ORs - 14 berths.  
(Total - 17 berths).  
**Armament:** Nil.  
**Purpose:** Target towing.

**106 Foot Steel Cargo Vessel.** Built by Ford Motor Company at their Geelong, Victoria plant, 31 vessels were initially ordered, but only 12 had been completed by 30 September 1945. Another two ships were under construction. The post war requirement being for only 14 vessels, the remaining 17 orders were cancelled. In Army service, they were often referred to as the 'D' Class, since all had names beginning with the letter D.

Like the 120 foot steel cargo vessels, these ships were assembled on the slipway from prefabricated sections. However in the case of the 106 footers, all sections were built in Ford's Geelong works. Once completed, they were launched sideways.



## AUSTRALIAN ARMY WATERCRAFT

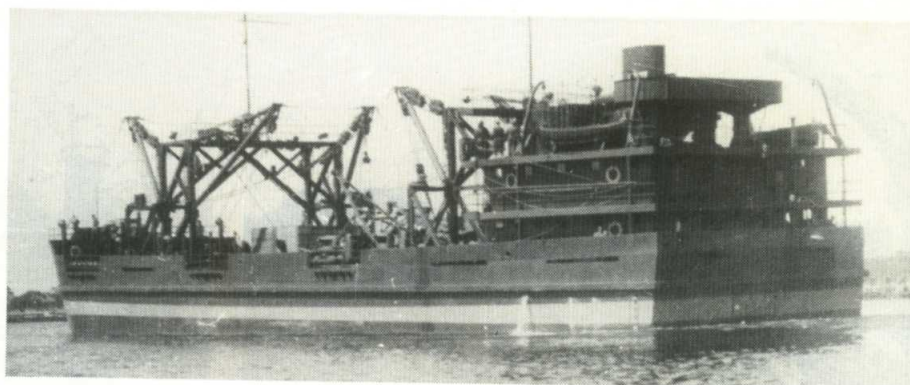
The design was ideally suited for island and river work due to the shallow draft when loaded.

Three are noted as being based at Rabaul in 1946. Some were reportedly left for a time in Victoria Harbour, Brunei along with a few 'E' Class 120 footers before disposal. Most had only short careers before being sold. At least two (Riverside Coal Transport's BARRAMBIN and BREMER) remained in merchant service for many years, lasting till the early 1990s.

**Army Numbers:** AV2016, 2049, 2081-2089 plus others.  
**Construction:** Steel-welded.  
**Dimensions:** Length overall 106ft. Breadth 26ft 6in. Depth (moulded) 10ft. Draft, Loaded 6ft 9in aft, 4ft 8in fwd. Light 3ft 6in aft, 1ft 6in fwd. 3 x Ronaldson & Tippet 8-3-2 marine diesel, 100bhp.  
**Engines:** 8 knots.  
**Speed:** Diesel - 1810 gallons.  
**Fuel:** 1000 miles approx.  
**Range:** 200 tons dwt.  
**Cargo Capacity:** 14 berths.  
**Accommodation:** 12.  
**Crew:** 1 x 40mm Bofors. 1 x 20mm Hispano MG.  
**Armament:** Transport of general cargo and repair ship.  
**Purpose:**

**85 Foot Wooden Cargo Vessel.** These vessels were ordered in lieu of 66 foot wooden cargo vessels (trawlers) due to operational requirements for vessels of greater cargo capacity, range and seaworthiness.

As of 1 March 1945, 22 vessels were under construction for the Army with the first vessel almost completed. A total of 35 had been ordered from several yards throughout Australia. By this time, four similar craft had already entered Navy service, with another four to join them by early July. By 30 September 1945, the



Heavy lift ship AV2767 CRUSADER underway.

Army's requirement had been reduced to two vessels.

The first Army vessel, AV2280 BARBARA was to be transferred to the RAN for SRD duties, but when hostilities ended, her conversion for that role was not complete. Four others, AV2286 BETH, AV2677, AV2678 and AV2682 were transferred to the Royal Navy from 24 July 1945. One RAN vessel of this type, MSL708, was transferred to the Army in 1958. She lasted only a short time in Army service.

**Army Numbers:** AV2280-2294, 2677-2678, 2682 plus others.  
**Construction:** Wooden - copper sheathed.  
**Dimensions:** Length overall 85ft. Breadth 20ft. Depth (moulded) 8ft 8.5in. Draft, Loaded 8ft 0in aft, 6ft 6in fwd. Light 6ft 6in aft, 3ft 0in fwd. 1 x Ruston & Hornsby 6VCBM marine diesel, 204 bhp, or 1 x Crossley DR6 marine diesel, 150 bhp. 8 knots.  
**Engines:** Diesel - 800 gallons. 1000 miles approx.  
**Speed:** 80 tons dwt.  
**Fuel:** 3 x two berth cabins.  
**Range:**  
**Cargo Capacity:**  
**Accommodation:**

6 x bunks in forepeak. (Total 12 berths).  
**Crew:** 12.  
**Armament:** 1 x 20mm MG and 2 x .303 Twin Vickers MG, or 2 x .5in MG, or 2 x .303 Twin Vickers MG.  
**Purpose:** Transport of general cargo.

**56 Foot Wooden Cargo Vessel.** This type of craft was designed in 1913 and built expressly for navigating rivers in New Guinea. A ketch rigged powered scow, the hull was fore and aft planked. They were ideally suited to island work due to their shallow draft of only 4 foot 6 inches when fully loaded.

Four of these vessels were under construction at war's end in 1945, representing the Army's total post war requirement. Eleven craft were originally ordered, the balance of seven orders being cancelled in September of that year. At least five craft of this type were used by the RAAF as general cargo vessels. They were built by Slazengers in Sydney. Two of the RAAF vessels were subsequently transferred to the Royal Australian Navy in 1962 for use as diving vessels.

**Army Numbers:** Not known.  
**Construction:** Wooden - copper sheathed.  
**Dimensions:** Length overall 56ft. Breadth (moulded) 16ft. Depth (moulded) 5ft 6in. Draft, Loaded 4ft 6in aft, 3ft 9in fwd. Light 4ft 0in aft, 2ft 3in fwd.  
**Engines:** 1 x Gray 64 HN9 marine diesel, 225 bhp.  
**Speed:** Cruising 6 knots, Maximum 8 knots (with sails furled).  
**Fuel:** Diesel - 600 gallons.  
**Range:** 700 miles approx.  
**Cargo Capacity:** 30 tons dwt.  
**Accommodation:** 1 x four berth cabin aft. 4 x berths in forecastle.  
**Crew:** 6.  
**Armament:** 1 x .5in MG, or 1 x .303in Twin Vickers.  
**Purpose:** Transport of general cargo.

**Heavy Lift Ship.** With the permission of the Small Craft Construction Directorate, the Army's Engineer-in-Chief, Major Clive Steele approached the Melbourne Harbour Trust to build two 200 foot long, shallow-draft vessels for the Army at their Williamstown shipyard. This order was to be in lieu of one for six



Landing ship medium, AV1354 BRUDENELL WHITE on arrival in Sydney, 31 December 1959.



## AUSTRALIAN ARMY WATERCRAFT



All four LSM's saw extensive service in Papua New Guinea waters. AV1354 BRUDENELL WHITE is seen in this view at Kandrian, New Britain during September 1966.



AV1356 CLIVE STEELE at Wewak, June 1966.

120 foot steel cargo vessels. Designed by the Engineer-in-Chief's office for the carriage of large military cargoes, including heavy equipment and vehicles, each ship was expected to carry more than a conventional 10,000 ton freighter. Due to the non-availability of suitable large engines, the ship was equipped with six propellers and four rudders.

The first ship, AV2767 CRUSADER was launched on 8 August 1945. She was not completed until after the war was over. Sister ship AV2768 CORSAIR was cancelled with only a small amount of work completed. CRUSADER sailed north to Rabaul and Torokina in early 1946, but after one trip there was little work left for the shallow-draft heavy lift ship to do.

Sold in 1947 to Queensland Cement and Lime and renamed CEMENTCO, the ship worked from Brisbane until laid up in September 1984. On 27 July 1986, she was scuttled off Cape Moreton.

**Army Numbers:** AV2767-2768.  
**Construction:** Steel-welded.  
**Dimensions:** Length overall 200 ft. Breadth 50ft. Draft, Loaded 12ft.  
**Engines:** 6 x Ruston & Hornsby marine diesel driving six propellers.  
**Speed:** 9 knots.  
**Fuel:** Diesel.  
**Range:** 7450 miles.  
**Cargo Capacity:** 1600 tons in three holds plus 40 vehicles as deck cargo.

**Accommodation:** 31 berths (5 officers, 26 ORs).  
**Crew:** 31.  
**Armament:** 2 x 40mm Bofors.  
**Purpose:** Transport of vehicles and general cargo.

**Landing Ship Medium (LSM).** Four Second World War vintage LSM's were purchased in 1959 from among mothballed United States Navy vessels in Japan. The ships arrived in Australia in two groups. First to arrive in Sydney were AV1353 HARRY CHAUVEL and AV1354 BRUDENELL WHITE on 31 December 1959, followed on 4 July 1960 by AV1355 VERNON STURDEE and AV1356 CLIVE STEELE. All were named after Australian generals. Following their arrival, all vessels underwent refit which included modifications to suit Australian conditions. The purchase gave the Army an ability to transport its Centurion tanks which to that point it had not possessed.

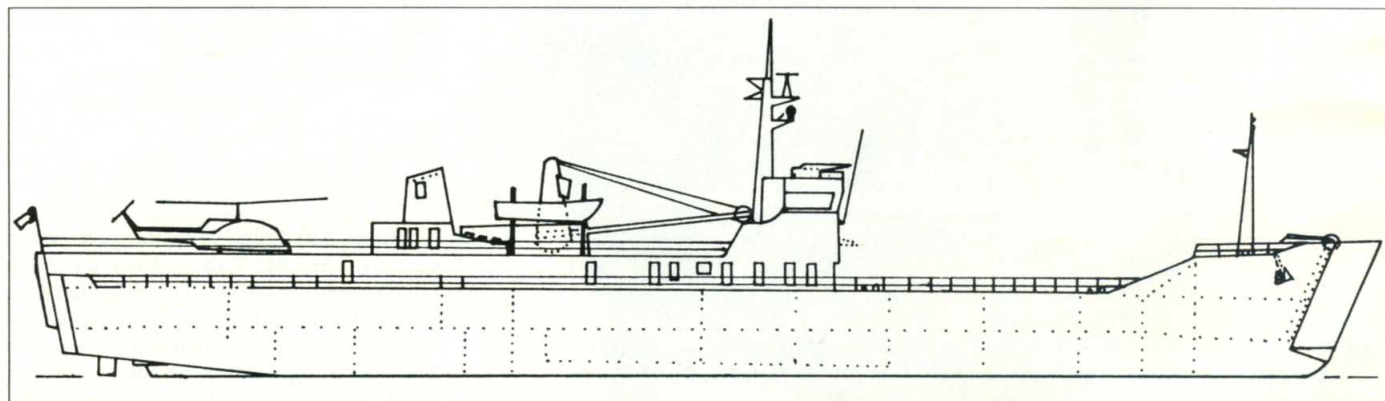
During their careers, all four LSM's spent considerable time operating in Papua New Guinea waters. In October 1964 BRUDENELL WHITE became the first vessel of her size to travel 350 miles up the Sepik River to the May River Junction. This distance record was set while supporting survey parties working inland from that point. Previous large ships to navigate the river include the German CORMORANT in 1909 and the holders of the previous record, HMA Ships PARRAMATTA and WARREGO (torpedo boat destroyers of 250 feet) who

reached Japandai, 130 miles up river, during the Great War.

The LSM's all visited Vietnam with loads of heavy equipment and stores for the Australian troops operating there. HARRY CHAUVEL and VERNON STURDEE also saw service in the Borneo area in 1964.

VERNON STURDEE was the first to be withdrawn from use, being sold in June 1970. The last three, put up for disposal in September 1971, were all sold to the one buyer, Pacific Logistics of Panama, on 20 December 1971 for a total of \$87,000. The Army considered that maintenance costs for the ships had become too great.

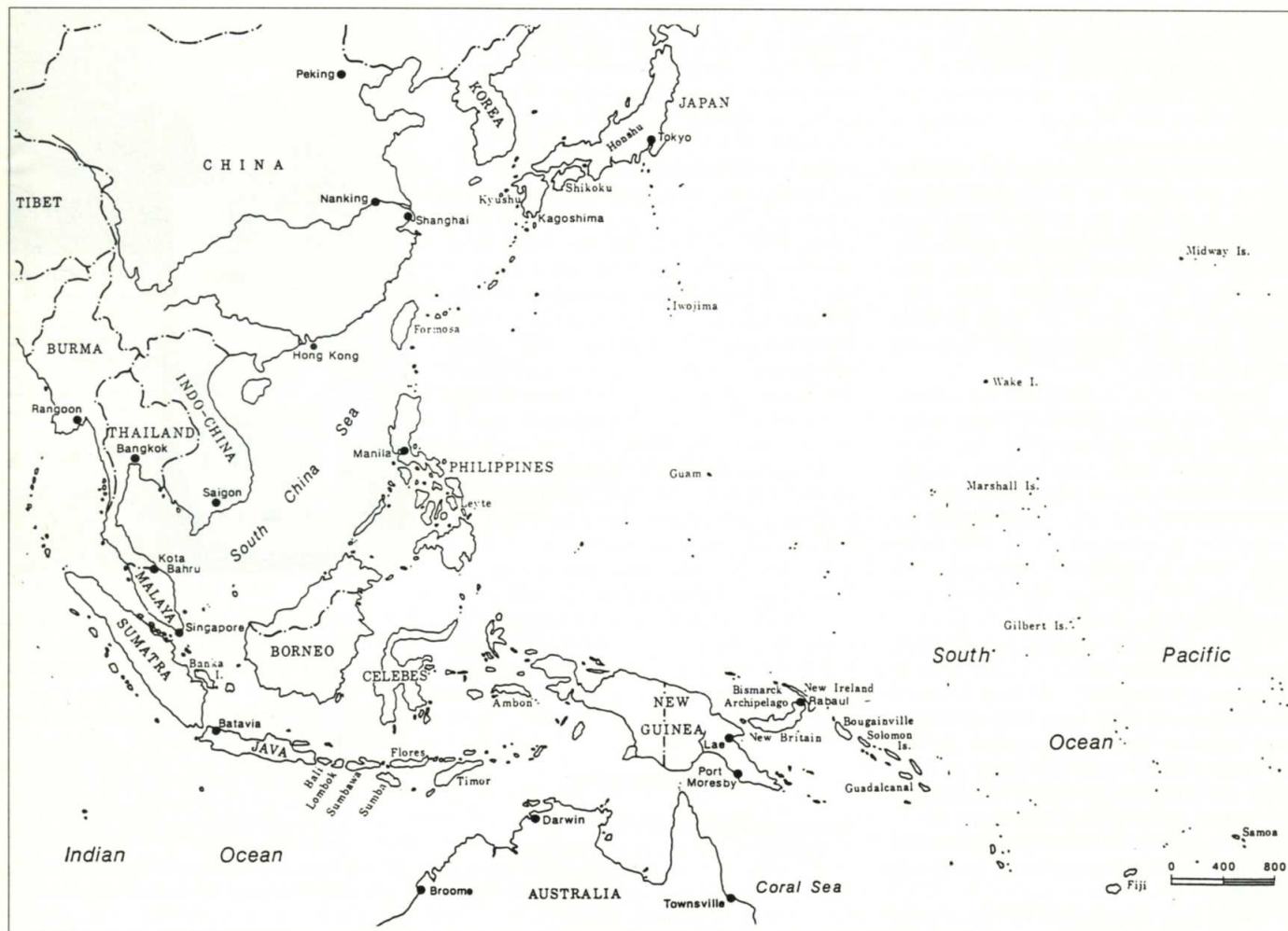
**Army Numbers:** AV1353-1356.  
**Construction:** Steel.  
**Dimensions:** Length overall 203ft 6in. Breadth 34ft 0.6in. Depth (moulded) Draft, Loaded 7ft 3in aft, 4ft 3in fwd. Light Landing 6ft 2in aft, 3ft 2in fwd.  
**Engines:** 2 x Fairbanks Morse marine diesel, 2880 bhp.  
**Speed:** Cruising 11.5 knots, Sea going 13 knots, Maximum 14 knots.  
**Fuel:** Diesel - 42000 gallons.  
**Range:** 4500 miles (5100 miles at 11.2 knots).  
**Cargo Capacity:** 5 x main battle tanks (MBT), or 12 x 2.5 ton GS vehicles, or



Profile of the proposed Landing Ship Medium Mk II.



## AUSTRALIAN ARMY WATERCRAFT



Areas where Army watercraft have operated outside Australia since 1942.

<b>Accommodation:</b>	270 tons dwt. Crew: Passengers: Berths for 2 officers and 28 ORs.
<b>Crew:</b>	4 officers, 46 ORs (Total 50) war, 3 officers, 37 ORs (Total 40) peace.
<b>Armament:</b>	1 x 40mm Bofors.
<b>Purpose:</b>	Transport of vehicles, troops and stores.

**Landing Ship Medium Mark II (LSM Mk II).** Designed in the late 1960s, the LSM Mk II was intended to replace the Second World War vintage LSM's purchased by the Army in 1959. In fact, the 1970 Defence Report included the following entry under items currently being obtained or to be ordered for the Army in the forthcoming year.

"LOGISTIC SHIP. To be built in Australia, this vessel of approximately 12000 tons gross tonnage, will be capable of transporting special military cargoes such as vehicles, refrigerated stores, explosives and inflammable supplies."

The ship was to have bow doors, an enclosed tank deck and special storage areas allotted for refrigerated stores, explosives and inflammable supplies. Plans for a helicopter deck on the stern were also included.

Ross Gillett in *Australian & New Zealand Warships Since 1946* mentions "problems involving the capabilities of the LSM Mk II developed when the Navy requested high speeds for convoy work and the Army a bow door (and slower speed) for beaching capabilities".

Plans for the ship were abandoned in the early 1970s, about the time a decision was taken that all sea-going Defence Force vessels would be Navy operated.

It is ironic, that the ship ordered by the Navy to carry out the role intended for the LSM Mk II, HMAS TOBRUK, has bow doors, a beaching capability and a top speed of only 17 knots.

<b>Army Numbers:</b>	Not allocated.
<b>Construction:</b>	Steel.
<b>Engines:</b>	3 x marine diesel.
<b>Speed:</b>	15 knots (proposed by Army) 20 knots (proposed by Navy).
<b>Fuel:</b>	Diesel.
<b>Purpose:</b>	Transport of vehicles, troops and stores.

### Conclusion

Although more than 2,060 Army numbers were allocated during the Second World War, it is uncertain exactly how many Army craft were in service at any one time. At 30 June 1945, 1818

purpose built craft of all types (excluding pontoons) were in operation in addition to the remaining requisitioned vessels. The lack of complete records makes a precise assessment almost impossible. Small craft construction programmes accounted for 2,029 vessels of all types delivered to the Australian Army by 30 September 1945. A further 167 craft are noted as building at this time, although some of them were later cancelled.

The contribution made during Pacific War and immediate post-war period (1942-46) by Army Water Transport was considerable. It is fair to say that without the support provided to combat units and formations by Army Water Transport units, victory would have been very difficult, if not impossible in many areas. Army watercraft were the lifeline of many units, providing ammunition, food and other stores. They also evacuated the wounded.

In the performance of their duties, many vessels were lost. At least 40 craft ranging from landing craft and barges, to trawlers and launches were destroyed by various means. Some such as AS28 ELENIE STAR, bombed at Douglas Harbour, were lost to enemy action. Others, including AS16 CURZON, AM129 LADY RUTH, AM556 WIGGLE



## AUSTRALIAN ARMY WATERCRAFT

and AV1363 WARRA were destroyed by fire. Several were lost at sea. Four craft, AM79 IVANHOE, AS92 MARLIN STAR, AM1478 BARRABA and a 300 ton lighter, were lost in the Arafura Sea during a cyclone while under tow.

Since the formal foundation of Army Water Transport in 1942, units have served in several locations throughout Australia, Papua New Guinea, the Pacific Islands, the Halmaheras, Borneo and South East Asia as required. They also operated as part of the British Commonwealth Occupation Force in Japan from 1946.

During 1972, a decision was made that all sea-going Defence Force ships would be Navy operated. The Australian Army was to retain only coastal capable small craft. In consequence, AS3051 JOHN MONASH, the Army's general cargo and training ship, was laid up in early 1974, being sold in September of that year. In addition, the LSM Mk II project was cancelled.

The most visible result of the decision, however, was the transfer of the landing craft heavy to the RAN. Although ordered as Army craft, only one, BALIKPAPAN, was ever to see Army service. The remaining LCH's commissioned as RAN units on completion. BALIKPAPAN, the prototype, transferred to the Navy on 27 September 1974, thus bringing to an end a long line of Army-manned sea-going vessels.

With the formation of the Royal Australian Corps of Transport in June 1973, LARC V amphibious vehicles became closely associated with units of what had been until that time the Transportation Service, the maritime element of the Royal Australian Engineers. In time these craft were integrated into water transport squadrons. Having entered Army service in 1969 as replacements for the ubiquitous DUKW, the last LARC V amphibians were withdrawn from use and placed in storage during mid 1994.

What then is the continuing role of Army Water Transport today? According to the current Manual of Land Warfare it

is "to operate RACT (Royal Australian Corps of Transport) watercraft for sea terminal and inland waterway operations". Except for the loss of its sea-going responsibilities to the Royal Australian Navy in the early 1970s, little of the role has changed since 1945.

The people who manned the Army's watercraft during the Second World War came from all walks of life. Some had maritime or yachting experience, but many had none before joining up. Before the purpose-designed "standard" vessels became available from 1943, they manned whatever craft were available, although many such craft were barely seaworthy and often not properly suited to the tasks undertaken.

They saw a job which had to be done, so without fuss, they got on and did it. Largely unrecognised, these men and the small ships they manned are owed a great debt for what they did during the Second World War and shortly thereafter.

If required, and given the opportunity, I am sure the current soldiers of Army Water Transport would rise to the occasion just as their predecessors did fifty years ago.

### Bibliography

#### Documents and Pamphlets:

1. Various official documents including:
  - a. AOU 1/1943, *Distinguishing Signals-Small Vessels and Craft-Australia*, Navy Office, Melbourne, July 1943.
  - b. AOU 1/1943 N(1), *Addendum No 1 to AOU 1/1943*, Navy Office, Melbourne, January 1944.
  - c. *Aust Army Small Craft as at 24 Nov 43*.
  - d. *Aust Army Small Craft as at 12 May 44*.
  - e. *Correction List No 4 to List of Aust Army Small Ships*.
  - f. *Engineer Equipment Technical Report No 1 (Small Craft)*, Mar 45.
  - g. *Register of Army Small Craft* (dated 15 Jul 44).
  - h. *Small Marine Craft Programmes - Quarterly review of uncompleted Projects as at 30th September 1945*.
  - i. *Small Marine Craft Programmes - Quarterly review of Direct War Efforts as at 30th September 1945 - Completed Projects*.



LARC V amphibian.

- j. *Statement Covering the Review of the Programme of Army Requirements of Small Marine Craft as at 30th June 1945*.
2. Various Australian Army information pamphlets including:
  - a. *Royal Australian Corps of Transport - 10 Terminal Regiment*, (dated 1981).
  - b. *Ships and Craft of Royal Australian Engineers (Transportation)*, (dated about 1967).
3. Various Department of Administrative Services "Request for Tender" documents.

#### Books:

1. M.W. Askey, *A Definitive History of the Participation of Australian Water Transport Units in World War Two*, unpublished manuscript.
2. N. Darwin, *The History of Ford in Australia*, Eddie Ford Publications, Newstead, Vic, 1986.
3. R. Gillett (Ed), *Australia's Armed Forces of the Eighties*, Child & Henry Publishing, Brookvale, NSW, 1986.
4. R. Gillett, *Australian & New Zealand Warships Since 1946*, Child & Associates, Brookvale, NSW, 1988.
5. D.P. Mellor, *The Role of Science and Industry*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, ACT, 1958.
6. MajGen R.R. McNicoll, *The Royal Australian Engineers 1919 to 1945 - Teeth and Tail*, The Corps Committee of the Royal Australian Engineers, Canberra, 1982.
7. Col J.H. Pearn, *Watermen of War*, Amphion Press, Brisbane, Qld 1993.
8. *Soldiers at Sea*, Australian Water Transport RAE AIF Association (NSW Branch), Strathfield, NSW, 1990.
9. *Soldiers at Sea Mk II*, Australian Water Transport Association (NSW Branch), Strathfield, NSW, 1992.

#### Articles:

1. "Australian Wartime Achievement", *The Australian Power Boat and Yachting Monthly Magazine*, August 10, 1946, pp 18-19.
2. R. Gillett, "The Galloping Green Ghosts", *The Navy*, October-December 1987, pp 10-13.



The DUKW served Australia from the Second World War until 1969.



## Navy Needs Garden Island

By A.W. Grazebrook

***Pressure has been growing for Navy to leave Sydney's Garden Island – both the Eastern Fleet Base and the dockyard, now run by Australian Defence Industries' Marine Division.***

**T**he pressure for the move comes from two sources – political and environmental. A third aspect is the proposal to sell all or parts of the publicly owned Australian Defence Industries.

ADI includes their Marine Division, formerly the RAN Garden Island Dockyard. On a commercial basis, ADI Marine Division competes for and wins refits and modernisations for RAN ships. It also competes for and wins an increasing amount of work repairing, refitting and modifying merchant ships. As such, ADI Marine's activities make a very significant contribution to the prosperity of Sydney particularly and New South Wales generally.

The other installation in the Garden Island area is the Fleet Base East. This important facility, supplies berths and shore support facilities for operational RAN ships. It has been built in the last few years. It is run by the RAN.

There are three proposals. The first is to move ADI Marine to another part of Sydney. The second is to move ADI Marine away from Sydney. The third is to consolidate ADI Marine to the part of the present Garden Island site (including the Captain Cook Dock and the most modern facilities) nearest the mainland. If the Commonwealth Government were to decide to sell ADI Marine, presumably the new owner would be free to close Garden Island or move all or part of its facilities elsewhere.

There would be no strategic benefit from moving the ADI Marine Division facilities or the Eastern Fleet Base from Garden Island or from the Sydney area altogether. The move would impose very substantial economic cost on the State of New South Wales and all Australian taxpayers. If ADI Marine Division were to be forced out of Sydney, the cost penalty (well over a billion dollars) would be aggravated substantially by the naval personnel location disadvantages of having the ships' largest modernisation and refit facility away from the other naval facilities in Sydney.

There has been similar pressure for over a decade. The last time this pressure developed significant strength, with support by the then Government of New South Wales, it was followed by the announcement of plans to base half the RAN on the west coast. This decision was based on sound strategic logic.

However, the New South Wales Government of the day then perceived correctly that their State would suffer economically. This perception was accentuated by the departure of the first ship and submarine. The loss to New South Wales has been accentuated as each ship and submarine has departed. It is being accentuated again this year with the move of the Submarine Squadron to the Fleet Base West.

A further factor is that, although there is no strategic benefit from moving Navy out of Sydney, if Defence is forced to move Navy they will consider the whole country in choosing the optimum site for the new facility. That optimum site may not be in New South Wales. Unquestionably, other States are keen to host Navy facilities.

The 1980s pressure to move the RAN from Garden Island evaporated. However, the issue was kept alive by the need to avoid the need to ammunition ships in Sydney Harbour and the need (for other reasons) to find a new home for the RAN's Kingswood ammunition depot. There remained a perception that noisier elements in Sydney do not want the RAN.

More recently, the issue has been reopened again by the review of the future of Australian Defence Industries, and the debate over the location of the new ammunition depot (East Coast Armament Depot) with Sydney's winning the contest to hold the 2000 Olympic Games.

The debate preceding the decision to build the new Armament Depot on Port Philip Bay re-emphasised an earlier point. Other States are keen to reap the economic benefits of hosting naval

establishments that may be forced out of Sydney. Queensland actively sought the location of ECAD at Gladstone. The Victorian Government welcomed ECAD with open arms.

Moving naval establishments out of Sydney does not necessarily mean that that facility will be located elsewhere in New South Wales. The repeated reductions in the Defence budget dictate a preference for the most cost effective site.

Proposals to move naval establishments also open the question of the optimum strategic location. There can be a strong case for forward location of support facilities. Much has already been achieved in this regard. Thus the headquarters of the patrol boat force is now in Cairns. The largest patrol boat squadron is in Darwin, which has its own shiplift.

For a number of reasons, including the need to provide shore postings to match sea postings in particular areas, there is a trend throughout the ADF to move more support facilities to the forward areas, particularly Darwin in Navy's case. For example it is possible that more ships will be based ported in Darwin with an attendant move of some shore support and training facilities.

However, major maintenance and modernisation facilities for the larger ships and submarines (for refits and modernisations) need to be co-located with a major industrial base. This need is being accentuated by the growing use of sub-contractors in refit work. This suggests any move of the Garden Island facility away from Sydney would be to another major industrial area. Both Adelaide (building the Collins class submarines and expected to get that refit work when it begins at the end of the decade) and Melbourne (building the ANZAC frigates and with Transfield keen to win refit and repair work) would jump at the opportunity to take naval and merchant refit and repair work forced out of Sydney.

Moving ADI Marine out of Garden Island to another part of Sydney Harbour would cost a huge sum. \$250 million or more is mentioned. There would be no naval benefits. There would be disadvantages, as any new Sydney site would be less accessible from the sea. Such a move would be nothing more than an extremely expensive beautification of Sydney Harbour.

Moving ADI out of Sydney altogether would be substantially more expensive. Although it is possible to move or replace equipment, even if at great cost, people (the engineering professionals who have built on their professional training with practical and directly relevant experience) cannot be forced to move. As with any other industrial organisation, ADI Marine's people work at a team. Together they are one of the primary resources that have provided Navy with the ability to modernise their ships over the years. That ability is indispensable. If a move from Sydney were to force the breakup of the ADI Marine team, that team would have to be replaced elsewhere.

Experience of other industry rationalisations and closures shows that, in practice, they result in a reduction of capability in Australia. There is an attendant and substantial dislocation of work. This is exemplified by the move of Oberon class submarine refits from Cockatoo to Garden Island.

The RAN needs the capabilities of Garden Island, either in its present location or elsewhere in eastern Australia. The merchant service needs the capabilities of Garden Island also, not least to provide a competitive balance to Forgacs, who have the only other sizeable dock on the east coast.

The answer to the Garden Island problem lies in consolidating the facilities at the landward end. This would keep the Captain Cook Dock and the modern electrical, electronic and engineering facilities installed in recent years. The seaward and more visible end of the island, which includes the older buildings of historical interest, could be made available for general community purposes.



# HMAS ADELAIDE and the 1927 Malaita Expedition

By Lieutenant G.J. Swinden RAN

*In early October 1927, the Town Class cruiser HMAS ADELAIDE lay alongside Garden Island in Sydney, having just returned from a cruise to the Solomon Islands, when news was received that there had been a bloody native uprising on the island of Malaita in the Solomons group.*

The events leading up to the 'native uprising' stemmed mainly from the Malaita natives intensive hatred of the newly introduced annual 'head tax'. This required every able bodied man to pay five shillings a year to the government of the British Solomon Islands Protectorate (BSIP).

The tax was very much taxation without representation, as the natives received very little in services for their five shillings. The tax had been introduced in an attempt to force the natives onto the British plantations in the Solomons which were short of labour. It was only on the plantations that a native could hope to earn enough cash in order to pay the tax. The natives also resented the gradual inroads into their traditional way of life that were being made by the BSIP authorities, missionaries and traders.

On 3 October William Robert Bell, the District Officer for Malaita, Cadet (Patrol Officer) K.C. Lillies and about 15 native police arrived at Sinalagu (Diamond Harbour) to collect the annual head tax from the local natives. Bell had been District Officer since 1915 and knew Malaita and its people well. Lillies

was an ex British Army officer who had been Bell's assistant since late 1925.

The next day Bell and Lillies sat at a desk outside a newly constructed 'tax hut' as the natives filed up to pay their taxes. For most of the morning all went well despite warnings Bell had received that the local natives intended to oppose him over the collection of taxes.

Suddenly one of Malaita's prominent warriors, Bassiana, stood in front of the desk as if to pay his taxes. As Bell looked up from the desk Bassiana produced a hidden rifle and clubbed Bell to death. This was the signal for other natives to attack. Although only armed with spears and a few old rifles the natives quickly overwhelmed the native police, armed with .303 rifles, killing nine of them and putting the rest to flight.

Several of the attacking natives were also killed or wounded in the brief skirmish. Cadet Lillies opened fire with his pistol wounding two natives before he was shot in the chest and killed. Later one of Lillies' hands was allegedly cut off and taken as a battle trophy.

Anchored in the harbour at Sinalagu was Bell's motor boat AUKI and the

schooner WHEATSHEAF, and it was to here that the native police who had survived the attack fled. Although some had been badly wounded they managed to swim out to these two vessels and raise the alarm.

Those onboard the vessels were uncertain of the situation ashore, apart from the fact that Bell and Lillies had been killed, so decided to sail to Tulagi and inform the authorities there. Tulagi, the administrative centre for the Solomons, was reached 18 hours later.

The massacre caused an instant uproar at Tulagi as the local white population believed it was only the start of a full scale native uprising. There is no evidence to suggest this was more than an isolated case of violence, however, the Resident Commissioner immediately cabled the Colonial Office in London and requested a warship be sent to the Solomons. The Colonial Office passed the request to the Admiralty who in turn passed the request to the Australian Naval Board in Melbourne.

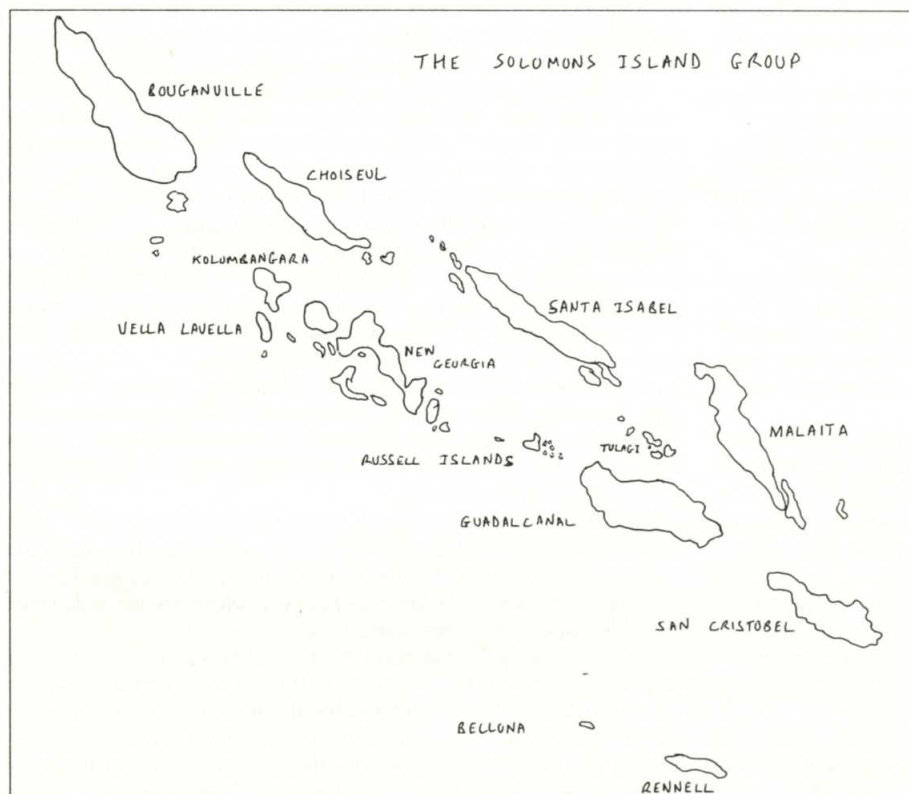
Eventually the Minister of Defence authorised the involvement of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN).

On 10 October ADELAIDE (under the command of Captain G.C. Harrison RN) was ordered to proceed with all dispatch to Tulagi. Extra ammunition, arms, tents, groundsheets, a large consignment of Mills bombs (grenades) and victuals were loaded. An additional Medical Officer, a Dr Courtney, was assigned to the ship and one newspaper of the day even fancifully stated that ADELAIDE had medical stores which included antidotes for tropical poisons.

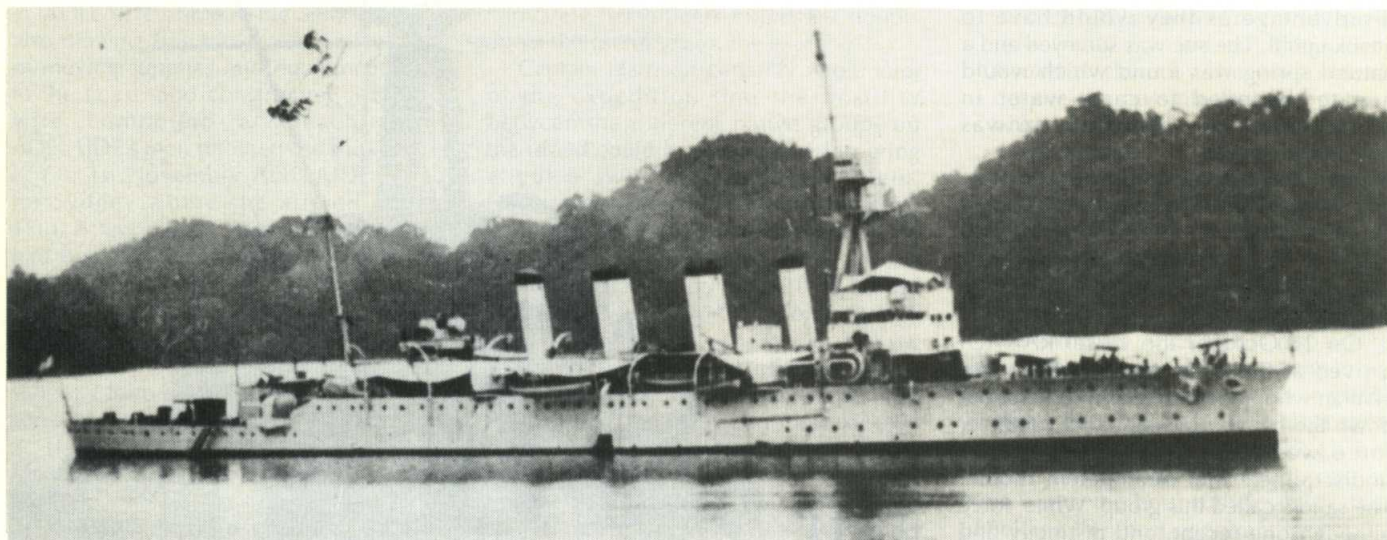
The Sydney Morning Herald informed its readers that the ships company of ADELAIDE 'were looking forward to a trip of adventure'. Another, the Sun News Pictorial stated that 'trouble in the islands finds the Navy ready' and carried a picture of ADELAIDE 'rushing to the Solomons in response to appeals for assistance following a native uprising'.

ADELAIDE sailed at 1900 on the 10th and steamed for three days at 20 knots and with all scuttles closed. The increasing heat with all scuttles closed made conditions below deck most uncomfortable. On 12 October speed was reduced to 16 knots and this made conditions a little more bearable.

In Australia the question of sending ADELAIDE to assist in the Solomon's was







*HMAS ADELAIDE during the Punitive Expedition.*

raised in Federal Parliament. Prime Minister Stanley Bruce stated that ADELAIDE would remain firmly under Australian control. The Labour opposition took an anti colonial stance and tried to infer that the government was toadying to the British. Bruce disposed of the argument stating that 'every community under the British flag is administered fairly and impartially, and it is not for us to criticise the administration of the Solomon's Islands'. The government also had popular support with the public and the bulk of the press for the dispatch of ADELAIDE to the Solomons.

ADELAIDE passed Guadalcanal, scene of intense fighting during World War II, and arrived at Tulagi during an intense rain storm at 1800 on the 14th. Captain Harrison met with the Resident Commissioner, Captain R.R. Kane, to discuss the ship's role in this punitive expedition.

Eleven of ADELAIDE's men, under a Petty Officer Smith, were left in Tulagi to assist with providing communications with the expedition. ADELAIDE sailed from Tulagi and arrived at Sinalagu at 1300 on 16 October, some twelve days after the massacre. Ashore at the village of Gwee'abe was found the scene of the fight.

Surrounding the tax hut were several broken spears, arrows and a number of empty .303 shells. On the verandah of the hut lay some torn mats, two empty revolver holsters, a broken typewriter (used to type out the receipts for the payment of taxes) and a number of brass tallies that the natives wore to identify themselves when paying taxes. These tallies were collected for use as evidence in any future trial.

The bodies of the butchered native police had been hastily buried in shallow graves and after several days in the tropical sun had begun to putrefy. The first task allocated to ADELAIDE's men was to rebury the dead in deeper graves with liberal layers of quick lime. Following this, all huts at the site, including the tax hut, were burned and bell tents were erected to shelter the landing force. Onboard ADELAIDE

preparations were made to prevent an attack on the ship by natives in canoes.

The camp at the site of the massacre became known as Beach Base, and on the 17th five officers and seventy ratings from ADELAIDE were landed. Provisions and water in barricoes was also landed.

Men were allotted eight to a tent and sentries were set for the night. One ADELAIDE sailor recalled that first night ashore: "The occupants of each tent slept on ground sheets with their feet to the centre pole. In most cases the arms of each overlapped on the chest of the person on either side. Strategically, the camp was badly situated but it would have been so anywhere along the beach strip with towering hills on three sides, but the moral effect of camping at the scene of the crime was considered great as the natives of those parts feared "debil debils". The eerie feeling was increased when one was aware that there were nine bodies buried close by.

Shortly after midnight when the middle watch sentries had been relieved, a blood curdling screech was heard and pandemonium broke loose. First thoughts were that Bassiana and his bush boys had attacked the camp. In an endeavour to grab rifles and bayonets, matelots were pinning one another down trying to get out of their tents in the pitch blackness. In my tent was a Leading Signaller who had his boots on the wrong feet; others slid under the flaps of their tents without boots on, and some with rifles but with no bayonets or ammunition. Outside the whole camp was astir and it was quite some time before it was realised that the cause of it all was some jittery sailor yelling out during a nightmare. This episode on the first night in camp, although humorous, served as a lesson to know what to do and what not to do should the real thing occur." At this stage Bassiana and his followers were several miles from the massacre site having taken refuge in the mountainous central region of Malaita.

On 18 October the Beach Base was a hive of activity as more tents were pitched and a galley, incinerator, wireless station and field latrine were set up.

Several native carriers had been recruited and a number of native police also arrived at the camp. By nightfall 150 of ADELAIDE's ships company were ashore at Beach Base.

There had been another interesting 'incident' that afternoon as related by an ADELAIDE rating: "During the afternoon Gunners Mate Sandy Lovegrove gave demonstration on how to throw Mills Bombs. After explaining the technique to a large audience and stressing that after the pin was removed the bomb was thrown cricket ball fashion. Having removed the pin, Sandy let the missile land a few feet in front of him. In less than 30 seconds the audience had put a few hundred yards between them and the bomb." Fortunately the bomb was only a practice one.

On the 19th a group of sailors were organised into No. 1 Platoon. With the new District Officer for Malaita and a number of native police (sometimes called police boys) they set off to explore the interior. After marching for three hours with full packs they had climbed over 1000 feet up in to the mountains and had progressed about three miles. For most of the journey the climb was almost vertical.

Another ADELAIDE sailor recalled that it was during this climb that one unpopular officer, nicknamed 'guts' because of his ample stomach, became exhausted and was unable to continue. Much to the sailors delight he was sent back to Beach Base and replaced by another officer.

After another hour of climbing, the expedition reached a small plateau where a deserted village, Furingudu, stood. Its inhabitants had fled to the coast in order to disassociate themselves from Bassiana and his men. Bassiana had previously claimed that the white men were inferior and would not be able to climb into the mountains, however, the arrival of ADELAIDE and her men had caused many natives to seriously begin to doubt his words.

The village of Furingudu was built on a flat area and the ground sloped away on all sides. This put any attackers at a



disadvantage as they would have to attack uphill. The site was surveyed and a natural spring was found which would negate the need to carry water in barricoes to the site. The site was selected as Base B.

No 1 Platoon returned to Beach Base to collect over 100 native carriers and returned to Base B. They arrived back at Base B at 1600 and began to set it up as a staging camp for further expeditions into the hinterland.

On 21 October the vessel RANADI arrived at Sinalagu carrying 28 white civilian who had volunteered to help 'put down the native uprising'. This volunteer force was to prove to be a totally undisciplined and incompetent rabble. The sailors called this group 'White' force although one recent, and distinctly anti colonial, historian has dubbed them the Breathless Army. It was also now nearly three weeks since the massacre and as yet there had been no confrontation with Bassiana or his followers. Also on the 21st two more platoons of sailors moved up to Base B.

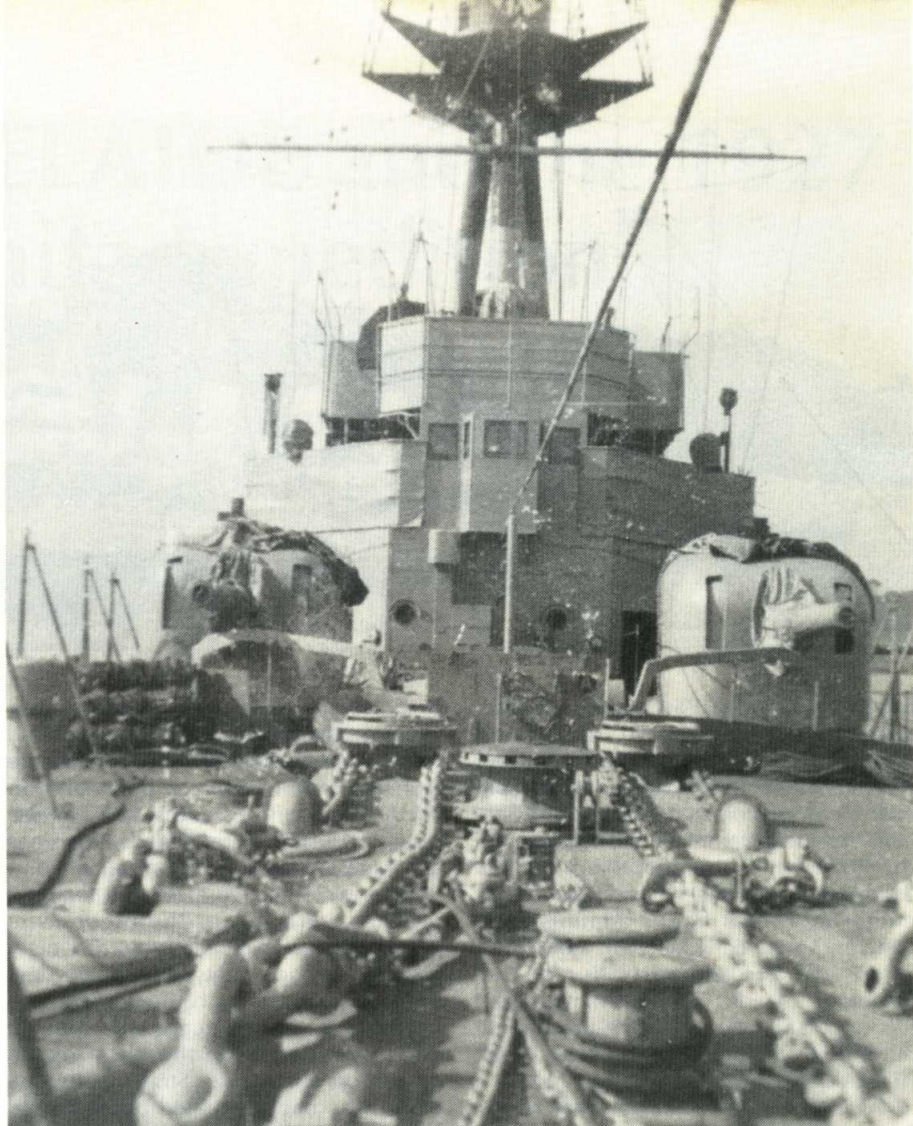
The Royal Australian Fleet Auxiliary BILOELA, a collier, arrived at Sinalagu on the 23rd and more stores were unloaded including, according to the newspaper The Sydney Guardian, several tons of barbed wire to form entanglements to protect the camps. BILOELA also brought coal for ADELAIDE and the ship was coaled by those men left onboard. This was BILOELA's last operational cruise as she was decommissioned on 14 November 1927 as a collier and was no longer required. In 1927/28 all the RAN's coal burning cruisers were either disposed of or converted to oil burning ships.

The combined Naval and civilian force left Base B on the 26th for the village of Falavalo (known locally as Tafaanikona). Over 150 carriers were required to carry the provisions and equipment needed, however, it was soon found that the White force members had brought a great deal of personal gear with them, including alcohol, and that each man required two carriers for his gear.

One native carrier later wrote that many of the white force men collapsed and had to be carried on stretchers back to ADELAIDE. He also thought several were 'faking it' in order to be carried out. He even claimed that they did not even carry their rifles but left these to a carrier as well as the rest of their kit.

The column of sailors, native police, carriers and white civilians stretched for over a mile and were none to quiet in their movements. Bassiana was aware of the actions being taken against him and moved further inland. It is even reputed that some of the natives who had taken part in the massacre were now being employed as carriers for the punitive expedition.

It took nearly ten hours, over two days, for the whole force to march the relatively short distance to Falavalo. On arrival it was designated Base A and tents



*Onboard the cruiser.*

pitched. A wireless transmitter was set up by one of ADELAIDE's Leading Telegraphist's for communications with the ship and Tulagi.

Base A was over 2500 feet above sea level and quite cold. A stream ran close by and there was also a waterfall and an ideal swimming hole which several ADELAIDE sailors took advantage of.

Several problems between the Naval force and the civilians began to become apparent. The undisciplined White force had access to a large quantity of whiskey and rum which they had brought with them, and this caused problems when a civilian under the influence of alcohol assaulted a Petty Officer. The senior Naval officer ashore, Commander Whitehorn, stated that amongst the civilians "drinking, gambling and singing went on well into the middle watch" and that "two bearers at least were required for each volunteer's kit".

Captain Harrison later wrote that over 75% of the great quantity of stores moved inland was the personal gear and stores of the civilian force and their personal servants. The whole attitude of the White force caused a great deal of discord with the Naval personnel involved with the expedition.

Apart from discipline problems there were also medical ones. Several members of the White force and ADELAIDE sailors were falling victim to dysentery and malaria. Daily convoys shuttled between

Base B and Base A bringing up supplies and returning stretcher cases. From Base B the stretcher cases went out to ADELAIDE. The journey from Base B to Base A with stores took nine hours and returning unladen took six hours.

The main activity of the expedition centred around Base A. From here to Sub Inspector of Police and the native police made daily patrols into the jungle and on occasions these patrols were absent for two or three days. Some natives involved in the massacre were captured, but others stayed hidden for several months. Unfortunately a number of innocent natives were arrested or shot by the police in their desire to bring about a swift end to the expedition.

Those sailors ashore are reported to have had a difficult time due to the heavy rain and cold nights. The bell tents were not effective in keeping out mosquitos and other insects. Any cuts or abrasions quickly turned septic in the tropical conditions and some men went for days sleeping in their clothes as they had discarded their blankets on the steep climb up into the mountains.

By 11 November most of the members of the White force had been evacuated. Captain Harrison described them as "a useless and undisciplined crowd who ought never to have been sent on the Expedition at all". ADELAIDE's sailors at the same time were described as "well behaved".



ADELAIDE's time in the Solomons was also drawing to a close. After a few days of moving supplies and equipment back to the coast, and constructing a barbed wire compound at Beach Base, ADELAIDE's men rejoined the ship.

On 16 November ADELAIDE sailed for Sydney where she arrived on the 18th. A few ratings, mainly telegraphists, had been left behind to assist with the provision of communications for the expedition. One historian states that on arrival in Sydney nearly 20% of ADELAIDE's ships company were suffering from malaria, dysentery or septic sores.

The punitive expedition continued on Malaita and by December the police had captured or forced to surrender nearly all who had taken part in the massacre. Bassiana surrendered in early December. By 21 December Base A had been abandoned and the majority of prisoners shipped to Tulagi. Following trial in Tulagi a number of natives, including Bassiana, were hung and several others given lengthy gaol sentences.

ADELAIDE's role in the punitive expedition had been mainly to provide logistic and communications support and none of her men had fired any shots in anger. This was the last punitive expedition that the RAN was involved with and one historian even went so far to say that "The ADELAIDE's part in the expedition is not one of the high points in Australian naval history", and that

"privately her officers expressed doubts about the usefulness of the exercise".

Captain Harrison certainly wrote later of the expedition that the hostility between the different native groups on the island could have been used to bring about a swift end to the problem. Harrison stated that "five hundred natives were awaiting the word to attack the murdering tribe. It seems a great pity no such order can be given as they would undoubtedly clear up the whole situation in a week".

Contrary to the misguided view that the Malaita expedition was a low point in RAN history, the Navy can look back on the punitive expedition with some pride. Some of the highlights which have been forgotten were:

- a. ADELAIDE was dispatched with short notice to the Solomons which required rapid planning and significant logistic effort.
- b. She arrived quickly and without incident thanks to the efforts of her ships company.
- c. Despite being hampered by disease ashore her men performed credibly in providing a vast range of services from construction work to communications support.
- d. Although a number of men became ill, no lives were lost amongst her ships company.
- e. Her men were shown to be highly disciplined especially in comparison to those in the civilian 'White' force.

f. ADELAIDE's officers and men effectively carried out the orders issued to them by the government, despite the possible feeling by those onboard that the expedition was a waste of time.

In what is often considered a mere footnote to Australian Naval history, the punitive expedition by ADELAIDE to Malaita in 1927 stands out as a classic example of the RAN being willing and able to carry out a difficult task at short notice. Whether ADELAIDE's dispatch to the Solomons was an example of Australia cowering to British imperial wishes is not relevant here. What matters is that the ADELAIDE was given her orders, and her ships company carried them out to the best of their ability, thus upholding the most important law of the Navy - "Thou shalt not criticise, but obey".

### Bibliography

Gillett R. - Australian and New Zealand Warships 1914-45, Doubleday Australia 1983.

Hermon Gill G. - Royal Australian Navy 1939-42, Australian War Memorial 1957.

Keessing R.M./ Corris P. - Lightning Meets the West Wind: The Malaita Massacre, Melbourne Oxford University Press 1980.

OPEN SEA - HMAS TINGIRA Old Boys Association Magazine 1969/70. Australian Navy List 1927.

## Defence could be your business. If so, join forces with us.

The Federal Government's two ocean defence policy and the implementation of the Defence Policy and Industry Report is transforming WA into a major strategic region for defence business.

This presents exciting opportunities for companies which have goods and services of interest to defence.

As a result of the progressive commercialisation of many defence functions these interests are diverse, involving new areas of commerce and providing opportunities for companies which have not previously done defence business.

Companies wishing to find out more about these emerging opportunities are invited to contact Mr Denis Pickett or Mr Les Hutton at the Department of Commerce and Trade.



DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMERCE AND TRADE  
Western Australia

170 St Georges Terrace, Perth, Western Australia 6000  
Telephone: (09) 327 5666



## National Valve & Engineering

Co. Pty. Ltd.

### Suppliers of Aviation Refuelling Equipment

Accredited To AS3902 / ISO9002

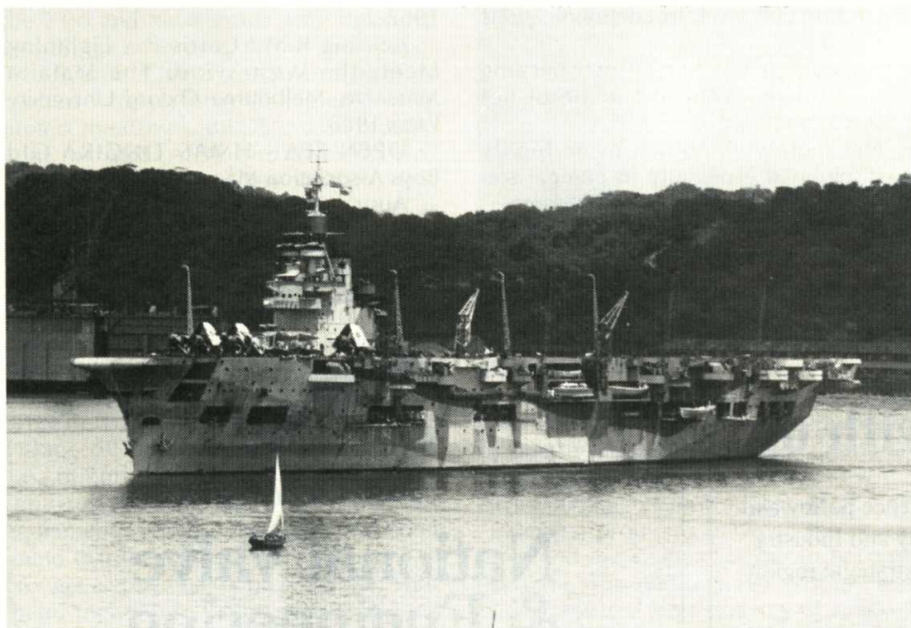
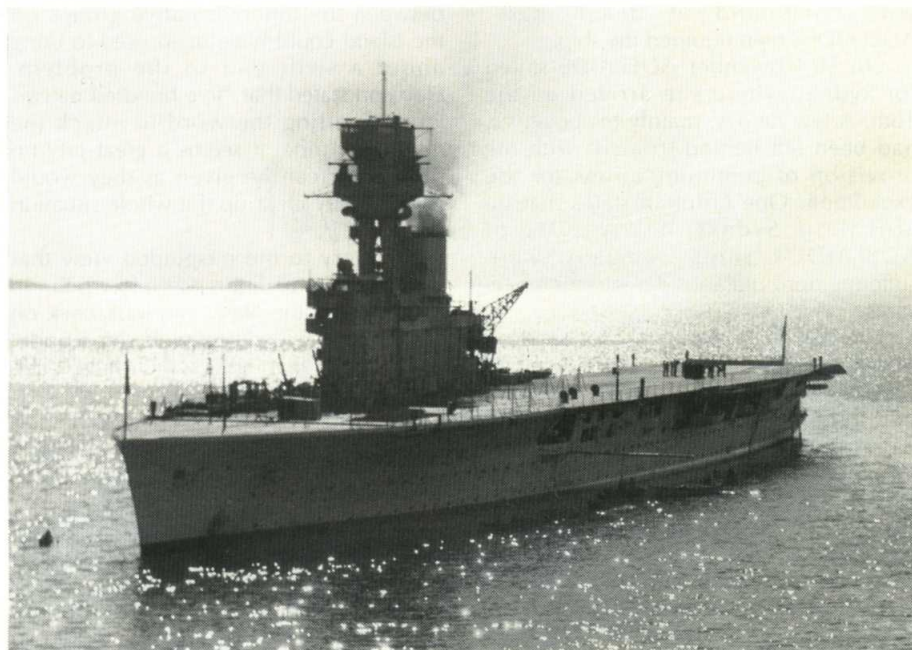
MELBOURNE: TEL: (03) 544 3099  
FAX: (03) 544 6013

SYDNEY : TEL: (02) 316 6911  
FAX: (02) 316 6608



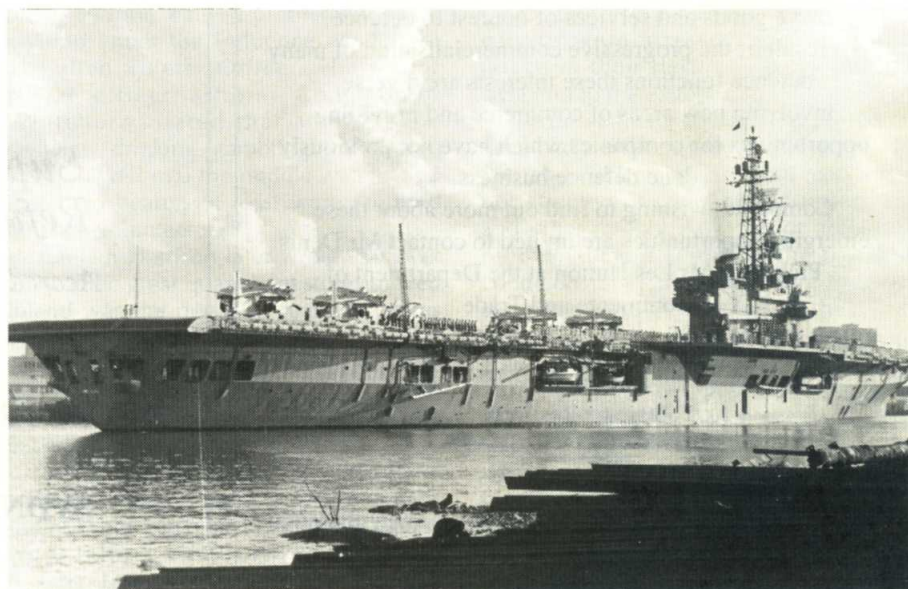
# HISTORY REVISITED

*HMS HERMES at Chefoo, China, 1931.  
(Photo - A.D. Baker III)*



*HMS UNICORN arriving Trincomalee,  
Ceylon.  
(Photo - A.D. Baker III)*

*The former HMS/HMAS VENGEANCE, in  
service with the Brazilian Navy as MINAS  
GERAIS.  
(Photo - A.D. Baker III)*







HMAS NEWCASTLE, August 1994. (Photo ABPH Keith Heslop).

# HMAS NEWCASTLE

## Off and Running

By Ross Gillett, Navy Public Affairs, Sydney

*Navy Public Affairs Sydney interviewed the commanding officer of HMAS NEWCASTLE, CMDR Rowan Moffitt, just before the ship began her first operational deployment on Wednesday 10 August.*

**Q. With more than eight months of hard work by the crew now behind you, how do you feel about the initial overseas deployment?**

**A.** This deployment gives us the opportunity for the first time to join the operational fleet and carry out the normal peace-time duties of an operational warship. It recognises that we have passed successfully overall the hurdles associated with bringing a new ship into full service, we've earned our 'spurs' and now we can be given a proper job to do alongside our fellow operational ships. I guess it equates to starting your first job after graduating from a tough school and I must admit that it feels absolutely

great. As well as that, there is of course the excitement for many of my ship's company of their first overseas trip and the prospect of seeing exotic places and exercising with other nations' navies. The deployment holds for all of us a new range of challenges and the potential for great satisfaction.

**Q. You had the AINS (Acceptance Into Naval Service) in August. What does this now mean for the ship and crew?**

**A.** The ship's final acceptance into Naval Service signifies that the Maritime Commander is satisfied with the material state and performance of the ship and all her systems. It is his

formal statement that he is happy that there are no technical problems which should have any limiting effect on the tasks he is able to allot NEWCASTLE. I guess that in simple terms, it means that the final customer is happy with the job that the ship builder has done.

**Q. What have been some of the hurdles you have to overcome to prepare the ship for Fleet duties. The ship returned to the builders in mid year, what was done there?**

**A.** Since commissioning in December last year, NEWCASTLE has been through three major processes. These have been:



- Combat System Qualification Trials, a seven week period at sea and in harbour during which all of the ship's weapons and machinery systems were tested to prove that they performed to manufacturer specifications. This included live firings of all weapon systems.
- Post Shakedown Availability, a period of two months when the ship returned to the builder's yard to be dry-docked and to have the latest class modifications and upgrades fitted. Included in this process was modification of some of the accommodation to allow us to embark up to forty females in the ship's company.
- Work Up, a five week period of very intense exercises at sea off the NSW coast which was designed to develop the crew's team skills in all areas of maritime warfare and to bring the ship to the required level of operational capability. This culminated in The Operational Readiness Evaluation, conducted at sea over a period of 30 hours and overseen by some forty 'examiners' from the Maritime Commander's staff. This was a most compressed and exhausting time for us all and I'm very proud to say that we passed.

**Q. At the time of commissioning, the ship and crew built up a strong**

**kinship with the city, port and people of Newcastle. Is that link still growing?**

- A. The links with our name city continue to grow. We have had many contacts with various organisations, especially the City Council, the ship's charity which is the Waratah Orthopaedic School and with many Newcastle businesses who have been amazingly generous in supplying the ship with a vast array of creature comforts not normally found in new ships. More activities are planned for the next six months too. As part of our Asian deployment we will be visiting Ube, in Japan, which has a Sister City relationship with Newcastle. Over the Australia Day weekend next year we will be visiting Newcastle again and during this visit we will have granted to us the Freedom of Entry to the City, which is a very special privilege and one which will be marked by a big parade. Yes, the links between the people of the city of Newcastle and 'their' ship are very strong and developing quickly.

**Q. Now the ship is ready for sea, what is the scope of naval exercises in which you will participate?**

- A. NEWCASTLE will be a participant in exercises with the RAAF off Darwin in August, before leaving Australian waters. After that, we will be exercising with the Indonesian Navy

and afterwards in the Five Power Defence Agreement Exercise STARFISH, a very large multi-lateral exercise hosted this year by Singapore in which the Navies and Air Forces of Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand will participate. I expect that we will also exercise briefly with the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Forces during our calls in Japan.

**Q. What ports is the ship scheduled to visit?**

- A. From Sydney, our calls are Cairns, Darwin, Jakarta, Singapore a couple of times, Pulau Tioman, Hong Kong, Ube (Japan), Yokosuka near Tokyo, Guam, Townsville and Sydney, arriving home on Friday 18 November.

**Q. Any particular navies you are looking forward to working and exercising with for the first time?**

- A. All of the navies that we are programmed to work with are very professional and it is always a challenge to develop our skills with them. We invariably learn quite a lot from each other and always end up making good friends. We work quite infrequently with the Japanese, who are very skilled and who also have some of the most modern and sophisticated equipment in the world today, so that period will be a very interesting and challenging one.

# ORACLE®

**Proud Contractor to the R.A.N.**

Oracle is a leading supplier of information management software. Oracle develops and markets the Oracle7 family of software products for database management; trusted Oracle7 for secure database management, the Cooperative Development Environment (CDE), a complete set of CASE and application development tools for enterprise-wide, client/server computing; and Oracle Cooperative Applications, packaged client/server solutions for commercial accounting, manufacturing, distribution, government accounting, human resources and project control. Oracle software runs on personal digital assistants, PCs, workstations, minicomputers, mainframes, and massively parallel computers.

## ORACLE®

Oracle Systems (Australia) Pty. Limited  
17 Torrens Street, Braddon, A.C.T. 2601  
Ph: (06) 247 9366 Fax: (06) 257 4806

## ORIGINAL WARSHIP DRAWINGS



*Your ship drawn in  
sepia or black ink from  
your photos or research  
by the artist.*

ALAN MORGAN MARINE ARTIST  
3 Sylvan Lane, Ocean Grove, VIC 3226  
Ph 052 554008

*Proud to be Associated and Best Wishes  
to All Navy Personnel from*

## ISECO REFRIGERATION

38 Boyland Avenue, Coopers Plains, Qld 4108

Telephone: (07) 277 8599

Fax: (07) 875 1392

**SUPPLIERS OF REFRIGERATION EQUIPMENT**



# The GRAYBACK and the GROWLER

*Two of the most unique submarines to operate with the United States Navy in the post 1945 fleet were the guided missile submarines (SSGs), USS GRAYBACK and USS GROWLER.*

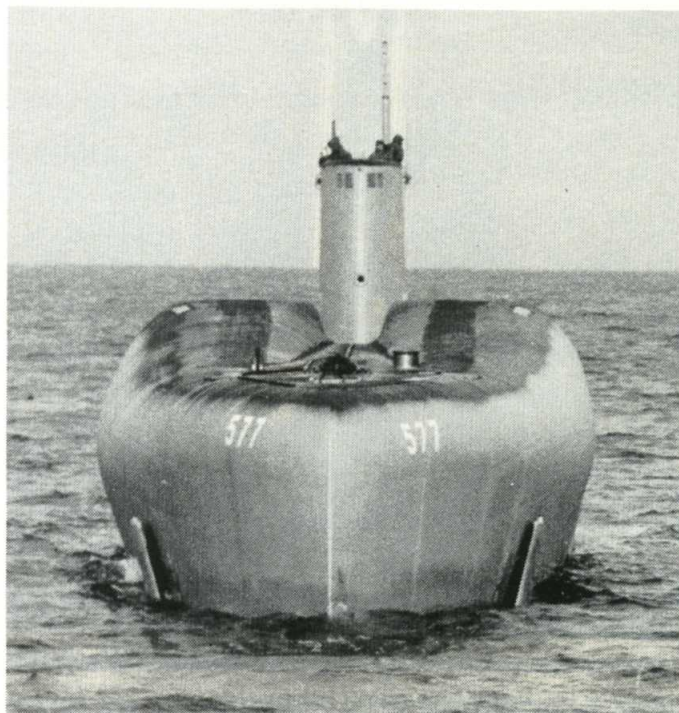
**G**ROWLER and her sister superseded the earlier war built submarines, converted to launch Regulus missiles and in 1958 were formally commissioned in March (GRAYBACK) and April (GROWLER).

Deployment of missiles at sea was in its early development period and the boats were modified from solely torpedo armed boats to deploy up to four of the 500 mile Regulus I weapons, launched from the main deck, forward of the conning tower. The weapons were stowed in a rather bulky, ugly twin hangar arrangement above the original bow, transforming the profile dramatically. Supporting the missiles were six bow and two stern 21 inch torpedo tubes, with space for missile supporting equipment and fire control panels, provided via the addition of a 15 metre section added amidships.

Coinciding with the construction of the boats, development continued on the Regulus II missile with a 1000 mile range. However, the advent of the more effective nuclear powered Polaris ballistic missile boats, meant an early end for the two SSGs and the subsequent Regulus II weapons and both were armed with the first generation missiles during their short SSG careers. On 25 May 1964 both were paid off into reserve.

Not long after GRAYBACK began a conversion to a transport submarine, utilising the space previously occupied by the missiles for the embarkation of troops rubber boats and equipment for seaborne assaults. Accommodation for 85 troops was reworked into the submarine in addition to the normal crew of ninety six personnel. Cost of the refit finally reached \$30m, twice the allotted sum and spanned almost five years. A similar conversion for GROWLER was subsequently dropped and she remained laid-up.

GRAYBACK returned to duty on 9 May 1969 and operated in her new role in the Pacific Ocean until finally stricken on 15 January 1984. GROWLER had previously been deleted on 1 August 1980, inactive since 1964.



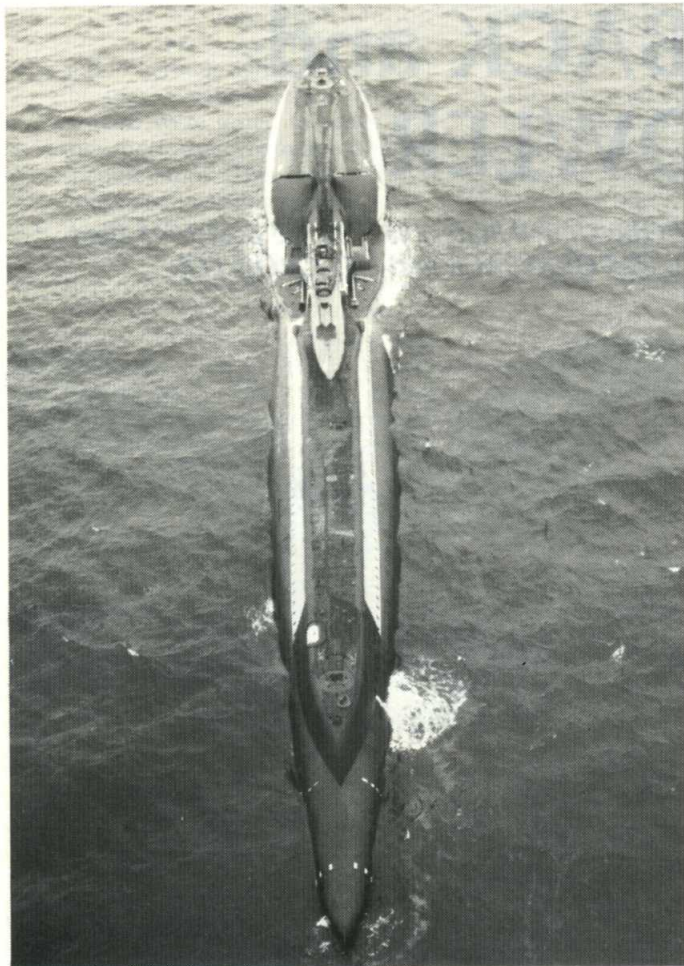
*USS GROWLER 1958. The rise at the bow is her twin missile hangars.*

The decision to preserve GROWLER was announced in the mid 80s and she was moved to New York to join the aircraft carrier USS INTREPID and other ships, a short distance from the centre of New York city. The boat has been restored internally and one of the former missile hangars converted to a small theatre and entrance to the boat.



*USS GRAYBACK, as converted to an amphibious transport submarine, in San Francisco Bay, 1969.*





USS GROWLER, stern on

## BOOK



## REVIEWS

### Anatomy of the Ship The Heavy Cruiser TAKAO

By Janusz Skulski

Published By  
Conway Maritime Press

From the superb front cover painting of TAKAO at speed, just after completion in 1932, this latest addition to the Anatomy of the Ship series from Conway presents the lead ship of the largest and most powerful class of heavy cruisers to be built for the Imperial Japanese Navy.

The basis of each Anatomy is the combination of technical and historical narrative, a selection of thirty photographs depicting the ship from the construction yard to the close of her career and over 700 drawings from the hull structure, armament, fire control, fittings and superstructure to the boats, flags and embarked aircraft.

In the author's description of the book, he describes the spectrum of illustrations as the most all embracing portfolio of TAKAO drawings ever published.

After surviving torpedo attacks during the Battle of Leyte Gulf, TAKAO was sunk by an explosive charge in Singapore Harbour, placed by the Royal Navy midget submarine ZE3. The cruiser was subsequently raised and later scuttled in the Malacca Straits.

Highly recommended.

Ross Gillett

☆☆☆

### D-Day Ships

#### The Allied Invasion Fleet, June 1944

By Yves Buffetaut

Published By  
Conway Maritime Press,  
33 John Street, London,  
WC1N 2AT

Last June, the Allied powers celebrated the 50th Anni-

versary of the landings at Normandy in June 1944. Maritime, land and air forces participated in the events in recognition of the largest amphibious landing ever undertaken.

D-Day Ships, by the French author Buffetaut, describes and illustrates the whole spectrum of the landings, from the initial plan for Operation Overlord, the crossing of the Channel, the actual landings at Utah, Omaha, Gold, Sword and Juno beaches, the German response, creation of the artificial ports and consolidating the bridgehead.

Much of the book, is however devoted to the landing craft and ships which transported the personnel to French soil and the fleet of naval ships which satisfied the all important escort and fire-support tasks. D-Day Ships also includes a detailed photographic record of all the amphibious vessels, supported by scale drawings of many of the craft and maps of the approaches to and landing points by the forces at Normandy.

The former RAN seaplane carrier ALBATROSS is mentioned as present in the area while the RNZN landing ship MONOWAI is depicted in April 1944, during a landing rehearsal off the Isle of Wight.

Ross Gillett

#### ADVERTISING AND PUBLICATION Percival Publishing Co Pty Ltd

##### SYDNEY

862 Elizabeth Street, Waterloo, NSW 2017. Telephone: (02) 319 6231. Fax: (02) 698 9689.

##### MELBOURNE

370 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne 3000. Telephone: (03) 670 4321. Fax: (03) 670 3615.

##### ADELAIDE

2nd Floor, 97 Currie Street, Adelaide 5000. Telephone: (08) 231 6225. Fax: (08) 212 5418.

##### PERTH

2 Walcott Street, Mt Lawley 6060. Telephone: (09) 370 1500. Fax: (09) 370 1581.

##### BRISBANE

3rd Floor, 480 Ann Street, Brisbane 4000. Telephone: (07) 832 2531. Fax: (07) 831 5290.

## J.R. EMBROIDERIES

72-76 Fenton Street, Huntingdale Vic 3166

Specialists in

- Embroidery by the metre
- Allover Embroidery
- Badges • Yokes • Pockets • Collars • Cuffs
- Guipure • Iron on Motifs

*If It's Embroidery we can do it*

Telephone (03) 544 6777

Facsimile (03) 562 8372



Convenient  
Location  
- Commanding View -

## GRANTHAM LODGE Serviced Apartments

Located in prestigious Potts Point - opposite HMAS Kuttabul - close to shopping and tourist centres and scores of restaurants - all suites and

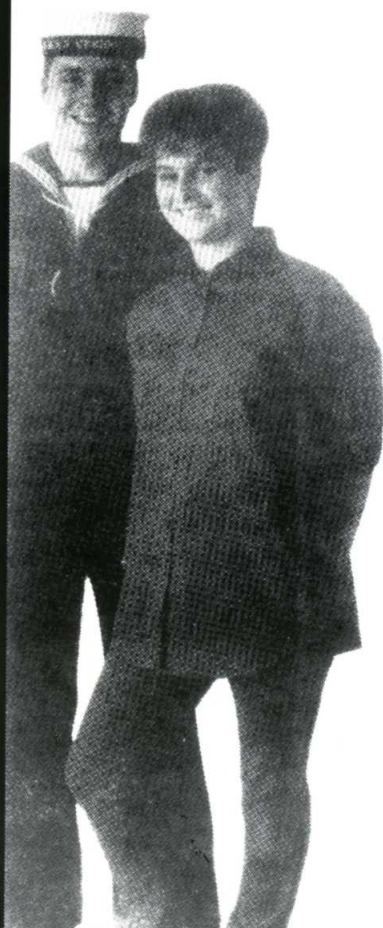
studios are self-contained with a fully equipped kitchen, air conditioning, colour television, swimming pool - plus international direct dial phones, guest laundry, child care and friendly personalised service.

Special Rates for Navy Personnel

FOR RESERVATIONS OR A BROCHURE CALL

SYDNEY (02) 357 2377 FREE CALL 008 249 706 or FAX (02) 358 1435





## Getting Married? You need NHBS.

Families of naval personnel can have the best possible health care at the lowest possible cost. NHBS is your private health fund responsible for making sure your family has the best cover available.

NHBS recognises the needs of Navy people.

Check NHBS costs and benefits and compare them with civilian funds. You will find we look after your family better.

For brochures and application forms, call NHBS free call (008) 333 156 or (03) 510 3422.

Waiting periods could apply.



**A REGISTERED HEALTH BENEFITS ORGANISATION**



A Division of A.E. Smith & Son Pty. Ltd. A.C.N. 004 274 793

*WE OFFER A FULL RANGE OF NOISE  
CONTROL PRODUCTS*

• **BARWEST PRODUCTS**

\* **INCE** **DECIBAR TAF**

\* **BEAR** **ISODAMP**

*THE RIGHT PRODUCTS FOR YOUR PROBLEMS*

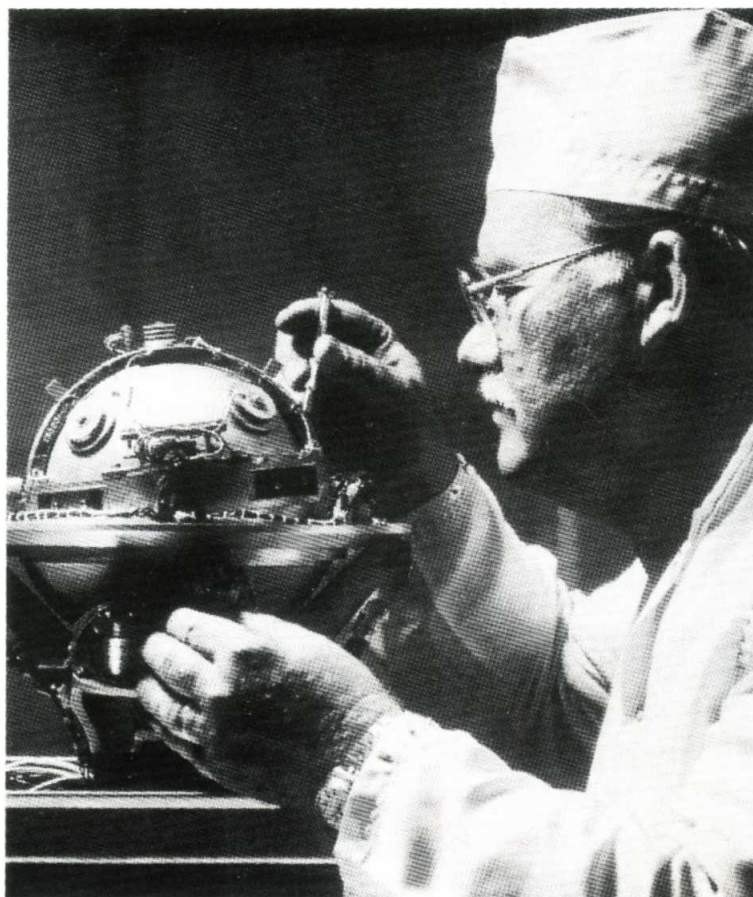
12-16 Catalano Road, Canning Vale, WA  
PO Box 1153, Canning Vale, WA, 6155  
Telephone: (09) 455 2588  
Facsimile: (09) 455 2323

## EXHAUST SYSTEMS



We have manufactured and installed exhaust systems in 15 Naval Patrol Boats built by Australian Shipbuilding Industries for the Pacific Fleet. 6 for Hong Kong and 2 for Kuwait.





## **Leaders in ship repair and modernisation for over 100 years.**

ADI has a long history as the principal contractor for the repair, refit and modernisation of the vessels of the Royal Australian Navy.

Through this experience, ADI has developed extensive and specialist capabilities ranging from the docking of ships to the installation and testing of sophisticated electronic systems.

For years ADI has worked with the Navy in facilitating stores supply and maintaining and repairing replaceable

equipment.

ADI has continually developed and upgraded its material management system and expertise in both commercial and defence supply systems. This allows ADI to offer the Navy much more to facilitate purchasing and inventory control functions.

In addition, ADI's testing and calibration centres in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth are available to check any equipment for the Navy.



**ADI**

The strategic edge.

ADI Marine, Garden Island, NSW 2000, Australia  
Tel: (02) 562 3298. Fax: (02) 562 3821