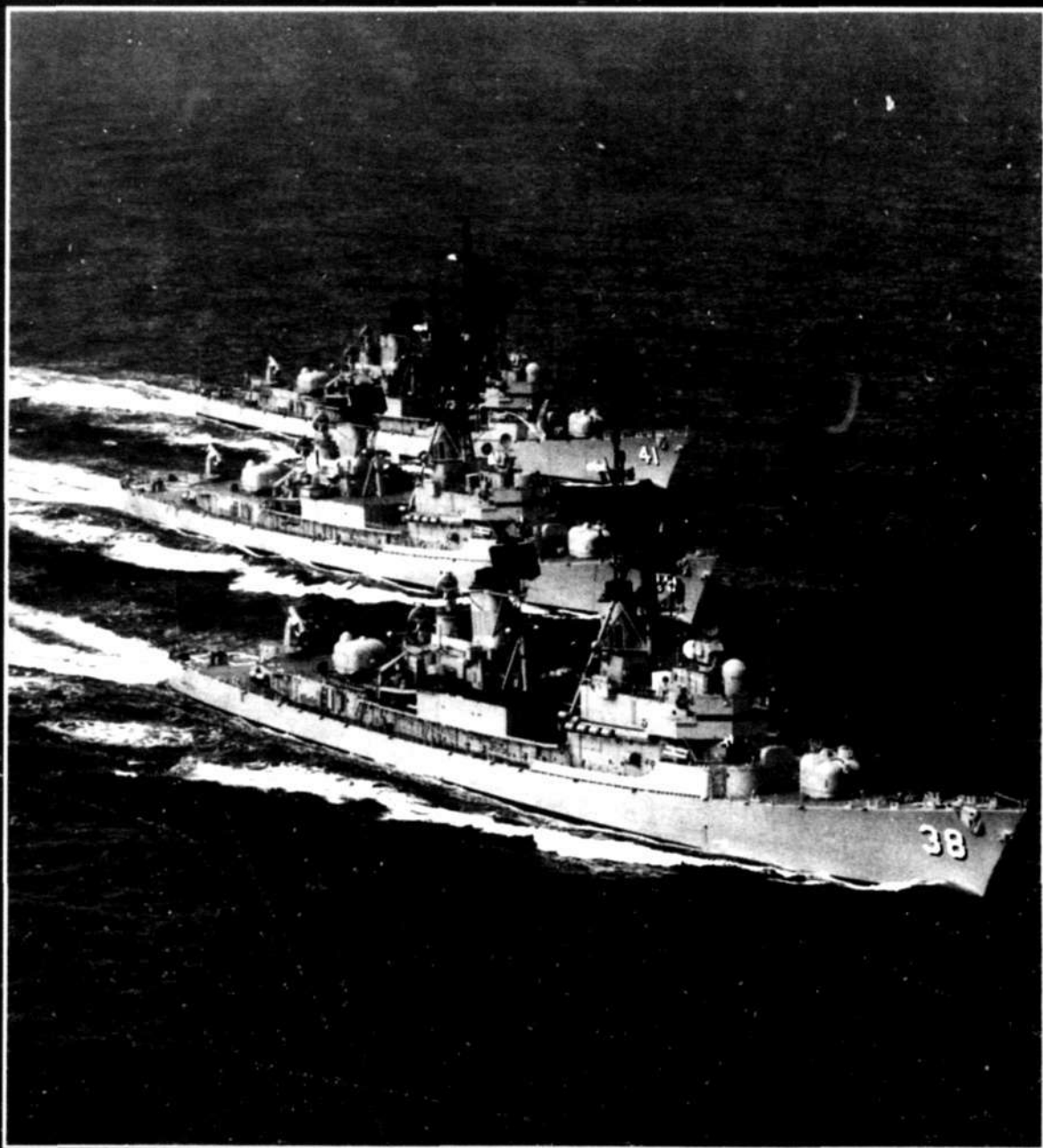


# THE NAVY

*The magazine of*  
**THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA**

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# THE NAVY

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## OUR COVER PHOTO

The three RAN guided missile destroyers at sea  
off Sydney in mid 1992

PHOTO TAKEN BY POPH MAL BACK.

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# The Changing Times

The following is an extract from the report of the Federal President of the Navy League of Australia (Commander Geoffrey Evans) to the League's Annual General Meeting held in Canberra on 13 November 1992:

Members of the Navy League are well aware that we live in changing — and challenging — times. Human nature being as it is, change is inevitable, but those of us who served in the RAN or RN during or soon after World War 2 could not have anticipated the rate or extent of change, especially during the last ten or so years. By and large, the RAN, generally regarded as a conservative organisation, has kept pace with, and sometimes anticipated, change in the wider community.

To an organisation such as the Navy League, founded at a time when naval power was all-important to the principal nations of the world, the changed times present a challenge not easily met.

Naval power, or perhaps in Australia's case better described as naval capability, continues to be important, indeed vital, but it is only a part of the means of ensuring national security. Today it is not enough or indeed sensible for the Navy League to simply advocate more warships, or this or that type of ship, or to seek more funds for the Navy as it did in the past and support naval policy in general as it has done in the past; today, the elected government's foreign policy, the role and state of the Army and Air Force, the merchant shipping industry, the industrial back-up available to the armed forces; these and many other factors must be understood if the Navy League is to have a meaningful role in our community.

It is fair to say the Federal Council has been grappling with the changed circumstances for some time. The League's membership has been broadened to include representatives of many of the diverse elements that constitute the maritime community but it must be widened further: its range of "contacts" has been

extended considerably both in Australia and overseas; it has appreciated the need for young Australians to increase their knowledge of the sea and its importance to them and done something about it — "The Sea and Australia" video for schools; it has organised seminars, alone or in conjunction with other organisations, on maritime affairs. Most importantly, much attention has been given to the content and style of the League's magazine *The Navy*. One could go on but reference must be made to some of the problems facing the Navy League, and indeed, other defence orientated organisations in this day and age.

First, the climate of public opinion is not conducive to discussion on the need for a strong Australian Defence force; economic woes aside, most Australians have for so long been untouched by war that it seems to be something that only happens to other people. Economic problems certainly don't help.

Second, with some notable exceptions the media which could lead discussion on national security, instead reflects public disinterest.

Thirdly, the armed forces have developed their own public relations organisations and naturally tend to use these instead of seeking support through "outside" bodies: the Navy in particular, once noted for its reticence, nowadays vigorously promotes its cause from its own resources, thus lessening the use of support groups to speak out on Navy's behalf. Despite the changed circumstances, I am convinced there is a place for the Navy League in the scheme of things, perhaps, above all because of my first concern — the climate of public opinion. Few countries in the world are as vulnerable to external events as Australia, events over which we have little or no control. While national security may not worry a majority of citizens at the moment, the future

of our country does concern many people. The League membership embraces a wealth of experience and expertise in an area vital to Australia's well-being, the maritime area and it would be a sad day if it was lost. How best to use such talent as the League may possess will be an important part of discussion at the forthcoming meeting of the Federal Council.

I would be remiss if I did not include in this part of my report, my appreciation of the co-operation of the Chief of the Naval Staff, VADM Ian MacDougall, in keeping me up-to-date with changes in the naval scene. This has been of great value in addressing audiences and performing those other duties that befall the League's office-bearers from time to time.

*Geoffrey Evans*

Federal President

## "THE NAVY"

All enquiries regarding the Navy Magazine, subscriptions and editorial matters should be sent to:

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14 September 1992

The Editor  
"The Navy"  
c/- Hon Sec Mr J Wilkins  
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Sir

The article by A J Robertson in the July-September issue of "The Navy" on the National Flag well presented some of the views held in the current debate about retaining or changing the Australian Flag.

I am sure the author tried hard to be objective in his comments, but some subjectivity for the retention of the existing flag did show in his article and, in the interest of balance in this very important debate, I ask that you publish other views held by members of the League.

Robertson is right — this is an emotive issue. It would be a sorry state of affairs if the matter concerning the changes for our nation's symbol didn't evoke strong feelings. There is however a need for a sensible and reasoned debate. To step aside simply because the idea of change is not popular with some groups and individuals in the community would be a coward's way out.

One of the objections to change is tradition and heritage. Ex-servicemen and women are often cited as being very strongly opposed to a change. I am ex RAN myself and I suspect that a great majority of ex servicemen and women didn't show an enthusiastic zeal toward the

flag (which incidentally was sometimes the red ensign) when they served. They were more concerned with their service to Australia per se — and why not? The passing of time makes it very hard for those concerned to accept this however.

It should be noted that until quite recent times all sailors fought and died under an entirely different white ensign from that currently flown in HMA Ships and Establishments.

What is not generally known is that it had not been clearly established until 1951 that any flag was the National Flag. A special committee recommended to the Government that it adopt the Commonwealth Blue Ensign as the Australian Flag. This was approved by the King in 1951. In 1953 the Flags Act was passed by the Australian Parliament to "proclaim definitely the Australian Blue Ensign as the National Flag and the Australian Red Ensign as the proper colour for merchant ships registered in Australia". Prior to this it was common to see the Red Ensign flying as the Australian Flag. I remember it being flown at my school in Adelaide.

There is no doubt our existing flag is beautiful. The main objection, however, to its retention cannot be easily dismissed if one fully understands its heraldic description. The present flag is described as "a British Blue Ensign defaced by the Southern Cross and Federation Star".

The Blue Ensign defaced with the appropriate badge in the fly is distinctive of the British Consular Service and Colonial Governments — not to mention UK ocean tugs, salvage vessels, the British Sea Cadets and several yacht clubs. To put it simply in flag parlance, our flag with its Union Flag in the

upper left canton signifies dominance by Britain.

Australians all, regardless of their fondness for the UK, certainly do not see themselves anymore as being "British".

Could any Australian advocate the return to "God Save the Queen" as our national anthem? Imagine our feelings if that had been played instead of "Advance Australia Fair" at the recent Olympics.

Imperial awards are finished, and it is highly improbable that anyone from the UK would be appointed ever again to the post of Governor of a State or Governor General of the Commonwealth.

By all means keep the State flags as they are. As mentioned by Robertson, Hawaii has retained the Union Flag in its flag. I do not even think there would be a strong objection to incorporating the Union Flag, as South Africa has, in a newly designed Australian Flag — but we cannot keep giving the world the message we are a British colony — and that regrettably is what the current flag shows.

We have a lot to be proud of in this country. Particularly in our ability to debate issues without the savagery and violence witnessed in other parts of the world. I'm confident this debate will be robust in that fine tradition.

I am confident also that Australia will eventually have a flag that shows our independence and uniqueness. I am also confident that when the change comes it will be done with dignity and acceptance.

Yours sincerely,

GAVIN RYAN

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# Submarine Squadron Celebrates 25th Anniversary

by Ross Gillett

*Submarines have, since their creation in the years prior to the First World War, been the most intriguing of all the warships in the Royal Australian Navy.*

The popularity of the boats continues at the same high levels today, with lines of visitors stretching for hour after hour during the traditional Navy Week and other open days.

For HMAS Platypus and her current operational units in the Sydney region, OVENS and OTWAY, the opportunity to promote "the silent service" was realised during "Submarine Week", seven days in late November, set aside to celebrate the Silver Anniversary of the present boats and the shoreside facilities in Neutral Bay.



Aerial view of HMAS PLATYPUS, 1983 (Photo - RAN)

The week of activities began on the Monday, 23 November, with the opening at the Australian National Maritime Museum of a display of photographs and artifacts from the establishments own "museum". Since the arrival in Sydney of the first generations boats AE1 and AE2 in 1914, the RAN has operated five classes of submarines, totalling 17 vessels. The ANMM display highlighted the development of the submarine arm, providing a stark contrast to an existing museum display, the Japanese midget submarine, opened earlier

in May by the New South Wales Governor, RADM Peter Sinclair.

Since its first commissioning in 1967, HMAS Platypus has developed strong local links with the North Sydney area. This was more than confirmed during the "Submarine Week". The Naval Support Band provided the musical interlude during its performance at Greenwood Plaza in the heart of the North Sydney business district on Thursday, 26 November and again the next day for the Freedom of Entry march through the streets.



Above: HMAS OXLEY, in Scottish waters, 1967 (Photo - RAN)

Right: Three RAN Boats and HMS ODIN sail through Sydney Heads (Photo - RAN)

At left: Sailing for the United Kingdom in 1969 HMS TRUMP served with the RAN from both HMAS PLATYPUS and HMAS PENGUIN (Photo - RAN)

## SUBMARINE SQUADRON CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HMA Submarines OTWAY and OVENS slipped quietly from their base on the Thursday evening to rendezvous with other surface Fleet units on Friday morning, 27 November. The occasion was a ceremonial Fleet Entry by the two boats, but this time with various Sydney media embarked. For the arrival Channel Nine's National Today Show broadcast live from the submerged boats while the commanding officers LCDR Sinclair (OTWAY) and CMDR Gladman (OVENS) spoke to more than half a million Sydney-siders tuned into the radio station 2UE.

No anniversary could be celebrated without a re-union party or commemorative book. For the submariners, they enjoyed both. The former was held in Darling Harbour, overlooking one of the boats moored in Cockle Bay and the book, authored by ex-submariner Graham White was launched by another ex-submariner, now CNS, VADM Ian McDougall.

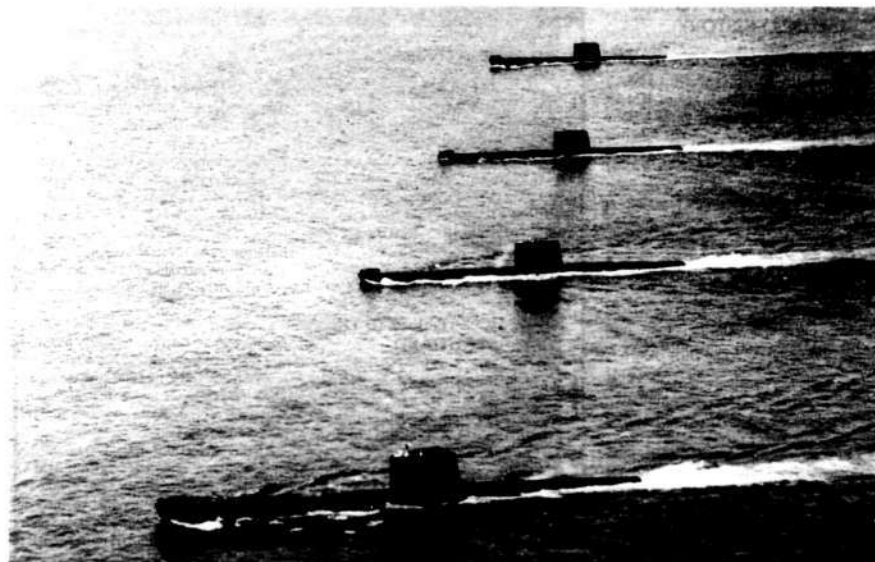
For the public the chance to inspect the two boats came on Saturday and Sunday in Darling Harbour. For the second time, two Oberon boats were moored inside the bay. The weekend proved most successful, with many thousands visiting the two boats over an eleven hour period.

Sunday, 29 November and the scene altered to the Naval Chapel on Garden Island, AE1 Divisions, inspected by the Chief of Naval



Five Oberons in Neutral Bay, three have been modernised (new bow dome) (Photo - RAN)

Staff saw the church service attended by several hundred current and former submariners. After the ceremony, most in attendance retired to the northern hill for a BBQ lunch.





# NAVALNEWS

## GUIDED MISSILE FRIGATE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

The guided missile frigate, HMAS CANBERRA, left Australia in mid-October for her first tour of duty in the Middle East.

The deployment of CANBERRA followed a four-month gap in Australian participation in the Multi-national Naval Force charged with enforcing sanctions the United Nations has imposed against Iraq.

Captained by Commander Rayden Gates, CANBERRA followed HMAS DARWIN, the last Australian vessel to operate as part of the MNF in The Red Sea. DARWIN left the Middle East on July 7 after being involved in more than 290 Red Sea boundings in 139 days at sea.

CANBERRA—undergoing modifications when Australian ships were first sent to the Gulf—sailed from Western Australia on October 17 and was on task in the north of the Red Sea, on November 13.

## HMAS MORESBY TO SAIL INTO HISTORY

The Royal Australian Navy's hydrographic survey ship HMAS MORESBY sailed from HMAS STIRLING on 22 September on an historic deployment which will see her become the first RAN ship to reach 1,000,000 nautical miles, on 31 October.

At the time of departure, the graceful MORESBY had recorded 999,150 nautical miles during 73,459 hours underway since she was first commissioned on March 6, 1964.

HMAS MORESBY reached the 'magical million' while surveying off Echo Island, off Arnhem Land.

Boasting a white hull, buff funnel and unarmed other than carrying small arms, MORESBY is the only ship in the Navy to boast a teak deck.

Her appearance is deceiving as she spends possibly more time at sea surveying Australia's vast coastline than any other ship in the Royal Australian Navy.

A tribute to her builders, Newcastle Ship Dockyard in New South Wales, the 2340-tonne MORESBY has surveyed nearly all of the West Australian coast and has worked off the coast of every state in Australia and the Northern Territory as well as surveying sections of the coastal waters of our near neighbours.



HMAS CANBERRA departs Fleet Base East, bound for her first Gulf deployment. (Photo RAN)

Commanded by Commander Mark Hudson, HMAS MORESBY carries a complement of 140 officers and sailors, including 13 females.

Home-ported in Western Australia since 1974, first in Fremantle and since 1978, at HMAS STIRLING Fleet Base West, HMAS MORESBY will continue to 'follow the sun' on her survey seasons for at least another three years.

## NAVY HOSPITAL SETS THE STANDARD

Balmoral Naval Hospital on Sydney's Middle Harbour has scored an Australian first by being awarded accreditation by the Australian Council on Health Care Standards (ACHS).

The award recognises the high standards of service provided by the hospital which is the first Australian Defence Force health care facility to receive such an award.

Balmoral Naval Hospital volunteered to participate in the ACHS programme which

involves evaluation by a team of professionals who are experts in all aspects of health care and administration. The ACHS is an independent organisation formed in 1974 with the aim of upgrading the standard of public and private hospitals and healthcare facilities in Australia.

Surgeon Commander Russell Schedlich, who is the medical officer in charge of the hospital, said he was delighted that the facility had received ACHS accreditation. "The ACHS accreditation procedure is a very detailed and exacting study of every aspect of the hospital's operations."

"This includes medical services, nursing, administration, catering, casualty, pharmacy and maintenance, to name but a few. To be successful we had to measure up to the highest level of performance in every category. It is a fitting way to celebrate the hospital's 50th year of operation," he said.

Balmoral Naval Hospital was established in 1942, and is located within HMAS PENGUIN on Sydney's Middle Harbour. The hospital provides a full range of medical, surgical and dental care in a modern facility staffed by some 90 health care professionals in the Royal Australian Navy.

# NAVALNEWS CONTINUED

## NAVAL OFFICER TO BECOME NEW CHIEF OF DEFENCE

The Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Ray, has announced the appointment of Vice Admiral Alan Beaumont to the position of Chief of The Defence Force. He will be promoted to full Admiral and take up his post in April 1993.

The appointment follows the approval of The Governor General in Council.

Announcing the appointment, Senator Ray said that "Admiral Beaumont is a vastly experienced officer who has headed up major reforms in Defence during his term as Vice Chief of the Defence Force."

"Admiral Beaumont has been exceptionally active in representing Australia at a regional level and is well liked and respected by the upper echelons of the Defence Forces in South East Asia."

Admiral Beaumont will succeed General Peter Gratton, 60, who will retire after 44 years service, six of them as Chief of the Defence Force.

Senator Ray said that "General Gratton has served his nation and the Australian Defence Force brilliantly."

"Under General Gratton the Australian Defence Force was placed on a sound conceptual and strategic framework commencing with the 1987 White Paper."

"General Gratton has overseen a period of intense activity within Defence to bring about a widescale modernisation of equipment and facilities. These include the shift of forces to the north, the development of a two ocean navy, the introduction of the Commercial Support Program, and the Force Structure Review."

Admiral Beaumont was born in Waratah NSW, and educated in Newcastle. He graduated from the Royal Australian Naval College in



Vice Admiral Alan Beaumont. (Photo - RAN)

1951 and has been Vice Chief of the Defence Force since September 1989.

He is a widower with four children.

## BIOGRAPHY

Vice Admiral Alan Beaumont was born at Waratah, NSW, on Christmas Eve, 1934 and was educated at Boolaroo Primary School and Newcastle Technical High School.

He graduated from the RAN College in 1951 with the Grand Aggregate Prize for academic studies.

After further training in the United Kingdom, he served in a variety of junior officers' postings in frigates and small ships before specialising as a torpedo/anti-submarine officer. He then served as an exchange officer, first with the Royal Navy in minesweepers, and then at the US Navy's Fleet Anti-submarine Warfare School in San Diego. He commanded HMAS Ibis in 1962.

Staff appointments in Canberra followed, before his posting as Executive Officer of HMAS Brisbane when he saw service in Vietnamese waters.

Promoted to Commander in 1969, he served variously as commanding officer of HMAS Yarra, Director of Underwater Weapons, as a student at the Joint Services Staff College and as the Follow-on Destroyer Project Officer.

He later commanded HMAS Vampire and became Director of Naval Plans and later Director General of Naval Policy and Plans in Canberra.

Promoted to Commodore in 1983, he became Director General Defence Force Administrative Policy, then served briefly as Assistant Chief of the Defence Force (Policy). He became Chief of Staff in Naval Support Command and Deputy Naval Support Commander in 1987, before promotion to Rear Admiral and an appointment as Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Development). He became the inaugural Assistant Chief of the Defence Force (Personnel) at the end of 1988, and Vice Chief of the Defence Force in September the following year.



The new 310 metre Fleet Pier under construction at Fleet Base West, HMAS STIRLING. The \$40m finger pier will double the available berthing capacity when completed in mid 1994. (Photo - RAN)

## HMAS PERTH HOME FROM DEPLOYMENT

The guided missile destroyer HMAS PERTH returned to Sydney on 6 November, after a three month deployment.

During this time PERTH took part in the Starfish 92 exercise in the South China Sea and the more recent Valiant Usher exercise held off the WA coast with Ships from the U.S. Navy.

## MAJOR WARFARE TRAINING

Principal Warfare Officers (PWO) from Australia and New Zealand were under intense pressure recently as they began their sea training phase off the west coast.

The nine Australian and two New Zealand Officers began their initial training some thirty weeks ago at HMAS WATSON in Sydney, NSW and were now entering the final stage requiring them to take control of the operations of the ship's warfare systems, which include gunnery, anti-submarine and anti-aircraft activities.

Following successful completion of the PWO training, the Officers will then undertake specialisation in either Communications, Gunnery, Navigation, Direction and Antisubmarine warfare fields.

Units involved were HMA Ships PERTH, BRISBANE, TORRENS, the submarine HMAS OYENS and HMNZ Ships WAIKATO and ENDEAVOUR, HS816 SEAHAWK and HS817 SEA KING Helicopter Squadrons.

RAAF 2 Flying Training School and No.25 Squadron and RNZAF No. 2 SKYHAWK Squadron.

## HMAS MELBOURNE JOINS THE FLEET

Australia's newest warship, the guided missile frigate HMAS MELBOURNE, is now (Sept. 92) officially part of the Fleet.

Since her commissioning in February, the ship has completed an extensive trials and preparation program. Her performance proved that Australia has the capability for building modern sophisticated warships.

The Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Ian MacDougall, praised the builder, AMECON, and all associated with the project saying: "HMAS MELBOURNE was delivered within time and under budget, with an overall quality as good or better than that of her imported sisterships. Indeed, quality has been a hallmark of the ship's construction."

Commanding Officer of the RAN's newest guided missile frigate (FFG) Commander Graham Johnston, was also enthusiastic in his praise of AMECON's work.

"MELBOURNE flies her 'Australian made' flag with great pride," he said, "AMECON's management and staff have been extremely supportive and the quality of work throughout the ship is very high."

The sixth ship of the FFG class for the RAN, currently being completed by AMECON at Williamstown, will be commissioned as HMAS NEWCASTLE in 1993.

NEWCASTLE was launched in February and incorporates lessons learned in the construction of MELBOURNE.

"Those working on NEWCASTLE claim she will be even better than MELBOURNE," Admiral MacDougall said.



RAN and RNZN units alongside HMAS STIRLING prior to the special warfare sea training. (Photo - LSPH Scott Connolly)

The heavy landing craft HMAS TARAKAN stands by to assist the TV TORTOISE in the Great Barrier Reef TORTOISE served in the RAN from 1962 to 1974 (Photo - RAN)

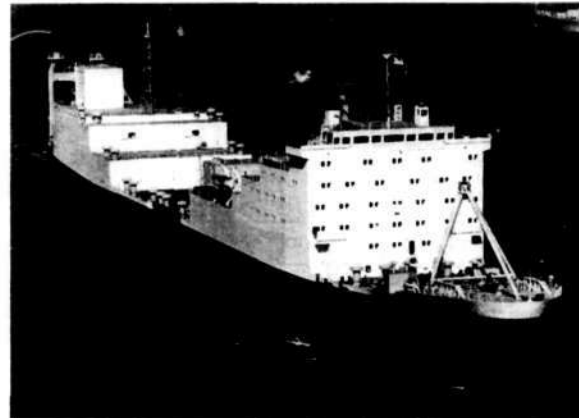


## NEW ZEALAND LOGISTIC SHIP

Reports from across the Tasman Sea have indicated the acquisition by the Royal New Zealand Navy of the former Union Steamship Co. of New Zealand's container ship UNION ROTORUA.

The plan, yet to be approved, would see the 203m long ship converted to a logistic support ship for use by both the Army and Navy. With a top cruising speed of 19 knots, the ship would be rebuilt to embark two Sea King size helicopters, with her decks strengthened to accept tanks. Cost of the ship plus conversion has been suggested as \$35 million NZ, with the modifications costing \$30m.

As built in the late 1970s, UNION ROTORUA and her sister UNION ROTOITI, operated between Sydney/Melbourne to New Zealand ports, with access to the ships' interiors via stern and bow ramps. Both ships boast massive superstructures fore and aft, the former for accommodation and bridge and the latter for machinery, funnel uptakes and the rear ramp mechanism.



UNION ROTORUA. (Photo - John Mortimer)



The former submarine OXLEY in an advanced state of demolition at ASI, Cockburn Sound, Western Australia, in September, 1992 (Photo - RAN)



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## DEFERRAL OF WA BASING

The Royal Australian Navy has decided to defer homeporting the trials and safety ship, HMAS PROTECTOR, in Western Australia, Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Ian MacDougall has announced.

"PROTECTOR will remain homeported in Sydney probably until late 1993 to provide continuing support to minehunter trials and to perform general support tasks," Admiral MacDougall said.

PROTECTOR was to be homeported at HMAS STIRLING in WA from December 1992 to assist the integration of the PC1804 submersible (which was to provide a submerged recovery capability) and then support Collins Class submarine trials to begin in early 1994.

Because of a recent decision by the Navy to review the development of the submerged recovery capability there is no longer a requirement on the west coast for PROTECTOR until the start of the Collins Class submarine trials.

"The decision to defer PROTECTOR's homeporting in the West does not impede progress towards implementation of the Two Ocean Basing policy, which recently achieved a major milestone with the arrival in the West of HMAS ADELAIDE, the first guided missile



HMAS PROTECTOR

frigate to be based there," Admiral MacDougall said.

## INDONESIAN EXERCISES

Two Indonesian patrol boats conducted maritime exercises with HMA Ships GAWLER and GERALDTON between

29 October and 1 November. Supported by RAAF Orions the two forces practiced patrols in the Timor and Arafura Seas and developed procedures for the tasking of both ships and aircraft. Named PATROLEX 92, the two day exercise increased the level of naval co-operation with the Indonesian boats visiting Darwin for a planning conference.

# CENTRALISATION CAN GO TOO FAR

## The Need for Balanced Decisions

A Navy League View by A. W. GRAZEBROOK and F. G. EVANS

*For several years, there has been rightly a concerted drive within Defence to optimise the standard of management in the Department and in the Australian Defence force.*

In this way, Defence has sought to ensure that the taxpayer gets the maximum value for every scarce defence dollar.

Steps taken have included developing budgetary management skills amongst serving uniformed Australian Defence Force personnel, devolving much increased budgetary authority to lower levels in Defence in Canberra and to ADF commands elsewhere.

A further very important step has been to centralise in Headquarters, Australian Defence Force, much key decision making and the preparation of major proposals for presentation to Government for approval. In this way, the number of personnel involved has been reduced and significant dollar savings have been achieved.

The major proposals now prepared in HQADF include all significant new equipment projects.

With the long lead times (sometimes more than a decade) necessary for major new equipment, these decisions can, and often do, set the structure of the Australian Defence Force for many years to come.

Therefore, it is absolutely essential to make the right major equipment decisions. To do this, we must have the right balance of input at top levels in HQADF and in the Defence Department.

Under the organisation now in place in HQADF, major equipment (Force Development) proposals are prepared under the direction of the Assistant Chief of the Defence Force (Development) — a two star position which may be held by a Rear Admiral, Major General or Air Vice Marshal.

Under ACDF (Development) there are three Directorates-General of Force Development. DGFD (Sea) is a Commodore, DGFD (Air) is an Air Commodore and DGFD (Land) is a Brigadier. Thus the senior single service input to vitally important long term decisions is at one star level.

ACDF (Development) responds to the Vice Chief of the Defence Force (a three star position, which may be held by an officer from Navy, Army or Air Force).

In turn, VCDF responds to the Chief of the Defence Force who with the Secretary of the Department of Defence, responds to the Minister of Defence.

Under this organisation, a new force development proposal is prepared in the appropriate Directorate General of Force Development.

The proposal is debated amongst the three services at one star level. Proposals may not go forward without the agreement of the ACDF (Development).

Thereafter, the proposal progresses upwards in HQADF. Force Development proposals predominantly for one service are necessarily often presented in Committee by an officer of another service.

The organisational necessity for an officer of one service to present a proposal that is primarily for the benefit of another service can result in an imbalanced view of that proposal being advanced amongst the high echelons of HQADF. This is possible not so much because of inter-service rivalry but because the officer has been trained in a particular element — be it land, sea or air — and understandably his knowledge of his own

sphere of operations is much greater than that of those in which he is less experienced.

Under the present organisation, any imbalance can be adjusted at key senior committee stages by the presence of the relevant service Chief of Staff — CNSS, CGS, and CAS. These senior committees include the Chiefs of Staff Committee and the Defence Program Management Committee.

At lesser, but still more important committees such as the Force Structure Policy and Programming Committee, balance is provided by including the DCNS, DCGS and DCAS.

Every person familiar with Service life and practices is well aware of the potential influence an extra stripe on the arm, or pip on the shoulder, can have on the presentation of cases in debate. The effect is inevitable, however hard a senior officer may try to prevent it.



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## CENTRALISATION CAN GO TOO FAR

Therefore, the balance in decision making provided by the presence of the individual Service Chiefs of Staff on key higher committees is essential if sound well balanced major decisions are to be achieved.

To play their vital part in balanced decision making, individual Service Chiefs of Staff must have access to expert advice.

There are reports that, under plans for further centralisation in HQADF, the position of the individual Service Chiefs of Staff, arguably already diminished by the appointment of sea, land and air commanders with considerable autonomy, is to be further eroded.

The proposed centralisation of the Services' material functions is of doubtful benefit and unacceptably risky at least for the next five years.

The differing nature of their operations results in substantial differences in the way Navy, Army and Air Force are organised to develop and deliver logistic and engineering support.

Navy is required to manage unique activities under Australia's policy of self reliance on defence equipment and through life support. These are exemplified by the Collins class submarines. Submarines of this design will not be in service anywhere else in the world. Constructing the submarines, bringing them up to operational standards, and supporting them in service are a demanding challenge. Now is not the time to impose a major organisational change with the disruption that such a change involves.

The reports also refer to personnel matters.

Currently, each service has its own personnel division headed by a two star officer. In HQADF there is a fourth two star officer as ACDF (Personnel). It is said that four bureaucracies are unnecessary and that much money could be saved by centralising the work in HQADF.

To the uninitiated, that may seem so. However, the personnel of Army, Navy and Air Force are very different from one another.

Their operations and ways of living in the front line differ widely. Sailors' homes, and a good deal of their food and supplies, travel with them in their ship. In war, every officer and sailor at sea in a ship is at risk.

Soldiers carry much of their supplies on their backs, and depend on their fellow soldiers (and services) for further supplies. Soldiers live rough. All soldiers in the front line are at equal risk.

Airmen are different again. They work and live in relatively permanent positions. All flying personnel are at risk when flying. Ground personnel are at most risk at forward bases.

The individual services have evolved proved methods of leading and administering their personnel. These methods are optimised to meet the circumstances of each service. Leadership, particularly, is not easy for the analyst to quantify. Nevertheless, it is indisputable that it is of paramount importance in any defence force.

History suggests that centralised tri-Service decision making on personnel matters can be disastrous. One example is the damage done in Canada in the 1960's.

Here in Australia, a centralised decision to remove the tax exemption on Reservists' pay did untold damage. The "savings" were far exceeded by the cost of rectifying the damage.

Streamlining organisations is highly desirable, always provided that the fundamental objective in this case, providing a well trained and well motivated Army, Navy and Air Force — is not placed at risk.

Much good has been achieved by the streamlining and centralisation already undertaken.

There is much to suggest that further centralisation would result in imbalanced decisions on major force structure matters. The individual Service personnel are the most important part of the defence of Australia. Further centralisation should not occur unless it is absolutely certain that the proper management, quality and numbers of the ADF's personnel will not be placed at risk.

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## NAVAL MATTERS

# Allied Forces "Attack" the WA Coast

Ross Gillett

*Since the commissioning of HMAS STIRLING, Perth and Western Australia have provided the scenario for many RAN exercises. One of the better known has been the Valiant Usher series, now held nine times, the most recent in October 1992.*

Co-ordinated by the Maritime Headquarters, Sydney, the major aim of VU92 was the undertaking of structured joint/combined maritime and amphibious training, designed to improve the inter-operability between the participating navies. Led by CMDR Nigel Perry and his twelve man staff, additional local support was provided by the FBW's CMDR Dave Thomas and his operation's team to provide visit support, ship liaison and harbour movements.

As well as a large presence from the "senior service", additional assets and personnel were provided by the RAAF and Army. Seven Fleet units were joined in the exercise by one Royal Navy frigate and four USN ships, including an FFG and three large amphibious vessels.

Following the work-up and briefings, the third or tactical phase began 13/14 October with the departure from Fremantle and FBW of the coalition and adversary forces. In overall charge of the "Blue" or coalition ships was CAPT Geoff Walpole, commanding officer of HMAS PERTH. The departure had previously been delayed after the goodwill/mercy visit by the American ships to drought plagued Somalia.

The WA based Clearance Diving Team

Four was allotted the responsibility of clearing the beachhead at Lancelin prior to the amphibious landing on Saturday, 17 October. US Marine Corp helicopters then ferried ashore loads of marines for the beach assault. Prior to the landing, the "Blue" forces were harassed by the "Orange" or Raksian forces afloat, represented by HMAS ADELAIDE, HMAS GEELONG, HMS BOXER and USS CURTIS. For the FFG ADELAIDE, the exercise was the first since her homeporting, to STIRLING earlier in the month. Naming of the mythical "enemy" forces, as told to the local media at an on-board press conference prior to the third phase was by the MCAUST, RADM (RAKSian) Walls.

From the air, came another threat to the landing. RAAF FA 18 and F111 aircraft plus USN P3s, and USMC EA-6Bs playing the roles of Tornados, MIG 23s, C130s and Badger Js respectively.

Prior to the actual landing a rehearsal was undertaken on Friday, 16 October with all participating units. A heavy swell on the day precluded the launch/operation of landing craft with all movements confined to helicopters. A media sea-day was provided for the local press, television and radio, the teams flying out from

ex HMAS LEEUWIN, now Defence Centre Perth, by Sea Knight helicopters. The loss of the RAN's heavy landing ship HMAS TOBRUK prior to VU92 meant that the participating Australian Army troops were transferred to the USS TARAWA for the amphibious operations.

Also taking a brief part in the exercise was the FFG HMAS CANBERRA, with CMDR Raydon Gates in command. The period at sea was employed to maintain the ship's level of readiness for her forthcoming "Gulf" deployment. The vessel subsequently sailed for the middle east on 19 October, farewelled by families and friends and the Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Ray.

For the city of Perth, the return of the VU92 units on the 19th marked the beginning of Navy Week, with the USN ships remaining in port for another eight days. The following Sunday, HMAS STIRLING opened its gates to the public, with more than six thousand visitors moving across the causeway.

Prior to their departure from Fremantle, a USN/USMC collection raised more than \$26,000 for a local Perth family, whose daughter was in urgent need for medical attention at a specialist centre in the USA.



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# HMS CAROLINE

## Still Going Strong

by GEORGE ADAMS

*While attached to the 1st Bn Royal Highland Fusiliers, for my first Northern Ireland tour of duty in February, 1971, I was a member of the holding company for the Barrack Ship HMS MAIDSTONE, an ex-nuclear submarine depot ship, given a ten year reprieve from Inverkielthing breakers cutting torches, to act as an accommodation ship for troops sent to the troubles in Belfast.*

In the course of my duties, I came across the beautiful ram bow of an old training ship HMS CAROLINE, languishing away in the backwater of Milewater Basin in Belfast Docks, all but forgotten by the modern Navies new fangled gas turbine destroyers and through deck cruisers. I believe that CAROLINE is the only First World War cruiser afloat and still in service. Certainly she is one of the oldest Royal Navy vessels flying the White Ensign and at present she remains the depot ship to the Ulster Division of the Royal Naval Reserve Belfast,

where she has served for many years in a training role.

On successive tours of duty with my parent Regiment, I always made a point of visiting CAROLINE where I was always made very welcome.

HMS CAROLINE was laid down by Cammell Laird Yard on the 25th January, 1914 and was commissioned on the 17th December the same year. I doubt whether any yard today could lay down, launch and complete a vessel the size of the CAROLINE in only 11 months.

CAROLINE was the name ship of her class of eight light cruisers of 3750 tons, 40000hp giving a speed of a good 29 knots (on trials, all members of her class made well over 31 knots). Her armament consisted of two 6 inch Mk XIV guns, firing 7 RPM and eight 4 inch Mk IV, quick firing guns 20 RPM, four on the fo'c's'le and four in the waist of the ship, plus a 3 inch AA aft the funnels.

On commissioning, CAROLINE joined the 1st Light Cruiser Squadron of the Grand Fleet and took part in many sweeps across the

North Sea. In 1916 she led the 4th Light Cruiser Squadron at the Battle of Jutland. After Jutland a single 6 inch gun and two 3 inch AA guns replaced the four quick firing 4 inch guns on the fo'c's'le, also a tripod mast was fitted in place of the pole mast. For the remainder of the war CAROLINE undertook convoy duties and further sweeps across the North Sea. It was said of her "that she was at sea more than in harbour". After Jutland all ships of the class became much overloaded and rolled badly.

All the class, other than CAROLINE, were mined during the First World War, but kept afloat and made harbour to be refitted and sail again.

After the Armistice in November 1918 she saw service in the East Indies on flag showing duties, until paid off in 1922 as surplus to requirements for a peace time fleet, much reduced after the war to end all wars.

With the establishment of the Ulster division of the RNVR, CAROLINE was converted for use as a Drill ship. For her new role she underwent extensive alterations including the removal of her armament, boilers and between decks for classrooms etc.

By the Second World War, CAROLINE, although immobilised, rendered service as a training ship and later, as a base support ship to a flotilla of armed trawlers. She also provided signals and cipher facilities throughout the war.

HMS CAROLINE - STILL GOING STRONG



The author (left) with a seaman from HMS MAIDSTONE

After the end of hostilities CAROLINE reverted to her role as a depot ship to the RNVR later the RNR. Every five years she is towed to Harland and Wolff's Belfast yard to be surveyed and refitted. The report from the yard is almost

always the same, "no deterioration". So with their lordships approval, we may hope to see the sexiest bow in the Royal Navy, gracing Milewater Basin for a great many years to come.



HMS CAROLINE



Wider view of HMS CAROLINE, with other smaller craft

# HMAS ARMIDALE

## - 50th Anniversary

The city of Armidale, NSW, was the scene for three colourful and emotional days in late November/early December, when the 50th anniversary of the sinking of HMAS ARMIDALE was commemorated.

HMAS Armidale about to berth at Port Moresby after ferrying troops from Australia.  
(AWM negative 26612)



The 900-tonne corvette was sunk by Japanese torpedo bombers off the coast of Timor on December 1, 1942, in a controversial operation that cost 100 lives, but resulted in an historic sea survival drama and an act of incredible selfless heroism.

To honour the ship and her crew, the RAN sent its band, a colour party and guard to the city to feature in three days of commemorative functions arranged by the RAN Corvettes Association.

The high point was the ceremony at the HMAS ARMIDALE memorial in Central Park on the anniversary of her sinking (Tuesday, December 1). At precisely 3.15pm - (the time of the sinking) - the commanding officer of HMAS GEELONG cast a wreath on the sea over the wreck of ARMIDALE, lying at 2000 fathoms, his words broadcast by satellite to the ceremony in Armidale city.

The ceremony was preceded by a march through the city by the RAN contingent and band, ex-servicemen (including some of the 18 remaining survivors of ARMIDALE) and Armidale schools, timed to reach the memorial just before 3.15pm. The Governor of NSW, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair, RAN, took the salute.

Other functions included a commemorative church service on Sunday, November 29, attended by the RAN colour party and ex-

16 The Navy, January-March, 1993

servicemen and a dinner held by the RAN Corvettes Association on Monday, November 30. The RAN band performed a concert in the town hall on Monday, November 30. Armidale museum also mounted a special naval exhibition and in the art gallery, on display, a painting of the sinking, on loan from the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

The painting depicts Ordinary Seaman Ted Sheehan firing his Oerlikon gun at the Japanese planes which were strafing his shipmates in the water. He went down with the ship, still firing his gun and even after ARMIDALE had vanished, tracer bullets from his gun curved up into the sky in forlorn bizarre arcs.

ARMIDALE had been sent from Darwin to take reinforcements to the Australian soldiers fighting in Timor. On the way to Timor she was frequently bombed and the constant zig-zagging made her late for her midnight rendezvous. Finding nobody there, she stood off to sea to await orders from Darwin.

At 10am the order came - go back in, even though ARMIDALE was within 30 minutes flying time from a major Japanese air base, there was 10 hours of daylight left. It was a tragically wrong decision.

At 2.30pm, 13 Japanese bombers swooped in and attacked ARMIDALE from all directions. ARMIDALE radioed for fighter



cover, but the Commodore in charge in Darwin replied: "Aerial attack is to be accepted as ordinary, routine, secondary warfare" - one of the most extraordinary signals ever sent in naval history. ARMIDALE did not even get the signal, because she had already been sunk by "ordinary, routine, secondary warfare".

At 3.12 two aerial torpedoes tore ARMIDALE apart. At 3.15 she sank. Ten of her crew were killed in action, along with 37 of the reinforcements, who were soldiers of the Netherlands East Indies army. The remaining 102, of whom 75 were ARMIDALE sailors, clung desperately to anything that floated, but not many things did - just the ships bullet-riddled motor-boat, a Carley float about the size of the average car and two small rafts not much larger than a life-buoy.

Only about half the men could cram into them. The rest had to take pot-luck in the water. Sharks, frightened away by the explosions, nosed their way back around sunset - their feeding time - and throughout the night there were sinister rustlings and thrashings in the water and muffled cries.

By noon next day, the captain realised that the only sensible course of action was to take the badly wounded with him in the motor-boat, which had petrol for 150km, to try to get to the area patrolled by Allied planes. It was late in the night of December 6 - five days after the sinking - before they were rescued. That alone was a feat of endurance and courage, and two of the 21 men crammed into the boat died on the way. But back at the scene of the sinking an even greater drama was unfolding.

Somehow or other the ship's whaler (a nine-meter-long wooden boat normally manned by five rowers and a coxswain) freed itself from the sunken ARMIDALE and floated up to within a metre of the surface. By pushing the Carley float down under the float, the sailors got the bow of the boat over it, then releasing the float, the sailors got the bow out of the water. They then managed to patch up the great gashes with bits of clothing, held in place by screws taken from the motor boat by pocket-knife.

They had created the world's most ingenious floating dock while treading water - they had already been in the water for 68 hours, fighting off sharks and deadly sea-snakes and their skin was shrivelled like tripe. Before that they had been at action stations for three days, then suffered the trauma of losing their ship.



Ordinary Seaman Edward Sheehan, photographed on joining the Navy, when he was attached to the Hobart depot, HMAS Derwent

As a wartime security measure, sailors wore either 'HMAS' or shore depot names on their cap tallies instead of the names of their ships. Most of the pictures of the Armidale survivors were taken from family albums and had deteriorated in quality over the years.

After four days, when help still had not arrived, the gunnery officer set off in the whaler with 28 men and only two tins of bully beef, 10 tins of unsweetened condensed milk and one lemonade bottle of water to sustain them. They were not found until eight days after the sinking and were in a shocking state, hardly aware of what had happened or where they were.

That same day an RAAF Catalina flying boat located the men on the rafts, but it was too rough to land. Next day there was no sign of them. Their fate is still a mystery.

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# Japanese Submarine I-124

**More than fifty years ago, on 20th of January 1942, Australian Navy vessels sunk a Japanese submarine outside Darwin harbour. The wreck of the I-124 still lies there with her crew dead on board, but the submarine's rest has been far from easy. From his book *Wrecks in Darwin Waters*, Tom Lewis outlines the history of the first Japanese warship to be sunk by Australian forces.**

In January 1942 the Japanese submarine I-124's captain made the mistake of attacking ships outside Darwin harbour. Perhaps his division commander, Captain Keiyu Endo, ordered a mission to "bottle up" shipping operations with a quick sinking. The Japanese forces knew there were over forty ships in the busy deep-water port. Together with her three sister vessels in the first months of Japan's war, the Japanese submarine's mission was to harass shipping off the Australian coast. But the only distinction this submarine would have was that of being the first Japanese vessel to be sunk by Australian ships in the war.

Early on the morning of the 20th of January 1942 I-124 attacked with torpedoes a US Navy fleet oiler, the USS *Trinity*. The supply ship was escorted by two destroyers. As the torpedoes were seen on the surface the defending ships turned and launched depth charges, but soon the destroyers lost their contact and broke off the attack. Later - at 1335 hours - while making her way to the scene of the original attack the Australian corvette *Deloraine* was also ambushed. Frank Marsh, who was a stoker on the vessel, remembers seeing:

...the trail of the torpedo which missed our stern so closely that the wake thrown up by the propellers actually caused the torpedo to come out of the raised sea surface. I was off watch and on the forward deck at the time of the sighting and have long savoured the corvette's manoeuvrability and Commander Menlove's skill....

The torpedo approached, according to the *Deloraine's* report, "...at 1335 on a bearing of green 100 and course was altered, full power ordered and torpedo passed ten feet astern." The attack was commenced at 1343 with a pattern of six depth charges and soon the fight attracted three aircraft and two other Australian corvettes, the *Kookaburra* and the

*Lithgow*. Another stoker on board the *Deloraine*, Dan Studeman, says in his recently completed manuscript *A Small War*:

...asdic reported the submarine creeping south and attack was continued with vigour. Eventually *Deloraine* reduced speed and examined the disturbed waters. Black bubbles of oil were rising to the surface and Commander Menlove ordered the attack to resume, and for the next ninety minutes the sea heaved as pattern after pattern of depth charges were dropped. Finally the bridge lookout reported the submarine was surfacing and, about 150 Yards astern a black painted conning tower was clearly visible. (p. 9)

Frank Marsh also confirms the surfacing: "I remember seeing the sub's periscope come out of the water a few feet - it turned its hood to face us and then promptly dived." More depth charging went

on, with two American destroyers joining the attack, and eventually the submarine was confirmed as motionless on the ocean bed. The boat's captain, Lieutenant Commander Koichi Kishigami, division Commander Endo, and between 40 and 75 men were trapped on board: the German model of the I-124 carried 40 men, but some accounts say the Japanese version carried more. The *Deloraine's* Lieutenant-Commander Menlove was later awarded the DSO for his command of the action, and two of the *Deloraine's* crew - SPOA Waller and Lieut. Harvey - were awarded the DSC. Leading Seaman P. Savage and Able Seaman Taitte were both awarded the DCM, and five crew members were mentioned in despatches.

A diesel-electric submarine of 1383 tons (displaced) and 279 feet in length, the I-124 was one of four older model boats that formed the sixth Japanese submarine squadron, laying mines and variously attacking shipping in Australia's northern waters. The first of the boats was built by the Kawasaki company, but after financial difficulties, according to Watts and Gordon's *The Imperial Japanese Navy*, the remaining three were finished in the Kure shipyards, with the I-124 - as she was then



HMAS DELORAINE, the Australian Minesweeper which sank I-124

## JAPANESE SUBMARINE I-124

known - being completed in December 1928. The "I" class boats were slow and somewhat clumsy when compared with the new submarines the Japanese were building. They were armed with twelve torpedoes in four bow tubes and a 5.5 inch gun on the foredeck. They also carried forty two mines.

So it would appear that one day, a long time ago, a standard attack was made on an outdated submarine, which given the ferocity and weight of the Allied attack against her, quite predictably and properly was sunk. But the end of the I-124 was to be surrounded by rumours and stories that have persisted until modern times.

There does seem some evidence that the submarine sinking involved an attack on more than one boat. The possibility that the attack was made on two boats is suggested by the attack reports from the commanding officers of both HMAS *Katoomba* and HMAS *Deloraine*. These both indicate contact during the attack with a second submarine some 5000 feet from the first "kill," which itself was definitely confirmed by oil coming to the sea surface. Depth charging on the second contact produced oil too. The *Deloraine* even attacked another asdic echo again the next day (the confirmed oil rising to the surface. The USS *Edsall* joined this attack and examined oil coming from the spot: the commander's report says: "...seems to be two subs down in this area about 1/2 mile apart." But after investigating the matter the Navy decided that there was in reality one submarine, and much of the credit for the sinking was awarded to the *Deloraine*.

Subsequent investigations did find one wreck. Soon after the sinking the *Kookaburra* made largely unsuccessful attempts to send divers down to the site. Some reports - Gavin Souter's 1973 article in the *Sun* newspaper, for example - claim that divers from the American ship *Blackhawk* also descended and heard the Japanese crew tapping on the hull. On the 26th of January the submarine repair vessel USS *Holland* began investigations. The commanding officer's report details the initial search for the submarine as unsuccessful: the first and second divers not finding the wreck at all in their brief "no-decompression" time of 16 minutes - all they were allowed on the bottom. The third diver however, located "...a large gully about 15 feet across 4 to 6 feet deep, which is believed to be where the submarine first hit bottom." After the *Holland* was moved:

the fourth diver found - a large submarine. One hatch apparently blown open. Unable to make any identification. Also located 3 other hatches but did not reach conning tower. Fifth diver reported gasket: blown out of two other hatches abaft conning tower: a built in hatch at conning tower with hatch on top... a small door open on conning tower with valve wheels exposed, believed to be salvage air manifold. Color of submarine black but was covered with slight coating of light colored mud. Ship was on even keel. No bubbles visible. No damage of any kind noted to hull or decking other than condition of hatches.

A sixth diver then verified the report of the fifth, but owing to inadequate air supplies the *Holland* then returned to Darwin. A small gasket had been recovered from one hatch: the report speculates about the "fatal weakness" of their design. But any other investigation was

prevented by rough weather when dives were again attempted the following night. However it seems the Americans were interested in recovery: the *Holland's* report suggested too that salvage was possible, perhaps using the USS *Pigeon*, a vessel then in the Philippines which was equipped for such tasks. But nothing further was done about the I-124: the war effort required the vessels elsewhere and she lay undisturbed for the next thirty years.

So, that should be an end to the matter. But persistent reports since the war have claimed there are in reality two sunken submarines. As late as 1989 the stories persisted: in that year the report of a possible second wreck by Darwin's David Tomlinson and his vessel the *Flamingo* Bay was the latest in a long line of stories about another boat. In an investigation led by Mike McCarthy from the WA museum a *Flamingo* Bay voyage subsequently found that the submarine's official position was incorrect, the I-124 was found, but no second vessel was located.

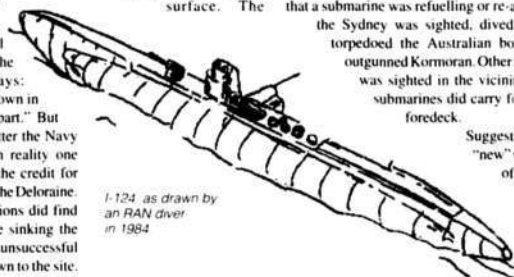
One theory seeks to connect the I-124 with a supposed Japanese submarine that was working with the German armed raider *Kormoran*, which sunk the HMAS *Sydney* in November 1941 with 645 men aboard. The book, *Who Sunk The Sydney?* by Michael Montgomery, suggests that a submarine was refuelling or re-arming from the *Kormoran* when the *Sydney* was sighted, dived to escape detection, and later torpedoed the Australian boat, winning the battle for the outgunned *Kormoran*. Other *Sydney* stories say that a seaplane was sighted in the vicinity of the battle: many Japanese submarines did carry folding planes in a hangar on the foredeck.

Suggestions have been made that the "new" wreck could be that alleged helper of the *Kormoran*; other stories have suggested even that the I-124 was involved. But the I-124 didn't carry a seaplane, and cannot in any way be connected with the sinking of the *Sydney*: a and speed, and well out of the 124's patrol area. So too, by implication, must any second submarine that was with the I-124 also be ruled out. Other stories suggest that inside the wrecked boat the captain's safe may contain an answer: a secret message from the Japanese Emperor congratulating submarine crews on the participation of one of their number in the *Sydney* sinking.

So more than the prospect of salvage has encouraged attempts through the last fifty years to explore the wrecked submarine or a companion - that sometimes has even been described in curious terms. Divers intending I-124 salvage in 1974 reported diving on what they thought was their target out beyond Darwin harbour, only to find instead a submarine with a hangar and planes on its foredeck. Others reported finding a submarine with a German compass on its bridge.

Whether there is a second submarine or not, the stories and rumours concerning the I-124 and its possible partner are indeed numerous - and often sound a little larger than life. One story from Owen Griffiths' *Darwin Drama* - published in 1946 - tells of an occasion during the war when HMAS *Warrambool* gained a load of fresh fish courtesy of I-124. The ship was carrying out exercises on the sunken submarine and had dropped a depth charge on it. Griffiths' book recalls:

From two to two and a half tons of red morwong of 11 lb. each came floating to the surface together with two coral cod, each 500 lb. weight. On gutting some of the fish they were found to



contain rice which had obviously come from the Jap submarine lying on the ocean bed. The decks of Warrambool were laden with the precious food and there was sufficient for the whole of the Darwin Navy. (p.123)

In July 1972 salvage operators CJ (Sid) Hawks, Harry Baxter, George Tyers and John Chatterton began preliminary salvage work on the submarine with the vessels Arnhem T, Larrapan and Arundel. They experienced some confusion as to the location of the wreck during their exploratory dives, but having found the site and identified the submarine, they applied for salvage rights. However, ownership disputes between Harry Baxter and the remaining three of the venture arose which gained considerable media coverage, and after a split into two companies and further scuffles the potential salvors were denied all rights by the Federal Government and warned off the site. In later years the wreck became a designated war grave – though the 1989 Flamingo Bay investigation established that the announced spot was incorrect. The war grave site has now been moved to the correct location.

From divers who have visited the wreck an accurate picture has grown of the I-124 today. Sharks favour the area, according to some reports, along with a considerable amount of other fishlife. As for the vessel itself, salvage operator Chatterton reported after his attempted salvage "...the submarine in perfect condition with only light growth from half way up the side of the hull over the deck and on the conning tower." George Tyers also carried out a number of dives on the boat and reported on a small hole in the conning tower: he was of the opinion that the pressure hull had in no way been breached.

In 1976 Harry Baxter – the rebel member of the original team who attempted to salvage the submarine – was reported to be trying new recovery attempts. He said to the NT News that he was anchored on the site of the wreck and that "...every dive down to the wreck was being recorded on film..." Baxter claimed to the News that his salvage attempts had penetrated the hull and that "...some of our divers have seen bodies sitting on the engines, but their heads have rolled away." He said too that he intended to reveal the mysteries of the boat: "...divers had been into the captain's cabin, but had not yet brought up the safe from that cabin."

At least one "relic" from the submarine has been recovered. Baxter was later reported in the newspaper as having "...brought into the open two relics from a Japanese submarine..." Sid Hawks remembers seeing one of Baxter's divers bring to the surface during the first recovery attempts – a klaxon from the outside of the submarine's conning tower. Baxter and his new Melbourne partner, a Mr Nason, had engaged the services of a firm known as Sub Sea Services to assess the submarine for salvage. At the time Hawks, Chatterton and Tyers were anchored near the wreck, ownership of which was being vigorously disputed. The klaxon, recalls Sid Hawks, was taken to Melbourne by Nason.

Baxter is later reputed to have attempted to destroy the I-124 in a fit of pique when he was denied the second chance to salvage the vessel. He apparently went out with explosives to destroy the submarine, but appears not to have been completely successful. In November 1984 Navy divers from HMAS Curlew carried out descents to the submarine to verify its condition: they reported mine-carrying rails but no mines, and also reported that the conning tower had been damaged in a manner consistent with the use of explosives, in accordance with Harry Baxter's

claims, made in the Australasian Post in March 1981. The divers reported that: "The after section of the conning tower is detached..." However, the hull "appears sound." These reports were further verified in 1989 when the Darwin vessel Flamingo Bay, captained by David Tomlinson, sent down a Remote Operated Vehicle – an unmanned mini-submarine equipped with a TV camera.

The vehicle sent back pictures of what's left of I-124's conning tower, still upright but with a list to one side.

And the second boat, if there is one? Of course, if there is a second submarine out there near the I-124 then its nationality would have to be determined. The I-123 and her sister boats are all accounted for, and out of the 134 submarines the Japanese lost in World War II there doesn't seem to be a likely candidate for the new wreck in terms of being in the right place at the right time. Mike McCarthy of the Western Australian Museum has researched the submarine's history extensively: the German authorities reported to him that none of their vessels were lost in this vicinity either. There appear to be no candidates for the second submarine. Perhaps there was one, but it escaped, although no war records have revealed such involvement. Or perhaps all of the contacts were the I-124, crippled and moving slowly on the bottom.

The I-124 has also attracted attention over the years for another reason: the theory that the "trim" tanks of the boat were filled with highly toxic mercury which could lead to dangerous levels of the chemical in fish. Dr Barry Russell, of the NT branch of the Australian Marine Sciences Association, said in 1989 that a major mercury contamination so close to a population centre would be a devastating situation, perhaps as a minimum endangering the local prawn industry. However,

Darryl Grey of the NT Fisheries Department has said a 1980 survey of shark across the Top End showed no abnormalities.

The mercury suggestion stems from the fact that the I-124 was based on a German design: an old U-boat was brought to Japan for the shipbuilders to use as a model. This submarine, the U-125, was trimmed with several tons of mercury. Therefore, according to this theory, the I-124, built in the years 1927-28, may have also used the method. However, once again Mike McCarthy's research proved otherwise: searching back through records and also in direct contact with the Japanese Government he has proved conclusively that mercury was not used or carried as cargo in the I-124.

The I-124 therefore seems destined to lie undisturbed. The site is a forbidden area even for boats anchoring nearby – one vessel already has been found in the area: the MV Leisure, which was carrying divers in a January 1984 visit. The divers didn't even enter the water before they were detected. Other prospective visitors should note the Historic Shipwreck Act 1976: the I-124 lies in a "protected zone": according to the Act no entry is allowed within a radius of 800 metres around the wreck without a permit.

Tom Lewis is also the author of Darwin Sayonara (Boolarong, Qld.), a novel for teenagers describing the Japanese attack on Darwin in 1942.

# Report of the Federal President to the 26TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

13th November, 1992

(See also "Viewpoint")

## INCORPORATION

Following legislative changes to company law which increased the accountability and responsibilities of directors of companies, it was decided to establish a small working party to examine the effect on members of the Federal Council (the Navy League is incorporated as a company and council members are legally "directors").

In the event, the League's honorary solicitors, Ebsworth and Ebsworth, have recommended the Navy League should retain its present status rather than opt to become a "registrable Australian body", the legal requirements of which are only slightly less onerous than those applying under the companies act.

Our solicitor's recommendation will be discussed by the Federal Council later this evening or tomorrow.

## OVERSEAS VISITORS

I am pleased that the Dominion President of the Navy League of New Zealand, Mr Peter Aburn, accepted an invitation to be our guest at this year's AGM and Federal Council meeting and is with us this evening.

Mr. Aburn will bring us up to date on NLNZ affairs later this evening.

## SEX DISCRIMINATION ACT

At the present time freedom to exercise sexual preference is not accepted by the Australian Defence Force; proposals to allow this freedom have been strongly resisted by the Minister for Defence, Service Chiefs and others.

After consultation with colleagues, I wrote to the Prime Minister saying, among other things, the League did not believe it was in the interests of the armed forces to change the rules at this time, standards of personal conduct were necessarily very high in the Services; the difficulty of maintaining these standards in the face of constant pressure to relax them; and the need for the Services to have time to absorb the substantial influx of women into a hitherto largely male-dominated domain with attendant "fraternisation" problems.

The letter also pointed out that other navies, including those of Britain, Canada, New Zealand and the United States had similar rules similar to those of Australia.

Cabinet has not so far made a decision on this matter.

## PROPOSED F111 ACQUISITION

The League issued a press statement on this matter, a copy of which is attached.

## (UK) SEA CADET CORPS JUBILEE

The SCC celebrated this event at a ceremony in London in May this year. Federal Vice-President, Captain Len Vickridge, who was visiting Europe at the time, re-arranged his schedule and represented the Navy League of Australia at what he reports was a very impressive occasion.

## NORTHERN TERRITORY DIVISION

In January, His Honour, the Administrator of the Northern Territory, the Honourable James Muirhead, AC QC, presented the Navy League's

1991 Community Award to HMAS COONAWARRA at a ceremony held in that establishment.

In July, whilst in Darwin attending a Press Council meeting, I was invited by the Divisional President, Don Milford, to accept on behalf of the Division a power-boat presented by Mrs Nicholas Paspaley, matron of the family long associated with pearling in Northern Australia. It was a most enjoyable occasion, with a good turnout of NRC cadets who will be the beneficiaries of this generous gift.

## QUEENSLAND – CAIRNS BRANCH

After some initial trauma involving the sealing of a long-term lease of land, the Cairns branch has, embarked on an ambitious project to resite the NRC unit TS ENDEAVOUR. The project has the support of Navy, the Queensland government and local authorities.

## CORAL SEA WEEK

Most Divisions took part in events commemorating the Battle of the Coral Sea. The Victoria Division in conjunction with the Australia-America Association, arranged a very successful reception held on the preserved barque POLLY WOODSIDE; the function was attended by some 200 people.

## "THE SEA AND AUSTRALIA"

The NSW and several other Divisions despatched "follow-up" letters to schools that had been sent the video. NSW received some 300 replies, most complimentary, but inquiries in Victoria indicated that a number of schools had lost or misplaced their copies. Divisions are requested to persevere with this matter and do their best to ensure the educational value of the video is not wasted.

## THE NAVY MAGAZINE

The management committee has reported financial stability (the price of the magazine was increased from \$2.50 to \$3.50 during the year) while sales have remained steady. THE NAVY continues to be distributed to ships and establishments by the RAN and to newsgroups by Gordon & Gotch.

I wish to express my gratitude to editor Ross Gillett for the continued high quality of the editorial content of the magazine, and to the NSW Management Committee headed by Otto Albert for exercising financial control.

## MEETING WITH OPPOSITION DEFENCE SPOKESMAN

Bearing in mind that a Federal election is due to take place in the coming months, several of my colleagues and I met with the Coalition defence spokesman, Mr. Alex Downer in September to exchange views on the defence scene. It was a useful meeting but I doubt very much that a change of government would be accompanied by increased spending on defence; some changes in priorities might however be expected.

## VALE

The Navy League of Australia lost two founding members during the year. In December 1991, John Paterson, Honorary Federal Secretary

The Navy, January-March, 1993 21



1947-50 and 1980 though 1984 died, and in March, Sir John Bates, Chairman of the Australian Navy League Council 1947-50 and first President of newly constituted Navy League of Australia 1950-55, passed away. Tributes were paid in THE NAVY to both former members who contributed so much to the League.

In July, another distinguished member, Captain Norman Boulton, a former President of the Victoria Division also passed away during the year.

### THE FEDERAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

I reported with regret to the 1991 Federal meeting the resignation of Admiral Sir Anthony Synnot and nominated Vice Admiral David Leach as a member of this important body. The nomination was accepted enthusiastically.

I now report with regret, that Admiral Sir Victor Smith, a strong supporter of the League for a great many years, has felt it necessary to resign due to ill-health.

I wish to place on record the appreciation of all members of the Navy League for the invaluable service Sir Anthony and Sir Victor have rendered the League over the years.

### CHANGES IN OFFICE BEARERS

After many years of service, Athol Robertson, Len Vickridge and John Bird did not seek re-election as President of the Queensland, Western Australia and Victoria Divisions respectively at this year's divisional meetings. I regret their departure as I know you will all do but I anticipate they will find other ways of supporting the League's objectives.

The new Presidents and as such, members of the Federal Council, are Ian Fraser who is also Senior Officer of the NRC in Queensland; Arthur Hewitt, formerly treasurer of the WA Division, and Graham Harris who succeeds John Bird. Graham, a barrister, is Staff Officer Naval Reserve Intelligence and a member of the Maritime Commander's team. I welcome the new members - although Arthur Hewitt is not new but merely transformed.

### FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The secretariat under the energetic guidance of the Honorary Federal Secretary/Treasurer, John Wilkins, has worked well during its first full year. Three staff members (who we "share" with the Electrical Development Association of Victoria) - Ray Corboy, Ann Giddings and Karen Evangelista have put in much more time than we are entitled to expect on the affairs of the League. The following statistics indicate the extent of the administrative tasks:

Photocopying	572 pages
Postage	711 Articles of correspondence
Facsimile	392 pages
Typing	315 letters

Until recently the Federal Council has not had overall responsibility for the affairs of the eight Divisions that comprise the Navy League of Australia. However, as a national organisation concerned with national affairs it is hard to escape responsibility for what is said and done in the League's name. I can assure you that the Secretary/Treasurer and I, bearing in mind the fate of numerous company executives in Australia in recent times, are very conscious of our situation and rely heavily on the co-operation of our State and Territorial colleagues to ensure the integrity of the Navy League.

After much effort on the part of John Wilkins, the financial accounts are gradually being brought under control and it is expected a consolidated balance sheet will be available for the 1991-92 year. John will report on the financial situation later in the proceedings of this meeting.

During a period when legal advice has been needed more than usual John Wilkins and I have been fortunate to have two members in

particular to turn to, Roger Blythman and Otto Albert; we are most grateful to both members.

### NAVAL RESERVE CADETS

A report on the present state of the NRC is attached.

I have been advised that TS MARMION, an ASCC unit raised by the WA Division of the League and accepted as an NRC unit in 1986 has won the 1992 Navy League Efficiency trophy.

TS MARMION lacks its own headquarters and meets at the Wanneroo (a northern Perth suburb) High School. The Western Australia Division has established a building fund to aid in the acquisition of a unit headquarters estimated to cost \$200,000. This is a difficult time to raise funds, even for the benefit of young people, but the League has been resourceful in the past and is hopeful of success.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have acknowledged the services rendered to the League by a number of individuals in the course of writing this report. Perhaps I can best conclude by expressing my very sincere gratitude to all office-bearers, Federal, State and in the ACT and Northern Territory, for striving so hard to attain our objectives in these changing times. I am also grateful to all members for continuing their membership; without your support there would not be a Navy League.

GEOFFREY EVANS,  
Federal President

## PROVEN DEFENCE CAPABILITY

DESIGN MANUFACTURE & SUPPORT  
OF SUBMARINE

WEAPON HANDLING & DISCHARGE  
SYSTEMS

COLLINS CLASS

OBERON CLASS

TOWED ARRAY HANDLING SYSTEMS

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

INTEGRATED LOGISTIC SUPPORT

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# A STRONG AUSTRALIA

## Liberal/National Party Naval Defence

### MARITIME DEFENCE CAPABILITIES

**Control of Australia's maritime environment is an essential part of a credible defence policy. Our naval force must have a blue-water capability to patrol our exclusive Economic Zone and to reach sovereign territory like the Christmas and Cocos Islands. The Navy capacity for resource protection and patrolling of the North will be enhanced. The Coalition will fast-track the acquisition of coastal mine-hunters to compensate for our current total lack of capability in this area.**

The following table outlines the current projected shipbuilding program for the next twenty years.

TABLE 1: PROJECTED AUSTRALIAN NAVAL SHIPBUILDING PROGRAM

PROJECT TITLE	NO.	DEVELOPMENT	PRODUCTION
Australian Frigate	2	-	1988-1994
Collins Class Submarine	6	-	1987-1999
ANZAC Ship	10	-	1989-2006
Fremantle Patrol Boat[a][b]	15	1992-1994	1995-2000
Oceanographic and Hydrographic Vessels[a]	3	1993-1994	1995-1998
Coastal Minehunters[a]	4-6	1993-1994	1995-2002
Helicopter Support Ship	1	1994-1995	1997-2002
Offshore Patrol Combatants[a]	12	1995-1996	1997-2010
Replacement Destroyers[a]	3 (+3)	1997-1998	1999-2012

[a] Announced in Force Structure review but have yet to have project approval by Government. Acquisition strategies may not yet have been developed.

[b] Life-of-type extension

### COLLINS CLASS SUBMARINES

The first of the Collins submarines will enter service in 1995 and thereafter one submarine will enter service every year or so until 2000. Although the program replaces six submarines with six, the transition will not be entirely smooth as the Oberons will go out of service faster than their replacements enter it.

Three major issues need to be considered. First, there is a need to guard against potential cost blowouts. Here, the Coalition's approach will be the same as that outlined for the ANZAC frigates. The second issue is the need to decide on whether to augment the submarines' weapons system. The 1987 Defence White Paper raised the possibility of equipping the submarines with a weapons system which would, in effect, give it a stand-off strike capability in addition to their anti-shipping weapons. Such a weapon would add significantly to the deterrent posture advocated as part of this policy. The Coalition will reconsider this option, studying the possibility of equipping the Collins class submarines with

weapons providing it with a deterring, stand-off strike capability. Clearly, these considerations will not generate cost obligations in our first term.

The third issue is whether to take up the option of building two additional boats. On this point, the Force Structure Review concluded that the proposal was not cost effective considering personnel and operating costs. In fact, a more realistic barrier is simply the acquisition cost. However, it remains true that the submarines will play a very important role both as a deterrent and as a highly flexible weapon in the future.

### GUIDED MISSILE DESTROYERS (DDGs)

Project development for the replacement of the three DDGs will take place toward the end of the decade. The Force Structure Review said that planning to replace these ships "will proceed on the basis of an ANZAC derivative." Remembering that the ANZAC frigates will have only a limited ASW capability, the Coalition support the development of a fully

capable DDG replacement, which will have the ability to support the full range of Seahawk Helicopter ASW operations. We will consider a locally produced DDG replacement, or ships built in co-operation with other countries.

### GUIDED MISSILE FRIGATES (FFGs)

The final FFG is currently being completed at Williamstown dockyard following the completion of HMAS Melbourne which has recently been launched and is undergoing trials. The task here will be to monitor the cost and project management of the construction. Of the four FFGs presently in service, two will end service in 2008; and two in 2012. It is too early to speculate about FFG replacements beyond noting that the success or otherwise of the ANZAC frigates will have an important bearing on the type of FFG replacement considered. Planning for their replacement will begin towards the end of the 1990s. Noting the lower-level capability planned for the ANZAC frigates (two vessels), the Coalition supports the principle that the FFG replacement will be equipped at a higher level of capability as a tier one vessel.

### DESTROYER ESCORT (DEs)

The DEs can no longer be considered fully operationally capable ships. In anticipation of their decommissioning in the first half of the 1990s, the remaining DEs in service (Swan, Torrens and Derwent) have had their major weapons systems removed and are reverting to a training role. They are ultimately to be replaced by the ANZAC frigates.

### ANZAC FRIGATE PROJECT

The first of Australia's projected eight ANZAC frigates will be delivered in 1994 or 1995, with one expected every year thereafter until 2002. The Coalition supports the ANZAC frigate project and places a heavy emphasis on the need to keep the project operating within costs, to specification and on time. Careful cost

management will forestall the need to review the future of the project. The Coalition will encourage New Zealand to purchase a further two ANZAC frigates in addition to the two already contracted. Towards the end of the current build, a Coalition Government will examine the possibility of extending the project to build more ANZAC frigates. We will also promote the ANZAC frigate as having a potential export market in the region.

### HELICOPTER SUPPORT SHIP

One of Labor's few substantive policy changes in the Force Structure Review was to propose the acquisition of a HSS.

To improve the ADF's ability to respond to regional requests, the training ship acquired to replace HMAS Jervis Bay later in the decade will have the dual role and capability of helicopter support ship; this ship might also be considered as a replacement in part for the capability provided by HMAS Tobruk, which reaches the end of its life in about 2010. (FSR p. 28)

The Force Structure Review also recommended the purchase of six utility helicopters for use with the ship. Price Waterhouse estimates that the cost of a ship converted from a civilian function would be in the order of \$250 million, with the cost of helicopters additional to that. Some sources estimates that up to \$700 million could be spent on this project.

The Coalition believes that this proposal is too costly in the short term given level of priority which this project should have in comparison to other more important requirements for AEW&C and mine counter-measure vessels. As outlined in the chapter on Co-operative Regional Defence the Coalition supports a lower-cost option for developing a similar capability in the short-term. Our proposal to provide the helicopters and helicopter support for a proposed New Zealand Logistic Support Ship provides a major capability of enormous value to both countries. The helicopters would come from those already in service. If the Sea Kings are used, some slight modifications would be needed for operations with ship. The vessel would be able to provide a disaster relief capability not currently in existence in the South Pacific. It would also be able to contribute to aid to the civil power operations, provide support to South Pacific island governments and in extreme (and highly unlikely cases) support Australian and New Zealand nationals in need of military protection.

An ANZAC Logistic Support Ship would be an effective demonstration of the principles behind Co-operative Regional Defence. Rather than spending \$250 million or more developing a highly sophisticated purpose built ship with

a major amphibious assault capability, the Coalition's proposal will produce a capability suited to the region's needs, will enhance co-operation with New Zealand and do so for relatively little cost. In military terms this proposal will create a major force multiplier for very little cost. In advancing this initiative, the Coalition is aware that some potential sovereignty issues about control of the vessel need to be addressed. These issues, however are not insurmountable. They are certainly worth discussing because of the added capability which the LSS would provide in the South Pacific.

At the very least some \$250 million will be saved as a result of this decision. The Labor Government has released details of proposed equipment acquisition over the next decade. This information shows the proposed timeframes, but not the costs of acquiring equipment. The acquisition of the Helicopter Support Ship has been programmed to take place over six years between 1993-94 to 1998-99. Based on the total cost of \$250 million, the Coalition estimates it will save \$126 million (assuming the expenditure follows a normal curve) during the first term in Government. The Coalition does not rule out the possibility of purchasing a HSS in the medium-term. We will investigate low-cost options for converting a commercial vessel for this purpose.

### HMAS JERVIS BAY

An additional function for the HSS would be to act as a training ship after the Jervis Bay is de-commissioned. But if the HSS is postponed, we must ask if we need to buy a dedicated training ship after the Jervis Bay is decommissioned later in the 1990s.

The answer is no. A dedicated training ship is a luxury the RAN cannot afford given the limited size of the combat fleet. Just as the DEs are now largely used as training vessels, so too will other surface combatants become operationally obsolete and be able to take up this role. Towards the end of the 1990s, a DDG could take on this role. Training requirements should properly be planned around the fleet in being rather than acquire a ship dedicated solely to the purpose.

The money not spent on a training vessel can be better directed towards projects higher up the priority list.

The Coalition will not, therefore, replace HMAS Jervis Bay with a dedicated training vessel. Training requirements of this sort will be focussed on available surface combatants as operational requirements allow. Future Navy requirements for a secondary vessel for troop and cargo transport will be studied.

### HMAS TOBRUK

There will continue to be a requirement for an amphibious heavy lift ship after the Tobruk.

However, as the Tobruk will not be de-commissioned until 2010, studies for its replacement will not be necessary during the 1990s.

### COASTAL MINEHUNTERS AND INSHORE MINEHUNTERS

Following the failure of the Inshore Minehunter project, the Force Structure Review committed the Government to approving "four coastal minehunters of a proven design... as a matter of priority, with an option for a further two vessels later in the decade." Navy plans building to begin in 1995. In addition, trials will continue on the two existing coastal minehunters, "... but no more inshore minehunters will be built." Labor's decision makes no sense. The costs of maintaining two vessels of a unique design with very limited operating capabilities is too great to make this a worthwhile project. The Coalition will therefore abandon the inshore minehunter program and sell the existing catamarans, or put them to different use.

Based on current budget estimates, cutting the inshore minehunter project in total would save \$18.1 million from fiscal year 1992-93 on. Therefore, some savings, amounting to a few millions of dollars will be made by this decision in 1993-94. More importantly, additional money will be saved from forgoing maintenance costs on two vessels of unique design.

Given the urgent requirement to develop a minehunting capability, the Coalition will fast-track the acquisition of coastal minehunters, emphasising the need to purchase proven technology. This project will be given very high priority in the equipment program. Over time, the Coalition will consider purchasing six rather than four coastal minehunters, provided we are assured that the vessels will be fully able to perform their function.

The total cost of the project has been estimated at \$600 million, the early phases of which have already been factored into budget projections.

### AUXILIARY MINESWEEPING CRAFT

Labor's Force Structure Review abandoned a long-term plan to acquire craft of opportunity (COOP) vessels, which could be locally based and used by Navy Reserve crews to tow anti-mine sweeps. The Government maintained that such sweeps could be towed by the four coastal minehunters they propose to purchase at some time in the future. Apart from being a waste of a very costly high technology asset, this decision would limit our Mine Counter-measures (MCM) force to only four vessels. The need is to have a larger number of craft using low technology sweeps to keep harbours open.

The Coalition will resume the COOP program because it is a low cost but highly effective MCM operation. This step was called for by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade in its report on the Defence Force Reserve. The Committee estimated the total cost of the program would be \$20 million over ten years. Of this amount, the Coalition estimates expenditure during the first term in Government will amount to \$4 million.

### FREMANTLE CLASS PATROL BOATS

The Force Structure Review proposes to modernise the 15 Fremantle Class patrol boats in a production phase lasting from 1995 to 2000. The Coalition supports the modernisation program for the Fremantle patrol boats with a view to extending their life well into the next decade. We will seek to keep the update within modest proportions to free as much money as possible to go into the development of a new class of offshore patrol vessels.

According to the consultants, Price Waterhouse, the total cost of the life extension has been estimated at around \$100 million for which Government approval has not yet been given.

### OFFSHORE PATROL VESSELS

The Force Structure Review also proposes to develop 12 Offshore Patrol Vessels, with greater sea-keeping abilities and more heavily armed than the Fremantle class ships. The project development phase is scheduled for 1997-98. The project has not yet been approved by Government for spending purposes but financial provision has been made for the project in the Defence Department Ten Year Defence Plan.

Improved sea-keeping abilities are certainly needed but given the essentially civil nature of the work these vessels undertake the requirement for more weapons systems is less certain. The Coalition supports the development of a new Offshore Patrol Vessel, designed to meet the civil tasks engaged in by the current Fremantle Class patrol boats, but with adequate defensive systems. Noting also that Navy has called this project the Offshore Patrol Combatants project, the Coalition will make sure that the design of these vessels is kept at a level appropriate to their stated task.

Some countries in Australia's region are also looking at patrol vessel options.

As part of our policy of Co-operative Regional Defence, the Coalition will actively encourage the development of a joint acquisition program involving defence industries from all participating countries. The program will realise significant economies of scale while retaining major Australian industry involvement.

### LANDING CRAFT HEAVY (LCH)

The heavy landing craft maintained by Navy are obsolescent and of questionable relevance to ADF requirements. They provide the ADF with a transport capability, but this is matched by many civilian barges. The Coalition recognises there is a declining strategic requirement for heavy landing craft. As the four remaining LCHs have a limited remaining service life, the Coalition will investigate civilian barge capabilities with a view to seeing if this can replace the ADF need for LCH-style transport.

### HMAS SUCCESS AND HMAS WESTRALIA

The maintenance of supply and at-sea refuelling capabilities are important force multipliers for ADF operations. The operations of both the Success and the Westralia during the Gulf War demonstrated their proficiency. They will both usefully remain in service for some years to come. There will, however, be a need to consider replacement options for the Westralia, which is in fact hired rather than owned by the Navy. The most likely option is that the Coalition will exercise the right built into the lease to buy the Westralia. If this is done, some of the leasing costs of the vessel will be offset against the cost of purchase. This will produce a lowered purchase cost of around \$9-10 million.

### FLEET AIR ARM

#### HS-748

The primary function of this aircraft is in electronic warfare training. We will reduce the limited use of the aircraft in VIP transport in

order to concentrate VIP transport with the RAAF.

#### Sea King

With the decommissioning of the aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne, these helicopters have been limited to flying off HMAS Jervis Bay and from land. This obviously limits their usefulness as ASW platforms. Nevertheless, they had provided a useful ASW training focus and it is regrettable that the Labor Government has abandoned this function. The Sea King will continue to provide useful service — including with the foreshadowed New Zealand Logistic Support Ship — in a utility role until a replacement is brought into service towards the end of the decade. The Coalition will stress the importance of commonality with other Navy helicopters in service when replacement options are considered.

#### S-70B-2 Seahawk

The Seahawk will be the main ASW system embarked on the surface fleet. Currently, the helicopter is equipped with passive rather than the more capable active sonar systems. In keeping with a strategic analysis that identifies a growing conventional submarine presence in our region, the Coalition will give priority to improving our ASW capability by looking at improving the surveillance, target acquisition and weapons delivery capabilities of the Seahawk helicopters. The cost of this program will fall well outside of the Coalition's first term in Government.

In acquiring helicopters to operate off the ANZAC frigates, commonality of support and maintenance capabilities with the Seahawk should be a key consideration.

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# Exercise Dugong Major Mine Warfare Exercise

Photographs by JOHN MORTIMER

A Dugong is a mammal that was often mistaken as a mermaid by sailors sailing the high seas. But for men and women participating in exercise DUGONG 2/92 in Townsville, the preparations for this exercise left no doubt as to what DUGONG was all about.

Exercise DUGONG was previously a bi-annual Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and Diving exercise between the Western Pacific USN EOD Team based in Guam and the RAN Clearance Divers, supported by the USN, USAF and RAAF minelay capable aircraft. Last year, Exercise DUGONG 2/92 was expanded in scope as the largest Mine Warfare exercise conducted by the RAN for more than a decade. The aim of DUGONG was to exercise the participants in minelaying, mine countermeasures (MCM) and EOD techniques, whilst providing Australian and American service personnel the opportunity to practise using different equipment and techniques and promote co-operation between the two nations.

Phase One of the exercise commenced on 13th October. COMAUSMINFOR staff deployed with 19 containers to establish the Forward Support Unit (FSU) which housed the Local MCM Headquarters, on No. 4 Wharf Townsville to support the units deployed for the exercise. Despite the dramatic change of climate from Sydney, all progressed well, with 'tent city' being erected in time for the arrival of the first participating unit, Auxiliary Minesweeper AM(S) BROLGA on 30 October, followed soon after by AM(S) KORAGGA.



Above: KORAGGA towing Sweep Bravo off Magnetic Island. Note she is now painted grey and carries the hull number 1185

Phase Two - Peace time operations, commenced with Route survey being conducted by the two MSA(S) and by the charter vessel JAMES KIRBY, manned by Mine Warfare reservists in the Townsville area. Another locally chartered fishing vessel, PACIFIC ADVENTURE has also been used to commence trials on an acoustic drone boat. In conjunction, the laying of inert mines in Halifax Bay weapons range commenced. Two US

Airforce B52s painted a majestic picture as they swept across the Townsville skies, and with the RAAF P-3C ORIONS, layed approximately fifty USN exercise mines.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

Below: The two parts of Sweep Mike comprising 8 Dyads each and associated pipe noisemakers, being coupled by RAN divers prior to commencing sweeping operations. WALLAROO is in the background

Below: WALLAROO with a drone boat coming alongside



## SHIPS WITHOUT NAMES

by  
Brian MacDermott  
Published by  
Arms and Armour Press  
Review Copy from  
Capricorn Link, Australia.  
Reviewed by  
Ross Gillett

## Ships Without Names

The Story of the Royal Navy's Tank Landing Ships of World War Two  
BRIAN MACDERMOTT



The Story of the Royal Navy's Tank Landing Ships of WWII is the subtitle to this new book from Arms and Armour. LST or Landing Ship Tank or large slow target, whatever you may call them, these ships satisfied a most important requirement for the Royal and many other allied navies.

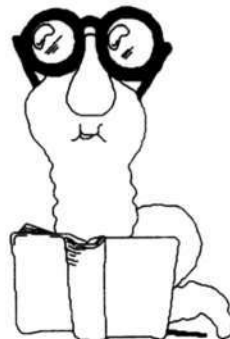
The standard LST 2 was in reality, a 300 foot long box, boasting a flat bottom but able to carry a load of 20 tanks and 27 trucks onto a beach during the many amphibious operations conducted between 1939 and 1945. After the LST 2, came the LST 3, six of which were later transferred to the RAN in 1946. The new ships were 45 feet longer, but like their predecessors remained the ugly ducklings of the fleet. Australia's LSTs spent most of their time in RAN service, laid up in reserve, the exception being LABUAN, which provided support for the Antarctic Bases before paying off in 1955.

Ships Without Names is well illustrated, but for readers expecting dramatic views of the ships, they may be disappointed. On the other hand, the book provides an important record, both in narrative and visual formats, of the

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## BOOK



## REVIEWS

ships, the forgotten heroes, that launched the Allies to victory in the Second World War. As well the author has included the factual records from official sources, with a selection of interviews of former crew members. Well recommended.

## "THE GUINNESS ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WARFARE"

Edited by  
Robin Cross  
Distributed in Australia by  
Harper Collins Publishers  
Distribution Services,  
PO Box 264, Moss Vale, NSW 2577  
(256 pages - RRP \$59.95)  
Reviewed by  
Vic Jeffery

I had always associated Guinness Publishing with the well-known "Guinness Book of Records", that was until I came across this superb encyclopedia of warfare. Thoughtfully laid-out and in an easy-to-read format, "The Guinness Encyclopedia of Warfare" commences with the Greek-Persian Wars of 499-448BC and skilfully spans 2500 years of warfare, concluding with the recent Gulf War of 1991.

From Alexander the Great to Nelson and Wellington, from the might of Rome to the high-tech battlefields of the Gulf War, from war galley to ballistic missile-armed nuclear-powered submarine, they are all included.

This encyclopedia is divided into 12 sections, each by a separate contributor. The sections being: The First Military Empires; Hoplites to Hannibal; The Might of Rome; Rome's Decline and Fall; The Dark Ages; Medieval Warfare; The Gunpowder Revolution; The Birth of Modern Warfare;

Industry and War; The First World War; The Second World War; and Warfare Today and Tomorrow.

Each section is sub-divided and contains highly illustrated and concise feature articles covering topics such as The Evolution of the Fighting Galley; Roman Naval Warfare; From Floating Fortress to Ship-of-the-Line; The Rise of the Dreadnought; The U-Boat; Naval Warfare; and concludes with articles such as Precision Guidance and Dismantling the Cold War Arsenals.

Running across the bottom section of pages throughout this reference work are feature highlights containing summaries and maps of crucial battles on land, sea and air in chronological order commencing with the Campaign of Thutmose III in 1481BC.

Many naval battles are included - Spanish Armada, Trafalgar, Tsushima, Jutland, Cape Matapan, Midway, Destruction of Convoy PQ17, etc. Each battle and campaign has an explanation as to why and how they were fought.

Lavishly illustrated throughout, this book is a good mix of colour and black & white photos, graphics, maps and reproductions of paintings. Two paintings of which caught my attention being Horatio Nelson after being wounded at Tenerife in 1797 and the US Civil War submarine CSS Hunley at Charleston on December 6, 1863 - two months before she sank the Union's USS Housatonic off Charleston before going to the bottom herself.

The Guinness Encyclopedia of Warfare is an authoritative survey of warfare designed to appeal equally to the military enthusiast and the general reader. A commendable reference work.

## THE WHEELS STILL TURN

A History of Australian Paddleboats  
by  
Peter Plowman  
Published by  
Kangaroo Press  
Reviewed by  
Ross Gillett

In his introduction to the book, the author states that the paddleboat played a major role in the development of the nation. For the Navy, both colonial and Commonwealth, the fleets included in their ranks, a small number of paddlers from the Tasmanian KANGAROO, employed as a minelayer in the Derwent River in the late 1880s and 1890s to the former Port Phillip steamer WEEROONA, taken over by the United States Navy in 1942 for use as an accommodation vessel.





For WEEROONA, the changes affected for war service made her virtually unrecognisable. Her social hall was altered to a large freezer, three of the boilers removed and open decks enclosed. With her naval service in New Guinea completed the ship returned to Sydney. She remained laid up in Kerosene Bay until 1951, when she was broken up. Another paddler to enjoy long naval service was the tug GANNET, employed as an auxiliary by the Victorian Colonial Navy from 1884 to 1893. Built in England, the iron hulled ship was typical of the paddle tugs of the late 19th century.

Of particular interest in *The Wheels Still Turn*, is the section devoted to the mechanisms of paddlers including diagrams of operating wheels.

*The Wheels Still Turn* is highly recommended to all readers.

### THE LINE OF BATTLE

The Sailing Warship 1650-1840

Editor

Brian Lavery

Published by

Conway Maritime Press

This is the second volume to be published in Conway's prestigious History of the Ship series and it analyses the world's warships from the mid-seventeenth century until nearly two hundred years later when the development of the steam engine brought about the demise of sailing navies.



Although purpose-built fighting ships had existed earlier, the principal characteristics of the classic sailing warship were only defined in the mid-seventeenth century. The emergence of strong central governments, as in Cromwell's Commonwealth or the France of Louis XIV, combined with the novel line-ahead tactics to produce for the first time national fleets of reasonably similar line-of-battle ships. As the battleship became more distinct, so the need

for a specialised cruising ship became apparent particularly as warfare became truly global – and from this the frigate was born. Other tactical requirements led to the adaptation of a wide range of small craft for naval use. This volume describes the development of all these types and in addition covers such important themes as ship handling, design, tactics and armament.

295 x 248mm (11 7/8" x 9 7/8"), 208 pages, 250 photographs and line drawings.

### "A DICTIONARY OF AUSTRALIAN MILITARY HISTORY"

from colonial times to the Gulf War

by

Ian Grant

Published by

Random House Australia,

20 Alfred Street,

Milsons Point, NSW 2061.

RRP \$29.95, 414 pages.

Reviewed by

Vic Jeffery

I must admit to being somewhat sceptical when I saw this book titled as a 'dictionary' of Australian military history which covers the enormous expanse of our 204 year history.

A limit of around 500 entries was fixed to make this book a manageable project with accounts of each major conflict in which

Australia was involved with campaigns and individual battles.

Australian servicemen and women have served on battlefields as far removed as Russia, Vietnam, South Africa and the Middle East, from the Maori wars to the Gulf War, conflicts seldom of our making.

The Royal Australian Navy is well represented with a 19 page summary and many individual ships and classes along with biographies of prominent individuals. My one disappointment in this area is no individual mentions of our World War One submarines AE-1 and AE-2, although they are included in the summary.

The first two entries in the book are Adams Class, Charles F. (Vietnam War, RAN) with cross references to the ships of this class and the war itself and Adelaide, HMAS (Second World War, RAN). The last naval entry is Yarra (II) HMAS (Second World War, RAN).

Among the numerous other naval entries are: HMAS Armidale, Bathurst-class minesweepers, Battle-class destroyers, Coastal shipping, Coastwatchers, J. Collins, W. Cresswell, L. Goldsworthy, Grimby-class sloops, MV Kraik, Q-class destroyers and HMVS Victoria.

Described as a concise A-Z reference book, this work is indeed a handy quick ready reference for amateur military historian and students.

### EXERCISE DUGONG CONTINUED

BROLGA and KORAGA were also required to play their part laying USN MK6 buoyant mines and the Stonefish Exercise mine.

With all preparations and most importantly mines in place, the Auxiliary Minesweeper Tugs AM (T) WALLAROO and BADICOOT

arrived on 6 November to participate in the exercise. During the operational phase of Exercise DUGONG, mines located were dealt with in a simulated threat environment. This was the first time all MSAs had exercised in a MCM scenario.



Above: BANDICOOT towing Sweep Mike off Townsville during Dugong 92.



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*The Navy League of Australia is now one of a number of independent Navy Leagues formed in countries of the free world to influence public thinking on maritime matters and create interest in the sea.*

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Any person with an interest in maritime affairs, or who wishes to acquire an interest in, or knowledge of, maritime affairs and who wishes to support the objectives of the League, is invited to join.

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- By encouraging and supporting visits by recognised world figures such as former United States Chiefs of Naval Operations and Britain's First Sea Lords.
- By publishing "The Navy", a quarterly journal reporting on local and overseas maritime happenings, past, present and projected.
- By maintaining contact with serving naval personnel through activities arranged during visits to Australian ports of ships of the Royal Australian and Allied Navies.
- By organising symposia, ship visits and various other functions of maritime interest throughout the year.

Member participation is encouraged in all these activities.

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To become a Member of The League, simply complete the Application Form below, and post it, together with your first annual subscription of \$20.00 (which includes the 4 quarterly editions of "The Navy"), to the Hon Secretary of the Division of the Navy League in the State or Territory in which you reside, the addresses of which are as follows:

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***For further information, please contact the Senior Officer in your State, using the addresses provided below.***

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**QUEENSLAND:** Senior Officer NRC, HMAS Moreton, Merthyr Road, New Farm Queensland, 4005.

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA:** Staff Office Cadets, HMAS Leeuwin, PO Box 58, Fremantle, WA, 6160.

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA:** Staff Office Cadets, HMAS Encounter, PO Box 117, Port Adelaide, South Australia, 5015.

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**AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY:** Commanding Officer, TS Canberra, PO Box E52, Queen Victoria Terrace, Canberra, ACT, 2600.

**NORTHERN TERRITORY:** Commanding Officer, TS Darwin, PMB 13 Winnellie, NT, 0820.

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The South African Navy's Ton class coastal minesweeper  
SAS DURBAN (SAN)

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# A Slide into Disorder

*The Peacekeeping role of the Defence Force*

When this edition of THE NAVY appears Australia will have a newly elected government. It might seem that Viewpoint should contain some comment on what, if any, changes might lie ahead for the defence establishment; publishing deadlines however require Viewpoint to be submitted well before the election and certainly, in mid-February, the writer is not prepared to hazard a guess as to which political party will lead the country for the next three years.

It is safe to say there will be changes, but defence has been in the process of changing in many ways for years and this will continue whoever takes office. Contrary to what many people seem to think, those who manage the nation's security affairs are not oblivious to the great changes taking place in the world and are as ready as anyone can be to adjust to altered circumstances.

Although there are a number of differences between the defence policies of the Labor and Coalition parties, there are several important similarities; these include recognition of the vital importance of being able to control the sea and air approaches to Australia (maritime defence) and agreement that peacekeeping overseas is a legitimate and necessary task for the ADF.

Despite political and widespread community support for the ADF's peacekeeping role, there has been some criticism based on a claim that the ADF lacks sufficient combat personnel to send abroad without placing the country at risk; the "risk" has not so far been credibly defined.

At the time of writing Australia has about 1570 service personnel engaged in missions overseas in either countries or areas, the contingents ranging in size from 4 technical experts supervising the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, to 945 in Somalia helping to provide relief for that country's starving population. In addition Australia provides a frigate (with a crew of about 180) for the allied naval force keeping watch in the Middle East, an area of great importance to this country.

With a defence force of 68,000 or so full-time sailors, soldiers and airmen, the absence of less than 2000 members, who are rotated regularly and all of whom could be recalled at short notice if necessary, hardly makes the ADF impotent. Indeed, the experience gained in countries who's stability is important to Australia, in a variety of climatic conditions not dissimilar to the variety experienced in Australia, is without doubt of value to Australia.

Apart from the foregoing there are other important factors to be considered, not the least being changes in the international scene since the Soviet Union collapsed and brought to an end a period during which rivalry between two great military powers influenced the conduct of virtually every country in the world.

The changes can perhaps be best described by quoting from a speech entitled "The New Disorder" delivered in London on 27th January this year by the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Douglas Hurd; Mr. Hurd was addressing the Royal Institute of International Affairs and his wide-ranging survey of the global situation would be hard to dispute.

After stating that the "gigantic Shadow" of Soviet Communism has passed, but that its passing has revealed a multitude of lesser shadows,

the Foreign Secretary went on to say: "Since the end of the cold war we are faced with a different world where disorder is spreading, nationalism in some places is out of hand (Yugoslavia, the Transcaucas), in others (Liberia, Angola, Cambodia, Somalia) factions rather than nations breed hatred. In almost every continent... we find dramas and tragedies which do not directly affect these islands nor those for whom we are responsible, nor our allies. Nevertheless they contain danger of wider conflict. They produce misery which is widely felt to be unacceptable".

Pointing out there was nothing new about misery, murder, rape, the burning of villages and towns and ethnic cleansing, Mr. Hurd said that the advent of television and the hand-held video camera enabled scenes of atrocities to be transmitted into homes around the world within hours and had brought about a new sensibility and a belief that "humanitarian concerns prevail over respect for each nation's right to manage or mismanage its own subjects".

Mentioning 25 current conflicts identified by the Secretary of the United Nations as "substantial", the Foreign Secretary said that no country had the resources to alone act as peacemaker or to enforce peace; he believed however those countries that shared a desire for a safer and more decent world — and there were many — could by acting together and making a rigorously disciplined and constrained effort curb the abuse of human rights and reduce the risk of local conflicts escalating into wider conflicts.

Australia, mentioned by Mr. Hurd together with Canada as a country with a long tradition of peacekeeping, is just as much a part of the international community as Britain and has much to gain by contributing a modest part of its armed forces to peacekeeping and, if necessary, to peace enforcement; the latter would test the resolve of government and the community. To seek a better and more tranquil world may seem idealistic and impossible of achievement, but better to try with others than stand by and watch a continuing slide into disorder and conflict.

*Geoffrey Evans*

Federal President

## "THE NAVY"

All enquiries regarding the Navy Magazine, subscriptions and editorial matters should be sent to:

The Hon. Secretary,  
NSW Division  
NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA  
GPO Box 1719, SYDNEY, NSW, 2001

Dear Sir,

I would like to make a few comments on the story "Submarine Squadron Celebrates 25th Anniversary" published in The Navy, January-March 1993 issue. HMAS PLATYPUS has its own Submarine Historical Collection at the main gate of the base in High Street, North Sydney and is open to the public from 1000 to 1400 hours Tuesday through to Friday. If any of your readers wish to visit or would like more information please contact me at the Collection on 02-9644263 during the above mentioned hours.

I would also like to correct several mistakes. One, the book "Australian Submarines: A History", was written by Lieutenant Commander Michael W.D. White QC RAN (Ret.) not Grahame White.

Two, Though rank and position preclude a seagoing billet on a submarine for CNS, Vice Admiral I.D.G. MacDougal AO RAN, the Admiral is still a submariner.

I congratulate the editors for your stories on submarines, to quote a recent speech at the launch of the submarine exhibition at the Australian National Maritime Museum, "submarines are the silent service" and the branch gets very little press. I also appreciate the photos published on the disposal of HMAS OXLEY's bulk. Other than the stripping of the 'J' class submarines in the 1920s prior to scuttling, OXLEY is the first boat to be cut up and disposed of here in Australia.

Peter Smith

Honorary Curator, Australian Submarine Historical Collection  
HMAS PLATYPUS, North Sydney, NSW, 2060

49a Carlingford Rd  
EPPING 2121  
24 December 1992

Dear Editor,

I would like to comment on the projected names for the ANZAC frigates. While I appreciate the problem in naming such a large group of vessels and still adhere to existing protocols, I believe there were more suitable names from the RAN's past which could have been taken up. Of course some names of ships which had notable service careers can no longer be used. These unfortunately include the N Class destroyers; however at least some of the Q's such as QUADRANT QUALITY & QUICKMATCH would not be out of place today. Similarly it would be inappropriate to use BATAAN in the 1990s but surely KURNAI (her intended name) would not have gone astray, and also maintained our link with the past. Also why have VOYAGER, VAMPIRE and VENDETTA been overlooked?

Of course one could overlook the current conventions altogether and take the same course which was pioneered with the Collins Class and select names of personalities from the past. Australia certainly had an abundance of bravery displayed by members of the RAN, but unfortunately most of these have been forgotten both in and out of the service. On a recent visit to the RAN Surface Warfare School at HMAS WATSON I noticed an honour board which dates back to the years of World War Two listing RANR graduates of the TAS courses (ASW these days). Amongst the graduates in the year of '41 was LCDR Arthur Callaway DSO RANVR.

Who was LCDR Callaway? With a little research I found that the action which culminated in LCDR Callaway being awarded the DSO reads like an article out of a Boys Own magazine of the 1950s. This incident occurred when he was in command of HMS LADY SHIRLEY, a 470 ton ten knot trawler of the Royal Naval Patrol Service. Taken up from trade in 1939 LADY SHIRLEY was given the standard trawler fit of one World War I vintage four inch gun, two machine guns and depth charge rails. Manned entirely by reservists, most of whom were North Sea fishermen, she was assigned to Gibraltar for patrol and escort duties in 1941.

LADY SHIRLEY was patrolling the Tenerife area when in the early hours of 4 October 1941 one of her lookouts sighted U-boat. As she closed to engage the U-boat it dived and LADY SHIRLEY began a sonar

search (ASDIC in those days). Contact was gained at 1,800 yards but prosecuting the attack was complicated by the fact that her sonar was defective and ranges had to be deduced with the aid of a stop watch. LADY SHIRLEY overcame this difficulty and attacked dropping a pattern of five depth charges which forced the U-boat to the surface less than a thousand yards off her stern. The battle however was far from over as LADY SHIRLEY had forced to the surface U-111, a Mark IXB "Atlantic" class boat of 1,050 tons capable of 18 knots and with a surface armament comprising a four inch gun, a 37 mm FLAK gun and two twin 20mm mountings. Both vessels opened fire simultaneously with SHIRLEY's gun layer being mortally wounded in the first moments of the engagement. Fortunately for the little trawler the German 4" crew forgot to remove the tampon before firing rendering the gun inoperative. The surface action went on for some twenty minutes during which a number of LADY SHIRLEY's crew were severely injured. LADY SHIRLEY's 4 inch fire was effective and U-111 went down taking eight of her crew with her.

LADY SHIRLEY's crew of thirty then had the problem of containing forty five German POW's on her return trip to Gibraltar.

LCDR Callaway was awarded an immediate DSO "for daring and skill in a brilliant action against a U-boat in which the enemy was sunk and surrendered to HM Trawler LADY SHIRLEY." Awards to the crew included two DSCs, six DSMs a CGM and five MIDs. One recipient of the DSC was LEUT Ian Boucat RANVR, a Sydney solicitor and the trawler's third officer.

Unfortunately LADY SHIRLEY's glory was short lived as she disappeared with all hands while patrolling the Western approaches to the Straits of Gibraltar on 11 December 1941.

The RAN has established a good precedent in recognising its more noted members of the past with the naming of the Collins Class submarines. Would it not be more appropriate we continue this recognition in naming the ANZAC frigates after people like Arthur Callaway, than HMAS WOOPWOOP (with all due respect to our country towns)? I personally would much prefer to serve in an HMAS CALLAWAY than an HMAS WOOPWOOP; in fact I think I would prefer even to serve in an HMAS LADY SHIRLEY!

Yours sincerely,

Noel Burgess, LCDR RANR

NOTE: In researching this incident I found that while Janes Fighting Ships 1945 recorded the losses of both LADY SHIRLEY and U-111, it also showed U-111 as still being extant but as a Class VII U-boat. This was probably the reason some earlier writers erroneously classed the U-111 in the LADY SHIRLEY action as a much smaller submarine. My understanding of the policy in the German navy in that era was that U-boat numbers were not re-used. The error in Jane's was more than likely due to the confusion in the German records systems immediately after WWII.

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# NAVALNEWS

## SECOND GUIDED MISSILE FRIGATE FOR W.A.

The guided missile frigate (FFG), HMAS DARWIN, will be homeported in Western Australia from December, the Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Ray, has announced.

The ship will join nine other commissioned vessels now based at the Navy's Fleet Base West at HMAS STIRLING, south of Perth.

The fourth and last FFG built in the United States for Australia, DARWIN was commissioned into the RAN in July 1984 and recently distinguished herself in the first, third and fifth RAN Gulf Task Force deployments enforcing United Nations Security Council sanctions against Iraq.

Senator Ray's announcement of her basing in the west follows the homeporting of sister ship HMAS ADELAIDE in Western Australia last October (1992).

Senator Ray said the arrival of DARWIN will bring the number of commissioned RAN units based in the west to 10. Apart from ADELAIDE, others currently homeported at HMAS STIRLING include the destroyer escorts HMA Ships SWAN, TORRENS and DERWENT; HMA Submarine ORION, underway replenishment ship HMAS WESTRALIA; hydrographic survey ship HMAS MORESBY; and Fremantle class patrol boats HMA Ships BUNBURY and GERALDTON.

"The basing of DARWIN in Western Australia will represent a significant enhancement of the destroyer/frigate force now at STIRLING," he said.

Senator Ray said that, although the first combat ship to be homeported in the west, HMAS STUART, had since been decommissioned, there had been 'a steady increase' since then in the number of ships based in the west.



HMAS ADELAIDE on the shipyard facility in WA for an \$8.5 m refit. (LSPH Scott Connolly)

"The population has also grown steadily from about 500 and their dependants in 1984 to about 1800 plus dependants today", he said, "and in the longer term will employ about 2550 Navy personnel at STIRLING and in WA-based ships."

Senator Ray added that about half the RAN's major combatants will be based in WA by the year 2000.

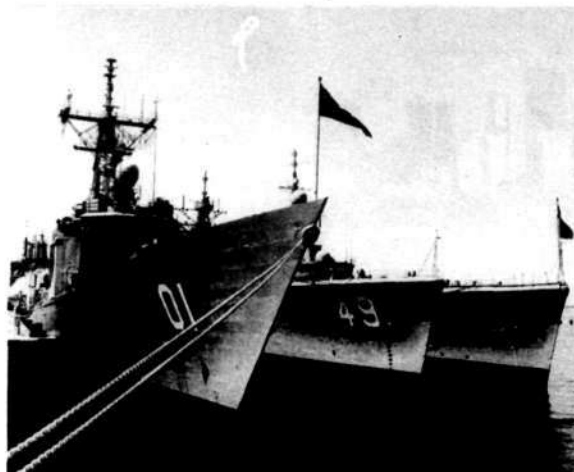
"The homeporting of DARWIN is a further demonstration of the Government's and Navy's commitment to the two-ocean basing policy," he said.

## LARGEST NAVY SHIP - NEWCASTLE REFIT

The Royal Australian Navy replenishment ship HMAS WESTRALIA arrived in Newcastle on Saturday 9th January to begin a four month refit with FORGACS Engineering Ltd.

The \$3 million plus contract was awarded on 15th December 1992, with work commencing at the Newcastle dockyard on 18th January.

## NAVALNEWS CONTINUED



The first FFG homeported in WA, HMAS ADELAIDE towers over the DES, HMA Ships DERWENT and SWAN (RAN)

## PROGRESS REPORT (JAN 93) HMAS TOBRUK

HMAS TOBRUK is now in Somalia to land Army vehicles and equipment and the embarked force of 75 to aid the United Nations international Task Force (UNITAF) in Operation SOLACE.

Since her departure from Sydney on 26th December HMAS TOBRUK underwent a work-up and an Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE) and received a satisfactory grading from the Sea Training Group. Once in Townsville, the crew were able to keep up the enthusiasm and worked well with the Army to load the ship with the equipment bound for Somalia and provisions for the six month long deployment.

On 4th January 1993, TOBRUK made a one day stop in Darwin to stock up on food, water and fuel. During the short stay, the Mayor of Darwin visited TOBRUK and read a letter addressed to the Commanding Officer, ship's company and embarked forces. The letter was from the people of Darwin wishing them every success in their forthcoming tour of duty in Somalia and a safe return home. This was TOBRUK's last farewell from Australia before they sailed for Somalia.

Another one day stop was made to the British owned island, Diego Garcia on the 14th January for last minute provisions. The personnel of the United States Communications Facility based at Diego Garcia were helpful in

continued their own work-up program to prepare themselves fully for their support role to the Australian Army for the duration of Operation SOLACE.

Major Damage Control exercises, small arms training and Defence Team training has been a constant part of TOBRUK's daily activities. Morale is high, as everyone onboard is aware of the importance of their task and of the hope that Operation SOLACE will bring.

On the 17th January HMAS TOBRUK rendezvoused with HMAS JERVIS BAY who was on her return trip from unloading Army supplies and troops in Mogadishu, TOBRUK will transfer mail and some personnel to JERVIS BAY for the return to Australia via Singapore.

TOBRUK arrived in Mogadishu on 20th January and spent four days unloading and assisting the Australian Army. She will then sail down to Mombassa in Kenya to pick up more supplies for the Army in their continued support of this United Nations humanitarian mission. HMAS JERVIS BAY arrived on 12th January.

## USS RANGER VISITS SYDNEY

The United States aircraft carrier USS RANGER sailed into Sydney Harbour, Saturday 9th January. Accompanying the 81,163 ton, 1,070 foot long ship was her escort and support group, comprising the guided

providing TOBRUK with what she needed and provided assistance in every possible way. During their time at sea TOBRUK's crew



The final moments of the BREMER, a landing craft built for the Army in WWII. The vessel was recently scuttled in Moreton Bay. (Courier Mail)

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Above: USS RANGER arrives in Sydney Harbour (ABPH G Penrose)

Right: USS CHOSIN (LSPH A Gay)

missile cruisers, USS CHOSIN and USS VALLEY FORGE and the support vessels WABASH and MAUNA KEA.

Thousands of Sydney-siders flocked to harbour vantage points at North and South Heads, Cremorne Point and the Domain to witness the arrival of the "Top Gun of the Pacific Fleet" as she steamed up harbour to her berth in W'loo Bay. RANGER was manned by 5,170 officers and men with an embarked air wing of 70 plus aircraft.

USS RANGER is the second USN "super carrier" to visit Sydney in two years. In May 1992, her sister-ship USS INDEPENDENCE berthed in W'loo Bay for the Coral Sea Anniversary.

## SINGAPOREAN AND AUSTRALIAN SAILORS PARTICIPATE IN WEST COAST DIVING EXERCISE

More than 40 clearance divers from the Republic of Singapore and Royal Australian Navies have participated in a 10-day clearance diving exercise in Bunbury, about 150 kilometres south of Perth.

6 The Navy, April-June, 1993



Exercise AXOLOTL1/93 involved the efforts of 22 clearance divers from the RAN's Clearance Diving Team Four (CDTF4) and about 20 from Singapore Naval Diving Unit in mine counter measures and explosive ordnance demolition techniques.

A Navy spokesman said mining of ports is considered to be a problem of common regional interest and that AXOLOTL exercises helped to establish common procedures between regional forces to deal with the threat.

(RAN clearance divers featured

## GOVERNOR PRESENTS COMMUNITY AWARD

An immaculate Royal guard and 450 members of HMAS NIRMBA's ships' company greeted his Excellency, the Governor of New South Wales (Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair) when he arrived to present the 1992 Navy League Community Award to NIRMBA on 19th January.

The Ceremony was witnessed by the Flag Officer Naval Support Command (Rear Admiral David Holthouse), the Federal President of the Navy League (Geoff Evans); the Vice President (Andrew Robinson a former FONSC), President of the NSW Division of the League (Otto Albert) and Vice President Keith Adams, together with Local Authorities dignitaries, relatives and friends.

Before inviting the Governor to present the Award Shield the Federal President briefly traced the history of the Navy League in Australia, pointing out that it was older than the RAN itself, having been formed (as a branch of the UK Navy League) in 1901.

His Excellency, well acquainted with NIRMBA through several senior naval appointments, spoke warmly of the establishment's fine training record over the years and its significant place in the local community; he said NIRMBA would be greatly missed when it closed at the end of the year and its activities transferred to CERBERUS.

The Commanding Officer of NIRMBA, Captain Geoff Cole, thanking the Governor for presenting the trophy (won by NIRMBA for



Her last voyage, USS RANGER sails from Sydney (B Morrison)

prominently in the clearance of two ports in Kuwait of sea mines and a vast quantity of other ordnance including explosive body traps ashore, left in the wake of the retreating Iraqi troops.)

Exercise AXOLOTL 1/93 finished on January 21.

## 'SILVER PLATTER' FOR HMAS PERTH

The Royal Australian Navy guided missile destroyer HMAS PERTH, commanded by CAPT Geoff Walpole, has been

awarded the RAN's "Silver Platter" the Fleet Service Award in the "senior service".

Mr. Bill Galvin, President of the Catering Institute of Australia, presented the award to the ship's company on 21st January. For HMAS PERTH it was the second time the award has been won by any one RAN ship.

The "Silver Platter" was first awarded to an RAN unit in 1983 as an incentive to improve food service standards throughout the Fleet. The award takes the form of a wall plaque and is judged throughout the year by members of the Fleet Supply Staff. Finalists are then assessed during inspections by members of the catering Institute who then select the eventual winner.



The Silver Platter Award: the winning captain and the winning ship. (Tele-Mirror)



FNS FLOREAL approaches HMAS GERALDTON during in-company exercises. (RAN)

the second time) said "NIRIMBA will retire from the contest undefeated".

## MAJOR MARITIME EXERCISE

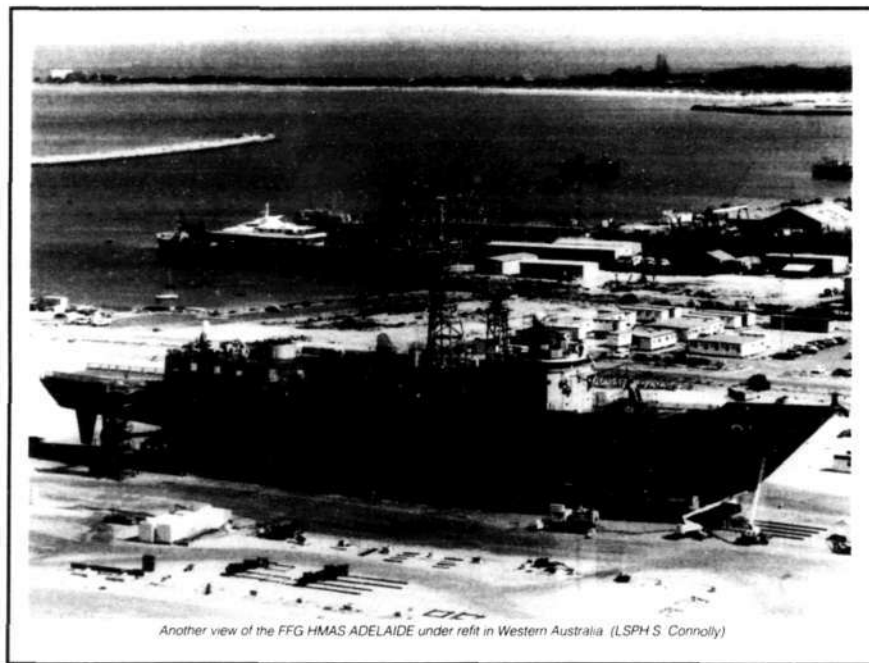
More than 2,500 officers and men, manning eleven Australian and New Zealand naval ships sailed from Sydney on Monday, 8th February to conduct joint maritime and air exercises off the New South Wales coast.

The eight RAN and three RNZN ships included three guided missile destroyers (PERTH/HOBART/BRISBANE), two guided missile frigates (SYDNEY/MELBOURNE), two destroyer escorts (DERWENT/TORRENS), two frigates (CANTERBURY/WAIKATO), a submarine (OVENS) and two oilers (SUCCESS/ENDEAVOUR).

During the war phase the ships were joined by RAAF and RNZAF aircraft plus "live" firings of naval guns, missiles, torpedoes and helicopter operations at sea. The Fleet Concentration is designed to test and evaluate



Navy League Community Award is presented to HMAS NIRIMBA



Another view of the FFG HMAS ADELAIDE under refit in Western Australia. (LSPH S. Connolly)



HMA Ships MELBOURNE, BRISBANE and SWAN depart for the Fleet Concentration in February 1993. (J. Straczek)



The restored mast of HMAS SYDNEY. (J. Straczek)

the operational readiness of the crews in a "high pressure" environment.

## SYDNEY MONUMENT

The Royal Australian Navy has officially "recommissioned" the famous mast of the first HMAS SYDNEY, on Bradleys Head at Mosman. The mast had just completed

a major restoration, as part of an appeal to restore the "fighting top" of the First World War light cruiser. More than \$100,000 was raised by the Navy to ensure the mast would stand on the shores of Sydney Harbour well into the next century. First erected on the headland in 1934 by the Mayor of Mosman the mast was last refurbished during the 1960s. The 1992 restoration ensures the visual significance of the site will not be lost to the

current generation of sailors and users of the Harbour and foreshores. To commemorate the occasion a brief ceremony was held from 10.45 to 11.30.

The first HMAS SYDNEY won the RAN's initial battle honours in the First World War when she sank the German raider SMS EMDEN at the Cocos Islands, en-route to the Mediterranean with the First AIF convoy.



Indian missile corvette prior to arriving in Fremantle on a goodwill visit. (RAN)

## TOP AWARD TO HMAS HOBART

The Governor General of Australia, Mr Bil Hayden, presented the Navy's top efficiency award to the guided missile destroyer HMAS HOBART.

HOBART was awarded the Gloucester Cup for most efficient ship in the Fleet in 1992.

The ship also picked up four other major Fleet awards for proficiency in gunnery/missile firing, communications, anti-submarine warfare and combat systems application. These awards were also presented by the Governor General.

The Gloucester Cup was received by the Commanding Officer, Captain Bill Dovers, on behalf of the 330 officers and men of HOBART.

1992 was a busy year for the ship. She took part in commemorations marking the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea, and several major fleet exercises, the highlight being RIMPAC 92 held off San Diego.

## EXPANSION OF SUBMARINE FACILITIES

The Minister for Defence, Senator Robert Ray, announced on 5th February that the Collins Class submarine training facilities in Western Australia will be expanded.

"Navy will relocate facilities at the Submarine Warfare Systems Centre at HMAS WATSON in Sydney to HMAS STIRLING in Western Australia," he said. "This follows the decision announced in the recent Defence Force Structure Review that all six of the Collins Class submarines will be homeported to the west."

"The Combat System Simulator (CSS), required to conduct operational and command team training for the Collins submarines, and the Land Based Test Site (LBTS), needed to support submarine operational software, will be relocated to Western Australia."

The New Submarine School will be expanded to accommodate the new facilities to create a Submarine Training and Systems Centre.

The total cost of the relocation is expected to be about \$13 million.

"However, this means that a separate Combat System Maintainer Training Facility, budgeted at a cost of \$12 million, will no longer be required," Senator Ray said.

"There will be no increase in the overall project cost and there will be significant savings and greater efficiency throughout the life of the new submarines as a result of consolidating all training and support facilities in Western Australia."

The Minister reported to the Senate on December 17th that the Project Office, the Contractor and the Defence Department advised him that the Collins submarine project was on time, within budget and ahead on performance — "a remarkable achievement for such a major complex after five years".

## TASMANEX 93

TASMANEX 93 ended on 25 February with the entry of 15 Australian and New Zealand ships to Auckland and flypasts of fixed and rotary wing aircraft.

The Auckland entry was followed by the entrance of the two RAN Guided Missile Frigates (FFGs) in the exercise to Wellington Harbour the next day.

More than 3,800 members of the RAN, RNZN, RAAF and RNZAF were involved in the exercise which began with Australian and New Zealand ships departing Sydney on February 18.

RAN ships involved included all three Guided Missile Destroyers (DDGs) HMA Ships PERTH, HOBART and BRISBANE, Guided Missile Frigates (FFGs) HMA Ships SYDNEY and MELBOURNE, Destroyer Escorts HMA Ships DERWENT and TORRENS, Replenishment ship HMAS SUCCESS and, in the early stages of the

opposed transit, HMAS OVENS.

RNZN ships included the Leander Class Frigates HMNZ Ships WAIKATO, CANTERBURY and SOUTHLAND, Inshore Patrol Craft HMNZ Ships MOA, KIWI, WAKAKURA and HINAU, Diving Support Vessel HMNZS MANAWANUI and Supply Ship HMNZS ENDEAVOUR.

A wide range of aircraft operated from both sides of the Tasman: RAAF P3C Orions and RNZAF A4K Skyhawks from HMAS ALBATROSS, F/A18s from RAAF WILLIAMTOWN and F111C3 from both RAAF AMBERLEY and RNZAF OHAKEA, Orions and other RNZAF Skyhawks also operated from NZ Air Stations.

Many of the ships and aircraft carried out weapons practices in the fleet concentration period in the East coast exercise area in advance of the departure from Fleet Base East for the transit.

OVENS provided a "threat" which enabled surface and air operators to sharpen their anti-submarine warfare skills.

This gave way to a scenario of a South Pacific Island dictatorship harassing shipping and destabilising another South Pacific Island State north of New Zealand.

Commodore AUCLAND, Cdre Karl Moen, told a post-exercise press conference that both sides claimed "a win". He said the exercise was intended to provide practice to help the Defence Forces meet periods of conflict and tension "such as the Gulf War".

Asked for justification for this type of exercise "when most military commitments seem to be for peace-keeping and disaster relief", Cdre Moen said, "If you just train for peace-keeping and disaster relief then, when something else comes along, you won't be able to do it."

The Orange Force Commander for Tasmanex 93, CO of PERTH Capt Geoff Walpole, said that from his point of view the exercise had been a period of tension but constraint.

"Most of the time Orange Force was under very stiff constraints," he said. "We could have destroyed Blue Force on the first day out but it was not until virtually the last day that the constraint was lifted." About 180 Australian, New Zealand and Canadian Naval reservists were also involved in Naval control of shipping.

"It was a considerable task to establish what merchant shipping was entering and moving through our waters," he said.

"There was considerable interest within the Merchant Shipping community and we received a response from every (Merchant Shipping) in New Zealand within 48hrs of notifying them of the exercise."

Cdre Moen added that 19 large ships had been led through mythical minefields.

The Maritime Commander Australia, RAdm Rob Walls, was asked how important he considered Tasmanex 93.

"I think an indication of how important we consider it can be gauged from the number of people who participated. It's the largest collection of people we've had anywhere for a considerable period," he said.

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# THE SOUTH AFRICAN NAVY 70 Years On

*The South African Navy, which celebrated its Seventieth Anniversary during 1992, has a proud record of achievement both in war and in peace. In this article, Commander Allan du Toit RAN, whose recently published book South Africa's Fighting Ships is reviewed in this issue, traces the development of the South African Navy since its formation in 1922.*

Although the South African Navy's earliest beginnings can be traced back to the formation of a small volunteer naval force at Port Elizabeth in the Cape Colony in 1861, it was not until January 1922 that a small South African naval force became a reality with the arrival of the country's first naval vessels from Britain. These were the survey vessel HMS CROZIER which was subsequently renamed HMSAS PROTEA, and the two Mersey class mine-sweeping trawlers EDEN and FOYLE which were renamed SONNEBLOM and IMMORTELLE.

The acquisition of these ships by the South African Government stemmed from the Imperial Conference held in London in mid-1921. At this Conference the British Government agreed to discontinue South Africa's outmoded annual contribution towards the running of the Royal Navy, and decided instead that, like the other dominions, South Africa would establish the nucleus of a permanent seagoing naval force.

Sadly, the South African Naval Service (SANS), small as it was, was not destined to last for long. As a result of the Wall Street crash of 1929, which ushered in the Great Depression of the 1930s, defence expenditure in South Africa was severely cut; South Africa's infant navy becoming the main victim. As a result, all three vessels were returned to the Royal Navy, and all but a handful of personnel were paid-off in 1934.

Although the SANS had now disappeared as a seagoing force, the South African Division of the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve (RNVR(SA)), formed in 1912, fortunately continued to flourish in the years leading up to World War II.

Five years after the disposal of the vessels of the SANS, South Africa again found itself at war, when the Union Government declared war on Germany. As was the case at the outbreak of war in 1914, South Africa was almost entirely bereft of adequate indigenous maritime defences, with the seaward defence of the country, and the protection of South Africa's



In 1898 the Cape Colonial Government authorised the development of Simon's Town as a major naval base for the vessels of the Royal Navy's Cape of Good Hope and West Coast of Africa Station. This extensive development, which was finally completed in 1910, included the construction of a sheltered tidal basin and a 228 metre long graving dock. (SA Naval Museum)

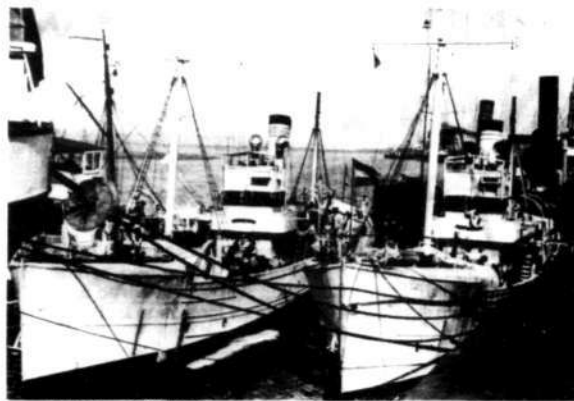
trade on the high seas, in the hands of the Royal Navy.

The Admiralty's war plan, based on experience gained during World War I, made provision for port minesweepers, anti-submarine vessels and examination craft manned principally by the RNVR(SA) to be based at the major South African ports. To this end, a number of local trawlers, whale catchers and other small vessels which had previously been surveyed, were quickly requisitioned and readied for war service.

The War was still in its infancy when the South African Government decided that the Union Defence Force should be responsible

for seaward defence as the Royal Navy would be unable to provide more than a few warships to operate occasionally in South African waters.

The first task facing the fledgling Seaward Defence Force (SDF), which was formed on 9th October 1939, was to acquire ships and train men as quickly as possible in order to meet its commitments. A large measure of assistance was rendered by the Royal Navy during the formation of the SDF, and the force took over most of the vessels which had been requisitioned locally by the Admiralty. The Royal Navy also agreed to release some members of the RNVR(SA) to serve in the new force.



HMSA Ships SONNEBLOM and IMMORTELLE, pictured here at Durban in 1930, formed the nucleus of the fledgling South African Naval Service between the World Wars. (SA Naval Museum)

In May 1940 the new Force was engaged in the arduous task of clearing mines laid by the German commerce raider ATLANTIS in the main shipping route near Cape Agulhas at the southern extremity of the African continent. A number of enemy minefields were subsequently dealt with in Cape waters, and the Mine Clearance Flotilla also took part in a number of operations with the Royal Navy, including the successful high-seas interception and capture of a Vichy French convoy.

The activities of the SANF were not confined to South African waters, and less than a year after its formation, the new Service extended its operations far beyond the borders of South Africa. In response to an urgent request from the Admiralty in November 1940, a flotilla of anti-submarine vessels sailed for the Eastern Mediterranean to join the British Mediterranean Fleet under Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham. The 22nd Anti-Submarine Group, consisting of four converted anti-submarine whalers, arrived in Alexandria on 11 January 1941 and were almost immediately put to work protecting the exposed supply route between Alexandria and Tobruk. The Flotilla tackled this task with energy and determination in the face of incessant air attack, and sadly, a month later, HMSAS SOUTHERN FLOE became South Africa's first war loss after striking a mine off Tobruk.

SOUTHERN FLOE was replaced, and the number of South African ships in the Mediterranean steadily increased, reaching a peak of four anti-submarine vessels, eight magnetic minesweepers (166th and 167th Minesweeping Groups) and a salvage vessel in 1944.

12 The Navy, April-June, 1993

In addition to their brave exploits on the supply run to the besieged Australian troops at Tobruk, South African vessels in the Mediterranean theatre also played a notable part in later operations along the North African and Levant coasts and in the final phase of the Italian and Adriatic campaigns.

On 1 August 1942 the rapidly growing SDF, and the RNVR(SA) which had grown to unprecedented levels, were amalgamated to form the South African Naval Forces (SANF). From that date, all members of the RNVR(SA) serving with the Royal Navy throughout the world, automatically became seconded members of the new SANF.

In October 1942 the enemy launched widespread submarine attacks on shipping using the routes round the Cape which were of initial importance to the Allied cause. Thirteen ships were sunk in the first four days of the offensive. Whilst maintaining anti-submarine patrols at the entrances to South African ports, SANF ships also took part in coastal anti-



The sturdy converted minesweeping trawler HMSAS DAVID HAIGH, typical of the 'small ships' which served South Africa with pride during World War II. (SA Naval Museum)

submarine operations throughout the offensive. In all, 133 merchant ships, totalling 743,544 tons, were sunk within 1,000 nautical miles of the South African coast during the war by submarines, whilst only two U-boats were destroyed.

The original functions of the SANF became more varied as the war progressed. Two SANF escort groups, under British operational control, operated in the Indian Ocean between Durban, Mauritius and Kilindini in East Africa between 1943 and 1945, and in early 1945, SANF representation in the war was widened by the dispatch of two vessels to Eastern waters. In addition to this, the SANF also manned two British River class frigates in the Indian Ocean during the closing stages of the war.

The greatest development in the wartime SANF occurred in mid-1944 when the British Admiralty presented three Loch class anti-submarine frigates still under construction to the Union Government. The first two units, GOOD HOPE and NATAL, were employed in British waters and in the North Atlantic during the final days of the war in Europe. NATAL, which had the distinction of sinking a German U-boat whilst on trials - the only Allied ship on record to achieve this unique feat - also served in Eastern waters during the closing stages of the war against Japan.

In addition to manning vessels of the SANF, 786 officers and 2,151 ratings were seconded to the Royal Navy. As a result, 'Springbok' sailors served in just about every type of ship and took part in nearly every major naval operation of the War. A number made the ultimate sacrifice, and significant South African losses were sustained when the NEPTUNE and GLOUCESTER were lost in the Mediterranean and the DORSETSHIRE,

CORNWALL and HERMES were sunk by the Japanese in the Indian Ocean.

More than 2,000 seconded SANF personnel served in the Far East and the SANF was the only arm of the Union Defence Force present when the Japanese signed the instrument of surrender on board USS MISSOURI on 2nd September 1945.

Although South Africa had no navy of her own at the outbreak of World War II, the establishment of an efficient seagoing force, and the rapid expansion of the SANF during

the conflict, was quite remarkable. South Africa's 'little ships', which were awarded 129 battle honours, earned an enviable reputation both in local waters and overseas, and South African sailors established a proud fighting tradition. At the peak period of hostilities in 1944, the South African Fleet consisted of 78 vessels, and by the end of hostilities in 1945, the SANF had a strength of 8,090 officers and ratings.

Towards the end of World War II the South African Government decided to retain a



The greatest development in the wartime South African Naval Process occurred in mid-1944 when the British Admiralty presented three new Loch class anti-submarine frigates to the South African Government. Pictured here is HMSAS TRANSVAAL in the Clyde in May 1945. TRANSVAAL subsequently paid a highly successful visit to Australia during January 1951 to attend the Commonwealth's Jubilee Celebrations. (Cdr H. E. Fougstedt)

permanent sea-going fleet for the defence of South Africa after hostilities ended. This decision was implemented on 1 May 1946 when the combat tested South African Naval Forces (SANF) were reconstituted as a permanent part of the Union Defence Force, with an authorised establishment of 60 officers and 806 ratings mainly filled by 'hostilities only' volunteers awaiting demobilisation. With headquarters at Cape Town and Commodore J Dalgleish CBE as its first director, the SANF immediately set about building up its strength as an anti-submarine and convoy force largely based on British strategy.

Following the closure of wartime SANF establishments at the various ports and the disposal of requisitioned vessels, and ships borrowed from the Admiralty, the SANF was wound down to 17 ships. The immediate post-war fleet consisted of the three new Loch class frigates, two Bar class boom defence vessels, a controlled mine-layer and eleven harbour defence motor launches, whilst two modern Algerine class ocean minesweepers and a Flower class corvette, which was soon converted into a hydrographic survey ship,



A spectacular view of the Modified Type 12 anti-submarine frigate SAS PRESIDENT STEYN at the commencement of a replenishment at sea evolution in 1967. PRESIDENT STEYN, a sister of the River class destroyer escorts operated by the RAN, crossed the Southern Ocean and visited various Australian ports during November 1968. (SA Navy)





As part of the extensive naval modernisation programme instituted in the mid-1970s, it was decided that South Africa would acquire six Reshef class fast missile-carrying strike craft, which were considered to best meet the SAN's operational requirements. Whilst the first three units were built in Israel, all subsequent vessels were built by Sandock-Austral in South Africa (SA Navy)

were purchased from Britain the following year.

Less than a year after the war's end a distinctly South African naval ensign replaced the British White Ensign which South African naval vessels had worn since the formation of the South African Naval Service in 1922.

During 1948 SANF Headquarters moved to Pretoria whilst the fleet and all other personnel moved from Cape Town and the training establishment at Saldanha Bay to the extensive naval base at Salisbury Island in Durban, which had been intended as a major fleet repair base for the Royal Navy following the fall of Singapore in 1942.

Next in the expansion of the navy was the purchase of a relatively new W class destroyer from the Royal Navy which was commissioned into the fleet as HMSAS JAN VAN RIEBEECK on 29th March 1950. She was later followed by a second unit which was acquired in 1953.

On 1 January 1951 the title South African Naval Forces was replaced by the simpler South African Navy (SAN), and the Director SANF became the Naval Chief of Staff. By the beginning of 1952 the SAN had grown to 132 officers and 1499 men, and on 20th June of that year the prefix of SA naval vessels was changed from HMSAS to SAS as growing Afrikaner nationalism gripped South Africa following the election of a National Party Government in 1948.

During 1955 a series of letters, collectively referred to as the Simon's Town Agreement, were exchanged by the South African and British Governments whereby the strategically important Simon's Town Naval Base would be transferred to South African control, subject to Britain retaining certain privileges, and the SAN expanded by purchasing modern anti-submarine frigates, coastal minesweepers and seaward defence boats from Britain for the

other advantages, it allowed Britain and her allies continued use of the base and facilities even in a war in which South Africa was not engaged. The Agreement established a strategic zone approximating to the British South Atlantic Station, including the Mozambique Channel, in which both the Royal Navy and SAN would operate under the operational authority of the British Commander-in-Chief South Atlantic. Within this zone lay a South African Area which remained the direct responsibility of the SAN.

The Simon's Town Agreement initiated an era of unprecedented expansion and modernisation in the SAN. Within the terms of the Agreement, South Africa duly purchased five Ford class seaward defence boats, ten Ton class coastal minesweepers, the Type 15 anti-submarine frigate SAS VRYSTAAT and the three Modified Type 12 anti-submarine frigates PRESIDENT KRUGER, PRESIDENT STEYN and PRESIDENT PRETORIUS from the United Kingdom between 1955-1963. The President class were particularly notable as



The four River class coastal minehunters, which entered service in 1981, are propelled by two non-magnetic Voith Schneider vertical axis propulsion units which are designed to provide excellent manoeuvrability and quietness of operation. Pictured here is SAS UNKOMAAS

defence of the vital sea routes around Southern Africa. As a result, the developing SAN vacated its base at Salisbury Island in Durban and moved to Simon's Town, and on 2 April 1957, after 143 years, the British flag was lowered for the last time at HM Naval Dockyard Simon's Town.

Despite the transfer of ownership of the Simon's Town dockyard to enable the Union Government to provide adequate logistic support for the enlarged SAN, the treaty was very favourable to British interests. Amongst

they were the first major warships ordered and built for the SAN.

In addition to these newly acquired ships, which virtually trebled the size of the Fleet, many of the older vessels were also progressively upgraded locally. This included the refitting of the W class destroyers, which had quickly become obsolete as naval technology rapidly developed during the 1950s. They were extensively upgraded and converted to operate Westland Wasp anti-submarine helicopters between 1962-66, which made them

most useful ships. At the same time the SAAF acquired Avro Shackleton long range maritime patrol aircraft in 1957 to replace its aging Sunderlands, Wasp helicopters in 1964 for operating from the converted W class destroyers, and Buccaneer maritime strike aircraft in 1965.

In the 1960s, as the National Party's racial policies began to create more and more ill-will abroad, South Africa was subjected to a process of increasing isolation from the international community, including the anti-communist West that it was sworn to defend. When South Africa became a republic in 1961 and left the British Commonwealth, numerous African states were in the process of achieving independence. These states began to call for an arms embargo against the new republic. Following the election of a Labour Government in the United Kingdom in 1964, Britain refused to supply further arms to South Africa. Whilst this ban included any new orders for maritime aircraft and naval vessels and equipment the British Government was still prepared to honour existing contracts

was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain such a vessel from abroad, a commercial tanker was purchased in 1965 and converted into a fleet replenishment vessel at Durban. She was commissioned as SASTAFELBERG in August 1967, and immediately became the largest and one of the most useful vessels in the fleet.

Another change occurred towards the end of 1965 with the establishment of a Maritime Headquarters at Youngsfield near Cape Town where the British C-in-C South Atlantic continued to maintain his headquarters until the South Atlantic Command finally closed down on 12 April 1967 as part of Britain's cut back in her overseas defence commitments. Following the closure of this Command, the C-in-C's responsibilities with regard to the Cape Sea Route were transferred to the Chief of the SA Navy who assumed the additional appointment of Commander Maritime Defence (COMMARDEF). Most of the other provisions of the Agreement, however, remained unchanged.

One of the most important moves to

recovery vessel and diving tender was designed and built in Durban, and a new Hecla class survey ship was ordered from the United Kingdom to replace the former Loch class frigate NATAL which had steamed countless thousands of miles since her conversion to a survey vessel in 1957.

Because of the complications of ordering frigates from Britain in the early 1970s, it was announced in 1971 that negotiations were proceeding with firms in Europe for the design of six missile armed corvettes, four of which were to be built overseas, whilst the remainder were to be built in South Africa. Whilst orders were in fact placed with a Spanish shipyard, with Portugal acting as an intermediary, political developments in the Iberian Peninsula in 1974, led to the cancellation of the project.

Although regular combined exercises with the RN continued unabated throughout the early 1970s, and South African personnel continued to attend RN courses, worsening relations between the two signatories of the Simon's Town Agreement finally culminated



SAS EMILY HOBHOUSE which recently recommissioned following an extensive half-life modernisation and upgrade, designed to extend the life and operational effectiveness of South Africa's three French built Daphne class submarines into the next century. (SA Navy)

and to provide spares within the terms of the Simon's Town Agreement.

In spite of its determination not to enter into arms sales with South Africa, the British Government nevertheless still considered the Simon's Town Agreement to be a valid treaty which remained in force, and links between the Royal Navy and SAN remained strong. Combined exercises and weapons training therefore continued between the two navies on a regular basis.

As most African ports were now closed to SAN vessels for refuelling, it became necessary to acquire a fleet replenishment vessel to maintain the SAN's ability to effectively operate in the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans. As it

improve the fighting efficiency of the Fleet and provide South Africa with a credible maritime deterrent, was taken during the mid-1960s with the decision to acquire submarines. Because of the political climate prevailing in the United Kingdom, it was decided to approach France — which was now the only major arms supplier willing to deal openly with the Republic — to supply these vessels. An order was subsequently placed with a French yard in 1967 for the construction of three modern Daphne class submarines, the first of which commissioned in July 1970.

At the same time the three President class frigates were progressively upgraded by the Simon's Town Dockyard, a combined torpedo

in the abrogation of the Agreement by the Labour Government in the United Kingdom on the 16th June 1975. This finally closed the chapter on 180 years of British naval presence in South Africa and effectively ended the traditionally close relationship between the SAN and RN.

It was now even more obvious that South Africa, unaided, would have to defend her own coastline. With the voluntary arms boycott increasingly reducing existing lines of supply, an order for three fast Reshef class missile armed strike craft was placed with Israel in late 1974, whilst two A69 class corvettes and two Agosta class submarines were ordered from France in 1975. South Africa had not, however,

reckoned on the all-embracing mandatory arms embargo which was tabled and accepted by the United Nations in November 1977. Whilst the three strike were delivered in 1977, Paris cancelled the sale of the corvettes and submarines leaving the SAN with no overseas source for new ships.

As a result of the embargo, the SAN was left with an elderly fleet of anti-submarine vessels which could not be replaced except through the costly option of local development and construction. To make matters worse, the SAAF faced a similar problem without a replacement for their ageing Shackletons. The SAN was consequently forced to abandon its role as a pro-West 'Guardian of the Cape Sea Route', and from 1978, concentrated entirely on the protection of South Africa's coastline and maritime interests.

The outcome of the arms embargo was a spectacular period of growth in South Africa's armaments industry, including the local construction of six Minister class missile armed strike craft — similar to those supplied by Israel — between 1978-82, as well as new River class minehunters to supplement the existing Ton class vessels, and more recently the replenishment vessel SAS DRAKENSBURG. These programmes have produced substantial technical, economic and strategic benefits, and most important of all, have placed South Africa firmly on the road to designing and building submarines and corvettes locally to meet the SAN's future needs.

At the same time, in line with its new direction, the Navy's 'blue water' capability all but disappeared with the final passing of the war-built Loch, Type 15 and W classes followed by the PRESIDENT STEYN which was stripped for spares and the PRESIDENT KRUGER which was sadly lost after a collision with the TAFELBERG in February 1982. The sole surviving frigate in the SAN, the PRESIDENT PRETORIUS, was finally paid off into operational reserve in 1985 principally for economic reasons, and is currently listed for disposal.

With the introduction into service of the strike craft, an operational base and support facility was established at Salisbury Island in Durban. Other developments during this period included the conversion of two Ton class minesweepers into minehunters, the extensive upgrading of TAFELBERG, principally to support amphibious operations and the reappearance of a Marine Branch in 1979 primarily for harbour protection and counter insurgency operations.

As part of a force rationalisation programme intended to improve the effectiveness of the SAN, a number of ships were approved for disposal in 1985. These included six Ton class mine countermeasures vessels and all five Ford class seaward defence boats. At the same time, the SAN's command structure was also reorganised, with the three area and three functional commands being



In 1983 the Simon's Town Naval Dockyard was tasked with the conversion of the 26-year old TAFELBERG to carry large helicopters principally to support amphibious operations.

replaced by an Eastern and Western naval command, with headquarters at Durban and Silvermine, respectively.

As a result of much reduced defence commitments and the political shift away from security to welfare, an extensive rationalisation programme for the entire SADF, involving drastic cut-backs and curtailments, was announced in January 1991 to reduce state expenditure in the interests of the 'New South Africa' and all its people. In the case of the Navy, the Marine Branch and a number of bases which were established to accommodate its harbour protection units, were closed down to enable the Navy to concentrate on its traditional seagoing role. In addition to this, control of the navy was centralised at SA Naval Headquarters in Pretoria, the two area commands — Naval Command East and Naval Command West, were disbanded and a number of other units were restructured, scaled down or consolidated. This painful restructuring and rationalisation process, which necessitated the retrenchment of about 2,400 uniform and civilian personnel of all ranks, resulted in a streamlined and effective organisation with shorter and clearer command lines.

Although small by world standards, the current streamlined SAN fleet numbers some 24 ships, with around 15 ships in operational service at any one time. Of these, a Submarine Flotilla consisting of three recently modernised Daphne class submarines and a Strike Craft Flotilla with nine Minister class strike craft constitute the main combat force, supported by the replenishment vessels TAFELBERG and DRAKENSBURG and the torpedo recovery vessel FLEUR. In addition to this, a Mine Countermeasures Flotilla, comprised of four River and four Ton class mine countermeasures vessels, is responsible for ensuring that the RSA's ports are not threatened by mines, whilst the survey vessel PROTEA carries out

hydrographic survey duties in SA waters. A number of small craft are also used for training, air sea rescue, coastal patrol and harbour defence purposes.

Whilst the SAN had hoped to supplement and eventually replace their Daphne class submarines with locally constructed boats based on the German Type 209 design during the early 1990s, this project was indefinitely shelved in 1988 mainly for budgetary reasons. Similarly, attempts to build four corvettes in Durban to replace the four oldest strike craft were shattered in August 1991 — as steel for the first vessel was less than a year away from being cut — due to government funding cuts. As a result, the SAN has to be content for the time being, with the three recently upgraded Daphne class submarines which are now some twenty years old, and the nine Minister class strike craft which are not ideally suited for sustained open ocean operations in the notorious waters surrounding South Africa.

Despite the profound changes taking place in South Africa, the harsh economic restraints on government spending which preclude any major new naval acquisitions and its new 'negative threat' environment, the SAN undoubtedly remains the most professional, efficient and best equipped navy on the entire African Continent at present, with its compact and reasonably well-balanced fleet. It is capable of effectively conducting maritime operations along the Southern African coastline and in the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and its ships are once again being seen around the world, with recent visits to various African states, South America, the Mediterranean and the Far East. Replacement submarines, surface combatants, and to a lesser extent mine countermeasures vessels, will, however, need to start entering service by the late 1990s if the SAN is to remain a credible force in the next century.

## NAVAL MATTERS

### Coastal Minehunters for Navy

A. W. Grazebrook

**Just before Christmas, the Government announced a short list of three companies from which one will be selected to build and supply up to six coastal minehunters to the Royal Australian Navy.**

The companies on the short list will be required to undertake definition studies into certain aspects of their vessels and their mine warfare systems.

The next stage should occur in April, 1993, when requests for tenders will be issued for the construction of the vessels. The tenders should be received in October, 1993. Assuming that one is acceptable, a contract will then be placed, with the first vessel due for delivery in December, 1997.

December, 1997, is two years later than the earlier target date for delivery of the first vessel. This is in spite of the fact that the coastal minehunters are the Australian Defence Force's highest priority equipment item.

Two of the three types on the RAN's short list are already at sea with European navies. The British SANDOWN class (offered by Transfield and Vosper Thornycroft) have now been officially accepted into service with the Royal Navy. The first ship of the Italian GAETA class is at sea and is expected to be accepted shortly. The GAETA is offered by Australian Defence Industries and Italy's Intermarine.

The third type, the LANDSORT 52, is offered by Australian Submarine Corporation. ASC's largest shareholder, Kockums, builds LANDSORT (as distinct from LANDSORT 52) class coastal minehunters in Sweden. Although the 47 metre LANDSORT is proven in service with the Royal Swedish Navy, the larger 52 metre LANDSORT offered to the RAN has never been built. The original LANDSORT design was 'stretched' to meet the RAN's seakeeping and endurance requirements. Singapore has placed an order for four 47 metre LANDSORTs, one of which is to be built in Sweden. Key components for the rest will be built in Sweden and assembled in Singapore.

All three types — SANDOWN, GAETA and LANDSORT 52 — are much the same size.

The RAN's operational requirements are for coastal minehunters,

with a minesweeping capability, capable of clearing mines from Australian coastal waters and those parts of the continental shelf which have important mineral, oil or gas deposits. The latter requires a minehunting system capable of operations in depths significantly greater than one hundred metres.

The deep water operations require a variable depth sonar. The shallow water requirement is met by the VDS which, when retracted into the hull of the parent vessel, is capable of operations in the hull mounted mode.

The British SANDOWN class are fitted with a Marconi Underwater Systems Ltd. Type 2093 variable depth sonar.

The Italian GAETA class are fitted with a Thomson/Raytheon SQQ-32 variable depth sonar.

The Swedish LANDSORT is fitted with a Thomson TSM2022 hull mounted sonar. The Singaporean version of the LANDSORT will also be fitted with a very similar mine warfare system. Thus the LANDSORT is not proven with a variable depth sonar.

The RAN requires all three suppliers to provide details of how both variable depth sonar types will perform with their ships. The reasons for this requirement are not clear, as it is the RAN's clearly expressed preference for 'low risk' (of technical or operational inadequacy or failure) minehunting systems. When the coastal minehunter acquisition programme was announced, a strong preference for a ship proven at sea with a particular mine warfare system was stated.

The RAN requires a minesweeping capability to be fitted in the new coastal minehunters. This will be met by the new ships being capable of stowing and operating the RAN's purpose developed influence sweeping system (as in the auxiliary minesweeper or craft of opportunity). The wire sweeping system requirement has not yet been determined, although it is likely to be that currently fitted in HMA Ships WALLAROO and BANDICOOT.

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The Force Structure Review, which included the decision to abandon further construction of Bay class inshore minehunters and build coastal minehunters instead, assumes that the coastal minehunters would meet the need for minesweeping. Thus, the craft of opportunity programme, for converted fishing vessels and tugs to serve as auxiliary minesweepers, should be discontinued.

Until the coastal minehunters enter service, the auxiliary minesweepers (three small fishing vessel and two larger "tug" type) would remain in service as the RAN's Interim Minesweeping Force. With the two Bay class inshore minehunters and the clearance diving teams, the auxiliary minesweepers are to provide the RAN with a mine warfare capability until the coastal minehunters enter service. As a result of the two year delay, the interim minesweeping force will have to remain in service for markedly longer than had been intended.

The clearance diving teams are an important part of the RAN's mine warfare capability, not least because of their participation in the Gulf War and subsequent mine clearance operations. The CDTs are the only part of the RAN's mine warfare group which has "real war" experience. Now that they have a fully capable mine warfare system, the Atlas Elektronik MWS80-5, with the DSQS-11M hull mounted sonar, the Bay class inshore minehunters RUSHCUTTER and SHOALWATER (built originally as prototypes) can provide a significant contribution to the RAN's shallow water mine clearance capability. Thus they will increase the total numbers of the RAN's mine warfare force. This is important. Even with the maximum of six coastal minehunters, the RAN will be short of numbers of mine warfare ships when this is compared with the huge area of mineable Australian waters and the economic importance of those waters.

For this reason, authoritative outside observers question the wisdom of the plan to dispense with the auxiliary minesweeper force when the coastal minehunters enter service.

The other parts of the RAN's mine warfare force will be the Mine

Warfare Systems Centre and the mine warfare base at HMAS WATERHEN.

The tendering process is underway for the MWSC. This, to be built at WATERHEN, will provide training and a library of mine warfare information and the facilities to use that information in operational planning and other activities.

Under the base modernisation plan, WATERHEN is to be completely rebuilt. Prior to 1988, the Commanding Office of WATERHEN was also Commander of the Australian Mine Warfare and Patrol Boat Forces. In 1988, the Patrol Boat Force Command was established separately at Cairns.

This enabled the Captain of WATERHEN to concentrate much more on mine warfare.

Clearly, as the RAN acquires a modern mine warfare force, that force will assume the importance that the facts of naval warfare dictated it should have assumed at least a decade ago.

One further step is needed. Although some of the earliest commanding officers of the RAN's Ton class minesweepers achieved flag rank (Admiral Alan Beaumont, Chief of the Defence Force, was one), no commanding officer of WATERHEN has ever subsequently achieved flag rank. The RAN's mine warfare force continues to be headed by a Commander. It is no reflection on successive holders of that post to say that proper recognition of mine warfare requires upgrading of the post of its leader.

The RAN is not the only naval service whose mine warfare force has suffered from lack of recognition as a stepping stone for its personnel to the peaks of a naval career. That is no reason for this to continue to be so.

Lack of recognition has contributed much to the RAN's mine warfare problems in obtaining resources in past decades. The resources are now being made available.

The lesson should be learned and the mistake of lack of recognition should be repeated.

# RAFA Biloela

A contemporary report from Commonwealth Engineer, May 1919

The launch of H.M.A. fleet collier Biloela, which took place at the Commonwealth naval dockyard, Cockatoo Island, Sydney, on the 10th April, marks the most important step yet taken in the ship-building industry of Australia, which is entirely due to the foresight and untiring efforts of Rear-Admiral Sir William Clarkson, C.M.G., K.B.E., M.I.N.A., third naval member, director of transports and controller of shipping. This important step in Australian shipbuilding carries with it the following records:-

1. The entire vessel, including all details, was designed in Australia.
2. It is the largest vessel constructed south of the equator.
3. The construction was carried out in five and a half months.
4. The work proves that Australia is capable of entirely constructing large vessels from the raw materials of the country.

The launching ceremony was performed at the request of the naval board by Mrs. J. King-Salter, and she was presented with a bouquet by Miss Cook, daughter of Lady Cook, who was also present. The cutting of the cord was performed with the aid of a mallet and chisel, which were ornamented by carved wooden handles made of Australian timbers. These tools were fitted into a casket nicely carved in similar woods, the whole having been made and carved by the dockyard staff in the joiners' shop.

The construction, together with the launching arrangements, were in charge of the general manager, Mr. J. J. King-Salter, who was very ably supported by Mr. J. W. Clark, assistant general managing engineer; Captain A. A. Barnes, R.A.N., and Mr. J. H. Blundell, acting engineering manager.

The design and construction even to the minutest details of the vessel were carried out under the direction of Engineer Rear-Admiral Sir William Clarkson, who was assisted in the design by Mr. J. Leask, M.I.N.A., ship constructor to the department of the navy. The vessel is constructed to the highest class of the British Corporation. The surveying was carried out by Mr. A. C. Meek, surveyor to the above corporation in Melbourne. The numerous functions laid down by Sir William Clarkson for the vessel to perform called for very strong construction.

As a fleet collier the vessel is capable of carrying:-

- 4000 tons of coal.
- 1100 tons of oil fuel.
- 300 tons of fresh water.
- 1000 tons of general stores.
- 600 tons of bunker coal.

The collier can discharge coal entirely with her own cargo gear, thereby dispensing with the use of the warships' coaling appliances. In



RAFA BILOELA in Sydney Harbour. (RAN)

addition to carrying out the duties of a fleet collier, the vessel is capable of being utilised for coastal and overseas shipping should the necessity arise. The load draft of the vessel is 22 ft. 6 in., but on the draft of 20 ft. 5000 tons of coal could be taken from Newcastle, N.S.W., to Port Pirie, South Australia. The coal would be discharged by the mechanical grabs at Port Pirie, after which the vessel could load lead, ore, or concentrates. The top side

tanks, as indicated in Fig. 2, can be filled with water, thereby raising the centre of gravity of the vessel and rendering more comfort in a seaway.

As will be observed from the section shown in Fig. 2, the inner bottom slopes up to the ship side, thereby permitting the coal to gravitate to the level part of the inner bottom and within reach of the mechanical grabs. Furthermore this arrangement dispenses almost entirely with hand trimming. The cargo holds are entirely free from any obstructions, pillars have been dispensed with. The four cargo hatches are 30 ft wide and about 37 ft long, which is of great advantage, especially when using mechanical grabs. The inner bottom plating has been increased to 3/4 inch thick and flush, so that it will withstand the wear and tear of the grabs.

In a vessel of this type it is of considerable advantage to place the machinery aft, for had the machinery been placed amidships, the shaft tunnel in Nos. 3 and 4 holds would have offered considerable obstruction and inconvenience when discharging coal or ore by the mechanical grabs.

The following are the general particulars of the vessel:-

- Length over all, 382 ft.
- Length between perpendiculars, 370 ft.
- Breadth moulded, 54 ft.
- Depth moulded, 28 ft.
- Load draught, 22 ft 6 in.
- Deadweight, 7000 tons.

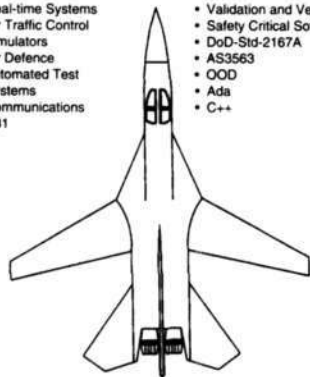
The vessel is of the single deck type with a poop and forecabin 8 ft. above the upper deck. The officers are accommodated under the navigating bridge in large, airy, and well-lit rooms, tastefully furnished with Australian material; electric light, fans, and radiators are also installed. The passages are laid with rubber tiling. In order to provide every comfort for the officers, a small lounge with a fireplace is arranged adjoining the cabins. The deck airing space has a sheltered portion with sliding windows which affords a comfortable airing space. The captain is accommodated in a large cabin directly under the navigating bridge.

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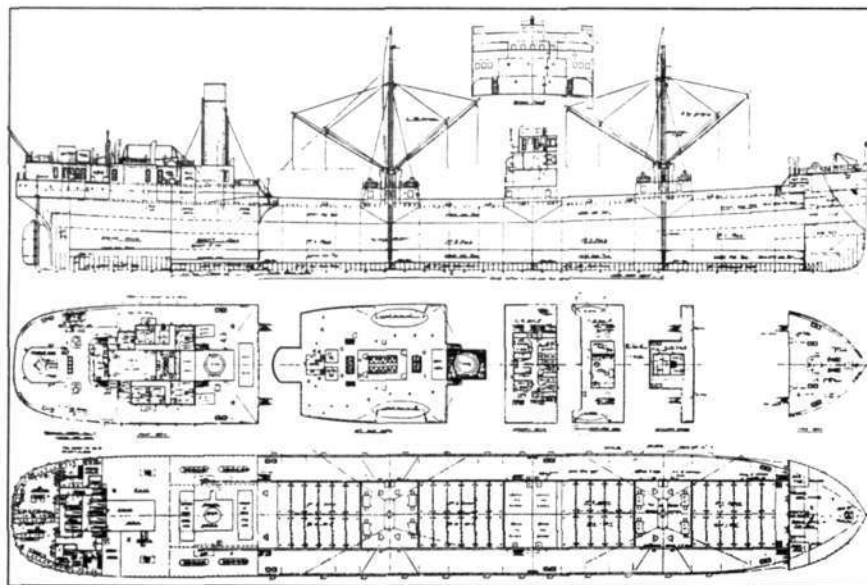
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General arrangement plan of the Fleet Collier

The houses at each mast are arranged for stowing cargo gear, which will be kept in close proximity to its work. There are eight cargo winches, each 7 in. x 12 in., capable of lifting 1 1/2 tons at the rate of 250 ft. a minute. Eleven cargo derricks are fitted, each capable of taking a 5 ton working lift. The two masts are so arranged that fore and aft rigging has been entirely dispensed with. The forecastle is arranged for the carriage of special cargo or live stock if necessary. On Account of the great width of the hatches it was decided to make the hatch covers each 15 ft. by about 6 ft. with ring bolts at each corner for lifting with the derricks. With this arrangement the hatch covers can be removed and the

derricks stowed on the masts before the vessel ties up alongside the wharf.

The engineers are accommodated on the poop deck in close proximity to the engines and boilers, in cabins similar to those of the officers. The dining saloon is arranged on the poop deck with a pantry adjoining. The pantry is fitted with modern appliances. The galley is fitted on the poop deck, convenient for the officers and crew. Food can be taken to the various dining rooms without being exposed to the weather. The seamen and firemen are accommodated around the stern on the upper deck, each having a separate dining saloon, lavatories, baths, and showers. The comfort of the crew has received special consideration, the ventilation of all the living quarters being in excess of the board of trade requirements. The general comfort of the entire ship's company had to be specially considered as the vessel might be coaling the fleet at Hobart in the midwinter, or in the north of Australia during the height of summer. A small isolation hospital is fitted on the after boat deck with all the necessary fittings.

The plates and sections and the ingots for the propeller shafting and crank shafts were supplied by the Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd., from the rolling mills at their steel works, Newcastle, N.S.W. The management of Broken Hill Co. went out of their way to do this work, as a war measure. The sizes of plates they have supplied were, of course, smaller than what could have been obtained from Great Britain of America, but their quality has been all that could be desired, and considering the plant with which they were rolled, the surface of the plates has been excellent for the purpose required.

The whole of the equipment of the hull is being manufactured in the Commonwealth, with the exception of chain cable and steel wire rope.



RAFA BILEOLA starboard bow view, (RAN)

The main engines and boilers, except the pressure parts (which are being made by Messrs. Hawke and Co., Kapunda, South Australia), and the tubes (which are being imported), are being built at Cockatoo; the auxiliary engines are also being built by contract by firms scattered over Australia, viz., Messrs. Robinson Bros., of Melbourne, who are supplying circulating pump, electric engine, evaporator, and fan engine; Messrs. Kelly and Lewis, of Melbourne, main feed pumps and oil fuel pumps; Jorgensen and Sons, of Bendigo, Vic., the steering engine; Welch, Perrin and Co., of Melbourne, the bilge and ballast pump; the Perry Engineering Company of South Australia, the windlass, capstan and ash hoist; Gibson, Battle and Co., of Sydney, the coaling winches; Morts Dock and Engineering Co., of Sydney, the general service pump and forgings for the propeller and crank shafts, and Messrs H. P. Gregory and Co., of Sydney, the fresh water pump. The anchors are being manufactured by Chas. Ruwolt Pty. Ltd., of Melbourne; all ship's cooking appliances by James Ward Ltd., of Sydney, while the government dockyard, Newcastle, have supplied a number of cast-iron pipes.

#### Propelling Machinery.

Concerning the propelling machinery, this is of the latest type in accordance with the best practice for this class of vessel, and is capable of developing 2300 i.h.p. under normal running conditions. Steam is generated in four water tube boilers of the Babcock and Wilcox type, having a heating surface of approximately 9600 sq. ft., and grate area of 233 sq. ft. The tubes are of 4 inch diameter and the evaporative capacity in the neighborhood of 37,000 lbs. per hour at 180 lbs. boiler pressure. The boilers are supplied with air upon the Howden principle of forced draft, and furnaces are designed to deal with coal even when the latter possesses low calorific value and high percentage of ash. The funnel is carried to a height of some 78 ft. above the firegrate, is 7 ft. 6 in. in diameter, and fitted with an outer casing. The brickwork is composed of standard bricks in order to facilitate renewal as necessary. Requisite steam space is provided in order to prevent priming in boilers by the use of a 3 ft. 10 in. diameter steam drums, and provision is made by internal zincs to check undue corrosion.

The engines are of the inverted type triple expansion (condensing). The diameters of the cylinders are h.p. 26 in.; m.p., 41 1/2 in.; and l.p., 67 in.; stroke, 48 in.; a piston valve is fitted to the h.p. cylinder, and balanced slide valves to m.p. and l.p. cylinders. Separate liners are fitted to h.p. and m.p. cylinders. The columns and soleplate are of the box section. The crank shaft is of the built-up type and three interchangeable sections, the diameter being 13 3/4 in. The crank webs are of cast steel of special design and quality. The pistons are all cast steel, conical in section, and fitted with cast iron piston rings. The connecting rods were forged from solid ingots, as was also the main shafting. Reversing gear is of the all-round type and can be operated by steam or hand power. The dependent pumps driven from the main engine are: — Edward's air pump 26 in. diameter, 24 in. stroke, two feed pumps 4 in. diameter, 24

in. stroke, and two bilge pumps 4 in. diameter, 24 in. stroke. Lubrication of all the parts is effected by gravitation.

The condenser is of the return flow type, having approximately 2300 sq. ft. of surface. The tubes are rolled naval brass of the standard 10 ft. length and 5/8 in. in diameter fitted with gland ferrules. The casing is built-up of steel plate. Both steam and hand turning gear is provided. The reversing and turning engines are 6 in. diameter, 7 in. stroke. The thrust block is of the Michell design, one collar only being necessary to take the whole of the thrust. The collar runs in a bath of oil.

Several new features are introduced into the machinery, include safety valve of full bore type, as fitted in all Admiralty vessels, and main regulating valve with superimposed jockey valve.

Concerning the auxiliary machinery, the collier is very completely fitted; with the following form the main items under this heading, all of which have been manufactured in Australia: — Main feed pump, 12 in. dia. x 8 in. dia. x 18 in. stroke; auxiliary feed pump, 12 in. dia. x 8 in. dia. x 18 in. stroke; general service pumps (2), 18 in. dia. x 5 in. dia. x 11 in. dia. x 21 in. stroke; circulating pump, capable of 3500 galls. of water per minute; direct contact feed heater, oil fuel pumps, centrifugal (2), capable of 150 tons per hour; forced draft fan capable of supplying 30,000 cubic ft. of air per minute; steering engine, 8 in dia x 8 in. stroke; electric light engine, 7 1/2 in. dia. x 5 in. stroke; ash hoist, 3 in. dia. x 5 in. stroke; capstans (2), 6 in. dia. x 10 in. stroke; windlass, 9 1/2 in. dia x 10 in. stroke; coaling winches (8), 7 in. dia x 12 in. stroke; auxiliary condenser, 680 sq. ft. of cooling surface.

The main engine feed pumps draw from the hot well and discharge to the heater. Feed water gravitates from the heater to the main feed pumps and is thence discharged to the boilers. Filtering is effected between main engine feed pumps and heater. A system of by-passing is also arranged. Feed water can be introduced to boiler either from main engine feed pumps, main feed pumps, or general service pumps.

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# An Interview with John Winton

by TOM LEWIS

John Winton's prowess as a maritime historian is equalled only by his skill as a novelist. Over thirty years, this ex-officer of the Royal Navy has written about Nelson's navy, the battles of World War II, and the nuclear fleets that succeeded the battleship. His history books continue to gain critical acclaim, and he is still producing novels that deal with everything from a crisis of conscience for a Polaris XO to a woman's role in the naval world. As the British Navy was once more embarking on a campaign - this time against Iraq in the Gulf War - Tom Lewis interviewed John Winton at his home in Wales.

Despite nearly three decades of making a successful living as a writer, John Winton's sea-going years have left an indelible stamp on his character and conversation. A friendly, thoughtful man of middle height and middle years, he is silent as he ponders questions about his work. He does not waste time in platitudes: when a decision has been reached he speaks out firmly with the air of authority that must have marked his years as a naval officer. Winton is an unusual author: he has written a large number of maritime history books but he has

also produced a number of novels, all dealing with various aspects of naval life. Despite this, he is not an author who reaches the best-seller lists, nor is he one who attracts critical acclaim. Despite that, his books sell steadily, and his history books are solid, respectable items that are acknowledged as bricks in the museum that is the story of the sea. His fictional works are - like that other great storyteller of the sea CS Forester - the sort of tale that can be re-read and grow even further in a reader's esteem.

A typical Winton history book is *Carrier Glorious*, released in 1986. It is a strange story, the tale of a British aircraft carrier sunk in World War II, sunk on a clear day along with her two escorting destroyers by the German surface group of the battle cruisers SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU. The German ships simply steamed over the horizon and shelled the unfortunate squadron of British ships into oblivion, and the GLORIOUS went down with the loss of over 1,200 men. At the moment of attack her aircraft were all landed and she was completely surprised. Her two destroyers put up a valiant fight but were also sunk. The loss of the ships raised some serious questions. Why was such an important ship as an aircraft carrier so thinly escorted? Why did the GLORIOUS have no aerial patrols out? These questions and more have been thoroughly researched by the author and in his highly-readable yet concise style the story is thoroughly told, with eye-witness accounts, official documentation and a multitude of photographs. Winton leaves no facet unresearched, and the overall result is as complete a history of the incident as anyone could wish for. Yet this is only one of John Winton's history books, as a glance at the list below will confirm.

"Writing was something I realized I could do - at school in fact. Some boys could run fast, some boys could swim. The first writing I ever had published was at school. There was a prefect there who instead of beating you, made you write an essay when you did something wrong. The essay I wrote appeared in the school magazine...but I never had any thought of writing professionally - I went to Dartmouth and joined the Navy instead. But perhaps I liked that essay writing: I noticed a magazine called *The Naval Review*: it was the one place in the Service



you could write something critical of the Navy and not sign your name - instead call yourself something like 'Disgraced of Spithead'. It struck me that there was something wrong with the state of Naval training in the fifties, and so I began an essay on it that I would send to *The Naval Review*. Somehow that essay never got finished - characters suggested themselves, jokes, a narrative line - about two years later I ended up with a book."

This was the novel *We Joined the Navy*, a humorous account of a start in the Service. At the time Winton was an officer serving in a submarine. At port one day he had sent away his manuscript to a publisher. Eventually a telegram arrived for the submarine which caused the First Lieutenant to scratch his head: "Very interested in publishing your book. Please call..." *We Joined the Navy* was released less than a year later, the first of a string of novels gently satirising the Navy. Many of the characters reappeared in other efforts: The Artful Dodger (Commander Robert Bollinger) served with distinction in several. *We Saw the Sea* followed up the adventures of the new naval officers, *Down the Hatch* was set in a

submarine; *All the Nice Girls* revolved around naval men and marriage, and *Never go to Sea* set the sea-going sailor in a world of offices where the ocean was something never seen.

In 1963 Winton left the Navy to become a full-time writer. He had served in a variety of ships - amongst them were HMS EAGLE, HMS BIRMINGHAM and the submarines SPRINGER, ACHERON and EXPLORER - in the Korean War and the Suez Crisis, and over some 25 years he had gone through an enormous number of varied experiences with the far-flung Royal Navy. Now was the time to turn to a new career. The novels were continued, but Winton turned his attention to a second area: naval history.

In this area of writing he slowly built a solid reputation as a methodical and reliable historian. *The Forgotten Fleet*, an account of the British Fleet in the Pacific during WWII, a biography of Sir Walter Raleigh; *War in the Pacific - Pearl Harbour to Tokyo Bay* - all were received well and followed the same formula: meticulous research coupled with an easy, straightforward style.

Winton has not confined his historical works to WWII. *Hurrah for the Life of a Sailor* is a panoramic study of the Victorian lower-decks in the days when "gunboat diplomacy" was a realistic way of protecting the boundaries of the British Empire. *The Victoria Cross* also begins in the 19th century Navy with the story of the Mate of HMS HECLA, Charles Lucas, who won the first Navy VC in the Baltic in 1854. It charts the remaining winners of that honour, each story told with the enviable Winton style that blends a straightforward account with easy imagery, a relaxed style and a clever eye for human foibles and dialogue.

Meanwhile on the fiction side the novel *HMS Leviathan* marked a turning point in Winton's style. A harsh but realistic story, the book follows the politics and perils of a commander's appointment to an aircraft carrier. This was followed by *The Fighting Temeraire*, which puts the reader on board a British nuclear hunter-killer submarine penetrating Russian waters in the late sixties. The *TEMERAIRE* is detected, depth-charged and then - after dispatching some of her enemy - settles onto the seabed where the crew await a dismal fate. These two

novels established Winton as a serious fiction writer, one who was able to realistically project possibilities that the Royal Navy might one day encounter.

John Winton treats writing as a business. His days at his house in Wales are organized and methodical. His books are written "...from start to finish. It's my job. People say 'Do you have to wait for inspiration?' but when you've got bills to pay, it concentrates the mind wonderfully. Waiting for inspiration might be okay for a lyric poet, but as a working writer, as a tradesman, with a wife and family, you've just got to get on with it."

He begins writing at 9.30 and continues until 12.30, when he has lunch. Then Winton might do a little gardening, or takes the dogs - he has two - for a walk. At around 2.30 he begins work again, and writes until: "Six, something like that, depending on what I'm doing. Then I'll sit and leer at the television - depending on what's on - if it's 'Cell Block H' (Australia's Prisoner shown on British TV) I'll go to bed early! But before then I normally sit for an hour, and think what I'm going to write the next day, so that when I wake up I've got something in my mind - particularly so with a novel, where it's important to get some sort of impetus going, some kind of mental stimulus. In a book of naval history you marshal all of the facts each day. But with something you're making up as you go along you need some sort of mental continuity. Sometimes I've sat up till two o'clock in the morning, just sitting thinking, what I'm going to do the next day..."

However, John Winton doesn't force himself to write. "It's the quality not the quantity - sometimes I just sit there thinking until something comes." In his early days of writing he wrote his drafts in longhand, then eventually typed up the manuscript, but in 1985 he purchased an Amstrad word-processor: "It's transformed my life - I'd never go back to the old Chicago piano."

Winton's pen and processor have been busy with a remarkable variety of books ever since. A biography of Admiral Jellicoe was followed by the novel *The Good Ship Venus*, which rather than anything suggested by a line of that famous song follows instead the "work-up" trials of a Royal Navy ship partly manned by females. This satire is in the style of Winton's earlier fiction, a manner of writing he has tended to avoid recently, preferring the straightforward realistic narrative of books such as *A Drowning War*, which follows the exploits of three officers in three navies during WWII. A similarly-styled and set story is *Aircraft Carrier*, which follows the career of a carrier-based pilot. The satirical and humorous books aren't nearly so fashionable as they once were, reveals Winton, although he occasionally reverts to that genre - and still manages to get them published. "*Good Enough for Nelson* - another novel about training in the Navy - was actually originally turned down by the publishers Michael Joseph as being old-fashioned. 'There's definitely a set against that sort of thing now, although *We Joined the Navy* has just been reprinted in paperback. But I have heard that the non-fiction books are out-borrowed by my novels in a four to one ratio.' However: "*The Forgotten Fleet* is extremely popular too - it once climbed to forty pounds in the secondhand shops - though the reason is simple - this was the fleet that was out in Australia in 1944 and 1945 - it had half a million men - and there's been very little written about it."

Novel plots are often dictated by the type of narrative. In *We Joined the Navy* "I was describing a process of training, and when that finished so did the book." On other occasions a plot is written around an idea, as in *One of Our Warships*. "I read about a real incident, which could have been a war-crime, and I built it up - was it, or was it not a crime?" At the time Winton had just taken a degree in English literature... "I was going through what you might call a literary phase, and I used Conrad's Marlow character - the uninvolved witness. So you either start with a framework, or you start with a situation, and you just see what happens as you write."

*One of Our Warships* is narrated by a naval officer who heard about the war-crime secondhand and investigated it further. The novel is a significant landmark in Winton's progress as a writer, for with such concerns as this Winton is slowly inheriting CS Forester's revered status

as an author who may write about the sea and ships, but also deals with weightier matters too: Man, morality and conscience - these often trouble Winton's characters as much as they did Hornblower. Such themes are given even more significant treatment in Winton's latest work, the novel *Polaris* (1989). Here a naval officer becomes increasingly concerned with the implications of his submarine's deadly cargo of nuclear weapons and his part in the boat's deterrent patrols. Though it would be a mistake to assume - as readers often do with novelists - that Winton's principal characters can be identified with himself. "I did once spend two weeks in one of the first Polaris missile submarines, and for that novel I did go up to Scotland to meet some demonstrators - but that's where it ends."

Like Forester, Winton has the gift of rendering a narrative attractive to read. His style is brisk and realistic, and he has both a talent for original figures of speech and an ear for dialogue. The latter, he claims, comes from years of "listening to what people say. I'm sometimes accused of being rather distant and offhand, but I am listening and taking notice. I remember being back at Dartmouth for a visit, long after I left the Navy, and then I went away and wrote *Good Enough for Nelson*. Soon afterwards I was sitting next to one of the Dartmouth chaps at dinner and he said to me: 'Did you get all of that material for the book from your visit - those three days?' I said yes, and he said that he was amazed - he didn't think I was taking in anything at all."

His present workdays are as busy as ever. Winton produces articles for a few magazines, and as expected, the articles are about the sea and ships. He maintains regular contact with the Royal Navy. "I still go to sea to do a piece for a magazine. It's still a great institution and a great day out: the spray and the salt, the helicopter out to the ship, the sailors - they don't change. The faces and the voices are still the same: you can even look at photographs of Victorian ships' companies with their straw hats on, and you can see that they believe they're the best, and these pictures from the Gulf - they reckon they're the bee's knees." He is presently working on a history of Admiral of the Fleet Cunningham and a history of Search and Rescue. Will another novel be along soon? "If one suggests itself - I have a few ideas in store." That is good news - I for one will be looking forward with pleasant anticipation to the next publication by CS Forester's successor.

## HISTORICAL:

Freedom's Battle: the War at Sea 1939-1945  
Hurrah for the Life of a Sailor: Life on the Lower Deck of the Victorian Navy  
The Forgotten Fleet  
Air Power at Sea 1939-1945  
War in the Pacific: Pearl Harbour to Tokyo Bay  
Sink the Haguro!  
Sir Walter Raleigh  
The Victoria Cross at Sea  
Jellicoe  
Hands to Action Stations: Naval Poetry and Verse of WW2  
Find, Fix and Strike: The Fleet Air Arm at War 1939-1945  
Below the Belt: Novelty, Subterfuge and Surprise in Naval Warfare  
Captains and Kings: The Royal Navy and the Royal Family 1901-1981  
Convoy: The Defence of Sea Trade 1890-1980  
The Death of the Scharnhorst

## FICTION:

We Joined the Navy  
We Saw the Sea  
Down the Hatch  
All the Nice Girls  
Never go to Sea  
HMS Leviathan  
The Fighting Temeraire  
One of Our Warships  
Good Enough for Nelson  
Aircraft Carrier  
The Good Ship Venus  
A Drowning War  
Polaris

# New Diving Launches

A contract for the construction of three new 20 metre Diving Launches for Clearance Diving Teams One, Two and Four was placed with a West Australian Company during October 1992. All three craft are currently scheduled for delivery to the RAN during mid-1993.

## PREVIOUS RAN CRAFT NAMED SEAL, PORPOISE AND SHARK

**SEAL (I)**  
SEAL, which was transferred to the RAN from the Army Water Transport forces during World War II, was allotted to the diving branch in 1945. She subsequently served as a diving boat for 23 years before being retired from service in 1968.

**PORPOISE (I)**  
The 200 ton Concrete Ammunition Lighter (CAL 207) was modified to a Diving Barge in 1955 and renamed PORPOISE. Her conversion included the addition of a classroom and the installation of a derrick post to assist in diving operations. When completed PORPOISE was towed to a mooring off Clark Island in Sydney Harbour. She was not commissioned. She was subsequently laid up during the early 1970s and finally sold in the early 1980s.

**SEAL (II) and PORPOISE (II)**  
During 1965 it was decided to purchase three second-hand Royal Navy HAM class inshore minesweepers for conversion to Diving Tenders. Two boats, POPHAM and WINTRINGHAM, were acquired in May 1966 and a third boat, NEASHAM, in March 1967. Of the first pair, WINTRINGHAM was converted by Halvorsens and renamed SEAL on entering service in December 1968, whilst NEASHAM remained laid up at Garden Island until 1972 when she was taken in hand for conversion by Storey and Keers of Balmain. Renamed PORPOISE, she was handed over on 13 June 1973. As conversion costs for the first pair proved substantially higher than originally expected, the third unit, POPHAM, was not converted. She remained laid up in reserve before being listed for disposal in December 1975.

SEAL and PORPOISE subsequently served as diving tenders and navigation training craft until 1989 when they were finally withdrawn from service and disposed of after reaching the end of their useful lives.

**SHARK**  
The 11.5 metre Naval Auxiliary Patrol (NAP) vessel SHARK was requisitioned for naval service on 17 July 1942. Armed with a .303

**Builder**  
Geraldton Boat Builders WA

**Primary Role**  
Capable of carrying up to 16 divers and attendants plus associated diving equipment (2 tonnes). Support is required for continuous, 24 hour diving operations with periods both underway and at anchor, in depths of water to 54 metres inclusive and employing self contained and surface supplied breathing apparatus.

**Secondary Role**  
Be capable of carrying out harbour patrols and assist in low level policing duties.

**Speed**  
Continuous working speed of at least 25 knots in the loaded departure condition in calm tropical conditions with a clean hull for a period of four hours. A speed of at least 20 knots when fully loaded in sea state 2. Minimum maintainable speed of 3 knots or less.

<b>Dimensions</b>	Length	19.95 metres
	length WL	18.07 metres
	Beam	5.64 metres
	Draught	1.0 metres
	ft	1.4 metres

**Structure**  
The launch shall be constructed for a life of type of at least 15 years. Twin engine propulsion. Morse type engine controls for each engine. Steering by handwheel

**Radar** — JRC model JMA2144  
**Satnav** — GPS navigator JRC model JLU121  
**Autopilot** — Saura model CP80

**Delivery Requirements**  
Launch 01 — Fremantle — NLT 21 June 93  
Launch 02 — Sydney — NLT 21 July 93  
Launch 03 — Sydney — NLT 21 August 93

**Price**  
Contract for a total firm price of \$2,800,000.00.



DTV SEAL II in full commission. (J. Mortimer)

## NEW DIVING LAUNCHES



Above: DTV PORPOISE II at the Pittwater Torpedo Range in 1981. R. Gillett)

Right: NAP patrol boat HMAS SHARK. (RAN)

Vickers machine gun and four Mk 7 depth charges, she entered service on Sydney Harbour on 25 August the same year. SHARK, which was purchased outright by the RAN in April 1944, finally paid off on 27 August 1945. She was subsequently sold back to her original owner in 1946.



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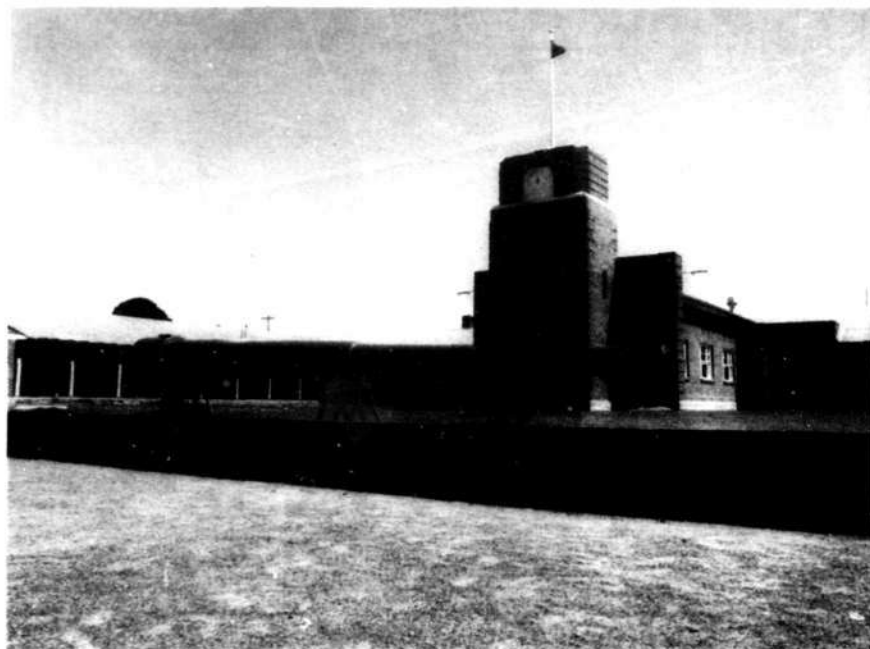
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# COASTAL DEFENCE GUNS OF ANOTHER ERA

by VIC JEFFERY, Naval Public Affairs Officer



The Bickley Battery 6 inch gun barrel which saw service aboard HMAS MELBOURNE in the Great War. Now on display at the former Kingstown Barracks. (V. Jeffery)

Many visitors to Rottnest island, one of Western Australia's most popular holiday and tourist resorts, have no idea that the island was the main obstacle to Japanese seaborne attack or invasion in the west during War World Two. An insinkable fortress located 20 kilometres off Fremantle, the island boasted two 9.2-inch and two 6-inch guns plus a number of anti-aircraft gun emplacements.

Today the two remaining 9.2-inch guns on

Rottnest Island are a grim reminder of the threat of Japanese attack in World War Two.

When Australia's coastal artillery was completely disbanded in 1963, the two 9.2-inch guns were purchased by the far-sighted Rottnest Island Board for the princely sum of a shilling (10 cents) each!

At that time the guns, which had been in combat storage since 1945, were still completely intact and capable of being fired. Since then the guns have been pillaged and

vandalised with souvenir hunters removing movable parts.

When handed over, they were still surrounded by their wartime camouflage netting and surrounded by support facilities including accommodation huts north and at the base of Oliver's Hill, the highest on Rottnest Island.

Sadly, similar World War Two 9.2-inch batteries at North Head in Sydney, Cape Banks, Darwin, Newcastle, Wollongong and Garden

Island in Western Australia were all went under the scrapper's torch by the early 1960s.

Two of only three 9.2-inch guns still mounted in their emplacements in the world,

the third being at Gibraltar, they were the centrepiece of the Fremantle Fixed Defences Coast Artillery Batteries to protect Australia's major west coast port and the City of Perth.



Relit after 40 years of darkness, one of the old Army tunnels under Oliver's Hill. (RAN)

Known as the Oliver's Hill Battery, they were considered an engineering feat when they were erected with their associated works including tunnels, engine rooms, cordite and shell magazines, first aid casualty stations, battery and fortress plotting room, hydraulic pump chambers and air compressors - all underground.

Setting up the Rottnest Island gun emplacements was a formidable and challenging task for the army engineers as all materials and equipment had to be brought in by sea from the mainland.

There was no heavy machinery on the island, few roads and inadequate water storage facilities.

An initial survey of the island was carried out in 1933 and the following year detailed planning for the batteries commenced.

Construction commenced in earnest in 1935 and two old vessels, the motorised barge AGNES and the ferry DUCHESS were used to transport the many thousands of tons of materials needed for the massive works program.

A narrow gauge railway was one of the first construction requirements and it snaked its way around the island. Commencing from an army jetty located near the Kingstown Barracks, servicing the Oliver's Hill Battery with a spur line veering off to the 6-inch former naval guns of Bickley Battery on the south-eastern tip of the island.

Two petrol locomotives were purchased, one a converted 1914-18 four-wheel-drive truck and the other a modified tractor with rolling stock recovered from the site of the ill-fated World War One abandoned Henderson naval base project on the mainland south of Fremantle.

Army sappers and gunners toiled long and hard alongside civilian contractors and day labourers to erect the fortifications and install the guns.

Water supplies was, and still is a ongoing problem today on Rottnest Island. A bitumen catchment area with a capacity of five million gallons was erected at Mount Herschell pre-war.

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Above: A section of the old wartime railway which winds around Rottnest Island.  
(V. Jeffery)

Right: Yet to be restored, the H2 9.2-inch gun at Oliver's Hill, photographed in the 1970s.  
(V. Jeffery)

A new communication cable was laid between the mainland and Rottnest Island in 1935, replacing a deteriorated cable system. Even with the growing war clouds gathering, the peaceful surrounds of the island must have made the threat of conflict seem a world away. It took some three years to construct the gun emplacements and associated facilities.

When completed in 1937, the Oliver's Hill battery of two modern 9.2-inch guns had a limit of 35 degrees elevation and could fire a high explosive armour-piercing shell 35.5 kilometres with an effective fighting range of 28.5 kilometres at a maximum rate of three rounds a minute.

A tall concrete building still stands near the Wadjemup lighthouse on Rottnest Island. It housed the battery and fortress observation posts, and sprinkled around the tranquil island you can still see the remains of often overgrown concrete observation posts.

It took 11 gunners to operate a 9.2-inch gun with another team of 11 men always on

stand-by to help move the ammunition up to the guns and to hand-operate the gun if the power system failed.

Under normal power operation five men were needed in the revolving gun house or turret, including the sergeant in command and six men in the gunpit for ammunition supply.

The two 9.2-inch guns with their 11.2 metre long barrels had a 360 degree arc of fire and they could have been brought to bear on the mainland if necessary.

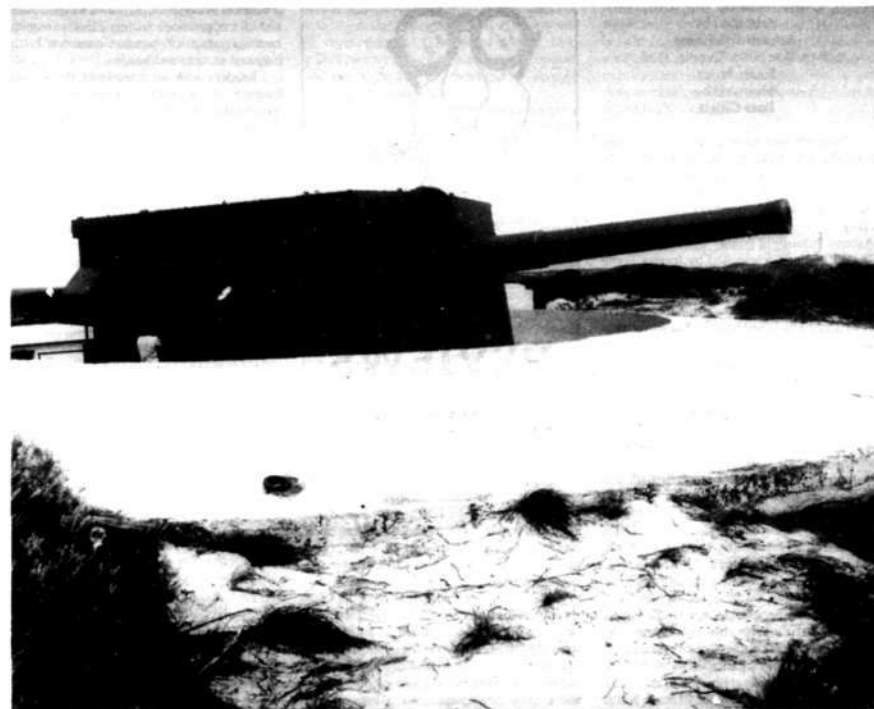
In fact during World War Two fire control data was prepared for this eventuality.

Fortunately the guns on Rottnest Island were never fired in anger, but were renowned for their accuracy shelling towed targets with radar assistance.

When the 9.2-inch guns were proofed in 1938 with full charges, the blast blew out a number of shutters and windows in nearby army huts. It is reported that an army cook went bush and it was some hours before he emerged from the dense thicket!

Oliver's Hill Battery's strength was 160 all ranks with Rottnest boasting more than 2500 servicemen and women on the island during the dark days of 1942.

Located on Rottnest Island was the Navy's Port War Signal Station which challenged all ship approaching the bustling wartime port of Fremantle with the coastal large guns training as required.



Restored H1 9.2-inch gun on Rottnest. (RAN)

Rottnest Island is not without its mysteries. It was overflown by a Japanese seaplane in 1942 and there are a number of mysterious ship sightings reported by people who served on the island during the war.

Gunners who served on Bickley Battery recall the day the cruiser HMAS SYDNEY came thundering out of Fremantle "with a bone between her teeth" at great speed straight out to sea through the normally unused South Passage. Reason unknown.

It is a little known fact that HMAS SYDNEY used to sit off Bickley Battery in the lee of the island rather than make her presence known in Fremantle during 1940. All her communications were passed through Kingstown Barracks.

There have been claims of the German commerce raider KORMORAN being challenged off Rottnest in 1941 and the mysterious disappearance of a number of people

from the island during the war - including the island commandant, Colonel H. Kuring.

Then of course there was the night when the guns of Bickley were tampered with and another occasion when gunners watched what appeared to be a ship on fire at sea to the south west of Rottnest Island, also at night.

Today one of the 9.2-inch guns (H1), has been restored as a tourist attraction by army engineers and volunteers with plans underway to restore the other gun, H2.

The long hidden underground tunnels have been restored with new lighting erected and plans to restore more of the above and below ground facilities including the railway.

The two 'mothballed' 6-inch guns of Bickley Battery which saw service on the World War One RAN light cruisers HMA Ships BRISBANE and MELBOURNE, were sold in 1963 along with all equipment to a WA scrap dealer named Brown.

After cutting one gun barrel in half, it was obviously considered too costly an exercise and it was left. The second barrel was buried in the sand nearby.

Salvaged for refurbishment by the Australian Army, the intact barrel (ex-HMAS BRISBANE) was mounted outside the Army Museum in East Perth while the second (ex-HMAS MELBOURNE) which had been cut in two was re-joined by an army workshop on the mainland and returned to Rottnest Island.

Today this barrel is on display near the former Kingstown Barracks parade ground, the barracks having been handed over to the WA State Government in 1984 and renamed the Kingstown Environmental and Education Centre.

The two remaining 9.2-inch guns, today a most popular tourist attraction, still point aggressively seawards, seemingly guarding the memories of a past era.



## SOUTH AFRICA'S FIGHTING SHIPS - PAST AND PRESENT.

by  
**CDMR Allan Du Toit, RAN.**  
 Published by  
**Ashanti Publishing**  
 P.O. Box 5091 Rivonia 2128  
 South Africa  
 Reviewed by  
**Ross Gillett**

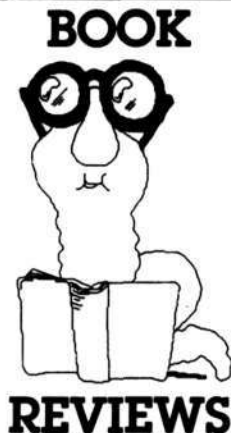
Over the past twenty or so years many books have been published on the navies of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Now in 1993, a detailed description of the development of the other Commonwealth Navy, South Africa has emerged from the Ashanti Publishing group.

Written and researched by former South African naval officer (now RAN) Allan Du Toit, the 360 page book provides an interesting and readable account of the ships, their careers as well as the facts and figures. The narrative is supported by more than 300 colour and black and white photographs of the "senior service" since 1922, the year a full time naval service was created.

A Volunteer Naval Brigade was formed as early as 1861 in Port Elizabeth and subsequently in Natal and Cape Town. Later in 1912 the South African Division of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve was created with the amalgamation of the volunteer units. Local coasters and tugs etc were taken over for the South West African campaign during the Great War and like New Zealand, in 1920, an old third class cruiser HMS THAMES was presented to the nation as a training ship.

Author Allan Du Toit begins the main section of the book with the words, "Take Station Astern". With this signal, made in November 1921, two Mersey Trawlers, HMASs IMMORTELLE and SONNEBLOM, cleared the breakwater at Plymouth, becoming the first units of the South African Naval Service. Like all the chapters in the book, each vessel or class of ships is described via acquisition, technical and historical history and final fate. A table of specifications plus builders, launching, commissioning and disposal dates complete each chapter.

Two of the more interesting ships



commissioned by the SAN were two former Royal Navy destroyers, converted to helicopter capable anti-submarine escorts in the mid 1960s. Both retained the original front half of the ship, with a hanger and deck added aft of the funnel. The main armament was also modified from 4.7 to 4 inch guns. These two semi-converted ships preceded the more usual and later frigate conversions by a number of years, providing a cost effective solution to meet new challenges from underwater.

The photographic presentation of the ships through the seventy years is first class. Not only are the vessels depicted as half or one third page illustrations, but the quality of all are excellent. The few poor quality photographs are the only images available of the rare or short lived naval units. As a bonus each photograph is accompanied by a detailed caption, including some of the crews, their Commanding Officers and in more recent years, onboard views of life aboard. Colour photographs, beginning in the mid 1960s depict the various classes of the recent and present day Navy. The back cover features a striking

photograph of a Ton class minesweeper, SAS DURBAN, in heavy seas.

Other features of the book are the side profiles of many of ships, drawn by the author and the appendices listing Fleet strengths, combined ship list, pendant numbers, battle honours, ensigns and badges.

Readers with an interest in the former Empire and Commonwealth navies and specifically South Africa will find the book an excellent addition to their library. Since the Second World War the South African Navy acquired many similar ships to those of the RAN and RNZN, including River and Loch class frigates, Ton class minesweepers, a converted Type 15 frigate and three Type 12 frigates. Prior to 1945 Castle class anti-submarine trawlers, Bar class boom defence vessels and Harbour Defence Motor Launches were also commissioned.

For the serious Naval student South Africa's Fighting Ships is a well written and deeply researched book, describing for most readers a missing chapter in the development and subsequent history of this former Empire and Commonwealth Navy. Highly recommended (please refer to the adjacent order form).

### DISASTER IN THE PACIFIC

by  
**Dennis and Peggy Warner**  
 with **Sadao Seno**  
 Published in the United States by  
 the **Naval Institute Press**  
 and in Australia by  
**Allen & Unwin.**  
 RPP (Hardcover) \$34.95  
 Reviewed by  
**Geoffrey Evans**

Shortly after midnight on Sunday, 8th August 1942, a Japanese naval squadron swept into the waters of Savo Sound in the Solomon Islands and in less than 90 minutes inflicted one of the worst defeats suffered by allied naval forces in the Pacific war — "the US Navy's blackest day" in the words of Admiral Ernest J. King, wartime Commander-in-Chief of the US Navy.

Four heavy cruisers — HMAS CANNIBERRA and the USS ASTORIA, QUINCY and VINCENNES — sank as a result of the attack, other ships were damaged and over 1000 sailors perished. The attacking warships suffered only slight damage and few casualties before withdrawing. To the allies it was indeed a disaster, not least for the US marines who had not long before been landed on nearby Guadalcanal and Tulagi Islands.

Not surprisingly, the naval engagement off Savo Island has been the subject of a number of official inquiries, professional studies and books. The Warners' account is the most detailed of the several read by this reviewer and overturns some long-held beliefs concerning the reason the substantial allied naval force available to protect the landings

was unprepared for a night attack by a numerically inferior Japanese surface force.

The events leading up to the engagement, the battle itself and its aftermath are described in graphic detail by the authors, the book is well-illustrated with photographs of allied and Japanese warships and the principal officers involved. Charts supplement the text and the numerous sources quoted are listed chapter by chapter at the end, together with a comprehensive index.

The extensive use of technical terms indicates "Disaster in the Pacific" was written for a professional readership rather than a layman; irrespective of background or interests however, it is a very readable account of a ferocious naval engagement — and a reminder of the extremely trying climatic conditions with which the sailors, soldiers and airmen of the participating nations had to contend on and around the islands of the South-West Pacific.

### AUSTRALIAN SUBMARINES - A HISTORY

by  
**Michael White**  
 Published by  
**Australian Government Publishing Service, 1992.**  
 Reviewed by  
**Joe Straczek**

1992 marked the 25th anniversary of the Australian Submarine Squadron. This was the fourth time that the RAN had established and maintained a submarine force. Michael White's book details the history of the earlier attempts and presents a brief insight into the current submarines and their successors the Collins Class.

The book opens with a brief history on the development of the submarine during the last part of the 19th Century. Unfortunately there is no mention of the submarine developed by Mr Seymour Allen of Sydney in 1894. A demonstration, using a model of this vessel, was conducted before Rear-Admiral Bowden-

Smith who commented that "if they would do what the model performed, naval warfare would be revolutionised" (The Naval Annual 1895 p289). Neither is mention made of the proposals for the Victorian Government to acquire 'submarine torpedo boats'.

For the rest the book represents a narrative history of the submarine in RAN service. The debate over the initial acquisition of the first submarines is adequately covered. The opposition by Captain Creswell to the acquisition of submarines is highlighted. This opposition was due mainly to the unproven nature of the vessel than any "closed mind" attitude of Creswell. The sections which deal with the Oberon and Collins Classes are not as detailed as the previous parts of this book which provide background information into the selection of the earlier craft. Whilst in part it could be argued that this is due to the records not being available, this cannot be the reason for not including detailed descriptions of submarine training, employment of submarines in modern warfare and some detail of life on a submarine. All of these could have been included by drawing on the author's personal experiences.

Whilst K IX was the only full sized submarine operated by the RAN during the Second World War, other smaller submarine craft were also in service. In particular there were the Wellmans and Welfrieghters operated by the Services Reconnaissance Department. No mention of these craft is made in the book.

The weakness of the last chapters is demonstrated by the omission of references to HMAS PROTECTOR and the submersible HOLBROOK. These craft were acquired by the RAN to assist in the trials of the new Collins Class submarines.

The book is well illustrated with a number of fine photographs. Some photographs and diagrams have however, been reproduced too small to be of any value. Also of little real value are the lists of submariner names contained in the Annexes of the book, especially as the review copy was missing pages 247 to 254!

Australian Submarines had the potential to be the definitive history of submarines in

Australian service. Unfortunately, it has not fully lived up to this potential. However, notwithstanding its shortcomings, the book is a welcome addition to the growing number of publications on Australia's naval history and does present a readable and interesting picture of the RAN's silent service.

### BRITISH WARSHIPS AND AUXILIARIES

by  
**Mike Critchley**  
 Published by  
**Maritime Press**  
 Lodge Hill, Liskeard, Cornwall,  
 PL14 4EL, United Kingdom  
 Reviewed by  
**Ross Gillett**

This compact book has been published by Maritime Press since the late 1970s as an up to date annual guide to the Royal Navy. In the book the author describes the Royal Navy via both photographs, brief data and notes.

Each type is illustrated at least once with a special colour section in the centre highlighting ships from rough weather to picturesque scenes. One photo depicts the Royal Navy's "Orient Express" Task Group, headed by HMS ARK ROYAL in 1992. Also included are the first photos of HMS VANGUARD, the new Trident submarine and RFA FORT VICTORIA, a "one stop" replenishment ship.

The size of the Royal Navy continues to shrink as budget cutbacks force ships into reserve and ultimately sale for scrap or foreign sale. Major vessels being built or commissioned include the new Type 23 frigates, UPHOLDER class submarines and minehunters and in the future a new helicopter carrier and amphibious ships.

British Warships and Auxiliaries also includes details of the Fleet Air Arm afloat and ashore, the Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service, Army and Sea Cadet craft and finally a list of ships up for disposal and preserved around the United Kingdom. A good value reference book.

### SOUTH AFRICA'S FIGHTING SHIPS Past and Present

By Allan Du Toit

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**"HOSPITAL SHIPS"**

by  
**Rupert Goodman**  
Published by  
**Bolarong Publications**  
12 Brookes Street, Bowen Hills,  
Queensland 4007  
RRP \$14.95  
Reviewed by  
**Vic Jeffery**

"Hospital Ships" is a unique book as it covers the changing role of hospital ships from the days of Sir Francis Drake in the 16th century to the recent Gulf War.

Containing 60 photographs this book details Australia's First World War hospital ships before covering the careers of the Second World War MANUNDA, WANGANELLA, CENTAUR and ORANJE.

For centuries the hospital ship was a long range ambulance, transporting battle casualties from theatres of war to general hospitals or to their homeland.

The hospital ship's role changed recently with the Vietnam, the Falklands and the Gulf conflicts seeing it used more as an offshore hospital where definitive care could be undertaken immediately.

Although international agreements such as the Geneva and Hague Conventions gave

hospital ships of all nations special immunity from attack providing they met certain conditions, these agreements sadly, were not always honoured.

The First World War saw 17 British hospital ships torpedoed and sunk by the Germans with a tremendous loss of life.

In the Second World War, Australia's hospital ships were not immune to attack from the Japanese with the bombing of MANUNDA during the first aerial raid on Darwin in 1942 and the torpedoing of CENTAUR off the Queensland coast the following year.

There could be no question that this important book fills a void in Australia's military history. Highly recommended.

**WARSHIP 1992**

Edited by  
**Robert Gardiner**  
Published by  
**Conway Maritime Press**  
Reviewed by  
**John Mortimer**

The 1992 edition of Warship like its predecessors contains a number of naval articles on a wide range of subjects. As such it is reliant on the purchaser being interested in several articles to justify investing in the publication. In some of the recent editions of Warship the

range of subjects has been so diverse and covered several articles of a rather obscure nature that it has no doubt deterred several prospective customers. The 1992 edition, however, is not in this category.

Featured articles include: The Shipboard Balloon — The Beginnings of Naval Aeronautics, The Second Class Battleship USS MAINE, Japan's Battlecruisers — The TSUKUBA and KURAMA classes, The Sverige Class Coastal Defence Ships, After the Dreadnought, The LE HARDI Class (French destroyers), Second World War Cruisers — Wax Armour Really Necessary, Allied Warships in German Hands, Romanian Submarine Operations in the Second World War, KORMORAN Versus SYDNEY, Japanese Special Attack Weapons (mainly midget submarines), and Countering the Magnetic Mine 1939-45 and to the Present.

For those with an interest in the RAN the articles on SYDNEY/KORMORAN, Second World War Cruisers and After the Dreadnought will be of interest. There is also a short article on the loss of AE1 as well as a number of photographs of RAN warships (the battlecruiser HMAS AUSTRALIA, destroyer HMAS BRISBANE, AE1 and cruiser HMS APOLLO).

Overall, the 1992 edition is probably the best that has yet been produced to date in this series and is recommended.

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