



# The Navy League of Australia

## South Australia Division

A.C.N. 008 451 063

**PATRON:** His Excellency The Honourable Hieu Van Le AC

### **SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION NEWSLETTER – Issue 3 – JUN 2020**

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### **HMAS KUTTABUL Commemoration 1 June 2020**



**Wreath laying at the Memorial**

The 78th anniversary of the sinking of the ferry HMAS Kuttabul at Garden Island was commemorated on 1 June 2020. Since 1858 Garden Island has served the needs of naval ships. HMAS Kuttabul was commissioned on 1 January 1943 and the name enshrines the former Sydney ferry HMAS Kuttabul.

On the 31 May 1942, three Japanese midget submarines entered Sydney Harbour and launched an attack on shipping in the harbour. Just after midnight, the accommodation vessel HMAS Kuttabul was hit by a torpedo and sank with the loss of the lives of 19 Australian and 2 British sailors. The crew of two of the attacking submarines were lost without trace.

Three of the Australian sailors were born in South Australia:

PA1913 Stoker II Class John Samuel Asher, age 19, North Adelaide

23893 Stoker William Richard Boundy, age 19, Wallaroo

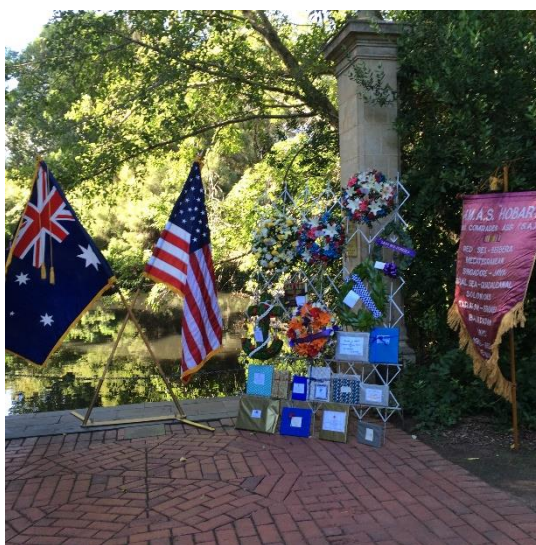
S6116 Ordinary Seaman Raymond Owen Venning, age 18, Pinnaroo

**LEST WE FORGET**

## COVID-19 forces cancellation of Battle of the Coral Sea 78<sup>th</sup> Commemoration around Australia.

Dinners and Services to commemorate the 78<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Battle of The Coral Sea, fought from 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> May, 1942, have not gone ahead because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Navy League of Australia – South Australia Division sadly regrets the Australian American Association service in Adelaide being cancelled this year. This Association in South Australia usually holds their moving service at The Columns in the Adelaide City Botanical Gardens. In attendance are guests from Military, Police, government, Royal Australian Navy & kindred organisations, Australian Navy Cadets and The Governor of South Australia. The highlight has been meeting some of the war widows of Australian and American servicemen, tother with a United States diplomat or Military representative, supported by the RAN Band of South Australia.



*HMAS Australia (II) during WWII. Image scanned from Navy Historic Archive.*

The Director of Strategic and Historical Studies at the Sea Power Centre - Australia, Mr John Perryman, commented that “Today, many Australians are unaware that the Battle of the Coral Sea was fought in waters that lap Queensland’s coast. However, in 1942, with fears that Australia was facing invasion, our population understood all too well the importance of it “Had the Japanese succeeded in capturing Port Moresby, Australia would have been cut off from America and prevented from actively participating in the Pacific War,” he said.

Further references: <https://www.navy.gov.au/history/feature-histories/battle-coral-sea>

**LEST WE FORGET**

# FEARLESS MUMS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN TOOWOOMBA

LCDR Jason Grivas (author), LSIS Richard Cordell (photographer)



HMAS Toowoomba's three mums on the forecastle while the ship is berthed at Bahrain, from left, Chaplain Kate Lord, Chief Petty Officer Naval Police Coxswain Deborah Schluter and Leading Seaman Maritime Logistics - Chef Kiralee Ekin.

As the majority of ship's company in HMAS Toowoomba woke up to call their mums and partners to wish them a happy Mothers' Day, the shoe was on the other foot for some women serving aboard Toowoomba in the Middle East.

The ship's honorary mother, Chaplain Kate '**Madre**' Lord, one of HMAS Toowoomba's three serving mums, said she loved taking care of the ship's company. "My two kids are in their 20s now. I miss them, but it's good for them to learn to manage our house in Melbourne and to be independent. "Caring for the ship's company is a bit of an extension of my role as a mum. "I love the people here, and listening to their stories brings me joy every day," Chaplain Lord said.

Chief Petty Officer Naval Police Coxswain Deborah Schluter has three children at home and her husband Chief Petty Officer Boatswain Jon Schluter on fulltime parenting duty. This is Chief Petty Officer Schluter's first deployment to the Middle Eastern Region, but throughout her career spanning over 20 years she has completed countless other exercises and operations in her time, missing many Mothers' Days amongst other special occasions.

"My eldest son, Justin (nearly 17), my daughter Evelyn (12), and my youngest son Flynn, who will have just turned 6 by the time we get home, are the ones who make the biggest sacrifices," Chief Petty Officer Schluter said. "It's hard for me to be out here and away from them, but it is harder for them. In their short lives, they have had to endure not only one parent leaving for months on end, but two of us. "They are the strongest, bravest and most resilient children and I am so proud of them. "I cannot wait to get home, hold them and tell them how much I love them," she said.

While mums back home in Australia woke up to the smell of burnt toast and sound of giggling children trying to make their mum breakfast in bed, there was no such joy for Leading Seaman Maritime Logistics - Chef Kiralee Ekin, who herself was up early, helping her team cook up breakfast and lunch for the 190 crew in HMAS Toowoomba.



Missing Mother's Day with her seven-year-old son Cooper for the third time in as many years, Leading Seaman Ekin can't wait to get back to Australia in July to spend time with him, after spending six months on Operation MANITOU. "He is the happiest, most caring and resilient little boy. I am super proud of him and am missing him more than I can say. "The things I'm looking forward to the most when I get home are his rough cuddles and spending quality time outdoors camping and doing the things he loves," Leading Seaman Ekin said, with a tear in her eye.

Whilst tough on any parent, Toowoomba's 'Fearless' mums are a great example of how people from all stages in their life can continue a successful and rewarding career in the Navy. "We are all equals in Toowoomba. That's what makes our ship great. "Just because we are mums, doesn't mean that we are treated any differently to anyone else on board. "We are all one big team," Chief Petty Officer Schluter said.

HMAS Toowoomba has completed four months of her six month Operation MANITOU deployment and is due to return to her home port at Fleet Base West in July.

### **HMAS SYDNEY V COMMISSIONS AT SEA**



**Source:** LEUT Ryan Zerbe (author) POIS Tom Gibson (photographer), LSIS Shane Cameron (photographer), ABIS Jarrod Mulvihill (photographer), ABIS Benjamin Ricketts (photographer)

Monday, 18 May 2020 was a very proud day for the Royal Australian Navy when HMAS Sydney V was commissioned at sea, off the coast of New South Wales and became one of Her Majesty's Australian Ship Sydney V. .

Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Michael Noonan, and Commander of the Australian Fleet, Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead, were aboard the guided missile destroy to officially welcome HMAS Sydney V into service and address the Ships' Company of the history and legendary pedigree of Sydney.

Following a blessing during the ceremony, the Commanding Officer, Commander Edward Seymour read the ship's commissioning order before the White Ensign was hoisted and completed the ceremony. Commander Edward Seymour complimented his Ship's company on their teamwork bringing a world-class warship into the fleet. "She brings an outstanding, Australian-built air warfare capability over an exceptional range and gives Navy a surface combat capability like never before". Commander Seymour commented "It isn't often in a naval career that you are part of commissioning a brand new warship, but to do so at sea and carrying the significant legacy behind the name Sydney, is a special feeling for the entire ship's company.

HMAS Sydney V is the last of three Hobart Class vessels built for Navy in Osborne, South Australia and is based on the Navantia F100 frigate design. (Imagery available on Navy Image Gallery: <https://images.navy.gov.au/S20201706>)

Navy League of Australia – South Australia Division is very proud and honoured to have the opportunity to present Commissioning decanters to all three RAN Hobart class vessels.

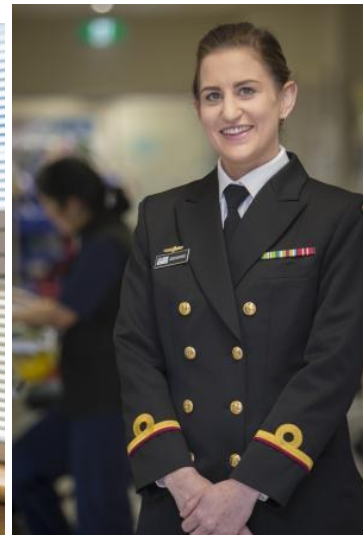
## LANDLOCKED SAILORS HELP OUT QLD



Members of the Australian Defence Force assist Queensland Police Service at a Police Check Point on the border of New South Wales and Queensland at Amosfield for Operation COVID-19 Assist. Royal Australian Navy personnel have been working alongside their Australian Army colleagues contributing to the whole-of-government response to the COVID-19 pandemic across country Queensland - in some cases hundreds of kilometres from the ocean.

## WORK PLACEMENT DOESN'T STOP NAVY NURSE FROM SUPPORTING THE MISSION

LCDR Ben Robinson (author), SGT Murray Staff (photographer)



*Royal Australian Navy Sub Lieutenant Jess Mysko, from Navy Headquarters in South Australia, working at the Lyell McEwin Hospital in Adelaide.*

Elizabeth North local, Sub Lieutenant Jess Mysko, is a nursing officer at Adelaide's Lyell McEwin Hospital. Undertaking a two-year placement, she never expected to be responding to a global pandemic. Sub Lieutenant Mysko moved to the area at the age of two, when her dad was in the Royal Australian Air Force and posted to Edinburgh Air Force Base. "I come from a military family and all of the women on my mother's side are nurses.

"I was inclined to join the Australian Defence Force from a young age, initially serving for 12 and a half years as a Navy medic," Sub Lieutenant Mysko said. "Last year I considered discharging as I needed to undertake my clinical placement to finalise my training as a registered nurse. Thankfully, I contacted the Navy Retention Team and they came to a solution that worked for the Navy and I," she said.

Sub Lieutenant Mysko's placement at Lyell McEwin Hospital has meant she is now working with other Australian Defence Force members as part of Emergency Management Australia's national response to

COVID-19. “It’s been great to see our planners working alongside the medical and support staff to ensure the hospital is effectively dealing with COVID-19,” Sub Lieutenant Mysko said.

In South Australia, Defence Force personnel are supporting the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the state Control Centre for Health, and the Northern, Central, and Southern Adelaide Local Health Network.

## **CERBERUS CONTINUES TO GRADUATE THE NEXT GENERATION**

LEUT Dave Devlin (author), ABIS Bonny Gassner (photographer)



***Recruit George Oram, left, and his brother Seaman Electronic Technician Trainee Jack Oram at Recruit School, HMAS Cerberus, and Victoria.***

The Royal Australian Navy Recruit Training School recently farewelled 137 graduates from General Entry Intake 380 Shipp Division, after 11 weeks of initial entry training at HMAS Cerberus in Victoria.

Recruit School consists of 11 weeks of initial training providing future sailors with the foundation skills they will need to shape their future careers in the Navy.

Shipp Division was named in honour of Leading Seaman Aircrewman Noel Ervin Shipp, who served in Vietnam with the Second Contingent of the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight in September 1968 and died while engaging the enemy under heavy fire.

The graduating class of 101 men and 36 women will now commence their category training either at HMAS *Cerberus* or at one of the many Defence training facilities throughout Australia.

Commanding Officer of Recruit Training School, Commander Cindy Jenkins spoke of the many challenges faced by the graduating class as a result of COVID-19. “The Recruit School has been able to maintain its responsibility in preparing and developing the future force for the Navy,” Commander Jenkins said.

“We have had to adjust how some of the training was delivered, particularly surrounding physical distancing, noting we have over 400 recruits spread across three intake divisions. “Most importantly, we have been able to deliver each of the required training outcomes, and deliver them safely. “I am very proud of the staff and the recruits in particular for the way they have adjusted to the changing environment and in getting the job done.”

For one graduate, Seaman Star Avionics Technician George Oram from Adelaide, the occasion was made very special with his older brother, Seaman Star Electronics Technician Jack Oram attending the parade.

Jack graduated from Recruit School in December 2019 and has been undertaking his category training at HMAS *Cerberus*. “It’s a very proud moment for me to watch George graduate today and also a very proud moment for our family,” Seaman Jack Oram said.

“The COVID-19 restrictions have prevented families from travelling and attending graduations, so I feel very fortunate that I can attend and support my brother today.”



Seaman Star George Oram said joining the Royal Australian Navy was not about following his brother's footsteps, but those of their father's. "Dad served in the British Army as part of the Intelligence Corps and served with the British Special Forces," Seaman George Oram said.

"He has always been a big role model to us both, his many stories of service and the friendships he made is what drove me to consider joining." "He would be immensely proud today, not just of my graduation, but to have two sons in uniform, serving and representing the country and starting their military careers, similar to what he did many years ago."

The brothers' period of serving together will be short-lived for the time being as Seaman George Oram, will conduct his Avionics category training at Wagga while his brother, Seaman Jack Oram, will continue his Electronics training at HMAS *Cerberus*, before moving to Western Australia to become a Submariner.

Imagery is available on the Defence Image Gallery: <https://images.defence.gov.au/S20201809>.

For further information on careers in the Royal Australian Navy, visit <https://www.defencejobs.gov.au>.

## AUSTRALIAN NAVY CADET UNITS

As of 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020, ANC Cadets Australia-wide, received a Temporary Suspension of Australia Navy Cadet Activity direction from Director-General Australian Navy Cadets & Reserves (Commodore M.D. Hill CSC RAN) and National Commander Australian Navy Cadets (Captain M. Blume ANC) until further notice.

2020 was looking a busy year ahead for South Australian ANC units until COVID-19 restrictions occurred.....Despite the STAND DOWN, zoom meetings have been set up between cadets and staff, along with other initiatives to keep in contact. .As circumstances are gradually improving, ANC units are now preparing for a possible re-opening in the following month or so – within COVID-19 guidance..... SO WATCH THIS SPACE.

### Cadets take the helm at Maritime Skills Camp (BEFORE COVID-19)

LCDR Alistair Barber (author)



**Helmsman CDTLS Charlotte Mauviel (TS Adelaide) drives MV Revieresco astern to clear anchorage on Tamar River**



**National Commander ANC Capt Martin Blume watches cadets in simulated harbour entry challenge.**

*Editor's Note: Please note that this activity took place before COVID-19 social distancing restrictions were put in place. Defence is currently following whole-of-government guidance from the Department of Health in relation to COVID-19.*

*For more information on Defence's response to COVID-19, visit <https://news.defence.gov.au/national/defence-response-covid-19>.*

Earlier this year, before physical distancing was required, eighteen Navy Cadets from around Australia successfully navigated a series of maritime duties and drills in a three-day training camp aimed at giving them hands-on experience of what it's like to work in the Royal Australian Navy.

The pilot Maritime Skills Camp was held at the Australian Maritime College (AMC) in Launceston, Tasmania, and brought together cadets from the **Torrens (South Australia), Lonsdale (Victoria) and Kellatie (Tasmania) Flotillas**. "We wanted to deliver a unique and exciting training program that combined maritime skills, teamwork, self-discipline, communal living and having fun," Commander Stuart Wheeler, Director Australian Navy Cadets, said. "It was important that we had some 'wow' factors to keep the Cadets interested, but also that we gave them a real feel for what it could be like to work in a Navy career." The program included hands-on seamanship activities, coastal navigation and ship handling, an introduction to marine engineering, fire-fighting and survival-at-sea drills.

Cadets trained on a full ship's bridge and a tug bridge at the Centre for Maritime Simulation and also worked in the Model Test Basin, which simulates wave motion and harbour configurations. "It would be so awesome to drive a real Navy ship," Cadet Leading Seaman Ivy O'Halloran said after safely navigating her 'ship' through Sydney Heads on the Australian Maritime College's bridge trainer.

The Cadets donned firefighting rig for practical training at the College's marine fire-training centre, and escaped into life rafts from a mock ship's superstructure at the Survival Centre. The training culminated in exciting hands-on evolutions on the Tamar River aboard MV *Reviresco*, where Cadets performed ship handling, coastal navigation, man-overboard drills, emergency steering, collision avoidance (rule of the road) and anchoring and berthing techniques.

Other Cadets worked deep in the hull of the training ship MV *Stephen Brown*, a former coal carrier, on group engineering activities that required a high level of teamwork and focus.

Commander Wheeler said the Cadets demonstrated Navy values through their personal commitment and teamwork and he believed the Maritime Skills Camp was an excellent introduction to the Royal Australian Navy. "These lucky Cadets had such fun and experienced more aspects of Navy life than many members could hope for during their careers. It made me wish I was a Cadet!"

**NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA – SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION  
ANNUAL LUNCHEON 28<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2020 HAS BEEN CANCELLED**

*We look forward to making new plans to re-invite our Members, friends & special guests,  
the Governor of South Australia, His Excellency Hieu Van Le AC & Mrs Lan Le  
Together with our Guest Speaker, Commander Alastair Cooper ADC RAN,  
Commanding Officer Navy HQ – South Australia*

*Kind regards from President & Committee*