



NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

April 2021  
Volume 5, Issue 4

# DOWN THE VOICEPIPE *do you hear there!*

## COMING UP

Executive meeting Monday 05th. July 2021 at 1700

AGM NLWA Saturday 21st. August 2021 at 1100

HMAS PERTH (I) Memorial Foundation INC  
Executive meeting Saturday 15th. May 2021 at 1000

ALL ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THIS  
NEWSLETTER ARE PRINTED IN GOOD FAITH  
AND DON'T NECESSARY REFLECT THE VIEWS  
OF THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

HMAS PERTH (I)  
1939—1942





## Navy League of Australia Western Australia Division News update



We can't start the April newsletter without first acknowledging ANZAC Day and the many fine people who have served in all arms of the ADF, both past and present and in particular those who sadly paid the ultimate sacrifice to ensure we enjoy the lifestyle we do. As per last year, regrettably the Perth and Peel regions were put into a snap three day Covid lockdown, leaving the majority of us unable to attend any services. Those living in the affected areas were encouraged to hold a driveway Dawn Service under candle light and as I looked up and down my street it was pleasing to see so many households out on their driveway before 6am. Thankfully, services still went ahead in our outer metro areas and from all accounts looked to be very well supported.

I'd like to take the opportunity to acknowledge Jim O'Neill, not only for his tireless work for the League in WA but in producing this very newsletter each month. What began as an idea has grown into a monthly publication full of fun, facts and information. I'm assured everyone looks forward to receiving it. Carrying on the inclusive ethos of our activities and getaways everyone is welcome to contribute to the newsletter, so if you have something newsworthy, interesting or entertaining I'm certain Jim would love to hear from you.

In other news, the WA Executive Committee had a Dine In night with CO HMAS STIRLING, CAPT Gary Lawton and his wife Imelda, CO HMAS ARUNTA, CMDR Tony Nagle and XO HMAS ARUNTA, LCDR Dave Mason at the Tradewinds Hotel in Fremantle. This night can only be described as fun filled and interesting with great company, great food and more than a few great stories. Before we knew it, we were the last ones left in the pub which again reiterates just how enjoyable the night was.

Some of the Executive Committee also attended the presentation of the Gloucester Cup and Fleet Awards at HMAS STIRLING in the lead up to ANZAC Day. We sincerely congratulate CMDR Tony Nagle and the Officers and Sailors of ARUNTA for their outstanding achievement and thank him for the invite.

At the risk of sounding like a broken record, maintenance and upgrade works continue to our headquarters. A last lot of electrical work has been finalised (until the next lot) and thanks to our builder Emidio, the river frontage of the building is looking fantastic. These works again add to the overall security of the facility as well as the aesthetics. Next project is windows and shutters, both to be carried out next month all going well.

You would have noticed our half year update in the March newsletter and given some of these statistics I feel it is worthy of another mention. Building upgrades aside, the fact that we have signed up 17 new members in the past six months is something to be proud of and is comforting to the Executive Committee in knowing we must be doing something right. I'm really looking forward to another update after our AGM in a few month's time and feel we will surpass our figures to date.

After what appeared to be the country getting back on an even keel so far as the Covid-19 pandemic goes, Perth and Peel, as mentioned above were put into a snap three day lockdown though the news today is that the lockdown has again kept us safe and restrictions are being stepped down. Hopefully we keep improving and the travel bubble with the States and Territories as well as New Zealand remains open, allowing people to again take holidays and move around with less hindrance. It is further hoped that this travel bubble will be the start of additional safe countries like Singapore for example likewise opening to us.

Regards

Brad

NLWA EXECUTIVE AND RAN OFFICERS DINE –IN  
Trade Winds Hotel East Fremantle







## HMAS Perth (I) Memorial Foundation Inc Round-up and events



**Proposed Memorial to HMAS Perth (1) -**  
 Navy League of Australia - Western Australia Division Riverside Road East Fremantle WA

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# The Battle of Sunda Strait



*The words upon a tablet, dully gleaming on the wall,  
I notice as I passed beside the sunlit Perth Town Hall,  
Familiar words that made me pause I read the text again:  
"In grateful memory of the Perth, her officers and men."*

*In fancy I discern against the Java background dim  
A sharply outlined profile, low powerful and trim.  
I hear again the voices of the men who speak no more  
And feel the surge of engines as the old ship leaves the shore.*

*Her bows swing slowly westwards heading for the narrow gap  
Of Sunda Strait, the passage-way that leads to Tjilatjap.  
To Tjilatjap for orders through the fast descending night,  
While churning screws weave steadily a giant scarf of white.  
The graceful bow waves curling spurn the slicing bows of steel,  
And surge in slow resentment of the deeply ploughing keel.*

*The sleeping guns are black and grim against the moonlight sky.  
In silhouette the aircraft sit like some huge dragonfly.  
With breezes-born of motion softly singing in the spars,  
The long mast finger tries to trace a path between the stars.*

*The Perth, a modern cruiser of some seven thousand tons,  
Well armed with eight torpedo tubes and mounting six-inch guns,  
Is followed by the "Houston, huge and dark upon the sea;  
A heavy US cruiser, our only company.*

*In line ahead the blacked-out ships are steaming through the night.  
A few miles off to starboard is the Rabi Island light,  
Ahead of us and off to port there lies the Sunda Strait,  
On through the night we rush to keep our rendezvous with fate.*

*Then suddenly the battle starts, as unexpectedly  
A Japanese invasion fleet looms large upon the sea;  
A force of almost eighty ships, invading Banten Bay  
And spreading out across the Straits to bar our passage way.*

*Our guns speak first and find their target close against the shore,  
Then swing to bear on other marks (and there are plenty more),  
For everywhere the Jap guns flash like yellow winking eyes,  
And tracer shells a pattern stitch across the midnight skies.*

*Astern of us our allied ship is fighting fiercely too;  
The tracer streaming from her guns are amber, red and blue,  
And curving out from every side in low trajectory,  
The nearest foe scarce half a mile, the farthest only three.*

*Our heavy guns are flashing with a rumbling roaring din,  
Exploding shells are crashing on destroyers racing in.  
Our four-inch guns are flaming as they fling the challenge back,  
And anti-aircraft weapons rake the huge destroyer pack.*

*Yet recklessly they're closing in and trying to make a kill;  
They do not know the fighting heart nor do they know the skill  
The Perth acquired in battles such as Matapan and Crete;  
For every time their ships rush in, and every time we meet  
At point-blank range we're steady with our vicious deadly fire,  
Our bursting shells divert them and force them to retire.*

*The middle watch, the old month dies, the battle still goes on.  
We fight them for an hour and then our ammunition's gone.  
The shells are landing on our decks and close by in the sea,  
Torpedoes rip the racing ship and wound her mortally.*

*The splashes of the falling shells leap high into the air  
And hang suspended, greenish-white within the searchlight's glare,  
Tall columns with their ragged heads upraised towards the sky  
Like monuments to those who died and those about to die.*

*Still moving slowly forward as she settles in the sea,  
She's battered, bloodied, beaten, but she dies gallantly.  
The flag she'd borne through many fights still flying from the mast,  
And one propeller turning yet, defiant to the last.*

U.S.S. HOUSTON FOUGHT GALLANTLY AND SANK A FEW MINUTES AFTER H.M.A.S. PERTH

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Arunta the 'pride of the fleet'  
By Acting Sub-Lieutenant Jack Meadows  
27 April 2021



Governor-General General (ret'd) David Hurley, centre, and his wife Linda Hurley present the 2020 Duke of Gloucester Cup to Commanding Officer HMAS Arunta Commander Anthony Nagle. Photo: Leading Seaman Richard Cordell

One of Navy's longest running and most prestigious awards, the Gloucester Cup, has been awarded to the crew of HMAS *Arunta* for excelling in all areas of operation at sea and alongside.

On April 19, the Governor-General General (ret'd) David Hurley presented the cup in a ceremony at Fleet Base West in Western Australia.

"*Arunta* has had an outstanding year, capped off by her support of the ADF's commitment throughout the Indo-Pacific region, specifically in the South China Sea and in support of the United Nations Security Council sanctions on North Korea," General Hurley said.

"You are worthy recipients of the Navy's prestigious Duke of Gloucester's Cup. Congratulations. It's a great Navy day and, today, you are the pride of the fleet."

The Gloucester Cup was instituted in 1946 by then-Governor-General, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, to recognise exceptional contribution to the Royal Australian Navy each year by a unit deemed to have displayed the highest level of overall proficiency.

The award has been adapted into the modern Navy to recognise the unit, crew, squadron, clearance diving team or establishment that has excelled in all aspects of their tasking.

This includes mission effectiveness, lethality, safety, reliability, efficiency, currency and competency.

Leading Seaman Luke Gibbons, who is serving in *Arunta*, said the crew was proud to be awarded the cup following a challenging but highly rewarding year that included seven months at sea.

"It's great to be a part of a winning team and especially rewarding to be recognised for our contribution to the Navy and the nation," Leading Seaman Gibbons said.

"The CO really instilled a sense of pride in our ship and I think that had a flow-on effect leading us to achieve strong results in both RIMPAC (Exercise Rim of the Pacific) and our regional presence deployment.

"Winning the Gloucester Cup is a big achievement and I think this award will be a point of inspiration for our ship's company for years to come."





# Chinese Navy to help Indonesia salvage sunken submarine

AFP 17 h

Chinese navy ships have arrived off Bali to help haul up a submarine that sank last month killing 53 crew, the Indonesian Navy said Tuesday as it geared up for a deep-sea salvage operation.



© Juni Kriswanto Naval officers pay their respects during a remembrance ceremony for the crew of the KRI Nanggala. The help arrived after other foreign ships from Australia, Singapore and Malaysia left the archipelago, having assisted Indonesian authorities in finding the stricken vessel. The KRI Nanggala 402 -- one of five submarines in Indonesia's fleet -- disappeared last month while it was scheduled to take part in live torpedo training exercises.

An underwater rescue vehicle supplied by neighbouring Singapore gave visual confirmation that the German-built sub was lying on the sea floor more than 800 metres (2,600 feet) deep, broken in three parts, confirming there was no hope of finding survivors. Two Chinese salvage ships were on standby in waters off Bali, while a third was expected to arrive later Tuesday, the Indonesian Navy said, adding that Chinese Navy officials in Bali were helping to examine data collected on the submarine.

All three salvage ships can dive up to 4,500 metres deep. Indonesia's Navy said Beijing's ambassador to the country had offered the help to Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto. "The offer was welcomed by the Indonesian government," it said in a statement Tuesday. A vessel from Indonesia's upstream oil and gas regulator task force SKK Migas, used for drilling operations, will also join the salvage operations. It has a crane with a capacity of 1,200 metric tons.

Last week the Navy said high-powered magnets and air balloons were among the possible options to lift the submarine. An undersea robot will also be used in the operation, it said. The military has yet to offer an official explanation for the sinking of the decades-old submarine, which was delivered to the Southeast Asian nation in 1981.



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## ROUND UP OF THE Royal Navy









## The Kiev class carrier Minsk was saved from the scrapyards after the fall of the Soviet Union, but is now wasting away 50 miles northwest of Shanghai.

APRIL 15,



JOSEPH TREVITHICK [View Joseph Trevithick's Articles](#)

[@FranticGoat](#)

The former Soviet [Kiev class aircraft carrier](#) *Minsk* is rusting away, seemingly abandoned, in the middle of a man-made lagoon some 50 miles northwest of the Chinese city of Shanghai. It's a visual that feels better suited to a movie or video game set in a cyberpunk dystopia or an Earth where nature has reclaimed areas in the aftermath of some kind of apocalypse. It looks to be a sad and lonely fate for the ship, which was already spared the scrapper's torch once by Chinese businessmen in the 1990s.

The ex-*Minsk's* present home sits just off the Yangtze River to one side of the Sutong Yangtze River Bridge in Nantong, China. Its immediate neighbors are farms and associated agricultural facilities. Looking at satellite imagery of the site, to the immediate north of the Lagoon, there is what looks to be a viewing platform with a walkway leading back to various structures and a tented pavilion. All of this looks to be part of equally abandoned work on a planned theme park that was to feature the aircraft carrier at its center, but which never opened.



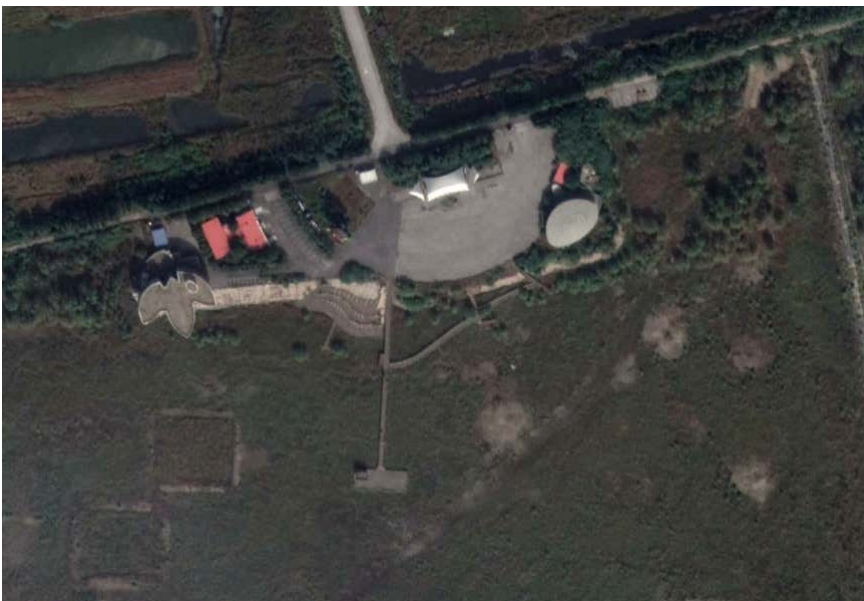
GOOGLE EARTH

A satellite image of the ex-*Minsk* at its present location near Shanghai in 2019. A portion of the Sutong Yangtze River Bridge is visible to the right.



GOOGLE EARTH

A more general view of the former *Minsk* and its surroundings.



GOOGLE EARTH

A close-up of the structures to the north of the man-made lagoon where the carrier is anchored.



How the ship, which had previously been the centerpiece of another amusement park in Shenzhen, just to the northeast of Hong Kong, some 750 miles away from its current location, got to where it is now, is something of a saga.

The *Minsk* was first laid down in a Soviet shipyard, situated in what is now Ukraine, in 1972. It was the second ship in the *Kiev* class and was commissioned into the Soviet Navy in 1978.

The *Kiev* class design is something of an oddity among modern aircraft carriers, to begin with, having a bow and island that both look more reminiscent of what you might expect to see on a [battlecruiser](#), along with a relatively small, angled flight deck. The Soviets categorized these 40,000-ton-displacement vessels as a "heavy aviation cruiser," a term also applied to the more traditional looking *Admiral Kuznetsov* that followed.



DOD

*Minsk* in service with the Soviet Navy in 1983.

Befitting this description, the *Kievs* had launchers for eight P-500 Bazalt anti-ship cruise missiles, also known to NATO as the SS-N-12 Sandbox, and two turrets with twin 76mm guns, among other weapons. This was all in addition to their air wings, which typically consisted of a dozen Yak-38 Forger jump jets and a slightly larger number of Kamov Ka-25/27/29 helicopters. *Kuznetsov* also had a similar anti-ship missile capability, with launch cells built right into its flight deck, as [you can read about more here](#).



DOD

The *Kiev* class aircraft carrier *Novorossiysk* offering a full view of its bow-mounted missiles and one of its 76mm gun turrets.

*Minsk* was assigned to the Soviet Navy's Pacific Fleet and had a largely uneventful service life in the twilight of the Cold War, as did her sister ships *Kiev* and *Novorossiysk*. A fourth *Kiev* class carrier, *Baku*, was commissioned in 1987. It featured a new phased array radar, improved electronic warfare capabilities, launchers for four more P-500s, and turreted 100mm guns in place of the twin 76mm weapons, among other additions, which often led to it being described as the sole example of a distinct subclass.



A head-on view of *Baku* showing its revised forward armament, among other changes.

USN



When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, the new Russian Navy took possession of all four ships, but found them difficult and costly to operate and maintain. *Minsk* was had already been effectively put into mothballs sometime between 1989 and 1990 due to "severe engineering problems," according to the 1993 edition of *Combat Fleets of the World*. In 1993, *Novorossiysk* also suffered a major engine room fire.

With limited immediate options to rehabilitate those two ships – the shipyards where they were built and that had the facilities necessary to conduct major repairs on them were now in the independent country of Ukraine – and the equally poor state of *Kiev*, the decision was made to sell them off as scrap. By 1995, *Minsk* and *Novorossiysk* had made their way to South Korea to be broken. The fate of *Kiev* was more complicated and we will come back to that later on.

An attempt was made to get *Baku*, by then renamed *Admiral Gorshkov*, back into service. However, in 2004, that ship was [sold to India](#) and it subsequently an expensive and drawn-out conversion process that turned it into a more conventional short-take-off-but-arrested-recovery (STOBAR) carrier with a full flight deck and ski jump.



INDIAN NAVY

A top-down look at the former *Admiral Gorshkov*, showing its completely revised bow and flight deck, which is now in Indian Navy service as the INS *Vikramaditya*.

The former *Novorossiysk* was ultimately scrapped in South Korea in 1997, but protests by South Korean environmentalists [prompted the sale](#) of the ex-*Minsk* first to a Chinese shipbreaking company, Guangdong Ship Dismantling, and then to Si Ke Investment Company, Limited. Si Ke, established by Chinese entrepreneurs who had made their money primarily through video game arcades, bought the ship with the express purpose of building a theme park around it. They paid approximately \$4.3 million at the time, close to \$7.3 million in 2021 dollars, for what was left of the *Minsk*.

The aptly titled Minsk World opened in Shenzhen in 2000. A curious assortment of aircraft, including Chinese [Q-5 Fantan](#) combat jets, Soviet-made [MiG-23 and MiG-27 Flogger](#) swing-wing jets, and [Mi-24 Hind helicopters](#), were put on display on its flight deck and down below in the hangar. The exact origins of the MiG-23s and MiG-27s, as well as the Mi-24s, are unclear, as the Chinese military never operated those types. [Flying](#) and non-flying examples [of these types](#), and other Soviet military aircraft designs, certainly have been bought and sold on the open market, by [commercial enterprises](#) and [private citizens](#), since the end of the Cold War.





*BROKENSPHERE VIA WIKIMEDIA*

The gates to Minsk World in 2008.



*BROKENSPHERE VIA WIKIMEDIA*

Mi-24 Hinds, at left, and Q-5s, at right, on the deck of the ex-Minsk.

Inert weapons, or mock-ups thereof, including missiles, bombs, and torpedoes, as well as other Soviet militaria were also displayed. Exhibits covering the Chinese military were also added. As seen in the video below, song-and-dance numbers were also regularly held at indoor and outdoor stages installed on the ship.

The original owners of Minsk World went bankrupt in 2006. The park and the carrier inside were subsequently auctioned off to a state-owned holding company, CITIC Group.



Before Minsk World opened, some experts and observers had suggested that the purchase of the carrier by a Chinese company was some kind of subterfuge to assist in the establishing of a carrier capability for the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN). *Kiev* had also been sold to another Chinese firm with the stated aim of turning it into a tourist attraction. Around the same time, a more shadowy firm based in Macau, with ties to the PLAN, had bought *Kuznetsov*'s unfinished sister ship *Varyag* from Ukraine, saying it planned to convert into [a floating hotel and casino](#).

As it turned out, despite assessments from experts that it would [be too onerous](#) to return *Varyag* to any sort of operational state, the PLAN did formally commission that ship in 2012 [as the \*Liaoning\*](#), and it remains [in service to this day](#). There's no indication one way or another that the acquisition of the *Minsk*, along with the actual opening of Minsk World, was in any way part of some larger plan on the part of the Chinese government to conceal its aircraft carrier ambitions. "Their target group is different," an anonymous advisor to the Minsk World project had [told \*The Washington Post\*](#) in 1999 when asked if there was a concern about competition from a future hotel and casino created from the *Varyag*.



PHOTO BY VCG

The *Liaoning*, now in service with the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy.

If there was any real competition to Minsk World, it could have come from Binhai Aircraft Park in Tianjin, China, some 100 miles southeast of Beijing, which is where *Kiev* went. Q-5s are also on display on that ship, as are [mock-ups of Yak-38s](#). In 2011, the company that owns that park announced plans to turn that former carrier into more of [a floating luxury hotel](#) with at least five presidential suites.



XINHUA

A picture showing the bedroom in one of the presidential suites that were added to the interior of the former *Kiev* at Binhai Aircraft Park.

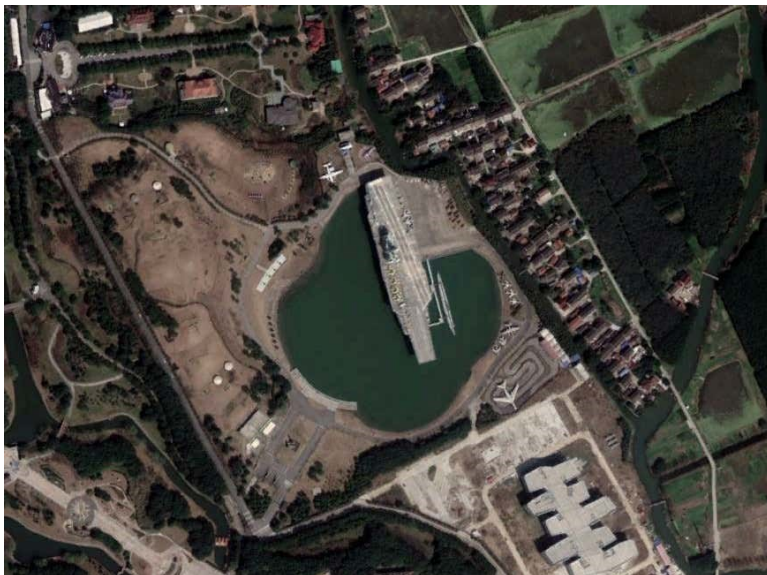
"Previously, China didn't have aircraft carriers. People find them mysterious and are curious about them. Even though China's first aircraft carrier [the Liaoning] has now gone on sea trials, it will be quite hard for the public to ever visit it," Liu Chang, a marketing manager at Binhai Aircraft Park told *The Guardian* newspaper at the time. "I guess people can come here to fulfil their curiosity."

Binhai Aircraft Park remains open and pictures show the ex-*Kiev* to be, at least on the surface, well maintained. The same cannot be said of the former *Minsk*, which, along with the aircraft on display, looked to be in an increasingly dilapidated state even before Minsk World shut down for good in 2016. The park was closed after government officials decided to reclaim the land it sat on for other purposes.



BROKENSPHERE VIA WIKIMEDIA

A picture showing the poor condition of one of the aircraft, a MiG-23, on display at Minsk World even in 2008, The ship, which had been repainted sometime in the intervening years with the hull number "16," the same as that on *Liaoning*, was subsequently moved to where it sits now near Shanghai, arriving there between 2017 and 2018. There had been plans to establish a new Minsk World, but that has not come to pass, though it's not entirely clear why. It is worth noting that there has been a [massive aircraft carrier replica](#), reportedly meant to be a [near-full-scale mock-up](#) of the American supercarrier [USS Nimitz](#), that people can tour at the Military Education Center near Dianshan Lake, close to Shanghai, since 2002.



GOOGLE EARTH

The carrier replica the Military Education Center near Dianshan Lake.





GLOBALSECURITY.ORG

A view of the "Nimitz" replica from the ground.

Whatever the ostensible plans for the remains of Minsk might be now, it is clearly all-but-abandoned. There is one video of the ship on YouTube, that an individual shot in 2019 using a camera on a quadcopter drone. There are no signs of activity on or around the ship whatsoever.

In 2020, the Burbex YouTube channel, short for Brin's Urban Exploration, which posts videos of individuals poking around various abandoned facilities, uploaded footage shot from within the ship. Remains of the exhibits, including one of the MiG-23s, are still inside, but are in very poor shape. The general condition of things strongly suggests these were not the first people to sneak aboard the aircraft carrier since it was first anchored in the enclosed lagoon. All told, there doesn't seem to be any real security in place at the site, at all.

All told, the future of what is left of the *Minsk* looks bleak. It remains to be seen how much longer the present owners will let the ship languish in its man-made lagoon before making some final decision about its fate. The longer it sits there, exposed to the elements with no real care given to its condition, the more likely it is that its next destination will be a scrapyard.

## FUTURE ROYAL NAVY SUBMARINE ANSON FLOATED OUT


By **Baird Maritime** - May 4, 2021



*Photo: BAE Systems*

The future Royal Navy submarine HMS *Anson* was recently floated out at BAE Systems' Barrow-in-Furness site in Cumbria. The submarine is currently undergoing the next phase of its test and commissioning programme. It is scheduled to leave Barrow next year for sea trials with the Royal Navy.

The future *Anson* is the fifth Astute-class nuclear-powered submarine to be built by BAE Systems. Once completed, it will have a length of 97 metres, a hull diameter of 11.3 metres, a submerged displacement of over 7,400 tonnes, and a maximum speed of 30 knots. Armament will include Spearfish torpedoes and Tomahawk cruise missiles.




### 'Under the weather'

This everyday idiom can be traced back to the 1830s. It's believed that phrase is a shortened form of the nautical phrase 'under the weather bow', which is a reference to the windward side of the ship's bow - the side of the ship which takes the brunt of high seas.

Originally, it referred to being seasick. During storms or high seas, when passengers and crew were feeling unwell, they would go below deck away from the bad weather to recover where the motion of the boat was less.

Nowadays, it generally means to feel ill or unwell.





## Littoral combat ship Detroit is being towed into port after another engineering failure

By: [David B. Larter](#)

November 6, 2020

62



The Freedom-class littoral combat ship Detroit sails through the Caribbean Sea. Detroit suffered a casualty to its propulsion system and is returning to port in Florida for repairs. (MC2 Anderson Branch/U.S. Navy)

WASHINGTON — The littoral combat ship Detroit suffered [another engineering casualty](#) on its return trip to its home port in Florida and is being towed into Port Canaveral, the U.S. Navy confirmed Friday.

The ship lost power on its return journey from a deployment in Latin America, which it was forced to depart after a casualty to its combining gear. It is being towed back to port by the tug and supply vessel Gary Chouest, according to U.S. 2nd Fleet spokesperson Cmdr. Ashley Hockycko.

“While conducting routine operations in the U.S. Fourth Fleet area of responsibility, the USS Detroit (LCS 7) experienced an engineering casualty. After a thorough technical evaluation, it was determined that repairs would need to be made in port,” Hockycko said in a statement.

“During the ship’s return transit to her homeport of Mayport, Fl., the ship lost electrical power. The ship is currently being towed to Port Canaveral by MV Gary Chouest. Due to deteriorating weather in the area, the ship was towed to Port Canaveral, Fl., the closest port out of an abundance of caution and for the safety and comfort of the crew,” the officer added.

The ship was scheduled to arrive this afternoon, Hockycko said. Online vessel trackers showed Chouest arriving in Port Canaveral around 2:15 p.m.

Detroit is a mono-hulled Freedom variant of the littoral combat ship, designed by Lockheed Martin and built at Marinette Marine in Wisconsin.

Defense News first reported the combining gear casualty in late October. The combining gear is a complex transmission that connects power from two large gas turbine engines and two main propulsion diesel engines to the ship’s propulsion shafts, which propels the ship through the water with water jets.

Detroit will redeploy to Southern Command when repairs are completed, U.S. 4th Fleet Commander Rear Adm. Don Gabrielson said in an Oct. 28 statement.

“USS Detroit (LCS 7) experienced an engineering casualty during routine operations, and a technical evaluation determined that in-port repairs would be required,” the statement read. “USS Detroit has been a vital and productive asset and will be redeployed as soon as possible.”

The incident was reminiscent of one in late 2015 with Detroit’s sister ship, the Milwaukee, was forced to shut down its engines and [be towed into port on its maiden voyage](#) from the shipyard to its home port in Mayport, Florida, after suffering a similar combining gear casualty.



### Shipbreaker Buys Hull for \$3.66M

By: [Sam LaGrone](#)

May 5, 2021 6:49 PM



Former *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD-6) toed from Naval Base San Diego, Calif., on April 15, 2021. The hull of the former amphibious warship *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD-6) is approaching the Panama Canal on the way to a Texas shipbreaker for dismantling, USNI News has learned.

The day after a ceremonial decommissioning at Naval Station San Diego, Calif., the hull was towed into the Pacific, bound for Brownsville, Texas on the Gulf Coast just North of the border with Mexico.

International Shipbreaking LTD., took possession of the remains of the ship for \$3.66 million, while the Navy would harvest components from the hull that were undamaged by last year's fire at the pier in San Diego, according to a copy of the contract obtained on Wednesday by USNI News.

USNI News understands the ship's propulsion system was largely undamaged from the effects of the four-day fires and would be part of the so-called harvested equipment from the hull. The Brownsville company has scrapped several large U.S. Navy ships, including the former carrier USS *Constellation* (CV-64).

The hull is currently under tow off the coast of Panama City, waiting to transit north through the canal, according to data from [Marine Traffic](#). Ordinarily, a Wasp-class amphibious warship is too large to transit the canal, however during its preparation for towing from San Diego, the aircraft elevators and island were removed to fit through the locks of the canal. The 40,000-ton *Bonhomme Richard* was in the midst of a \$250 million renovation to upgrade the 22-year-old ship when a fire broke out on July 12 and burned for four days. The extent of the damage prompted the Navy to decommission the ship rather than attempt repairs.

Several investigations into the incident are still ongoing.



# EGYPT: A RAPIDLY EMERGING MARITIME POWER

By [Trevor Hollingsbee](#) - April 29, 2021



ENS

*Gamal Abdel Nasser, one of two Mistral-class helicopter carriers operated by the Egyptian Navy (Photo: [MarineTraffic.com/Christophe Dedieu](https://MarineTraffic.com/ChristopheDedieu))*

The Egyptian Navy (EN) is the largest regional naval force in the Middle East. Its roles include the protection of Egypt's extensive Red Sea and Mediterranean coastlines and the support of operations by the Egyptian Army. The service has seen significant action against Israeli and other naval forces over the years, and the sinking in 1967 of the Israeli destroyer INS *Eilat* by Styx missiles fired from an EN Komar-class fast attack craft marked the first ever successful strike by a ship-launched surface-to-surface missile.

From the 1960s onwards, the Soviet Union helped build up the Egyptian fleet, but the EN was long noted for the antiquated nature of much of its inventory. It still retains a handful of active old vessels, including, astonishingly, the 1865-vintage state yacht *El Mahrousa*, but over the past 20 years has emerged as a very modern and ambitious force.

The prime catalyst for EN growth has been the regional security situation, which includes unstable governments, territorial disputes, and terrorist activity.

In January 2020 the EN caught the attention of analysts when it staged an unprecedented major exercise in the Mediterranean. Tensions in the region were high, and Egypt was embroiled in a de facto alliance with the UAE, France, Sudan, Russia and Saudi Arabia, in support of rebel Libyan General Khalifa Haftar. Participating Egyptian assets included destroyers, fast missile-armed attack craft, a diesel-electric attack submarine, and a landing platform dock (helicopter) (LPH).

Core assets of the contemporary Egyptian fleet are a pair of French-built, 21,300-tonne Mistral-class LPHs, ENS *Gamal Abdel Nasser* and ENS *Anwar al-Sadat*. These ships were originally intended for the Russian Navy, but the order was cancelled for political reasons. Each capable of operating up to 35 helicopters, including the new Russian-made Ka-50 ground attack platforms, these ships facilitate the long-range power projection that is a major element of geopolitical ambitions.

Recent months have seen a quantum leap in EN surface warfare capabilities, including the commissioning of the Italian-built gas turbine/electric-powered FREMM frigates ENS *Al Galala* and ENS *Bernees*. These ships are fitted with the powerful Herakles passive electronically-scanned array radar, providing strong surveillance capabilities, while armament includes a 76-millimetre gun and Exocet anti-shipping and Aster air defence missiles.

Two AW101 or SH-90 helicopters can be carried.

The first German-built MEKO 200 frigate, four of which are on order, is due to be launched very shortly. These ships will be armed with Swedish Saab RBS-15 surface-to-surface missiles and South African Umkhonto air defence missiles.



*ENS Port Said, Egypt's first locally-built Gowind-class corvette (Photo: Alexandria Shipyard)*

January 2021 saw the commissioning of the first of a planned three locally-built, French-designed Gowind 2500 corvettes, the first example having been constructed in France. Armament includes the new MICA vertically-launched air defence missiles. Cairo is currently negotiating with Paris for the possible supply of two more Gowind 2500s to be built in France.

Backing up the burgeoning EN inventory of very modern escorts is a flotilla of second-hand ships, namely four Oliver Hazard Perry-class and two Knox-class frigates, formerly of the US Navy, a pair of ex-Spanish Navy Descubierta-class corvettes, and a former South Korean Navy Pohang-class corvette.

A force of some 50 fast attack craft includes vessels built in China, Russia, Germany, UK, and the US as well as indigenously constructed craft.





S44, the

*fourth Type 209 submarine to be built for Egypt (Photo: ThyssenKrupp)*

In a development that has significant balance of power implications, Egypt is now vying with Israel to be the operator of the region's most powerful submarine force. Three German-built Type 209 1400 mod class boats are now in service with the EN, and the fourth and final boat of the class was launched at the TKMS shipyard in September 2020. Both these boats, and the EN's quartet of Chinese-built Romeo-class submarines, can fire the underwater-launched variant of the Harpoon anti-shiping cruise missile.

There is, therefore, no doubt that Egypt is rapidly emerging as a maritime power to be reckoned with.



**Stoker and HMAS Waramunga**





## TS AHURIRI celebrates local name

What's in a name?  
When it comes  
to Training Ship  
AHURIRI, a lot of  
thought went into the  
naming of the Cadet  
Forces' newest Sea  
Cadet unit.

The Napier-based unit, up and running since October, had a parade on 14 February at Napier's Veronica Sunbay to formally recognise its regionally-inspired name, with Chief of Navy Rear Admiral David Proctor and local dignitaries present for the ceremony.

The Navy cadets had been under the sponsorship of the City of Napier Cadet Corps unit, a typical arrangement until the numbers become consistently large enough to form a separate unit.

City of Napier unit commander, Cadet Force Captain Harley Benton, formerly Royal New Zealand Navy, says the idea of forming TS AHURIRI was put forward two years ago.

"I put forward the name, AHURIRI, which refers to the inner harbour area. And the Māori chieftain Ahuriri, he was quite a sailor, apparently. So it fitted both historically and today."

Older Sea Cadet units have been named after former Royal New Zealand Navy ships or former Navy ships connected with New Zealand, but there are exceptions. TS TALISMAN in Nelson is named for a local coastal scow. TS GODLEY is named after a pioneer founder of Christchurch. TS NIMROD is named after the ship that Sir Ernest Shackleton used for an Antarctic expedition.

There were some who thought VERONICA would be appropriate, a nod to the sailors from HMS VERONICA who came to Napier's aid after the 1931 earthquake. At every Art Deco Festival, the Westshore Sea Scouts escort the Veronica Bell to the Napier Sunbay memorial, where it is rung to commemorate the Navy's contribution.

"The Sea Scouts have been doing that for a long time, it's their duty. If we called our unit VERONICA, it would seem like we stole that identity from them."

CFCAPT Benton had observed they had paraded about 15 Naval Cadets for a while, and thought it was time they had their own unit. "You've got to get support from the community, the RSA, Ngāti Kahungunu. There has to be a public meeting, you get the backing of the council, you fundraise, get boats, and you demonstrate that you've got a structure, and you can stand by yourself. We put a huge amount of effort into it."



It was an "awesome" parade, with 57 cadets from City of Napier Cadet Unit, Ruahine Cadet Unit, and 11 (City of Hastings) and 13 (City of Napier) ATC Squadrons.

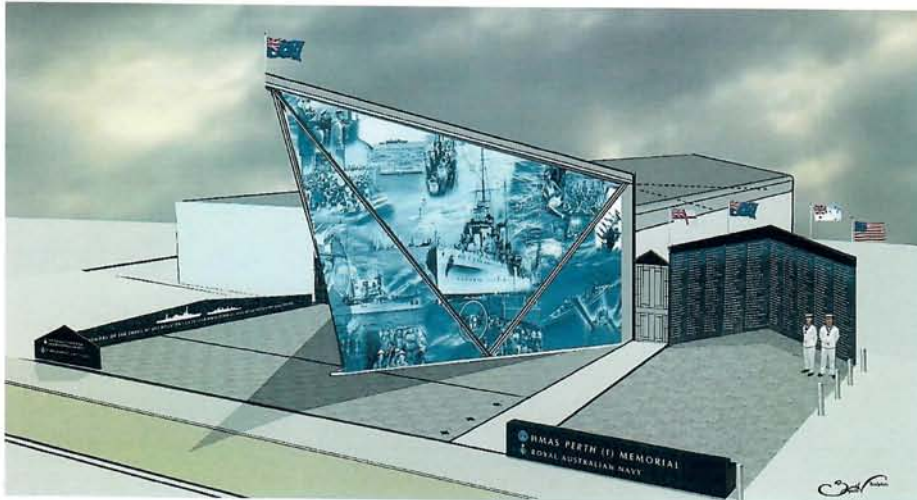
Although they share Coote Road Army Drill Hall with the Army and Air Force cadets, CFCAPT Benton can definitely cut the apron strings, he says. "They have their own unit commander who has done the Command Course. They have their own office space. For Art Deco, they'll do a Charter Parade, and attend the Blossom Festival in Hastings." And best of all, they've got boats, he says. When they head off to their upcoming regatta in Auckland, they truly represent their region.



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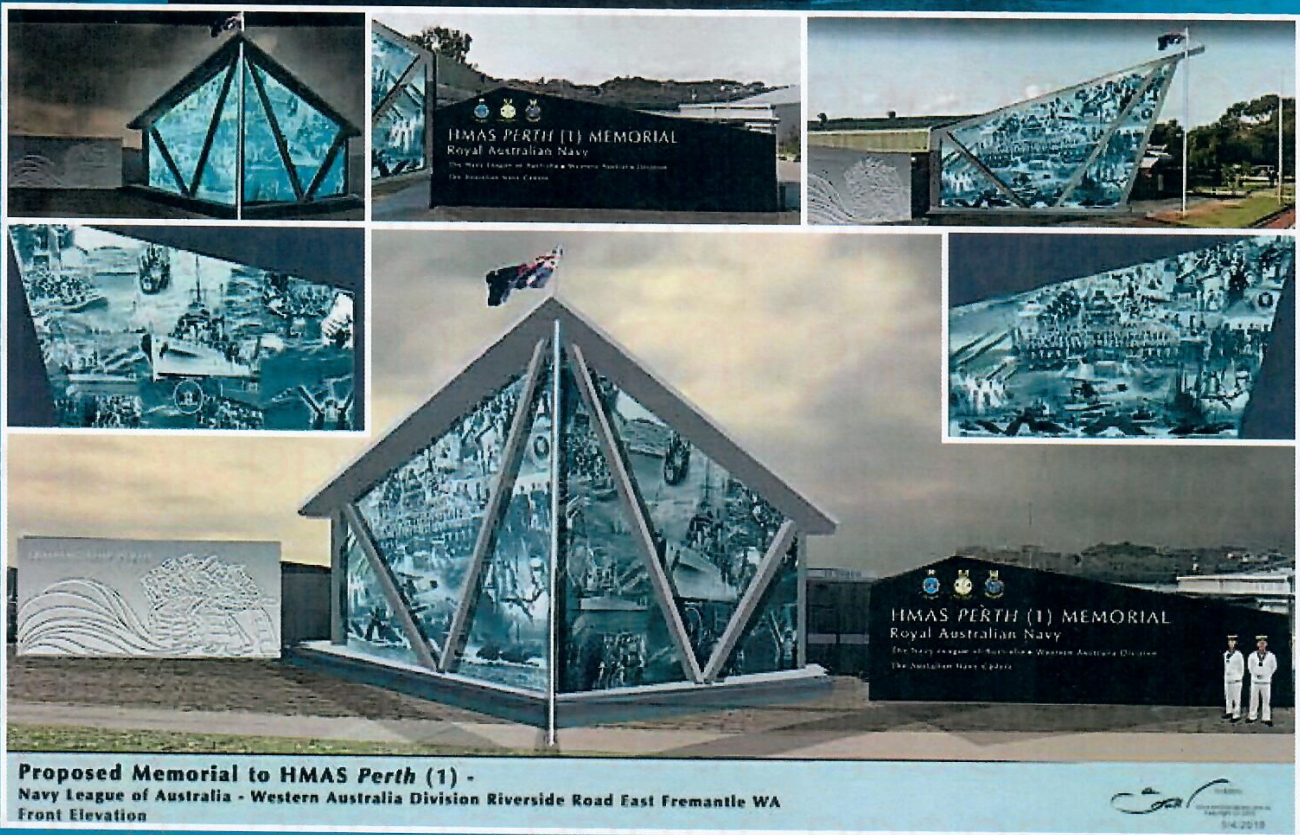
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