



# NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

VIC TAS DIVISION

MAY 2021

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“Keeping Watch over the Maritime Wellbeing of Australia”

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### Division Survey

Thanks to our members who took the time to respond to our survey.

It is great to have your feedback to inform our vision and plan future activities.



16 May 2021

Crew members from #HMASGascoyne experienced a day on the water unlike any other – kicking back and throwing a line off the decks for a worthy cause.

Partnering with HMAS Waterhen, sailors and officers participated in the annual Pirtek Fishing Challenge to raise much-needed funds for research into prostate cancer.

[#AusNavy](#) [#YourADF](#)

# UPCOMING EVENTS



- The next Divisional event is the **commemorative luncheon** in memory of LCDR John Bird RNR. It will be held at the Royal Victorian Motor Yacht Club in Williamstown on Sunday 18 July 2021, 1200 for 1230. The cost of the 2-course meal is \$35 per person. LCDR Bird was involved with the Navy League in the UK, NZ & Australia for over 70 years. His passion was fixed wing aircraft. An invitation will be sent to you shortly.
  - A **seminar** on the subject of fixed wing aircraft is planned for October during Navy Week.
  - The **Creswell Oration** luncheon is held annually on 1 March to commemorate the foundation of the Australian Navy. Due to COVID, it was cancelled in 2020 and 2021. We plan to go ahead in March 2022 and a tentative booking has been made at William Angliss Restaurant. We will confirm the date in July.
  - Our friends at the Naval Historical Society of Australia Victoria Chapter has a number of excellent speakers lined up for the remainder of 2021. You are invited to enjoy a meal and fellowship at the Waverley RSL prior to the speaker's presentation. I encourage you come along. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month, 5.45 for 6pm for dinner; the meeting commences at 7pm. Please contact Rodney Phillips by email [77minstrel@gmail.com](mailto:77minstrel@gmail.com) to book in for dinner, or just turn up. You will be made most welcome. Further information is available at [Victoria Chapter | Naval Historical Society of Australia \(navyhistory.org.au\)](http://Victoria Chapter | Naval Historical Society of Australia (navyhistory.org.au)).
- Mon 24 May Dr Steve Cole PhD, BSc (Hons) - *Navy Environmental Management Past & Present.*
  - Mon 28 June Robert Hadler – *Mutiny, Murder & Political Controversy*
  - Mon 26 July Captain Ainsley Morethorpe CSC RAN – *Captain James Stirling RN.*
  - Mon 23 August Captain Jorgen Berg – *Adventures in the Antarctica*
  - Mon 27 Sept Roger Buxton - *Exploration and Hydrography in the Arctic*
  - Mon 25 Oct Jan Roberts-Billet – *Australian Navy personnel at D-Day*
  - Mon 22 Nov CDRE Greg Yorke CSC RAN - topic to be advised. (*This is also their Christmas function.*)

# MELBOURNE MARITIME HERITAGE NETWORK (MMHN)



Our Division recently joined the Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network (MMHN). The Network was formed “to facilitate cooperation, collaboration and coordination across stakeholder groups.....

It seeks to sharpen the focus upon the richness of Melbourne’s maritime heritage and upon the crucial role of its port facilities in delivering social, cultural and economic benefits to Melbourne and regional Victoria.” Refer website [MMHN | Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network | Melbourne – A Great Maritime City](#)

The site outlines their vision and has a number of interesting newsletters for your perusal.

On 1 May 2021, Michael O’Brien shared the story of Victoria Harbour and the controversy surrounding the Central Pier at a seminar held at Magnet Galleries in the Docklands. It is hard to believe that this area was once a swamp.

Sir John Coode put forward a plan to develop a port and Joseph Brady modified this plan, proposing to shorten the Yarra River. The construction eventually went ahead and took 5 years due to the depression.

Central Pier was constructed from 1916 to 1919 and at that time, it was the second largest pier in the world. In 1925, 43 US naval ships visiting Melbourne docked there and some 25,000 US crew came ashore.

By 1964, containerization made the Victoria docks unsuitable.

In 2019, Central Pier was declared unsafe. It is now barricaded and about to be demolished, despite being heritage listed.



US ships at Central Pier 1925.

Photo courtesy of [Victoria Harbour & Central Pier - A Story Waiting to be Told - National Trust](#)



# SHIPS' VISITS TO MELBOURNE

HMAS Melville



HMAS Leeuwin



Members who met up with the crew of the hydrographic ships HMAS Melville and HMAS Leeuwin at the Royal Victorian Motor Yacht Club had a great time learning about the crew's roles and responsibilities. Whilst it is not possible to visit the ships due to COVID restrictions, it was great having lunch with some crew members. We will let you know about further ships' visits as the information comes to hand.



HMAS MELVILLE crew



HMAS LEEUWIN crew



Committee members Ron Lyon & Jane Teasdale  
with HMAS LEEUWIN crew



LCDR Roger Blythman, NLA President with  
CMDR Geoffrey Walker – Commanding Officer,  
HMAS LEEUWIN



# BISHOPSCOURT COCKTAIL PARTY



LCDR Roger Blythman, President NLA Vic Tas Division with Professor Geoffrey Blainey  
*Photo courtesy Jane Teasdale.*

Professor Emeritus Geoffrey Norman Blainey AC FAHA FASSA is an Australian historian, academic, best-selling author and commentator with a wide international audience.

Geoffrey graced us with his presence at Bishopscourt, 120 Clarendon Street East Melbourne on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Attendees were delighted to hear his fascinating talk on naval matters. The 20-minute talk extended into well over an hour as Geoffrey was plied with questions from interested attendees.

His Grace, the Archbishop of Melbourne Dr Philip Freier, conducted a tour of this heritage listed residence, explaining the history behind the chapel and the various rooms. We were privileged to be in this lovely setting for such a special event.



# NAVY NEWS



The RAN Band is back!

The RAN Band Melbourne will be performing at **76th Anniversary of D-Day Landings in Normandy**, hosted by the Normandy Veterans Association.

Date: 6 June 2021

Time: 10:30am-11:30am

Where: Second World War Forecourt, Shrine of Remembrance, Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne, Victoria. This is a free event.

Website <https://www.shrine.org.au/normandy-veterans-association-glen-waverley-secondary-college>

The RAN Big Band Melbourne will be performing at a Mooroolbark Concert

Date: 20 June 2021

Time: 2:00pm-3:00pm

Where: Mooroolbark Community Centre, 125 Brice Avenue, Mooroolbark, Victoria. This is a free event.

Website <https://www.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/Experience/Events/Royal-Australian-Navy-Band>



# OFFICERS BRIDGE A GAP IN EXPERIENCE



17 May 2021. Six officers in HMAS Anzac have bridged a gap in their experience by successfully navigating their way through their first multinational exercises as officers of the watch.

The officer of the watch is the commanding officer's representative and is responsible for, among other things, safe navigation, in conjunction with the principal warfare officer. Ref: [Officers bridge a gap in experience | Defence News](#)

## SUPPORT CONTINUES FOR OPERATION ARGOS



17 May 2021. Royal Australian Navy ship HMAS Ballarat has joined the international effort to enforce United Nations Security Council sanctions on North Korea.

This is the fifth deployment of a Navy vessel to Operation ARGOS since the operation commenced in 2018.

The Australian Defence Force has also deployed a maritime patrol aircraft on eight occasions for Operation ARGOS. Ref [Support continues for Operation Argos | Defence News](#)

# THE BATTLE OF THE CORAL SEA

*Written by Frank McCarthy, Honorary Vice President*



*Photo courtesy of Navy Times 4 May 2019*

For the Allies during World War II, a faint glimmer of hope began to shine in May of 1942, when the Japanese Navy were checked at the Battle of the Coral Sea by the United States Navy and the Royal Australian Navy. The RAN was well represented by the cruisers HMAS AUSTRALIA & HMAS HOBART.

The victory by the US Navy against the Japanese fleet in the following month of June at the Battle of Midway, spelt the turning point of the War in the Pacific leading to the Japanese eventual defeat.

The Battle of the Coral Sea will also be remembered next year (2022) as the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of that Battle.

In 1992, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Coral Sea Battle was commemorated in Melbourne by the Victoria Division of the Navy League of Australia, together with the American Australian Association.

An evening reception was held in the restored barque SS “Polly Woodside”. Over 200 people attended the Reception, including the League’s Victoria President LCDR John Bird RNVR RETD, Life Member of the League, plus the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, the Mayors of Port Melbourne and Williamstown, the Consul Generals of the United Kingdom and the United States.

Also in attendance was the Senior Naval Officer Victoria and the Commanding Officers of the visiting United States Navy frigate USS “RUBEN JAMES” and the RAN destroyer HMAS BRISBANE.

My own memories go back to 1954 when on the 7<sup>th</sup> May, the United State’s Navy Admiral Halsey, with the Victorian Governor Sir Dallas Brooks, took the salute in front of Melbourne’s Town Hall when approximately 3000 marchers from Australia’s current services and ex service personnel marched through Melbourne’s streets to commemorate the 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea.



Included amongst the 3000 marchers were 750 crew members from the visiting US Navy ships, the aircraft carrier USS TARAWA and the Fletcher class destroyer USS O'Bannon.

These commemorative services continued on each May through the 1960s and 1970s, but thereafter began to dwindle in Melbourne. It is heartening, however, to record the sterling efforts by the Naval family groups in Victoria and their supporters, in keeping the memory alive and encouraging the ongoing support during each month of May.

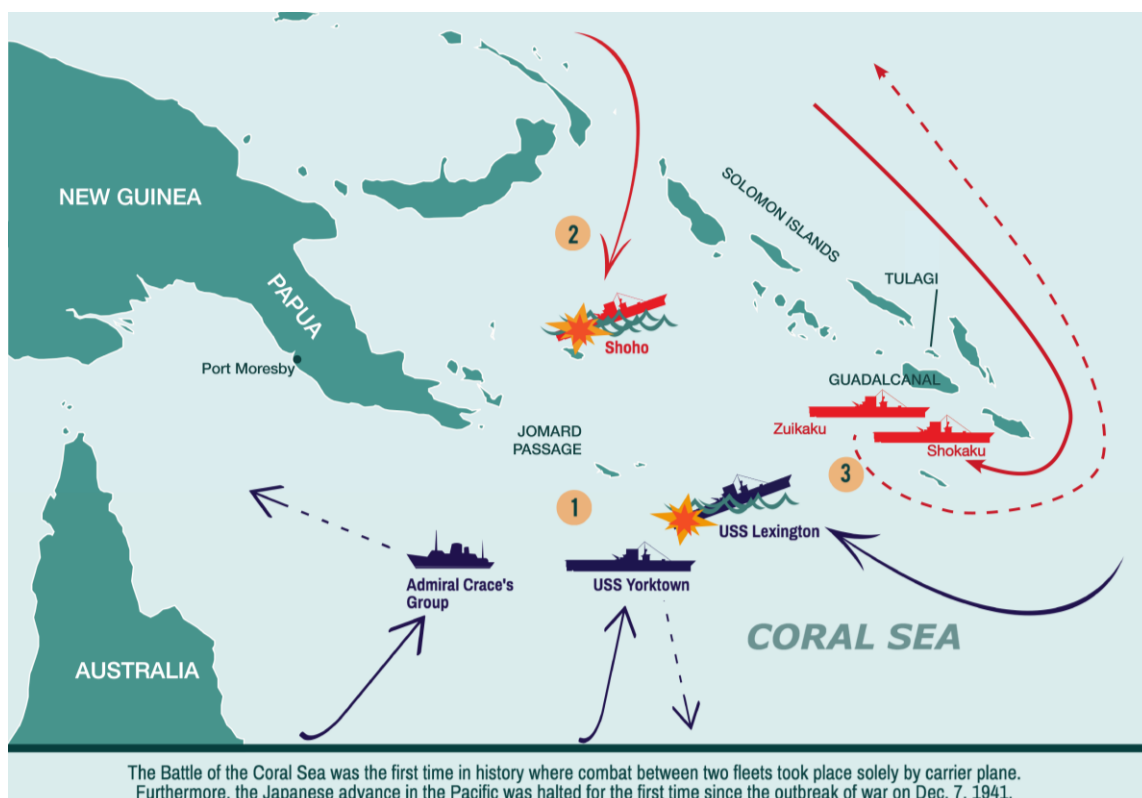
In terms of the actual Battle, some historians are quoted as describing the outcome of the Battle of the Coral Sea as tactically a draw, but in real terms strategically, it was a victory for the Allies. Port Moresby was never again directly threatened by a seaborne invasion; no enemy fleet ever again ventured so far south into the Coral Sea and two damaged Japanese aircraft carriers were unable to be repaired in time to take part in the Battle a month later that stopped Japan's seaborne advance in its tracks: Midway.

It should be remembered also that Melbourne played an important role from the initial stages of the Battle of the Coral Sea by supplying intelligence reports, detailing the likelihood of Japan's intentions towards Port Moresby.

As such, Melbourne was involved in the Coral Sea Battle from the first when locally based signals-intelligence units made a significant contribution to the early detection of the Japanese thrust.

Combining this information with that obtained from coast watchers and aerial reconnaissance, the combined Australian-US Operational Intelligence Centre located in Melbourne, issued an assessment on 25<sup>th</sup> April 1942, that a Japanese operation to occupy Port Moresby was imminent.

Thus, the code breakers in Melbourne provided invaluable information concerning the Japanese timetable and order of battle for the invasion of Port Moresby up to the very eve of the battle, fought from 4<sup>th</sup> May to 8<sup>th</sup> May in 1942. It was the first battle in history where opposing fleets were never in visual contact.



Reference: [FINAL JPEG CoralSea Infographic-791x1024.jpg \(791x1024\) \(dodlive.mil\)](https://www.dodlive.mil/791x1024.jpg)

# SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE REPORT

## Last Post Services



The public are invited to attend the 15-minute Last Post Services being held at 4.45pm each Sunday on the Shrine's northern forecourt. Each Service includes bugle calls, a wreath-laying at the Eternal Flame and Shrine Guard in historic uniform.

Service personnel are encouraged to attend and lay wreaths. Bookings are required by email - [ceremonies@shrine.org.au](mailto:ceremonies@shrine.org.au) or phone **03 9661 8100**

## Royal Australian Navy Recruits Wreath Laying Service

Sunday 23 May 2021 10:00 am - 23 May 2021 10:30 am

Second World War Memorial Forecourt, Shrine of Remembrance, Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne, VIC 3001

This wreath laying service recognises the contribution made by the Royal Australian Navy to Australia's national security.

Each month the current recruits at HMAS Cerberus make a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Remembrance. This visit links a sailor's experience at Recruit School with current and past members of the Defence Community.

Shrine Representatives:

- Shrine Governor Commander Terry Makings AM
- Shrine Governor Lieutenant Commander Jan Gallagher

## Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service

A wreath laying to honour the service and sacrifice of Aboriginal men and women.

Monday 31 May 2021 11:00 am - 12:00 pm

Second World War Forecourt, Shrine of Remembrance, Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne, VIC 3001

Free admission

This commemoration honours the service of Aboriginal men and women, past and present.

Aboriginal people have served in every conflict and peacekeeping mission involving Australia for more than a century. This is despite the fact that Aboriginal people were not allowed to enlist until the Second World War and for many years their service was not recognised.

In 2006, Auntie Dorothy 'Dot' Peters (1930-2019) sought to change this, and in 2007 the first Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service took place. Since then, it has been held every year to honour the service and sacrifice of all Aboriginal servicemen and women.

Watch the live stream

Shrine representatives:

- Shrine Chair of Trustees Captain Stephen Bowater OAM
- Shrine Governor Group Captain Annette Holian





## Queen's Birthday 21 Gun Salute

A 21 Gun Salute to mark the official birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Saturday 12 June 2021 12:00 pm -12:10 pm

Lower Forecourt, Shrine of Remembrance,  
Free admission

A 21 Gun Salute on the Lower Forecourt at 12pm will mark the Official Birthday of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, the Head of State. Although her actual birthday is 21 April, the reigning

monarch holds an Official Birthday usually in early June to coincide with the finer weather in the northern hemisphere that benefits the outdoor ceremonies. In Victoria this is held on the second Monday in June.

A 21 Gun Salute is a traditional salute firing blanks from an artillery piece or cannon to acknowledge special royal occasions within the United Kingdom and Commonwealth.



## N-Class Destroyers

A wreath laying to honour the service and sacrifice of those who served aboard N-Class Destroyers.

Sunday 13 June 2021 11:00 am - 11:30 am

Sanctuary, Shrine of Remembrance, Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne, VIC 3001

Free admission

This service remembers the N-Class destroyers, and all those who served aboard them.

The N-Class destroyers were a flotilla of ships built for the British Royal Navy. Early in the

Second World War, 5 were loaned to the Royal Australian Navy to be manned by Australian sailors. The Napier, Nestor, Nizam, Norman and Nepal served in the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Indian Oceans.

The date of this service commemorates the sinking of HMAS Nestor on 15 June 1942. While protecting a supply convoy to Malta, the Nestor was heavily damaged by an air attack that killed four sailors. Unable to be salvaged, the ship was scuttled off the coast of Crete.

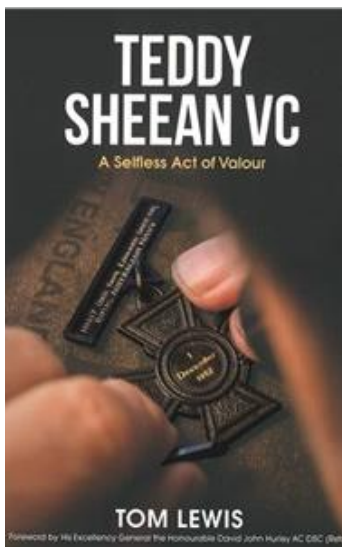
Shrine representatives:

- Shrine Governor Commander Terry Makings AM
- Shrine Governor Lieutenant Commander Jan Gallagher

# SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE SHOP

## LATEST BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM THE SHRINE BOOKSHOP

Please call 03 9661 8119 or email [shop@shrine.org.au](mailto:shop@shrine.org.au) to place your order.



### **Teddy Sheean VC (Tom Lewis) \$28 \*JUST RELEASED\***

In 1942, 18-year-old Edward "Teddy" Sheean was one of the youngest and most inexperienced sailors on board the corvette HMAS Armidale. Whilst on operation in the Timor Sea this warship came under heavy attack by Japanese aircraft. Armidale began sinking while swarmed by the Japanese aircraft. Read Teddy's brave fight to the end. It took more than 70 years for Teddy to become the first in Australia's Naval history to receive this highest award - confirming Teddy Sheean is an Australian hero.

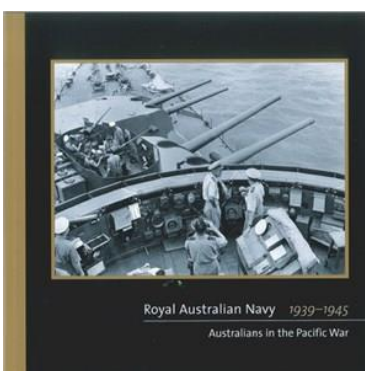
Dr Thomas Anthony "Tom" Lewis, OAM is an Australian author, military historian, editor, teacher, and former naval officer. An author since 1989, Lewis worked as a high school teacher, and served as naval officer for 20 years, seeing active service in Baghdad during the Iraq war, and working in East Timor.



### **Royal Australian Navy WW1 Department of Veteran Affairs \$12**

This publication contains a brief history of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) in the First World War. It is accompanied by more than 100 images showing the personnel and vessels of the RAN as they served on operations around the world. Part of the DVA's *Australians in World War 1* series.

Soft cover, 128 pages.



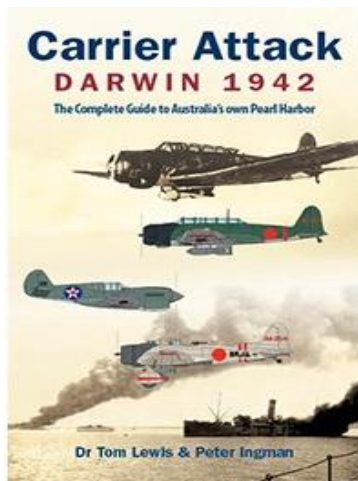
### **Royal Australian Navy 1939-1945 Department of Veteran Affairs \$10**

When Japanese troops landed in Malaya, the Royal Australian Navy found itself facing a new enemy and fighting a new war. A war that was to last four years and see Australian ships and personnel operate across the vast expanse of the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

The Department of Veterans' Affairs 'Australians in the Pacific War' series follows the events of several Pacific War campaigns throughout 1940-1945, covering details with clear insight and imagery easily understandable for all audiences.

Soft cover, 110 pages.



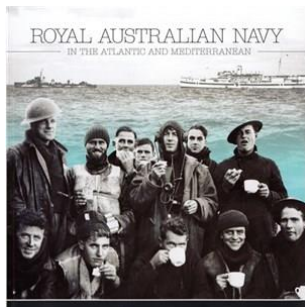


### **Carrier Attack Darwin 1942 (Dr T Lewis & Ingman) \$44**

When the Pacific war began it was a case of “when not if” Darwin would be attacked. But nobody could have predicted the extraordinary scale and ferocity of the 19 February 1942 raid. A massive strike force, blooded at Pearl Harbor just weeks before, hit Darwin in the biggest Japanese air attack ever in the South Pacific.

Since then, generations of Australians have been drawn to the stories and folklore of the Darwin action. But facts have blurred and mythology has thrived. This is the book that tests these many Darwin myths and reveals new information.

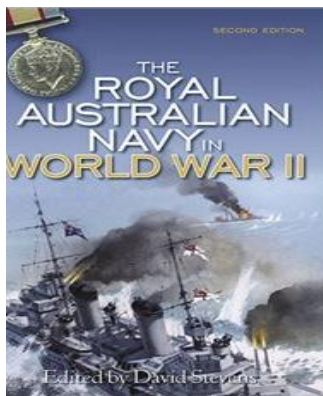
Carrier Attack provides a timely and fresh analysis of the raid. Most importantly, it draws on specially translated Japanese sources. Hard cover, 368 pages.



### **Royal Australian Navy WW2 Department of Veteran Affairs \$12**

Featuring over 100 photographs and art works, this new DVA title explores the role of the RAN in two critical theatres of war. The RAN was heavily involved in combat operations in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, including the North African campaign and Greece and Crete. Including an appendix of battle honours, this book tells the story of RAN operations and uses personal accounts to explore these years of success and sacrifice.

Soft cover, 110 pages.

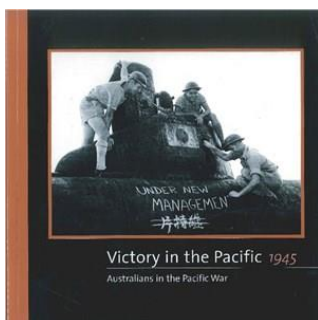


### **The Royal Australian Navy in World War 2 (Edited by D Stevens) \$48**

With new material provided by leading naval historians from Australia and overseas, this revised edition of The Royal Australian Navy in World War II more fully examines the part the Royal Australian Navy played throughout six years of global conflict. Drawing on recently released official documents and the latest scholarly research, new light is shed on the vital importance of Australia's role in maritime campaigns in every theatre.

Illustrated with many previously unpublished photographs, The Royal Australian Navy in World War II goes far towards encapsulating Australia's naval war in one volume.

Soft cover, 316 pages.



### **Victory in the Pacific Department of Veteran Affairs \$10**

Few words spoken in Australia's history have triggered such spontaneous displays of emotion as these words of Prime Minister Ben Chifley, spoken over the wireless on the morning of 15 August 1945, "Fellow Citizens, the war is over". This book offers a few stories of Australians and their experiences. They are not representative of all, for there were so many and so varied. They are stories intended to illustrate what VP Day may have meant to some or many Australians, showing joy, heartache, difficulties, hopes and changes wrought by the arrival of peace

The Department of Veterans' Affairs 'Australians in the Pacific War' series follows the events of several Pacific War campaigns throughout 1940-1945, covering details with clear insight and imagery easily understandable for all audiences.