



The Navy League of Australia

South Australia Division

A.C.N. 008 451 063

Patron: Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC

South Australia Division Newsletter – Spring 2023

Congratulations Henry Young Centenarian Navy Fighter Pilot, Farmer and Tennis Champion



Navy League South Australia congratulates Henry who will have achieved his 100 years milestone on 26 September 2023. We are proud to have him as our senior member.

Henry Samuel Calhoun Young was born in Adelaide then, at 10 years of age, moved with his family to New Zealand where he would follow his father into banking.

With New Zealand at war, he enlisted at age 19 to become a Royal New Zealand Navy Volunteer Reserve Fleet Air Arm pilot but was diverted to the Army as a soldier. Returning to Navy, he completed flying training in America and Britain. After peace was declared, he was discharged in New Zealand and returned to banking. Yet the lure of flying remained, with Henry joining the Royal Australian Navy in 1948 for further flying training in Britain, prior to joining the aircraft carrier HMAS Sydney in 1949. His wife Madge influenced his decision to leave the Navy to become a farmer.

After years of hard work as soldier settlers at Keith South Australia, they later purchased their property before retiring to Adelaide when he was 70. There Henry discovered the challenge of tennis. Competing in Master's Games he would become a Champion in his age group. In February this year he appeared at the Australian Open in the Clash of Centurions against 98-year-old Ukrainian Leonid Stanislavsky.



Bravo Zulu Henry

A FINAL SALUTE FOR SURGEON CAPTAIN VYTAUTU (Vic) GILMORE



SURG CAPT Vic Gilmore with Lt Katherine Gilmore (nee Fowler) daughter-in-law, later CMDR and Lt Stephen Gilmore son, later RADM.



Report from Jack Church of the "Fleurieu Sun" edition 13 July 2023

Surgeon Captain Vytautus (Vic) Gilmore, a local resident and ex-Navy Doctor has recently had a departing wish granted, having his ashes scattered at sea in his beloved Victor Harbor. Vic's ashes were taken aboard the HMAS Sydney last Friday when the ship was in Port Adelaide. On Tuesday 11 July his son Stephen Gilmore and his wife Kate, both ex-Navy, made the cruise down to Victor Harbor along with several students from Victor Harbor High School, in what were superbly perfect weather conditions.

Vic joined the Navy as a medical under-graduate in 1960 while studying at the University of Adelaide. He was appointed to the rank of Sub-Lieutenant and completed several periods of naval training while completing his tertiary studies. Vic was promoted to Surgeon Lieutenant in 1964 where he embarked on many iconic naval vessels including later service in Vietnam. He was Principal Medical Officer at the Adelaide Port Division in Port Adelaide, located at HMAS Encounter. Vic was deployed to South East Asia in 1985 where he underwent a series of humanitarian support and rescue missions in the Solomon and Macquarie Islands.

Vic's wife Krys Gilmore was not on board the Sydney, but joined the hundreds of people amassed on the Causeway and Granite Island. *"If Vic knew that he would be granted his last wish he would have been a very happy man, said Krys* . For Krys, everything had fallen perfectly into place to get her husband's ashes spread out at sea, off the vessel in Victor Harbor. *"Thanks to Captain Coleman for coming into Victor Harbor who it made this all possible", she said.*

After Vic's retirement from the Navy in 1989 he went into private practice before coming to the Fleurieu where he spent many years as a local practitioner, providing support for different medical centres when needed. Vic's uniforms were donated to the Victor Harbor RSL, one on display in the museum, the others went to the Maritime Museum at Port Adelaide and the RSL Mallala.

Tuesday was truly a fitting final salute for a man who contributed so much.

His full biography is at Virtual War Memorial <https://vwma.org.au/explore/people/804877>

Source: *Blood, Sweat and Fears II: Medical Practitioners of South Australia on Active Service After World War 2 to Vietnam 1945-1975*. CMDR Tony Swain was one of contributors.

Steve Gilmore was an Australian Navy Cadet at TS Adelaide and later as Rear Admiral, he was guest speaker at a Navy League SA Division Annual Luncheon. He was accompanied by the then Warrant Officer, now Commander Martin Holzberger RAN. Both have been awarded an AM and CSC.

P/V39P LIEUTENANT WILLIAM WILLMOTT TWISS RANVR



South Australian Lieutenant Twiss RANVR, was one of five hundred Australian Naval Reserves who served with the Royal Navy during the Second World War. They were recruited under the *Yachtsman's Scheme* for training in England to serve as officers in the rapidly expanding Royal Navy. They would serve across all elements of the Royal Navy.

An only son, he was educated at St Peters College and Adelaide University. William enlisted in September 1939 for two months local training then not called up until October 1941. He sailed to England as an Ordinary Seaman where, after two months sailor training, he joined the destroyer HMS Petard for six months sea experience. His ship escorted convoys to South Africa and Aden before joining the British Mediterranean Fleet. In November 1942, with his Efficiency assessed as Superior, he was appointed Sub Lieutenant (On Probation) prior to three months concentrated officer training at Hove, Sussex.

On completion, he joined the Corvette HMS Petunia, remaining with her until May 1944. Over that period, Petunia escorted 26 South Atlantic convoys and he was awarded a Bridge Watch Keeping Certificate for Corvettes. This qualified him to take charge of the ship during watches at sea. In November 1943 he was promoted to Lieutenant. Following several months ashore, in September 1944 William joined the Corvette HMS Bluebell, a member of the 8th Escort Group deployed on Atlantic convoys. Early in 1945 the Group briefly escorted English coastal convoys.

On 2 February, the Group sailed from Scotland with Arctic convoy JW64 for northern Russia. Four days later the convoy was strengthened by a cruiser, two escort carriers and their destroyers. The convoy survived two days of air attacks without loss before reaching Kola Inlet on 16th. There a sister corvette was torpedoed, then taken in tow by Bluebell until passed to a Russian tug.

On 17 February 1945 escort ships were deployed off Kola on anti-submarine patrols against U Boats known to be gathering to attack the return convoy. Around 1000 hrs the sloop HMS Lark was torpedoed. Five hours later Bluebell's stern was hit by an acoustic homing torpedo, fired by U 711, causing its depth charges to detonate, sinking the ship in 30 seconds. Only one man survived.

Lieutenant Twiss left a wife and young son. William is commemorated on the Australian War Memorial, the Adelaide World War 2 Wall of Remembrance and the Plymouth Naval Memorial for the Missing/Lost at Sea.



HMS BLUEBELL K80 Royal Navy Corvette "Flower Class" built 1940 Scotland

LARGEST NAVY BASE HMAS ALBATROSS CELEBRATES 75TH ANNIVERSARY



Gathering at the Fleet Air Arm Museum at HMAS Albatross, the Cutting of The Cake Ceremony was carried out by Captain Scott Palmer and Able Seaman Casey Merriman in honour this special milestone.

The decision to build an airfield on the site was made soon after the beginning of WW2. It was originally opened as an RAAF base on May 7, 1942.

In October 1944, the base was transferred to the Royal Navy, re-named HMS *Nabbington* and supported the British Pacific Fleet until March 1946.

In July 1947, the formation of the RAN Fleet Air Arm was sanctioned. On August 31, 1948, *Albatross* was commissioned.

Amongst many service personnel, special guests and dignitaries attending the ceremony, former Commanding Officer Commodore Grant Ferguson told of his father, Chief Petty Officer Ian Ferguson who was a member of Carrier Air Group 20.

This group embarked in newly commissioned HMAS *Sydney* to transfer squadrons of Sea Fury and Firefly aircraft from England to *Albatross*.

Home to the Fleet Air Arm and more than 20 resident units, *Albatross* supports members from all three services, the Australian Public Service and several Defence contractors and commercial entities.

HMAS Albatross 808 Squadron was hero of the 2019 bushfire rescues.

Undoubtedly, the highlight of the 75th Anniversary was the flypast of a formation of EC-135 and MH-60R Seahawks.

“fly navy”

HMAS SYDNEY 1951 – 808 SQUADRON SEA FURY



HMAS *Maryborough* II and HMAS *LARRAKIA* II DECOMMISSIONED AT HMAS COONAWARRA



HMAS *Maryborough* (II) and HMAS *Larrakia* (II) are the latest of 14 Armidale-class patrol boats to be decommissioned. Both ships conducted a wide variety of operations alongside Border Force, Australian Fisheries and the Australian Federal Police.

After 15 years' service HMAS *Maryborough* (II) has been decommissioned. The *Maryborough*'s ship's company were farewelled with a "Freedom on Entry Ceremony" and Open Day on 10 September, while berthed alongside Southport Marina at the Gold Coast. 1,600 visitors were given a rare glimpse into life on board an Armidale-class patrol boat – including a weapons and boarding party display, damage control, firefighting equipment and the amazing opportunity to ride in one of the ship's two 7.2m jet rigid hull inflatable boats.

Maryborough II, affectionately nicknamed 'the Bruh' by her crew, has sailed more than 356,000 nautical miles, visiting a range of ports including Singapore, Jakarta, Auckland, Honiara and Palau.

Larrakia II has sailed more than 434,000 nautical miles, visiting a range of ports including Jakarta, Solomon Islands, Singapore and Penang and over 17 years of service. *Larrakia* II deployed to the Solomon Islands to support the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force's COVID-19 response in 2021.

Patrol boats are the primary enabler of the Australian Defence Force's contribution to Operation SOVEREIGN BORDERS and a key arm of OPERATION RESOLUTE. Those who served in either ship, have made a significant contribution to these efforts and the overall responsibility of defending Australia and its interests.

Navy is undertaking a transition from the existing Armidale-class and Cape-class patrol boats to 12 Arafura-class offshore patrol vessels. Construction of the first Arafura-class patrol boats is well-underway at Osborne Naval Shipyard in South Australia.



HMAS *Maryborough* ship's company at anchor in Darwin Harbour, NT ahead of the Armidale class Patrol Boat's decommissioning.

NAVY LEAGUE SA DIVISION NEWS

SEVEN SEAS CLUB ADELAIDE - To Foster Comradeship of the Sea

Navy League SA Division has long been associated with the maritime club members, belonging to local Yacht Clubs, sailing clubs and others who are serving or ex-professional seafarers from the RAN, RN, RANR and MN etc, and other members who have not had the opportunity to go to sea, but have a lively interest in the historical and professional advancement of the service and that unique comradeship which exists amongst seafarers.

As the only female Navy League president in Australia (so far), I was delighted to be invited to the once 'all -gentlemen's club' following a small change in their constitution - ladies are now admitted – no doubt with many amazing stories.!

The first female guest speaker was truly inspirational from "messing around in boats" in her childhood to cruise liners and many maritime adventures including being rescued at sea! **BZ Catherine Linley**. Principal Regional **Port** Marine Surveyor at Australian Maritime Safety Authority (ASMA).

SA DIVISION COMMITTEE ESCAPES TO THE SOUTH COAST



...for the best way to hold our committee meeting...delicious lunch by the water at **Bombora Café** on the River Murray outlet to the Southern Ocean.

Jean, David, Dianne, Dean, Jeannie, John, Anne and I (the photographer) definitely recommend this beautiful part of South Australia.

Guests at LEGACY CENTENARY APPEAL 2023

Freemasons Masonic Lodge Adelaide
Mrs Naomi Jones, LCDR Gary Jones XO HMAS
Encounter and Diana Hill President Navy League SA



SPECIAL NOTICE

Navy League of Australia
AGM and Federal Council Meeting

To be held at the State Library of NSW
Jean Garling Room
Macquarie Street Entrance
Sydney, NSW 2000

Saturday 21 October 2023 – Trafalgar Day
10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Trafalgar Dinner Evening



SAVE THE DATE.....

*Navy League SA Division Members Invitation for
Christmas Gather Round Celebration*

Friday 24th November 2023 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Combined Ex-Services Cllub, Torrens Parade Ground



Further details to follow



CHRISTMAS IN JULY" on a cold winter's Sunday in Adelaide

.....What Better Time to hold for Navy League SA Division's Annual Luncheon at Combined Ex-Services Mess in Adelaide!



SA Division Immediate Past President, Dean Watson RFD with Lynda Gilbert (Secretary NLA-Victoria/Tasmania) and Ken Crook (co-editor) Vic/Tas together with Commanding Officer HMAS Encounter, Commander Emma McDonald-Kerr.ADC RAN –our very popular guest speaker.....*all waiting for their Christmas dinner ! Thanks to the Mess Bar Staff for welcome drinks before the Delicious menu of Roast turkey & beef & all the trimmings, Christmas pudding, pavlova, cheeseboard, chocolates, coffee and port*



Commander Chris Bastian OAM ANC (far left)

Director of Youth ANC

LCDR Pieter Scott ANC (far right)
Flotilla Commander – Torrens Flotilla
ANC in SA

speaking with our Victorian guests and
LCDR Gary Jones, Executive Officer,
HMAS Encounter

CMDR Bastian and LCDR Scott our special guest speakers from the Australian Navy Cadets, who presented an excellent insight into ANC units and encouraged everyone to take an interest and support this fine Youth Development organisation, particularly our South Australian units.



WRANS & NAVAL ASSOCIATION SA



LEGACY CLUB OF SA & NH
LEGATEES Bob & Heather Willis former serving RAN officers.



Sandy McCue & Di Hill
NLA-SA & HMAS Adelaide Assn

Special thanks to Ivor Willmott ex RN who gave the Gaelic Grace

Blessing of the Valkyrie

HMAS Toowoomba's embarked aviation team, Flight 607 Valkyrie, has received a blessing from the ship's chaplain. "Fair Winds and Smooth Seas"



NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

The Navy League was established in Australia in 1901, initially as small branches of the United Kingdom (established in 1897). Since 1950, Navy League became an autonomous national body, headed by a Federal Council consisting of a Federal President and representatives of the sister States, Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. 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.

PRINCIPLE OBJECTIVE of the Navy League of Australia is '*The Maintenance of the maritime well-being nation*' by:

- Keeping before the Australian people the fact that we are a maritime nation and that a strong Navy and sound maritime industry are indispensable elements of our national well-being and vital to the freedom of Australia.
- Promoting defence self-reliance by actively supporting manufacturing, shipping and transport industries.
- Promoting, sponsoring and encouraging the interest of Australian youth in the sea and sea-service, as well as supporting practical sea-training measures.
- Co-operating with other Navy Leagues and sponsoring the exchange of cadets for training purposes.

Navy League Australia founded the then 'Sea Cadets' in 1953 and carried this responsibility until 1973, when then Navy Cadets were handed over to the Royal Australia Navy. SA Division has a very long history with the Cadets and continue their interest and support today. The division's historic shield for 'The Most Efficient Unit' carries on today and we look forward to the next presentation. Covid affected the ANC badly and it is imperative that this amazing youth opportunity is maintained in support of the future of today's youth.

SA Division has the privilege of continued patronage of The Governor of South Australia, Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, support of Navy and other special organisations.

Yours Aye
Diana and the Team

Diana Hill – President

John Evans – Vice President/Treasurer

Jean Gill – Secretary

Dean Watson RFD – Immediate Past President

David Rattray OAM – Committee

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