



CALL THE HANDS



Issue No. 42 June 2020

From the President

Welcome to this 42nd edition of *Call the Hands* which coincides with the recent commissioning of the RAN's newest guided missile destroyer HMAS Sydney (V) with pennant number 42. *Sydney* actually commissioned on 18 May 20, different to the expected date we noted last month. Occasional Paper 82 continues the *Sydney* theme by describing the Kerr Sydney-Emden Medals produced in 1918 to commemorate the 1914 engagement.

In addition to the DDGs, the Royal Australian Navy will, in the coming decade commission more new ships under the Governments continuous build program. Occasional paper 83 accompanying this edition describes projects to deliver new patrol vessels to the RAN. Paper 81 originates from a personal collection of documents donated to the Society. The papers included farewell messages sent to the Scrap Iron Flotilla as they departed the Mediterranean in 1941. These messages indicate just how well respected was the performance of these aging ships and their crews. Donations of diaries, albums and scrap books are always welcomed and significantly enhance the Society's archive.

A positive for Society members and subscribers to emerge from the current pandemic is a new program of web based naval history presentations. Our next presentation, *A Century of Submarine Development* by Society Vice President, John Jeremy is scheduled for 23 June. An e-mailed invitation will be sent on 16 June. Please join us. Full details are attached.

On 25 May 2020 the Society marked its 50th anniversary without fanfare. A member's event involving Society Patron, the Chief of Navy will occur later in the year as the situation allows. Great credit goes to all our committee members and volunteers across the Chapters who have pursued the vision of our founding fathers with great energy and enthusiasm to make the Society what it is today. We have come a long way and are proud of it. You will find on page 11 a record of the inaugural meeting of the then Garden Island Naval Historical Society.

Finally, a paper by and podcast with long serving Society volunteer, Ian Wrigley MBE VRD is featured in this edition. Ian who was a WW2 veteran and Society archivist lived a remarkable life achieving success as an Olympic shooter, America's Cup yachtsman, pastoralist and member of the Board of the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW. His podcast is well worth a listen.

Stay safe,

David Michael

Support the Society

Although *Call the Hands* is a free service to the community, produced by volunteers there are costs. Our objective is simply to promote understanding of Australian naval history. Voluntary contributions are essential to deliver this service to readers. If you value our work **please consider a donation**. <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/donate/>



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Rugby in the RAN – the Navy’s First Australian Services Rugby Premiership

By Ian Wrigley

With a proud sporting heritage, we surprisingly hear little in the way of naval sporting activities and achievements in these pages. This short article looks at some memorable historic achievements on sporting fields during and post WWII.

The First Whistle

I entered the RAN as an Ordinary Seaman at HMAS Cerberus just short of my 19th birthday in August 1942. An interest in sport was important to shaping my future naval career and may have helped influence my selection for Officer Cadet Training.

As a newly promoted Midshipman RANR I was posted to the Bathurst class minesweeper HMAS *Deloraine*, then conducting east coast convoy and anti-submarine patrols. It was during this time that she rescued survivors from the torpedoed United States merchantman *Lydia M. Child*. She also assisted in towing into Sydney Harbour the torpedoed Liberty ship *Peter H. Burnett*. *Deloraine* had previously gained fame while patrolling off Darwin carrying out a successful attack.

Tropical Paradise

Palm Island, with an area of 55 km², forms part of the Great Barrier Reef and is only 57 km from Townsville. It should be a tropical paradise but has a troubled past with greatly increased Aboriginal population of so-called troublemakers brought from the mainland. The population prior to WW II of this small island was about 1,600 and this was further increased when in July 1943 the USN constructed an air station to operate Catalina flying boats.

One of my duties in *Australia* was as the ship’s Physical and Recreational Training Officer and it was my job to find an outlet to improve upon the restrictive shipboard exercise routines. This included when at anchor, organising deck hockey, boxing and wrestling matches in the starboard waist and smallbore shooting matches on the forecastle. Palm Island had a sports field on which it was possible to have a game of rugby against teams from the other ships but, just as importantly, against a number of teams from the local indigenous community who thoroughly enjoyed the friendly competition. It was here that I managed to gain a place in the fiercely competitive *Aussie* First 15. The team captain was Leading Seaman Baldwin and another player was Engineer SBLT Norman Alexander in the back row with me, in the photo taken under the Y turret 8” guns with our Captain H.B. Farncomb and executive officer CDR W.H. Harrington in the centre.

The final push

We were now committed to the real purposes of war and thoughts of games ashore quickly faded. Shipboard physical exercises however were necessary to maintain fitness. As the Pacific war moved north and west, *Australia* was frequently in action and at Leyte Gulf. Here she suffered from a devastating kamikaze attack. I was then sent to England to do the Long D Course and returned to Australia and HMAS Watson after the war ended. Whilst at *Watson* I was selected to be lock forward in the Navy Rugby Team.



HMAS Australia Rugby Team Palm Is. 1943

The RAN, despite being numerically the smallest service, was determined for the first time to go all out and win the Rugby Services Premiership. Engineer CAPT McMahon, centre of the back row of the photograph, aided by team manager CMDR Power on the left and CMDR Anderson on the right, assembled a team of enthusiastic players. We had a great coach PO Bill Coleman, a 1938 Wallaby, in civvies on the left of the photo. All these years later, sadly, it is difficult to recall the names of many of my team mates. In the centre of the middle row were two unforgettables: team captain Paymaster LEUT Kevin McLean, next Engineer LEUT Tiny Shultz and COOK Paul going to the right. Being a lock forward I do remember those in the photo front row: from left AB Moulder, AB Peter Johnson, AB Gibb Wood, here I am (LEUT Ian Wrigley) and CPO Tommy Lea.

We were a happy band of post war "Rah Rahs" where rank or rating meant nothing in our determination to win the premiership because those of us who were 'hostilities only' had been told that we would not be demobbed until we had done so. With that challenge in mind we played and beat the Army by 23 to 14 at Victoria Barracks in Sydney on 9th July 1946, having beaten the RAAF at North Sydney Oval a week earlier 8 to 6 in a tough, very hard-fought game.



RAN Premiership Winning Rugby Team 1946

The Navy was fairly chuffed that we had in fact for the first time ever, won the Australian Services Rugby Premiership. This was a time of post war euphoria when the Victory test cricket matches were being played, so our finale as a team was to do our country tour ending playing Northern NSW at Armidale, which I think we won 23 to 16. After this we dispersed and were demobbed.

Those days on the sporting fields were happy times with a great sense of camaraderie and team mates are sadly missed.

Aircraft Direction Experiences: HMAS Australia II during WW II: Ian Wrigley



As indicated in the previous story, Ian Wrigley served in the then new specialization of Navigation and Direction during WW2. This involved the use of Radar for both offensive and defensive operations.

Ian was the first Aircraft Direction Officer to serve in HMAS Australia. He was also an officer of the watch and sports officer. At that time, there was no training for a Direction

Officer so he was required to teach himself, and his ratings. He was serving as Direction Officer during the Battle of the Coral Sea and later at Leyte when Australia was struck by a kamikaze.

In September 2016, Ian was interviewed by Navy on his experience as a Direction Officer in particular. Parts of the interview were later used for Principal Warfare Officer training.

An audio version of Ian's fascinating interview is available on the Society's website.

Follow this link: <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/podcast/aircraft-direction-experiences-in-hmas-australia-ii-during-world-war-ii-by-ian-wrigley/>

HMAS Sydney (I) in the North Sea

The four photographs in this series are from the collection of Rear Admiral G. B. Moore, C.B.E. HMAS Sydney operated in the North Sea in the last years of World War I with 2nd Cruiser Squadron. *Sydney*, flying the flag of Australian born Captain Dumaresq, was engaged in a battle with a German zeppelin during this period.

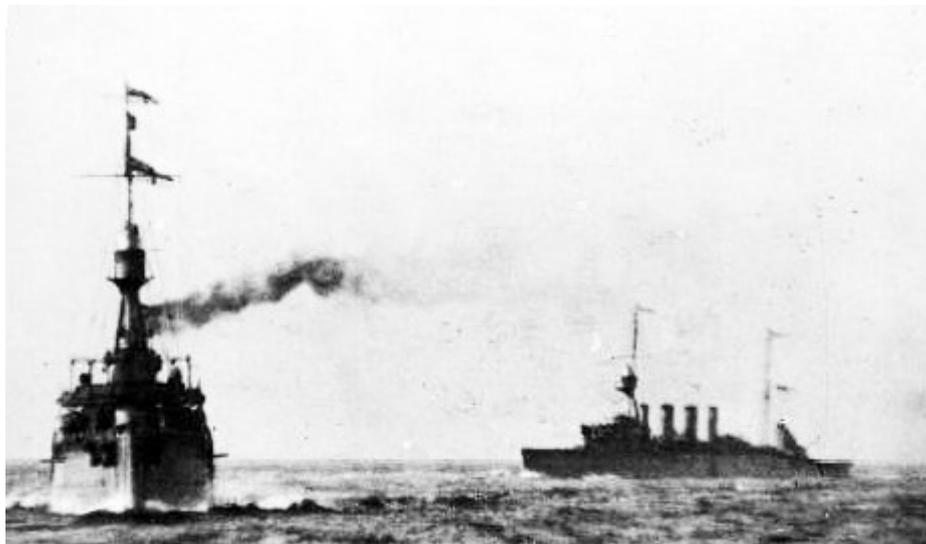
HMAS Sydney arrived at Devonport on 19 September 1916 before proceeding to Greenock for refit. On 31 October 1916 she was temporarily attached to the 5th Battle Squadron at Scapa Flow. On 15 November she sailed for Rosyth and on arrival joined her sister ships HMS Southampton, HMS Dublin and HMAS Melbourne as part of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron, attached to the 2nd Battle Squadron of which HMAS Australia was the flagship. For the remainder of the war her service was confined to North Sea patrols.



HMAS Sydney (I) in rough seas



HMAS Sydney (I) in the North Sea



HMS Dublin and HMAS Sydney (I) at sea



HMAS Sydney and ships of 4th Battle squadron at Scapa Flow

Warship: Life at Sea

Documentary series documenting everyday life onboard the Royal Navy Type 45 destroyer HMS Duncan.

The following four files cover the episodes – either click below and watch, or file for later viewing.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJ44AthMyPQ>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SLh_q4RSKcs&t=10s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5WkbhoZYyQ&t=42s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qA5w-BZ67gg&t=11s>

Lieutenant C.L.M (Jack) Shepperd, MBE DSM: Obituary:

Anybody who served in HMAS Nirimba between 1956 and its closure in 1994 would have known Jack Shepperd. Jack passed away on 17th August, 1994 aged 86.

Jack was born on 2 January 1908. His father was a Stoker in the Royal Navy and at the age of 11, Jack was enrolled at the Greenwich Hospital Naval School, thence at HMS Fisgard, completing his apprenticeship at Chatham Dockyard and graduating as an Engine Room Artificer, later serving in a number of ships in that capacity.

During the 1930s Jack specialised in Aircraft Hydraulic Catapult Machinery, was promoted to CERA in 1939 and was at sea in HMS Illustrious at the Battle of Taranto and promoted to Warrant Engineer in 1944. He was invested with the DSM by King George VI in 1946 as a result of numerous improvements and modifications he had made to Catapults and Flight Deck machinery.

In 1948, aged 40, Jack retired from the Royal Navy but did not have a long retirement as the RAN knowing of his skills, and having taken delivery of HMAS Sydney (III), asked for his services. He re-joined the Royal Navy for two years and was sent to Australia. Two years became eight and in 1956 Jack transferred to the RANVR.

In 1956 among others, Jack was instrumental in setting up HMAS Nirimba as the RAN Apprenticeship Training Establishment, using his Greenwich and *Fisgard* background to formulate training programmes for Engineering Apprentices as well as Basic Fitting training for all categories. In 1968 Jack retired but remained at *Nirimba* for a further six years. He was awarded the MBE for his efforts in 1967.

Jack died after a long illness. His contribution to RAN Apprentice training was immense and valuable and thousands of young and not so young Australians would have just cause to remember Jack and his contribution to their skills and progress in life.

Video of the Month

HMAS Sydney (II) Leaves the Tyne on Speed Trials (1935)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTEilqMqNwE>

On 8 July 1933 the ship that would become *Sydney* (II) was laid down as HMS *Phaeton* in the shipyard of Swan, Hunter and Wigham Richardson, at Wallsend-on-Tyne in England. The following year she was purchased, in build, by the Australian Government and renamed *Sydney*, in memory of her namesake and the capital city of New South Wales. She was launched on 22 September 1934 by Mrs Ethel Bruce, the wife of Mr Stanley Bruce, MC, the Australian High Commissioner to Great Britain and former Australian Prime Minister.



Sydney was completed on 24 September 1935 and following acceptance trials she commissioned under the command of Captain JUP FitzGerald, RN. With a steaming party embarked, she then made the short voyage to Portsmouth where the balance of her Australian ship's company was waiting to join her. These men had been standing by in Portsmouth having sailed there in the obsolete light cruiser HMAS *Brisbane* which was being paid off for disposal.

Photo of the Month:



HMAS Sydney (III) leads RNZN and RAN units into Auckland, 15 March 1950.

News in Brief

HMAS Sydney commissions at sea

The Royal Australian Navy has welcomed its newest Guided Missile Destroyer (DDG) into the Fleet in the first commissioning of an Australian warship at sea since the Second World War. The ceremony, conducted off the coast of New South Wales on Monday, 18 May 2020, marked the moment the 147-metre long Air Warfare Destroyer HMAS Sydney (V) became one of Her Majesty's Australian Ships. Sydney's sister ships, Hobart and Brisbane, commissioned in 2017 and 2018 respectively and all three vessels are homeported at Fleet Base East in Sydney.



Six More Austal-Built Cape-class Patrol Boats for the Royal Australian Navy

Australia's Department of Defense ordered six new Cape Class Patrol Boats for the Royal Australian Navy (RAN). The vessels will be built by local shipbuilder Austal. The Australian Border Force currently operates eight Cape-class Patrol Boats, while the RAN operates two leased Cape-class. The six new vessels, to be constructed at Austal's Henderson shipyard in Western Australia, will add to the Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) existing fleet of two CCPB's delivered in 2017 and further extends Austal's Cape-class Patrol Boat program to a total of 18 vessels



Two halves of future HMAS Arafura brought together

Just shy of 18 months after the start of construction and one year since the official keel-laying ceremony for the Navy's new first-of-class offshore patrol vessel, the two halves of the future HMAS Arafura have been brought together. On Wednesday 29 April, the front half of the ship was rolled out of its construction shed atop a 192-wheeled low-load transporter and wheeled into position to be married to its stern half. *Arafura* and her sister ship *Eyre* are currently under construction by Luerssen Australia and its partner ASC (formerly Australian Submarine Corporation) at Osborne Naval Shipyard, South Australia. The remaining 10 Arafura-class OPVs will be built at the Cvmec shipyard in Henderson, Western Australia. Future HMAS *Eyre* had its official keel-laying ceremony last month. Construction started, on the third ship – future HMAS *Pilbara*– in WA, in March.



Watch a construction video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHraOYqwnxs&feature=youtu.be>

This Month in History

June 1858	The Admiralty approved an expenditure of from £4000 to £6000 for rendering Garden Island, Sydney, available for the repair of HM ships.
June 1912	The River class destroyer HMAS Warrego was commissioned at Cockatoo Island Dockyard, Sydney, and CMDR G. F. Hyde, RN, was appointed as Commanding Officer.
June 1917	HMAS Melbourne sailed from Birkenhead to rejoin the Grand Fleet at Scapa and again became a unit of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron
June 1919	The first AFC was awarded to Flight Lieutenant A. Frauenfelder of No. 2 Flying School. Frauenfelder was an Australian serving with the RNAS, and trained pilots in aerial combat tactics.
June 1923	HMAS Geranium struck a reef while surveying. She was re-floated the next day at high tide, but her keel was badly buckled and holed in places. The reef that Geranium struck (south of Wheatley Islet) was subsequently named Disaster Reef and bay she stopped at for repairs was named Geranium Bay.
June 1927	HMAS Sydney (I) visited Dili, Timor, on a flag-showing cruise.
June 1933	The prototype Supermarine Seagull V amphibian aircraft, designed for the RAN, was tested. The aircraft, and the Walrus which developed from it, was used extensively in the RAN and the RN. HMAS Australia, (cruiser), was the last warship to carry the aircraft in battle in 1944.
June 1940	HMA Ships Sydney, (cruiser), and <i>Stuart</i> , (destroyer), supported a combined British and French Squadron in the bombardment of Bardia. During the action <i>Sydney's</i> Seagull amphibian aircraft was shot down by three Italian fighters, and crashed on landing. The pilot, Flight Lieutenant. T. McB. Price, RAAF, was awarded the DFC for this action.
June 1943	HMAS Wallaroo, (minesweeper), sank in a collision with the American merchant ship <i>Henry Gilbert Costin</i> , 60 miles west of Fremantle, WA. 3 ratings lost their lives.
June 1950	The decision to reestablish the WRANS was announced due to pressure on naval manpower from Cold War commitments. Initial categories were Telegraphist, Writer, Sick Berth Attendant, Stores Assistant, Cook, Steward and Regulating.
June 1954	723 Squadron took delivery of the RAN's first jet aircraft. LEUT P Goldrick accepted the de Havilland Vampire Mk T.34 at the de Havilland workshops in Bankstown before flying the aircraft to NAS Nowra.
June 1959	The Daring class destroyer HMAS VAMPIRE, (CAPT E. J. Peel, DSC, RAN), was commissioned at Sydney. <i>Vampire</i> was laid down in Cockatoo Island Dockyard Sydney, on 1 July 1952, and launched on 27 October 1956. Lady Slim, (Wife of the Governor-General Sir William Slim), performed the launching ceremony. <i>Vampire</i> was decommissioned on 13 August 1986, and transferred to the Australian National Maritime Museum in 1991, as a permanent exhibit.
June 1968	Three members of 723 Squadron, Lieutenant P.C. Ward, Petty Officer D.J. Sanderson and Naval Airman Mechanic Airframes and Engines (NAMAEE) R.K. Smith, were lost when their Iroquois crashed over the cliff at Beecroft Head Firing Range and fell into the sea while on a range clearing flight.
June 1970	AB B. K. Wojcik, (Clearance Diving Team 3), was killed in a vehicle accident in South Vietnam. Despite the number of times the Diving Team contingents had been under fire during their service in Vietnam the unit's only death was in an accident.
June 1977	The Oberon class submarine, HMAS Orion, was commissioned. <i>Orion</i> was laid down in Scott's Yard, Greenock, Scotland, on 6 October 1972, and was launched on 16 September 1974. Mrs Armstrong, (Wife of the Australian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom), performed the launching ceremony.
June 1984	Training ship HMAS Jervis Bay, (CMDR J. Scott, RAN), rescued five survivors from the sinking yacht <i>Shalom</i> , in heavy seas off Port Macquarie, NSW.
June 1987	As safety and supportability issues caught up with the ageing Wessex's, National Task duties were transferred to 817 Squadron and 816 Squadron was decommissioned.
June 1991	HMAS Stuart, (destroyer escort), decommissioned at HMAS Stirling, WA.
June 2002	HMAS Arunta departs from HMAS Stirling, for service in the Persian Gulf, as part of the Maritime Interdiction Force, (Operation SLIPPER), enforcing sanctions on Iraq.
June 2015	725 Squadron commissioned to fly MH-60R helicopters.
June 2019	HMAS Newcastle (I) decommissioned

The entries selected for publication this month are randomly generated from an extensive database of historic naval events. The absence of a significant event is in no way intended to cause offence. The objective is to provide a cross section of events across time. The Society's website enables you to look up any event in RAN history. Searches can be made by era, date look up or today. The latter appears on the home page. The others are accessed via the Research page. <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/research/on-this-day/>

Readers Forum

Exhibition: 1945: From Hot War to Cold War

Thanks to the Federation of Naval Ship Associations for drawing attention to this exhibition in Sydney at the ANZAC Memorial, Hyde Park. The exhibition can be visited online or by attending the Memorial. The exhibition entitled '1945: From Hot War to Cold War' remembers the last year of the Second World War, 75 years on. Using the three principal victory celebrations VE Day, VP Day and VJ Day it examines the experience of Australians in the final phases of the war in Europe, in the campaigns in New Guinea and Borneo, Australia's role in post-war Asia and the recovery and return to civilian life of Australian service personnel and the domestic wartime economy. The exhibition is free and will be on display until 28 February 2021.

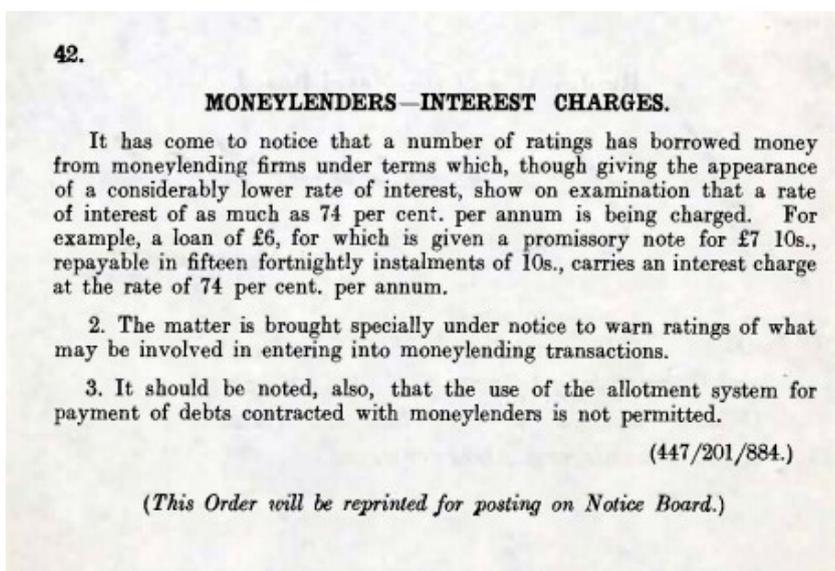


It can be viewed online at: <https://www.anzacmemorial.nsw.gov.au/event/1945-hot-war-cold-war>

Commonwealth Navy Order 42, Navy Office, Melbourne.

Thanks to John Vaughan for drawing attention to this 30 March 1937 Order concerning the dangers of borrowing from 'loan sharks'.

Are young sailors any less at risk today?



The Development of the RAN Research Laboratory



A recent research question led Society volunteers to a Defence Science and Technology Paper which records the history of the RAN Research Laboratory, established in 1956 as the RAN Experimental Laboratory on the shores of Rushcutters Bay in Port Jackson, NSW. That site has a long history of association with the Royal Australian Navy.

Founded in a period when British influence was strong in Australia, the laboratory drew its early culture from the Admiralty. During the period to 1984 covered in this paper the USA came to dominate defence technology and provided the western role model for this area of endeavour. The laboratory's links with US Navy increased during its history but evolved its own Australian character. In 1984 the laboratory relocated to the Royal Edward Victualling Yard in the Sydney suburb of Pyrmont. Later in 1987 RANRL subsumed into the Weapons Systems Research Laboratory.

The Development of the RAN Research Laboratory edited by WF Hunter is available at: https://ia800105.us.archive.org/17/items/DTIC_ADA311848/DTIC_ADA311848.pdf

Occasional Papers in this edition

Included with this edition of Call the Hands are the following occasional papers: -

- Occasional Paper 81 - Recognition for the Scrap Iron Flotilla
- Occasional Paper 82 - The Kerr Sydney-Emden Medals
- Occasional Paper 83 – Current Australian Naval Building Projects

Society Matters

Celebrating 50 Years

Report of Inaugural Meeting of Garden Island Naval Historical Society



GARDEN ISLAND NAVAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Navy's own historical society is now a reality. An inaugural meeting held at Garden Island on 25th May, was attended by 42 members.

An outcome of the meeting was the election of an executive to guide the society through its formative stages.

The committee is :

President :	Lew Lind
Vice President :	Gavin Cashman
Secretary Treasurer :	Alan Payne
Committee :	Peter Churchill, Grahame Muir, Howard Horwood, Terry Mitchell and Ron Atwill

This committee includes a vice-president and a secretary of existing historical societies and members with a solid background in the navy, the sea and research procedures.

Affiliation with The Royal Australian Historical Society is being arranged and a draft constitution has been drawn up.

Applications for membership have been received from personnel at Coonawarra, Albatross, Creswell, Navy Office and the Department of Defence. Further applications are being received daily.

Activity groups have already been formed. Peter Churchill is heading a historical buildings team and Alan Payne a ships team. Other groups will be formed at our July meeting.

The committee has agreed that regular meetings of the society will be held on the first Friday of each month in the Main Cafeteria at Garden Island. Meetings will commence at 7 pm. The first meeting will be held on 3rd July. Commodore Mussared, General Manager of Garden Island Dockyard will address the meeting.

A special meeting to approve the draft constitution of the society and to elect patrons has been set down for Friday 12th June. This meeting will be held in the Apprentice Training Room (next to the Post Office) at 12.10 pm.

Your attendance at both meetings would be appreciated.

The attached application for membership should be completed and handed to the secretary at our next meeting.

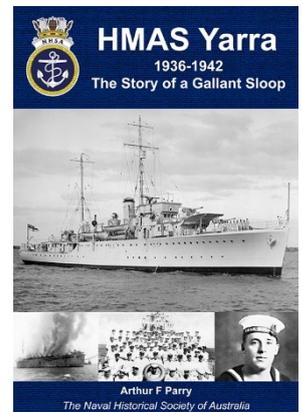
Naval Historical Review

Become a member to receive quarterly copies of the Naval Historical Review the Society's flagship magazine. <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/membership/>.

New Books

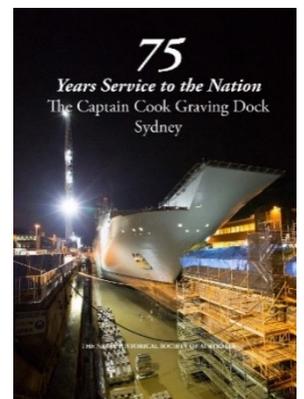
HMAS Yarra 1936-1942, The Story of a Gallant Sloop

Between 1936 and 1942, HMAS Yarra and her crew served Australia in peace and war, in Australian waters, the Red Sea, the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf and finally South East Asia. Yarra was lost on 4 March, 1942 in a valiant fight against overwhelming odds, in defence of the ships she was escorting. All but 13 of her complement of 151 perished in this action. Arthur Parry, who served in Yarra during all of her overseas service up until mid-February 1942, made a promise to his crewmates to tell their story, and this book is the culmination of that promise.



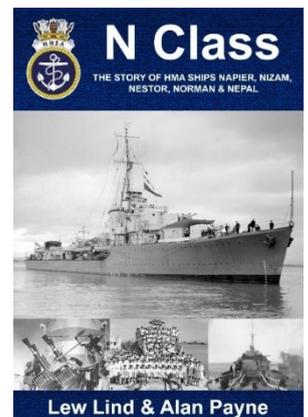
75 Years of Service: The Captain Cook Graving Dock, Sydney

This story of the Captain Cook Graving Dock commemorates the 75th anniversary of its opening on 24 March 1945 by the then Governor General of Australia, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester. In addition to details of construction, this book provides detail about the opening ceremony, the Civil Constructional Corps members who laboured on the project, the war artists who captured the mood of the time and dock operations since 1945.



N Class - The Story of HMA Ships Napier, Nizam, Nestor, Norman & Nepal

The 'N' Class Destroyers book first published by the Society in 1974 has been republished in three electronic formats and is now available for sale in the Society's online shop. This story of HMA Ships Napier, Nizam, Nestor, Norman and Nepal takes readers through the story of each ship from commissioning, through extensive service during World War II until late 1945. The missions described cover the full spectrum of destroyer operations in the period.



Purchase Online

These books are all available for purchase through the Society's website in a variety of formats. <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/shop/>

Society's Office Reopened

The Society's office in Garden Island is back in business Tuesday and Thursday all be it with reduced staffing to comply with Pandemic Isolation guidelines. Unfortunately there is no prospect of conducting guided history tours in the short term.

Subscription to Call the Hands

Should you become aware of others who wish to receive *Call The Hands* they should be advised to register by e-mailing the Society at publications@navyhistory.org.au. Current subscribers can unsubscribe by emailing the same address.