

# CALL THE HANDS

Issue No. 44 August 2020

## From the President

Welcome to the August 2020 edition of Call the Hands. The theme of this edition is the War in the Pacific which concluded on VP Day 75 years ago. We hope you find it of interest and provide feedback which is always appreciated.

The significance of the 75th anniversary of the end of the War in the Pacific is of great importance to the Committee and Volunteers of the NHSA in that our Society was founded by veterans. Many had served in WW2 and later wrote numerous books published by the Society from firsthand accounts and diaries kept by their colleagues. In this our 50<sup>th</sup> year we are proud to still have amongst our membership a small number of WW2 veterans some of whom have served on the Committee or as volunteers.

Accompanying this edition are three occasional papers (OPs). The first, OP 86 summarises the activities of the Royal Australian Navy in the Pacific War. OP 87 focuses on the disposition and employment of RAN ships deployed north of Australia in August and September 1945. Following the end of hostilities, these ships were tasked with; ferrying participants to or conducting surrender ceremonies, internee and POW repatriation, transporting troops and stores, landing occupation forces and mine sweeping operations.

The publication of this issue also coincides with the 30th anniversary of the deployment of HMA Ships *Adelaide*, *Darwin* and *Success* to the Middle East 3 days after the Cabinet decision to commit Australian forces to the United Nations multinational force. OP 88 describes the lesser known logistics support aspects (pre deployment and in theatre) for Operation Damask the Australian code name for the operation. The paper also addresses support for second deployment ships; *Brisbane*, *Westralia*, *Sydney* and Clearance Diving Team Three.

On page 5 you will find a list of positions and tasks for which the Society is currently seeking Sydney based volunteers to join us in the Boatshed. If you live in Sydney, have an interest and some time to give please consider this opportunity. The Society has for 50 years been very successful at what it does and we would like to continue with our ambitious goals but we can't do it without new blood to reinforce the current team of dedicated regular volunteers.

Finally, when contacting the Society by mail it is important that the full postal address below is used. The 'Locked Bag 7005' incorporates all Defence establishments in the Sydney area.

Kind regards,

David Michael



## The Naval Historical Society of Australia

ABN 71 094 118 434  
Patron: Chief of Navy

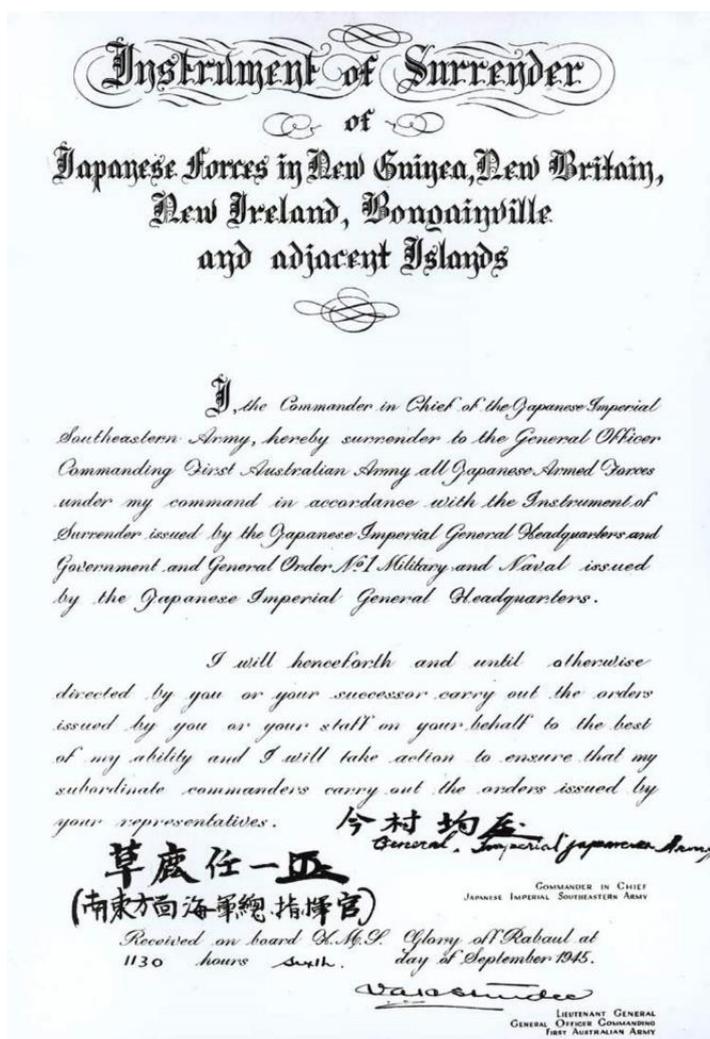
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## Instrument of Surrender –All Japanese Armed Forces in Papua New Guinea

The image below is of the World War II Instrument of Surrender by Japanese Forces in New Guinea, New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville and adjacent islands. It is signed by Lieutenant General Vernon Sturdee, General Officer Commanding First Australian Army and Commander in Chief of the Japanese Imperial Southeastern Army, General Hitoshi Imamura. The signing took place on board the aircraft carrier HMS Glory off the coast of Rabaul, New Britain on 6 September 1945. This Instrument was drawn up by the Department of External Territories. **Source:** National Archives of Australia



## Surrender of Hong Kong to Royal Navy 1945

Video of the surrender on 16 September 1945

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8\\_G5ECDUu](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V8_G5ECDUu)

Right: HMS Duke of York at anchor in Hong Kong Bay



## AWM Video: Surrender ceremony on board HMS Glory: 6 September 1945

The aircraft carrier HMS Glory was riding in St George's Channel, between New Britain and New Ireland at the time of the ceremony held on the flight deck.

Approximately 139,000 Japanese personnel were covered by the surrender instrument. After the actual signing, a conference was held between Australian and Japanese officers. Corsairs of the Royal Navy flew constant patrols from HMS Glory.

Available at: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/F07301/>



### Further Viewing

Wewak Surrender Video, 13 Sep 1945, AWM, available at; <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/F07243/>

## Video of Interest - USS Peary Propeller Discovery in Darwin Harbour

The discovery by a local diver of two large ship propellers on the sea floor of Darwin Harbour has offered a completely new interpretation of the events around the sinking of USS Peary on 19 February, 1942. The propellers cannot be matched to any ship known to have been lost in Darwin Harbour, other than USS Peary.

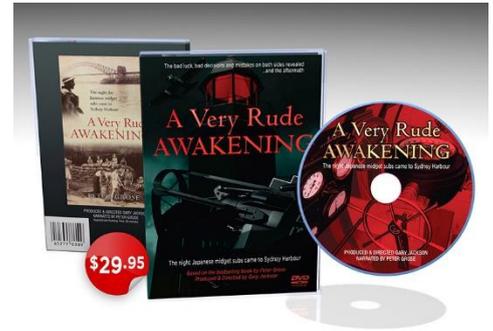
This short video was produced by Gary Jackson, technical animation specialist and supporter of the Naval Historical Society.



Gary's video is at <https://vimeo.com/432732054/e36deb4689> and further information on the discovery of USS Peary relics is available at, <http://www.garyjackson.net/>.

## Documentary Video: The night Japanese Midget Submarines Came to Sydney

A documentary based on Peter Grose's bestselling book *A Very Rude Awakening*. Narrated by the author, the engaging 48 minute production puts to rest all the misinformation that has persisted about that infamous Sunday winter night in 1942.



This is a neutral, balanced, critical analysis of what did happen and why anything that could go wrong, did go wrong.

**Available** through the NNSA website shop, <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/shop/a-very-rude-awakening/>. \$29.95

## The Federation of Australian Historical Societies



The Naval Historical Society of Australia is affiliated with The Federation of Australian Historical Societies (FAHS) which is seeking assistance to continue and expand its functions. The following links provide access to documents about the work of the FAHS and how it can be supported.

[Ways to support the FAHS](https://www.history.org.au/Ways_to_support_the_FAHS.pdf), [https://www.history.org.au/Ways\\_to\\_support\\_the\\_FAHS.pdf](https://www.history.org.au/Ways_to_support_the_FAHS.pdf)

[The work of the FAHS](https://www.history.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/FAHS_Flyer_2019.pdf), [https://www.history.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/FAHS\\_Flyer\\_2019.pdf](https://www.history.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/FAHS_Flyer_2019.pdf)

## Join the NNSA

If you are not already a member, support us by becoming a member. It is quick and easy for as little as \$30 per annum.

Just visit our <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/shop/membership-2020-2021/>



## Souvenir - Japanese Midget Submarine Fragment

Shortly after the Japanese midget submarine attack in Sydney Harbour, metal fragments cut from two submarines were produced to raise funds for the RAN Relief Fund and King George's Fund for Sailors. They were sold as souvenirs during a touring exhibition around the country accompanying a composite midget submarine constructed of the two sunken vessels raised from Sydney Harbour.



A cut square fragment of metal with possibly some Japanese characters etched on it. Attached to a paper label by string. NNSA image

**Inscription:** "A Guaranteed Souvenir/ from the Japanese Midget Submarine Sunk in Sydney Harbour/ Sunday, May 31st 1942/ G.C. Muirhead - Gould/ Rear Admiral in Charge, Sydney. Proceeds to RAN Relief Fund and King George's Fund for Sailors."

### Volunteer Positions Vacant and Additional Help Required in Sydney

The Society is seeking regular, skilled and motivated volunteers prepared to work on a regular (one or two days a week) in its Garden Island Dockyard office, The Boatshed. The heritage listed Boatshed is located on the north eastern waterfront of Garden Island with views north to Shark and Clark Island. Defence transport is available from the CBD.

The office is open from 0900 to 1600 Tuesdays and Thursdays. The working environment is open plan with ten separate work stations. Volunteers generally specialise in a primary field of work. However, multiskilling is encouraged to cover holiday vacancies and meet peak demand periods such as regular mailouts. Age, gender and background are not considered in our selection process.

If you have an interest in and skills to make a contribution in any of the following work areas please contact the Society. We would like to talk and hear your story.

**Phone:** (02) 9359 2243 Tuesday and Thursday or 0423227342 anytime.

**E-mail:** secretary@navyhhistory.org.au

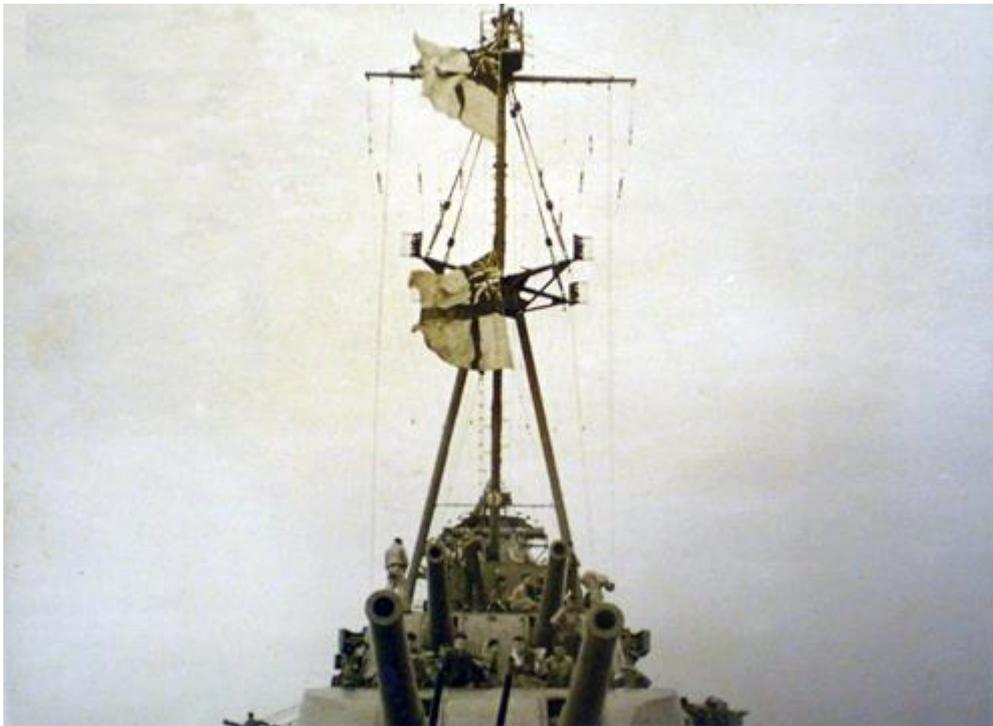
These activities are not necessarily time-consuming one-person positions. There is scope to share the work. Similarly, an individual volunteer may assist in more than one of these areas.

1. Archivists (print)
2. Archivist (digital)
3. Sales & Book keeping (monitor purchases {website & others} fill orders, invoice and receipt)
4. *Call the Hands* Assistant (research and write content for CTH and occasional papers)
5. Assistant Secretary (E-mail correspondence in and out)
6. 'Ahoy' Editor (A digital bulletin relating to significant Navy events provided to members)
7. Marketing and Promotions Manager (Tours, product development and sales promotion)
8. Website Content Assistant
9. Digital Photograph Collection Manager (manage photographic collection)
10. Video Conversion Manager (convert VHS and DVD collection to digital format)
11. Garden Island Hill and Garden Tour Guides
12. Garden Island Heritage Tour Guides
13. Garden Island Dockyard Time Line Manager (research and update)
14. Member Events Manager (plan and conduct)
15. Grants and Sponsorship Manager

## Photos of the Month



Tokyo Bay 1945. Taken from HMAS WARRAMUNGA, it looks across HMAS BATAAN to HMAS HOBART and the stately HMAS SHROPSHIRE rafted together. Mt Fuji is shown in the distance. (Alan Meade Collection)



HMAS SHROPSHIRE flew two ensigns from her mainmast as the surrender was signed on USS MISSOURI in Tokyo Bay. (Alan Meade Collection)

## News in Brief

### Australian Military Deployment

An Air Task Unit made up of F/A-18A Hornets, EA-18G Growlers, an E-7A Wedgetail and a KC-30A Multirole Tanker Transport will conduct advanced air-sea integration drills with five Royal Australian Navy warships.

HMAS *Canberra*, *Hobart*, *Stuart*, *Arunta* and *Sirius* are part of a Joint Task Group conducting a regional deployment through Southeast Asia, before participating in exercise RIMPAC in Hawaii.



### RAN's HMAS Ballarat and S-100 Camcopter UAV conduct flight trials

The Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) Anzac Class frigate, HMAS *Ballarat*, and an S-100 Camcopter Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) have conducted flight trials. The test focused on the launch and retrieval of the 200kg S-100 Camcopter UAV at sea. It was conducted off the Eastern coast of Australia. The RAN's 822X Squadron personnel and from the Aircraft Maintenance and Flight Trials Unit (AMAFTU) test specialists were deployed on the 118m-long frigate to collect data. The trials offered an opportunity to learn how to integrate the UAV's payload capacity with the frigate's warfare capabilities.



### Russian Navy to commission some 40 vessels in 2020

The Russian Navy is set to commission some 40 naval platforms this year, the service's commander-in-chief, Admiral Nikolai Yevmenov, told military newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda (Red Star)*. All four of the navy's fleets will receive surface combatants, while submarines will be delivered to the Northern and Pacific Fleets, according to Adm Yevmenov.

Among the warships under construction are Project 22350 frigates, Project 20380, 20385, 20386, and 21631 corvettes, Project 22800 and 22160 missile and patrol corvettes, Project 12700 mine countermeasures vessels, Project 955A ballistic missile submarines, Project 885M nuclear-powered attack submarines, and Project 636.3 and 677 diesel-electric submarines.



The Project 22350 frigate Admiral Kasatonov

## This Month in History

August 1875	CDRE James Goodenough, RN, commander of the Australia Squadron 1873-75, died from wounds sustained from poisoned arrows, fired by Santa Cruz Islanders.
August 1900	Transport 105, (the vessel SS Salamis), sailed from Sydney with men from the NSW Naval Brigade, (146 men), Victorian Naval Brigade, (170 men), and a platoon of Marine Light Infantry, (31 men), for service in China to suppress the Boxer Rebellion.
August 1908	The 'Great White Fleet' arrived in Melbourne, and remained there until 5 September, when it sailed for Albany, WA.
August 1914	Great Britain declared war on Germany. The telegram informing Australia of a state of hostilities was not received in Melbourne until 5 August. At the outbreak of war, the strength of the RAN was 3800 of all ranks. A warning shot was fired across the bows of the German merchant ship PFALZ by the Nepean Battery on Port Phillip Bay, VIC, when the vessel attempted to escape to sea. PFALZ turned back and was seized. Records suggest this was the first shot fired by British forces against the Germans in the First World War.
August 1915	HMAS Psyche was ordered to Singapore, following reports that German agents were fomenting civil unrest in Burma and India.
August 1918	HMA Ships Huon and Yarra, collided in the Adriatic. <i>Huon</i> was severely damaged and was withdrawn from further war service.
August 1929	HMAS Platypus paid off and the following day commissioned as HMAS Penguin as a Depot Ship at Garden Island, acting also as parent ship for the submarines. HMAS Encounter decommissioned.
August 1936	HMAS Australia (II) arrived in Sydney after an absence of 615 days on exchange service in company with HMAS Sydney making her long awaited entry through Sydney Heads and into Port Jackson where her arrival was viewed from the shore by thousands of citizens who had turned out to see her.
August 1940	HMAS Hobart's, (cruiser), amphibian aircraft, made a solo bombing raid on the Italian airfield at Zeila, Somaliland. Italian bombers retaliated by straddling <i>Hobart</i> with bombs.
August 1942	Australian Coastwatchers at Porlock, reported the 5th Sasebo Special Landing Force was moving along the coast in barges from Buna to Milne Bay.
August 1948	The 20th Carrier Air Group, (comprising 805 and 816 Squadrons), was commissioned at the Royal Naval Air Station, Eglinton, England. The air group was formed to be embarked in the RAN's first true aircraft carrier, HMAS Sydney. 805 Squadron with Hawker Sea Furies and 816 Squadron with Firefly FR.4 aircraft.
August 1957	HMAS Quadrant paid off into Operational Reserve at Sydney. On 15 February 1963 <i>Quadrant</i> was sold for scrap to a Japanese firm, Kinoshita & Co Ltd.
August 1964	HMAS Ibis and Teal replaced HMAS Gull and Hawk as a part of the Far East Strategic Reserve as part of Australia's commitment to Commonwealth support for Malaysia during the Indonesian Confrontation
August 1974	Iroquois helicopters of the RAN Fleet Air Arm rescued 112 people when the Shoalhaven River broke its banks. Another 240 people were rescued by Navy personnel in ground operations.
August 1982	HMAS Barbette temporarily changed her pennant number from 97 to 83 for her role as the fictional RAN patrol boat, HMAS Ambush, in the second series of the popular ABC television series, Patrol Boat.
August 1992	HMAS Otway, (Oberon class submarine), became the first RAN submarine to fire Mk48 torpedoes against a manned submarine, when she fired on the US Submarine New York City, during RIMPAC exercises.
August 2004	15 sailors from HMNZS Endeavour, (tanker), were injured during a life boat drill that went awry, while the ship was berthed at Fleet Base East, Sydney. During a regular test of the lifeboats, one of the boats accidentally plunged 10 metres into the harbour. Personnel from HMA Ships Manoora and Sydney were involved in the rescue of the New Zealand sailors.
August 2014	At 11:52am a fire, thought to be caused by a 'blow through' during welding activities, broke out in HMAS Bundaberg while she was on the hardstand at Aluminium Boats Australia Pty Ltd in Brisbane for refit. The fire quickly took hold spreading throughout the boat. Queensland Fire and Emergency Services brought the blaze under control at around 15:44pm but by that time, the damage to the boat was extensive.

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

### HMAS Sydney (II)

A recent query related to the duties of a member of gun crew in HMAS Sydney (II).

‘Good afternoon Naval History Crew!

My brother in law Bill Menzies was on the Sydney during WW II and went down with the ship. I understand he was a gunner and that he told this relative that his gun placement was on the stern of the ship, X gunnery, if that means anything to you. I understand that this gun was the last to be disabled by the German ship. What I would like to know is:

Did the gunners always have the same gun placement while on a particular ship?

This was Bill's first engagement and so it must have been a horrific situation for him to be in.

If you do not know the answer, can you tell me how to find out this information.

I would really appreciate anything you can tell me.

Thanks and Regards’

### Society Researchers provided this reply

Bill Menzies’ service record shows that he was an able seaman with no particular gunnery qualification. From Joan’s comments we presume that he was in X turret’s crew. As he was unqualified, we presume that he was an ammunition loader in any position from the magazines to the turret. He may well have had a different action station such as for anti-aircraft action.

The following attachments may help Joan to understand his duty.

- Model of HMAS SYDNEY showing X turret
- Drawing of inside a 6 inch turret
- Photograph of X turret as seen on the wreck of HMAS SYDNEY on the ocean bottom. This shows little damage and therefore indicates that the turret’s crew would not have been killed by an exploding shell.



Hope this is of some assistance.



## Suez Canal

From Ron Osborn

'I was interested to read details of the 1956 Suez Canal Invasion in the latest mailing.

I was serving as a Midshipman in HMS LIVERPOOL in 1951/1952 under the command of Captain JD Luce RN who later became First Sea Lord.

In early December all Egyptian employees of the Canal Company went on strike which included local Canal pilots. Ex-pat pilots remained available but there were no tugs, line boats etc. so the Canal was not operating.

*Liverpool* and two destroyers were sent to the Canal. *Liverpool* secured stern to from RN House and manned tugs and line boats. One destroyer was anchored in the Bitter Lake and the other in Suez, providing required services.

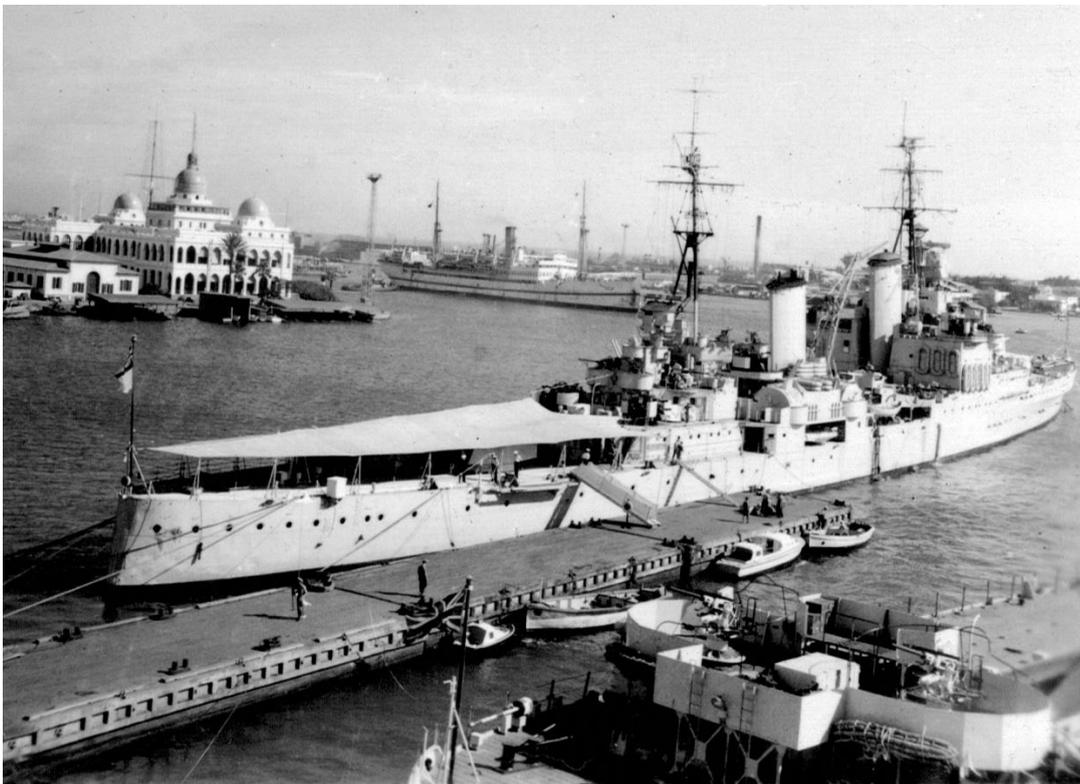
We were there for 3 weeks before being relieved by HMS Cleopatra.

We returned in January for another three weeks before the situation returned to normal with all the local employees resuming work.

They were interesting times with British Troops and local "terrorists" firing at each other on the roof tops while we enjoyed a pre-dinner beer on the quarterdeck (No Gin for Mids]. *Liverpool* was accused in the Times of Egypt of shelling the local railway station which was only about half mile from our berth - very difficult for any of our armament.!!

In early February 1952 we were in Tobruk with about half the Med Fleet when the sad news of the Kings death was received. All the Commanding Officers motored down to the RAF Base at El Adam to pay their respects to our new Queen as she transited on her flight from Kenya to London.

Seems a long time ago!!'



**Above**

Royal Marines guard  
Royal Navy House  
Port Said 1951.

**Left**

HMS Liverpool  
acting as floating  
shipping office at  
Port Said, December  
1951

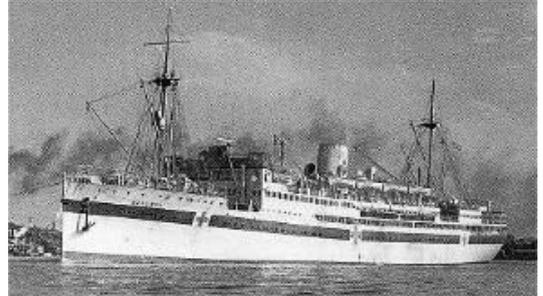
Images: Ron Osborn

## Australian Hospital Ships World War II

The Australian Hospital Ships (AHS) which saw service during World War 2 were converted civilian ships manned primarily by Army Medical staff. These ships were either Australian or Dutch ships transferred to the Australian Government. The Dutch ships retained their original Dutch officers and Javanese sailors with replacements from an international pool added as required. They sailed under the Dutch flag.

### AHS Manunda

*Manunda* was an Australian registered and crewed ship converted in 1940. It first sailed to [Suez](#) in October 1940 and saw service in both the Middle East and Pacific Campaigns, specifically New Guinea. *Manunda* was present during the bombing of Darwin where she suffered damage. In September 1946, *Manunda* was decommissioned and returned to her parent company following a refit. She resumed passenger services around Australia.



### AHS Wanganella

*Wanganella* was an Australian registered and crewed ship converted to a hospital ship in 1941. *Wanganella* served from 19 May 1941 until 1946, during which time she covered 251,011 nautical miles and transported 13,385 wounded.



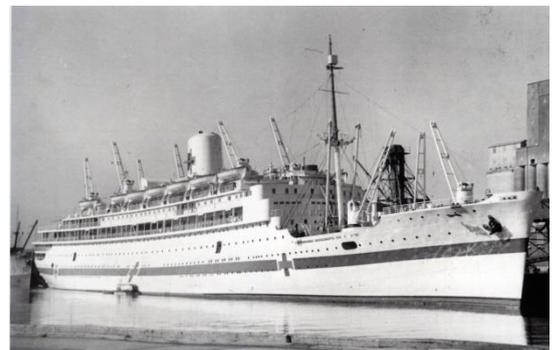
### AHS Centaur

*Centaur* was British registered and crewed by Australian sailors. She was converted to a hospital ship on 12 March 1943. She was torpedoed by Japanese submarine I-177 on 14 May 1943 during her second voyage to New Guinea as a hospital ship. Of the 332 medical personnel and civilian crew aboard, 268 died.



### AHS Oranje

*Oranje* was a Dutch-registered vessel of 20,565 tons owned by Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland SMN Line, was completed in 1939. While on her maiden voyage to Jakarta, World War II was declared, and by the time she reached her destination, the Netherlands had been occupied by Nazi Germany. *Oranje's* captain was ordered to Sydney, and to present his ship to Australian authorities. At the same time, the Netherlands Government informed the Australian Government that *Oranje* was to be converted to a hospital ship, at the Netherlands' cost. Converted at Cockatoo Island Dockyard, *Oranje* continued to be crewed by Dutch officers and Javanese (Indonesian) sailors. It operated in the Middle East, Indian, and Pacific Campaigns, making 40 voyages over the five years of her service.



7.34 The hospital ship Oranje in 1941

## Occasional Papers in this edition

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

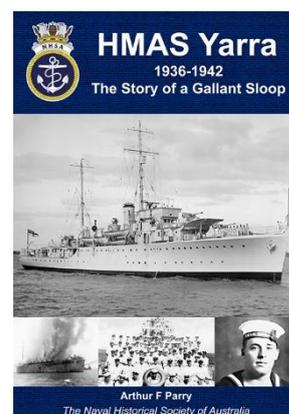
- Occasional Paper 86 – Royal Australian Navy in the Pacific War
- Occasional Paper 87 - Disposition and Employment of RAN Ships Following Cessation of Hostilities 15 August 1945
- Occasional Paper 88 - Gulf War Logistics Support for RAN Ships: Operation Damask 1990-1991

## Society Matters

### New Books

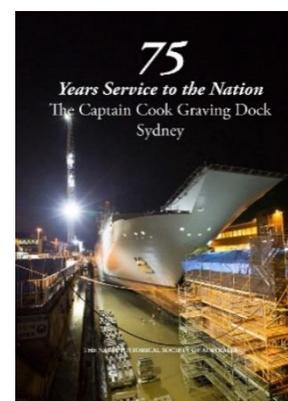
#### **HMAS Yarra 1936-1942, The Story of a Gallant Sloop**

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.



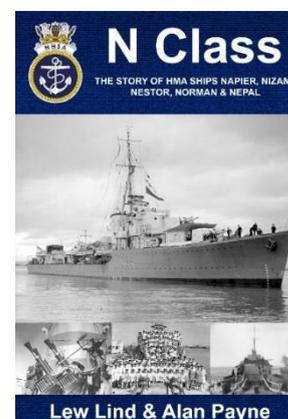
#### **75 Years of Service: The Captain Cook Graving Dock, Sydney**

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/>