



CALL THE HANDS



Issue No. 52 May 2021

From the President

Welcome to the Society's 52nd edition of Call the Hands and accompanying occasional papers. The occasional papers are available to members through the members website page. These papers are made available to the community after twelve months.

A special welcome to new members who have joined the Society in recent weeks. Your support is reassuring for the future of the Society in such uncertain times as we search for new ways to achieve our goals. As examples, work on the new book on the history of the Ikara anti-submarine missile is nearing completion and ticket sales for the 'Attack on Sydney' harbour cruise are progressing well. We look forward to welcoming members and guests on MV *Royale* for this anniversary event on 31 May.

For members who have pre ordered copies of the Society's own fifty-year anniversary book please bear with us as we finalise its format and lock in a date with our Patron the Chief of Navy for a launch date.

The passing of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh on 9 April evoked memories for the many millions of lives he touched in different ways during his long life. From the Society's perspective, our relationship with the Prince commenced in 1971 when he wrote the foreword to the Society's first book, 'HMAS *Hobart*; the story of the six-inch Cruiser 1938 to 1962'. Prince Phillip later unveiled the HMAS Parramatta Memorial at Garden Island on 3 October 1986. Members will recall the interesting story of the Society's first major project to recover the bow and stern sections of HMAS Parramatta (I). That story was published in the December 2020 edition of the Naval Historical Review.

Watching Prince Phillip's war service interview which is highlighted in this edition of CTH, I noted his references to being part of a ship's company and every ship making a valuable contribution regardless of where it is deployed. Similarly, we recognize all those who have served in the Royal Australian Navy and passed on with minimal recognition beyond loved one and friends. Their service does contribute to our rich naval history as we are reminded each Anzac Day.

As always, the Society welcomes new volunteers. At present we are seeking people to join us in the Boatshed, Sydney to assist with a range of administrative and other interesting tasks as well as tour leaders. Training and support is provided. Please get in touch if you can assist.

Kind regards,

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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Maritime Heritage Registers: Federal and State Governments

As an island continent, Australia has always been dependent on shipping services, however, the waters around the continent often proved treacherous to mariners. Since the first documented landing on Australia by a European in 1606 (Dutch explorer Willem Janszoon in *Duyfken*) there have been literally thousands of recorded ship wrecks for which locations may or may not be known.

The Federal Historic Shipwrecks and Underwater Cultural Heritage Acts oblige all states to maintain a register of all historic shipwrecks and relics located in State and Commonwealth waters.

The primary register for all shipwrecks in Australian waters is the Australasian Underwater Cultural Heritage Database. However, some states provide additional detail about particular wrecks. Examples of the information available through these websites include;

- HMAS Australia (I) [HMAS Australia shipwreck | Heritage NSW](#)
- and HMAS Parramatta (I) [Ex HMAS Parramatta \(I\) shipwreck | Heritage NSW](#)

State Government Maritime Heritage Data Bases

- [Australasian Underwater Cultural Heritage Database](#)
- [New South Wales](#)
- [Victoria](#)
- [Tasmania](#)
- [South Australia](#)
- [Western Australia](#)
- [Northern Territory](#)
- [Queensland](#)



Duyfken. image by Duyfken 1606
Replica

Australia, Japan Naval Gift Exchange: 1925–26

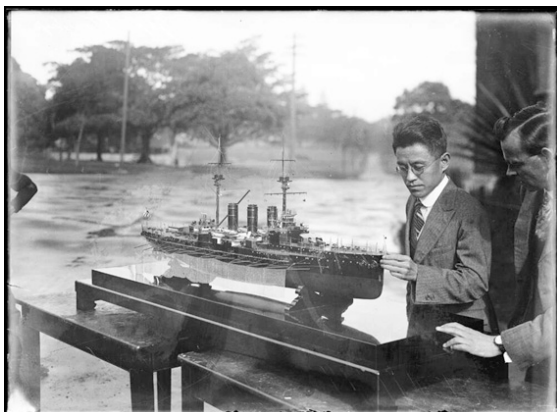
Society volunteers recently conducted research into Japan, Australia naval relations and were interested to learn about an exchange of gifts between the two countries stemming from the First World War engagement between HMAS *Sydney* (I) and SMS *Emden* on 9 November 1914.

Participating as an escort for the 38 strong transports in the first ANZAC convoy was the Japanese battlecruiser *Ibuki*. After being notified of the 'strange warship' was approaching the Cocos Islands the commanding officer of *Ibuki*, Captain Kanji Katō was a keen volunteer for the intercept task. However, despite being a superior ship to *Sydney* was ordered stay with the convoy. The reason for this was that *Ibuki* was burning a lesser grade coal and making more smoke than HMAS *Sydney* which was assigned the task. Detection of *Sydney* was less likely as the higher-grade coal she was burning produced far less smoke.

During post war visits by Imperial Japanese ships to Australia the "samurai spirit of the *Ibuki*" was always celebrated by the Royal Australian Navy. This attitude is exemplified by representations made throughout 1924 by the Australian War Memorial and Australian Prime Minister to Japanese Naval authorities for relics from the *Ibuki* which had been scrapped in 1923, a victim of the Washington Naval Treaty.

The Japanese responded in January 1925 by instructing their Ministry of Marine to construct 'a small model of the 'Ibuki' and a cigar box to be made of wood from the ship'. The model was delivered by the SS 'Mishima Maru', which arrived in Sydney on 8 June 1925. In his speech at the handover of the model on 12 June 1925, the Japanese Acting Consul-General, Mr Yamasaki, stated he hoped the gift would be accepted 'as undeniable evidence that the same friendly and cordial relations will remain unchanged between the Commonwealth and Japan, and are as strong as when the *Ibuki* conveyed the brave Anzacs to the battle front, there to gain imperishable renowned for their patriotism and courage. I feel confident that the action of Japan in this instance will counterbalance and set-off some of the unkind words which misinformed people occasionally indulge in regarding the intentions of Japan towards Australia'.

Australia reciprocated on 25 January 1926 during a visit to Melbourne by the Japanese training cruiser *Iwate*. During the welcoming reception for Captain Yedahara and officers of *Iwate* the Minister for Defence, Sir Neville Howse presented the binnacle from the HMAS *Australia* (I) for conveyance to Japan as a present from the Commonwealth Government. He stated his hope that the friendship between the two countries would be strengthened by the exchange of gifts.



Japanese Acting Consul- General Yamasaki
presenting the model of IJMS *Ibuki*



Model of IJMS 'Ibuki', AWM image

The *Ibuki* model is still held by the Australian War Memorial having been on display for many years.

The history of the *Australia* binnacle following its arrival in Japan is intriguing. Enquiries by Society volunteers through the Consulate-General, Sydney and Embassy of Japan to ascertain if it was still held by the Museum of Naval History in Etajima, Japan. The Museum buildings are those of the former Imperial Japanese Naval Academy established in 1888.

The Society is indebted to Captain (Navy) ASO Reona from the Embassy of Japan, Canberra for providing the following information on the likely provenance of the *Australia* (I) binnacle. He wrote,

‘Up until the time it was occupied by Allied forces in the latter part of August 1945, all objects on display related to the Pacific War in the Education Center of the Naval Academy were incinerated under orders of the Commandant of the Academy. However, objects related to the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars were collected and presented as an offering to a shrine located near the Academy. Midshipmen then searched among the remaining objects, and anything regarded as having sentimental value was carted away. Hence by the time Allied forces occupied the Academy, nothing remained within the Education Center (it does appear that Admiral Togo’s favourite table and chair were still present, though).

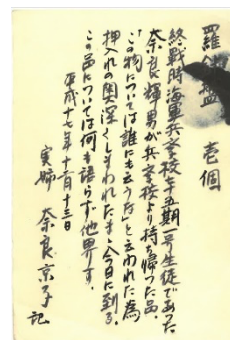
The family of one of the midshipmen of the Academy later returned a compass (minus its name plate) that their younger brother had taken from the Academy after he passed away. This might in fact be the compass in question.’

The Society is now working with Naval Heritage Collection curators to determine if the actual compass held is indeed that from HMAS *Australia* (I).



Compass held by Maritime Self-Defense Force, 1st Service School

Captain Reona provided a provisional translation of a document which accompanied the returned compass supporting the above explanation. It reads as follows. ‘This object was taken by one Nara Teruo, a member of the 5th round midshipman intake of the Imperial Naval Academy, from the said Naval Academy at the end of the war. Given he told me not to tell anyone about it, I hid it in a chest of drawers where it remained until today. (Nara Teruo) passed away without telling me anything about the object.’



Further Reading

Dr David Stevens, November 1914 - Australia's First Victory at Sea, published by SPC-A: available at <https://www.navy.gov.au/history/feature-histories/november-1914-australias-first-victory-sea>

Semaphore: 90 Years On: Rabaul and Sydney/Emden, 1914, published by SPC-A: available at; <https://www.navy.gov.au/media-room/publications/semaphore-90-years-rabaul-and-sydneyemden-1914>

Australian War Memorial, Model Ship: HIJMS *Ibuki* description and history, available at, <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C111976>

Hobart Mercury 26 January 1926, page 6, ‘Binnacle to go To Japan’, available at <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/29127969?searchTerm=h.m.a.s.%20australia%20binnacle%20japan#>

FOREWORD

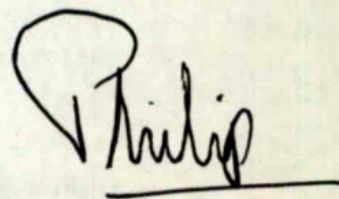
Buckingham Palace



I hear that the Naval Historical Society in Australia is to publish a series of Accounts of the wartime exploits of Her Majesty's Australian Ships. These ships saw service in many parts of the world, and went through some hectic experiences. All this and many other incidents and personalities are worth recording.

I am interested to know that H. M. A. S. Hobart is to be number one of the series. I had a fleeting acquaintance with her in January 1940 when I took passage onboard from Aden to Colombo as a Midshipman on my way to join my first ship H. M. S. Ramillies.

I am sure that this publication, and all the others to follow, will be a fitting tribute to the men of the Australian Navy during the war and to keep alive the memory of their service.



1971.

Financial Rewards

Readers of naval fiction would be very aware of prize money. For example, Patrick O'Brian's hero Captain Jack Aubrey, lived for it. He was an expert at anchoring in the dark outside an enemy port, then sending in the ship's boats with muffled oars and rudders, the crews instructed to board enemy ships, slip them and sail them out of the harbour. This generally resulted in all of the crew receiving prize money. For this, they admired and idolised their Captain. He rarely had difficulty in manning his ships.

Many RAN personnel have received prize money over the years most recently in the combined payout at the end of World War II. However, there was another type of financial reward payable to naval personnel which has not attracted the same amount of publicity. Salvage money was generally earned from participation in events which could be equally dangerous to capturing enemy ships but was not regarded as so glamorous. Salvage money may be payable if a vessel in distress is assisted in getting to a safe anchorage.

A recent example of such an event occurred on 13th September 1958 when two tankers collided in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf. They were the French tanker *SS Fernand Gilbert* in ballast and the Liberian tanker *SS Melika* in deep condition on passage to the USA. A distress signal was sent soon after the collision and was received by every RN warship within about a thousand miles.

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Navy saves two blazing tankers in Gulf of Oman

SALVAGE PRIZE £1m?

Bulwark's helicopters and frigates in another sea epic

A 150-MILE dash by H.M.S. Bulwark after receiving information that two tankers had collided, were blazing, and had been abandoned in the Gulf of Oman, was all that was required to make another naval epic of the sea. Bulwark, accompanied by at least four frigates, arrived at the scene of the disaster after having sent the assistance of a Skyraider within an hour.

The Navy was successful in extinguishing the flames in both tankers and, despite the heavy seas, got both in tow and they were eventually made safe.

During the morning watch on September 13, H.M.S. Bulwark (Capt. P. D. Gick, O.B.E., D.S.C., Royal Navy), which was exercising with H.M.S. Loch Kilisport in the Gulf of Oman, was informed that the Liberian tanker *Melika* and the French tanker *Fernand Gilbert* had been in collision and were both ablaze and abandoned some 150 miles from Bulwark.

Within the hour, a Skyraider from Bulwark reached the scene of the collision and saw an unidentified tanker, well down by the bows. The frigates H.M.S. *Puma* and H.M.S. *St. Bride's* Bay were ordered to go to the scene of the collision. The Swedish tankers *Coras* and *Sira*, and the British tankers *Anglian Diligence* and *Border Hunter* were searching for survivors.

The *Sira*, which had picked up two bodies, continued her voyage, but the other three tankers had some survivors on board, some of whom were injured. These vessels steamed towards Bulwark, who sent helicopters with medical aid to them. The total crews of the two damaged vessels was 85, and of these the tankers picked up 62. The helicopters then conveyed the survivors to Bulwark.

The first of the damaged ships sighted by Bulwark was the *Fernand Gilbert*, and Cdr. R. H. H. Brunner, Bulwark's Executive Officer, and a small fire-fighting party were flown by (Continued on page 3, column 1)

Broken Arrestor Wire Cost Pilot His Life

SCIMITAR SWINGS OFF DECK OF H.M.S. VICTORIOUS INTO SEA

ONE of the Royal Navy's most experienced pilots lost his life on September 25. Flying a Scimitar, the Navy's first swept-wing aircraft, Cdr. John D. Russell, Commanding Officer of 803 Naval Air Squadron, landed on H.M.S. *Victorious* and, according to an eye-witness, the landing was perfect. The trailing hook caught an arrestor wire which suddenly broke. The Scimitar shot over the side of the ship and remained afloat for about two minutes during which time the pilot was seen, apparently, to pull back and close his cockpit canopy, but he seemed unable to get out of his aircraft.

A helicopter moved to the sinking plane with a rating on the end of a cable, but before a rescue could be effected the plane sank.

Although a prolonged search was made, the missing officer was not recovered.

Arrangements to salvage the aircraft have been made and a board of Inquiry to investigate the cause of the mishap has been held, but the findings have not yet been announced.



A helicopter from Bulwark hovers over the bows of the *Melika*

H.M.S. Chichester fights fire in Costa Rican ship

WHEN the Costa Rican steamer *Concha* caught fire off the Penzance coast, H.M.S. Chichester (Cdr. R. Butt, R.N.) was taking part in an exercise with the Radar Direction School, H.M.S. Harrier, not far from the burning vessel.

The fire was so intense that Chichester's boarding party could not take their hoses and fire-fighting equipment near enough to the seat of the fire and after an explosion which shook the ship and increased her list by some three feet the fire party withdrew.

Shortly afterwards tugs arrived from Penzance and took the burning *Concha* in tow, but she foundered before she could be towed into port.

NELSON PLAQUE FROM VICTORY MATERIAL

ON the anniversary of the birth of Admiral Nelson, a plaque made from oak and copper of H.M.S. *Victory* was unveiled at the Rectory, Burnham Thorpe, Norfolk. The plaque, prepared in H.M. Dockyard, Portsmouth, was unveiled by Rear-Admiral Thorsfield and dedicated by the Bishop of King's Lynn in the presence, among many others, of a contingent of boys from the Boys' Training Establishment at Shotley, H.M.S. *Ganges*.

Fortunately, there were quite a few then in the area including HM Ships *Bulwark*, (recently converted to a commando carrier and fortuitously carrying numerous helicopters) *Puma*, *Loch Killisport*, *St Brides Bay*, *Loch Alvie*, *Sheffield*, *Ceylon*, tug *Warden*, RFA *Cedardale* and RFA *Sea Salvor*. Not surprisingly, they were all involved to some degree in the subsequent salvage operations and so were eligible for salvage money as can be seen in the following ADMIRALTY press release.

Big Salvage Award

Three thousand six hundred and seventy seven officers and men of eight HM Ships and two RFAs are to share a salvage award of almost 100 000 pounds for their work in salvaging the tankers MELIKA and FERNAND GILBERT which caught fire after a collision in the Arabian Sea two years ago. This is the largest sum ever obtained for a salvage operation by HM Ships.

The award is allocated by shares based on rank or rating, and therefore relative responsibility. It applies to all those serving in appropriate ships at the time of salvage. The largest single award goes to the Commanding Officer of BULWARK, who was in charge on the spot of the initial salvage operation. Typical of some of the amounts received under the award are:

<i>Lieutenant in HMS Bulwark</i>	<i>£ 99 17 6 pence</i>
<i>Petty Officer in Loch Killisport</i>	<i>£36 18 4 pence</i>
<i>Able Seaman in PUMA</i>	<i>£22 17 1 pence.</i>

One of the recipients was LCDR D. P. Weil RAN who, having completed his long Aircraft Direction and AIO Course, was posted for two year's exchange service in the RN and was serving in HMS *Bulwark*. [He was well known in the RAN as "Weary Weil"] He had volunteered to be in the first firefighting party flown over to SS *Melika*. His share of the salvage money was £268 pounds sterling and as such he was probably the last RAN officer to receive salvage money.

If you are currently serving in the RAN don't get excited about salvage money as we understand that the Australian Government will no longer approve such payments.

Veterans Stories

Mick Rudkins enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy in Brisbane on 7 March 1941. After his initial training at Flinders Naval Depot in Victoria his first draft was to the HMAS *Bungadore* in Sydney Harbour. It turned out the draft was just to paint the ship and then he was sent to the corvette HMAS *Colac* on which he served for eighteen months.

Most of the corvette work entailed escorting convoys and occasionally minesweeping. During one convoy trip, a New Zealand ship, the *Limerick* was sunk by a Japanese submarine and the *Colac* picked up the survivors and ferried them to



Brisbane. Mick also visited ports in Papua and New Guinea and whilst at Milne Bay he was told on one day to get ready as he was to be drafted to the HMAS *Bendigo* and picked up in the morning. He spent six weeks in Milne Bay waiting for the ship to arrive. Later on he served on the HMAS *Norman* and visited Durban, Bombay, and Aden. He discharged on 11 December 1945

[Mick Rudkins - Joining the Colac - YouTube](#)

Photo of the Month



HMS TABARD in floating dock AFD17 at Cockatoo Island, starboard bow view.

HMS Tabard was part of the Royal Navy's 4th Submarine Flotilla which was based in Sydney from 1949 until 1969. The flotilla, which varied in size between two and three boats, was used to support the Royal Australian Navy and Royal New Zealand Navy in anti-submarine warfare training, with the operating cost split between the two nations.

News in Brief

HMAS Supply (II) Commissioned in Sydney on Saturday 10 April 2021.

HMAS *Supply* (II) is the lead ship of two Supply Class Auxiliary Oiler Replenishment (AOR) ships currently being built for the Royal Australian Navy by Spanish shipbuilder, Navantia. The Australian Supply Class ships are based on the Spanish Navy's Cantabria Class design.

The ships are intended to carry fuel, dry cargo, water, food, ammunition, equipment and spare parts to provide operational support for the deployed naval or combat forces operating far from the port on the high seas for longer periods. In addition to replenishment, the vessels can be used to combat against environmental pollution at sea, provide logistics support for the armed forces, and to support humanitarian and disaster relief (HADR) operations following a natural disaster. HMAS *Supply* was laid down on 18 November 2017 and then launched at the Navantia Shipyards in Ferrol, Spain on 24 November 2018. HMAS *Supply* is the second Royal Australian Navy ship to bear the name after the Tide Class Fleet Tanker, HMAS *Supply* (I).



Shipbuilder Austal USA has launched the future USS Canberra (LCS 30)

Launched on April 2021 USS Canberra is the first ship to be launched by Austal USA in 2021.

What is more, it the first vessel to be launched from the shipyard's new floating dry dock at Mobile Alabama.

LCS 30 is the second US Navy ship named in honour of the first HMAS Canberra, a Royal Australian Navy heavy cruiser that fought in the Battle of Savo Island in August 1942 during World War II.



Back in February 2019, Austal held a metal cutting ceremony for the newbuild.

Videos of the month

A tribute to His Royal Highness Prince Phillip and the Royal Family.

Prince Philip: The War Years - Duke of Edinburgh On Serving in WW2 - 1995 Interview (45mins)

In this 1995 interview Prince Philip talks with Richard Astbury about his service with the Royal Navy and his experiences during the Second World War.

The Duke of Edinburgh was mentioned in dispatches for his role operating searchlights in the Battle of Cape Matapan, in 1941, and was even present when the Japanese surrender was signed in September 1945, escorting the USS Missouri into Tokyo Bay.

[Prince Philip: The War Years - Duke Of Edinburgh On Serving In WW2 • FULL 1995 INTERVIEW - YouTube](#)



HMS Vanguard: The Last Battleship 1962

This video covers the life and death of HMS *Vanguard* including its 1947 cruise to South Africa with the Royal family and later scrapping in Scotland in 1962 after service as the Flagship of the Home Fleet and time in reserve.

Of interest also was the planned Royal visit to Australia by King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and Princess Margaret in 1949 aboard HMS *Vanguard*. After more than a year of planning and excitement throughout Australia the visit did not occur. Details of planning for this visit which did not occur are available in a story by Alf Batchelor published in the Naval Historical Review in June 1916 and available on the Society's [website](#).

[The Last Battleship 1962 - YouTube](#)



This Month in History

May 1843	The first war vessel built in Australia, the schooner ELIZA, (119 tons schooner), patrolled the estuary of the Derwent River, TAS, to put down smuggling, and prevent the escape of convicts from the colony. ELIZA was built at Port Arthur, TAS.
May 1884	Tasmania's only warship, an unnamed 2nd class torpedo boat known as TB1, arrived in Hobart.
May 1912	LEUT A. Longmore, (an Australian serving with the Naval Wing of the Royal Flying Corps), and LEUT Samson, were the first pilots to fly aircraft at a Spithead Review. Longmore flew a monoplane, and Samson a 'hydro-aeroplane'.
May 1913	The Minister for the Navy approved the formation of the Naval Dockyard Police. The initial strength was one Chief Warrant Officer, one Sergeant, nine Senior Constables, and 29 Constables.
May 1915	The RAN and the RCN operated together for the first time, when HMAS MELBOURNE and HMCS NIOBE, (cruisers), joined up to conduct patrols off the east coast of the United States. These patrols were to ensure German merchant ships, then interned in neutral United States ports, did not try and escape.
May 1918	The Australian transport ERA was sunk by a German submarine off Cape Tenes in the Atlantic. Eleven of her crew were lost.
May 1924	The turret ship HMAS CERBERUS, (which had been renamed PLAYTPUS II), was sold for 80 pounds, and taken to Williamstown Dockyard for dismantling. The hulk was later sunk as a breakwater at Black Rock, in Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne. CERBERUS has commenced service with the Victorian Navy in 1871, and had become part of the Australian Navy in 1901.
May 1930	HMA Ships PARRAMATTA and SWAN, (former destroyers), were anchored in Cowan Creek near the Hawkesbury River, (north of Sydney), in preparation to become accommodation for prisoners from civil jails. Before this scheme could be commenced, the NSW Government was pressured to abandon the idea due to an outcry from the public, who considered the plan reminiscent of the convict prison hulks of the 18th and 19th Century.
May 1936	HMAS ANZAC, (destroyer leader), was sunk as a target off Sydney Heads.
May 1940	Destroyers Vendetta, Voyager and Waterhen departed Malta as escorts for HMS Warspite. They arrived at Alexandria on the 10th
May 1941	Ordinary Seaman Ian Rhodes, a RAN Volunteer Reserve sailor, was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal for courage in action when HMS Kashmir was sunk during operations to defend Crete. Ordinary Seaman Rhodes was part of the gun crew for the Aft Port Oerlikon gun. With the water rising up around the weapon as the ship sank, and under fire from German aircraft which strafed the ship and survivors already in the sea alongside, Ian Rhodes climbed up to the weapon on the other side of the ship and commenced returning fire, shooting down an aircraft. For his courage in action, he was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal, the award for gallantry second only to the Victoria Cross for sailors, and the only Australian Sailor to receive the decoration during both world war.
May 1945	RAN ships and establishments received the signal announcing the end of hostilities against Germany. The Admiralty signalled all ships to 'Splice the Main Brace'.
May 1949	HMAS Sydney (III) arrived in Jervis Bay with the Fleet Air Arm's first Naval Air Squadrons, 805 and 816 Squadrons, embarked. Two Supermarine Type 309 Sea Otters were lowered into the water and flew to Nowra while 27 Hawker Sea Fury FB II's and 27 Fairey Firefly AS 5s were landed ashore by aircraft lighters along with the associated stores, machinery, aircraft documentation and personal baggage. Once ashore, the aircraft were towed to Nowra in convoys, the last arriving on 29 May. It was another two weeks before flying could commence due to inclement weather.
May 1953	850 Squadron commanding officer Lieutenant Commander Reginald Wild, DFC killed while flying a Hawker Sea Fury F.B. II when his aircraft collided with a Tiger Moth in mid-air over

	Wagga airfield. The occupants of the Tiger Moth were uninjured.
May 1956	First Gannets delivered to RAN FAA
May 1961	The nuclear-powered submarine USS SARGO, visited Sydney for Coral Sea Week celebrations.
May 1963	HMAS QUEENBOROUGH, (frigate), struck HMS TABARD, (submarine), while exercising off Sydney. Both vessels were damaged but returned to Port under their own power.
May 1967	Three divers of Clearance Diving Team 3 were flown to Phu Loi, Vietnam, to recover a Chinook helicopter which had crashed into the sea. The team recovered the bodies of the crew and assisted in the raising of the sunken helicopter. Two battalions of troops guarded the area against Viet Cong attack during the operation.
May 1971	HMAS Hawk, Curlew and Snipe deploy to Papua New Guinea to conduct a Mine Warfare Pilotage Survey and South West Pacific deployment during which they provided aid to the civil power in New Britain, Rabaul, in the aftermath of an earthquake.
May 1975	HMAS QUEENBOROUGH, the last of the five 'Q' class destroyers presented to the RAN as a gift by Great Britain, was towed out of Sydney, bound for Hong Kong and breaking up.
May 1980	The first female officers of the RAN to serve at sea, embarked in the training ship HMAS JERVIS BAY.
May 1988	While on exchange with the Royal Navy, LCDR N. Wallace, RAN, was appointed in command of HMS OLYMPUS, (submarine).
May 1992	12 RAN and USN vessels, led by the 80,000 tonne aircraft carrier USS <i>Independence</i> , in a fleet entry into Sydney Harbour commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea.
May 1998	A massive fire breaks out in the engine room of HMAS WESTRALIA, (tanker), then operating off the Western Australian coast, which leads to the deaths of four RAN personnel. Those killed were MIDN Megan Pelly, RAN, PO Shaun Smith, LS Bradley Meek, and AB Phillip Carroll. An enquiry into the accident revealed that the Navy had allowed inappropriate flexible fuel hoses to be fitted to the engines during a recent refit, and that one of these leaked and sprayed vaporized fuel onto the hot engine, which caused a huge fireball to engulf the engine room.
May 2001	HMAS JERVIS BAY was decommissioned in Hobart, TAS after her 2 years charter. Known as the 'Dili Express', she had carried 6,600 troops, and 3,200 pallets of stores, to East Timor during her two year career.
May 2009	Whilst transiting the 'Internationally Recognised Transit Corridor' in the Gulf of Aden, HMA Ships Sydney IV and Ballarat II came to the assistance of a merchant vessel, MV Dubai Princess, which was under attack from pirates in two small skiffs.

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/>

Occasional Papers

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

- Occasional Paper 109 - First Command
- Occasional Paper 110 - Charles Killick, RAN Bandsman, 1918-1925
- Occasional Paper 111 – HMAS Australia post WWI and scuttling

Society Matters

Chatswood RSL Support

The Society continues to receive significant support from the Chatswood RSL Club and Sub Branch. In recent days the Sub Branch has contributed to the cost of acquiring new cabinets in which plans and drawings in the Society archives can be appropriately stored. Previously, the Club has assisted with the provision of conference room facilities for presentation evenings and AGMs as well as audio visual equipment. In April, several Committee members enjoyed their hospitality at an ANZAC luncheon. In return the Committee has been pleased to offer Chatswood RSL members a discounted rate on the 31 May Attack on Sydney, anniversary harbour cruise.



Chatswood RSL Anzac Lunch 22 Apr 21. Lt Col R, John Smith, Mayor Gail Giles-Gidney, Walter Burroughs, David Michael

Anniversary Cruise, 31 May 2021, Sydney Under Japanese Attack



For members and subscribers in Sydney on 31 May, the cruise will highlight the events of 31 May 1942 when three Japanese midgeet submarines entered Sydney Harbour to attack Allied warships. Tickets are selling fast but still available. Follow the links on the [Society's website home page](#) to purchase your ticket.

You can assist by telling others.

Joining the cruise will be representatives from the Japanese Consulate General, Sydney and Embassy in Canberra.

Japanese submariners involved in the midgeet Submarine attack on Sydney 31 May 1942. AWM

Cooperation with Sydney Heritage Fleet

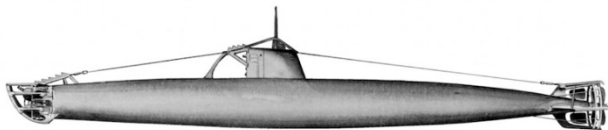
On the anniversary of Anzac Day 2021 the Sydney Heritage Fleet (SHF) conducted a similar cruise on the Bark *James Craig* to tell the story of the Japanese midgeet submarine attack on Sydney. During April, the Society and SHF cooperated to ensure successful events. The Society assisted the SHF with volunteer guide training and subject matter expert Noel Phelan to assist during the cruise. In return the NHSA benefited from the experience and transfer of information on logistics and administrative matters. Consideration is now being given by both parties to future cooperation with a cruise to highlight the many significant Navy related sites around Port Jackson.



Noel Phelan with James Craig crew member Chris Willis on James Craig 24 April 2021



Sydney Under Japanese Attack 1942: Anniversary Cruise on the Harbour Monday, 31 May 2021



This cruise highlights the events of 31 May 1942 when three Japanese midget submarines entered Sydney Harbour to attack Allied warships.

The 1942 Japanese midget submarine attack on ships in Sydney Harbour remains a topical subject. However, many Sydneysiders know little about this watershed event. It was the first attack on Sydney and its impact changed Australia from a quiet backwater of the Second World War to a vital springboard for the defeat of Japan.

This cruise will provide a detailed description of events leading up to and during the attack.

Your cruise boat will take you to sites on the Harbour where key events occurred and a comprehensive description of how those events during the fateful night of 31 May/1 June 1942 unfolded. The story will be told by expert narrators from the Naval Historical Society.

One midget submarine became entangled in the boom defence net. The second was depth charged and sunk while the third fired its two torpedoes at the USS Chicago and escaped from the harbour.

All three crews died in the attack. 19 Royal Australian Navy and two Royal Navy personnel were killed when one of the torpedoes that missed the USS Chicago detonated on the eastern sea wall of Garden Island under the moored HMAS Kuttabul used as an accommodation vessel.

Come join the cruise to learn more detail about that incredible night.

Three Hour Cruise

Date and Time

Mon., 31 May 2021

10:00 am – 1:00 pm AEST

Location

Campbells Cove Jetty

Circular Quay West

The Rocks, NSW 2000

More details on Eventbrite

[Book Online](#)

Through Eventbrite

Adult	A\$ 75.00
Concession	A\$ 67.00
Child under 15 years	A\$ 35.00
Family (2 adults + 2 children)	A\$185.00
NHSA or SHF Member	A\$ 60.00