



“The maintenance of the maritime well-being of the nation”

is the principal objective of the Navy League of Australia

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NAVAL VISITOR TO MELBOURNE

The first Naval visitor to Melbourne for the year 2015 arrived on 12th June when HMAS Melbourne, under the command of Commander William Waters C.S.C. R.A.N., berthed at Station Pier, Port Melbourne.

Following a maintenance period in Sydney and exercises off the Australian East Coast, H.M.A.S. Melbourne paid a scheduled two day visit which was the first for six years. On the occasion of the ship's last visit to Melbourne Cmdr (now Captain) Allison Norris was in command.

The 4200 tonne H.M.A.S. Melbourne 05 is an Adelaide Class Guided Missile Frigate, one of two built at the Williamstown Dockyard. Her sister ship H.M.A.S. Newcastle 06 is currently serving in the Middle East Region on Operation Manitou.

H.M.A.S. Melbourne is one of an original class of six ships with four having been built in the United States. Of the original four U.S. built ships "Adelaide" and "Canberra" have been sunk as dive sites. Sydney has been "paid off" to serve as an along-side training vessel whilst H.M.A.S. Darwin remains operational.

H.M.A.S. Melbourne C.O., Cmdr Bill Waters, is the son of the Navy League's Vic' Div' late Executive Committee Member Arch Waters. Arch is well remembered for his fine work in organising the annual Navy League Yacht Race for the Geoff Evans Trophy.

During this latest visit by H.M.A.S. Melbourne Cmdr Waters and the Wardroom Mess Committee were elected as Honorary Members of the League, receiving mementoes and spare copies of the League's Magazine "The Navy".

Details of the H.M.A.S. Melbourne's main characteristics are as follows:-

Length	138 metres	(453 ft)
Beam	14.3 metres	(47 ft)
Draught	7.7 metres	(26 ft)
Crew	190	
Speed	30 plus knot	
Aircraft	Hangar Space for 2 Seahawk Helicopters	
Armament	Various Missiles plus 1 X 76 mm gun	
	1 x 20 mm C.I.W.S. plus torpedo tubes	
	4 x machine guns plus Nulka missile defence.	

H.M.A.S. Melbourne departed Melbourne on Sunday 14th June 2015 heading for Australia's East Coast Exercise area for further work with the R.A.N. Sea Training Group plus readiness evaluation trials. Part of H.M.A.S. Melbourne's current program will also include exercises off the East Coast with the R.A.N'S L-H-D nuship Adelaide 01 as the L-H-D commences her sea trials.

The now 23 year old H.M.A.S. Melbourne FFG05, the third ship so named for the R.A.N., is expected to relieve H.M.A.S. Newcastle later this year as the next R.A.N. ship for deployment to operation Manitou in the Middle East region.

H.M.A.S. motto is:- "Vires Acquirit Eundo"

Which translates to: "She gathers strength as she goes".



HMAS MELBOURNE



NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA VICTORIA-TASMANIA DIVISION HONORARY MEMBERSHIP
PRESENTATION TO HMAS MELBOURNE



HMAS MELBOURNE BERTHING AT STATION PIER

NAVAL HISTORY

As we look back over the years the history books reveal the following naval events that have transpired during the month of July.

JULY 1925

Ninety years ago under the command of Admiral R.E. Coontz USN, a fleet of 56 ships arrived in Australia. As the US fleet neared Australia's East Coast they split into two groups, with the main group of 44 ships proceeding directly to Melbourne and the remaining 12 ships sailing to Sydney.

This event was commemorated in the year 2000, as the 75th anniversary of the event, and celebrated at a luncheon-reception which was hosted by the NLA Vic. Division for the Senior Officers of USS John Paul Jones, when the Arleigh Burke Class Destroyer visited Melbourne 14 years ago.

ED: This year 2015 will mark the 90th anniversary of the visit.

JULY 1911

On July 10th 1911 King George V gave his approval for the Naval Forces of Australia to use Royal Prefix, thus the Commonwealth Naval Forces became the Royal Australian Navy.

JULY 1942

On the 1st July 1942, a number of allied prisoners of war, including RANR Coastwatcher's, lost their lives when the Japanese Transport Vessel "Montevideo Maru" transporting the P.O.W.'s to Japan was torpedoed and sunk by the American Submarine USS Sturgeon off the Coast of Luzon in the Philippines.

JULY 1943

On the 10th July 1943, the allies landed in Sicily. This operation was codenamed Op "Husky. The following RAN Bathurst Class Minesweeper-Corvettes participated in this operation:-

HMA Ships Cairns, Cessnock, Gawler, Geraldton, Ipswich, Lismore, Maryborough and Wollongong.

NAVAL HISTORY C'TND

JULY 1943

It was 70 years ago during the last months of World War 2 at this time in 1945 that a combined force of United States Navy, together with Royal Australian Navy Ships bombarded and landed troops at Balikpapan on the island of Borneo between the 1st and 9th July. This was Australia's largest amphibious operation of WW2.

H.M.A.S. PIONEER, 100 YEARS ON

In keeping with the centenary of ANZAC theme and the commemoration of the role of the R.A.N.'s participation in World War One, it is interesting to reflect upon the action of one of the R.A.N.'s cruisers at this point in time 100 years ago.

The Third Class 2200 ton light cruiser H.M.A.S. Pioneer stationed in Sydney as the "P" Class cruiser H.M.S. Pioneer was transferred from the R.N. and by 1914 was operating as a unit of the R.A.N. commissioned H.M.A.S. Pioneer.

At the outbreak of World War One H.M.A.S. Pioneer, under the command of Cmdr Thomas Wyburn Biddlecombe, was deployed to Western Australia for patrol duties off the W.A. coast. Following this task, H.M.A.S. Pioneer was deployed to East Africa in January 1915 to join units of the Royal Navy.

H.M.A.S. Pioneer joined the British Task Force in pursuit of the 5400 ton German cruiser S.M.S. Konigsberg which had been eventually found and driven upstream of the Rufigi River.

Although "Konisberg" was virtually trapped in the Rufigi River by the British blockade, it was a lengthy and difficult operation for the British Force to get close enough to their quarry to render her out of action.

Following many attempt by the British, and with Pioneer engaging the German defences at the mouth of the Rufigi, an R.N. Monitor in July 1915 finally inflicted sufficient damage to the German cruiser to set it alight, which eventually led to her destruction, helped along by scuttling charges.

H.M.A.S. Pioneer remained off the East African Coast for a further 12 months, during which time her activities included several bombardments of Dar-Es-Salam, the capital of German East African Territory.

The main characteristics of H.M.A.S. Pioneer are as follows:

Displacement	2200 tons
Length	314 feet
Beam	37 feet
Draught	17 feet
Speed	16 knots
Fuel	Coal
Ship's Company	224
Armament	8 x 4 inch guns + 8 x 3 pounders 3 x machine guns + 2 torpedo tubes.

NAVAL HISTORY C'TND

During her East Africa deployment H.M.A.S. Pioneer made her presence well known, for this relatively small cruiser of pre Federation vintage had in fact made a place for herself in Australia's Naval history. She had in fact achieved a record by having been engaged in more actual fighting in World War One, and had fired more rounds in anger than any other ship of the Royal Australian Navy.



HMAS PIONEER OFF EAST AFRICA 1916

AS IT WAS

In addition to delving back into the annals of Naval History, it can also be of interest to peruse the more recent happenings that either caught the eye of, or involved the Navy League.

In this section of our Newsletter, we have a look back 10 years to July 2005 for events that transpired and note that it was around this time that:--

- (1) L-H-D Contract Discussions took place
- (2) U.S. Ship Visit Cancelled.

AS IT WAS C'TND

RAN AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS

A recent press article advises that the Managing Director of the French Ship Building Company "Armaris" paid a visit to Australia during late June 2005 to discuss the Australian Government's plans to acquire two new Navy Amphibious Ships.

Mr. Alain Blovis said that he believed the Australian Government's preference was to build the ships in Australia, however, he warned that it would take a year longer and as a consequence be a lot more expensive.

He said no Australian Shipyard was capable of assembling the 21,000 tonne Armaris design, which enters service with the French Navy this month.

The Spanish Company "Navantia" is also vying for the Australian Contract with a 26,000 tonne ship. Navantia also wants to build the ships in Spain and its F-100 Frigate is the early design favourite for the Navy's Air-Warfare Destroyer.

According to industry sources, the Amphibious ship contract has been squeezed from \$2 billion to about \$1.6 billion because of an early price below-out for the \$6 billion Air-Warfare Destroyers.

The defence capability plan says the first amphibious vessel should be delivered in 2010.

The destroyer contract was awarded by the Howard Government to the South Australian firm Australian Submarine Corp and is already running up to \$7 billion.

Australian Shipbuilders in the running for the amphibious contract included Austal in W.A or Korea, ADI in Sydney or Brisbane and Tenix in W.A or Melbourne.

The Armaris Mistral Class Amphibious ship comes in three variants capable of carrying 450 to 1000 people plus 60 vehicles including the Abrams main battle tank.

The 199M ship can travel at 18.8 knots and has a range of 11,000 nautical miles at 15 knots. They can carry four landing craft, 16 helicopters and are equipped with a 50 bed hospital.

US SHIP VISIT TO MELBOURNE CANCELLED

The recent exercise "Talisman Sabre" that took place off the Queensland coast, included units of the United States Navy and the Royal Australian Navy.

Ships of the USN involved were KITTYHAWK, COWPENS, FITZGERALD, JOHN PAUL JONES, VANDEGRIFT, BOXER, BLUE RIDGE and GUADALUPE.

The RAN ships were CANBERRA, WARRAMUNGA, BALLARAT, MANOORA, SUCCESS, WESTRALIA, FARNCOMB, HUON, HAWKESBURY, YARRA, NORMAN, BRUNEI, LABUAN, WEWAK, MELVILLE plus SHEPPARTON and BENALLA.

The Oliver Hazard Perry Class Frigate USS VANDEGRIFT, was scheduled to visit Melbourne following "Talisman Sabre" on 3rd July 2005, however, a last minute alteration to the schedule resulted in VANDEGRIFT instead visiting Brisbane with other USN Ships.

A visit to Hobart by one of the Arleigh Burke Class Destroyers was also rescheduled to Brisbane. The US Carrier KITTYHAWK and the command ship BLUE RIDGE visited Sydney.

AS IT WAS C'TND

Had the USS VANDEGRIFT paid a visit to Melbourne it no doubt would have rekindled memories for Navy League member Martin Clemens for the ship is named in honour of General Alexander Archer Vandegrift US Marine Corp. General Vandegrift, during the course of his active career, was involved in a number of engagements and actions including battles in the Solomon Islands during World War 2 and the landing of 7th August 1942 on Guadalcanal.

In early August 1942, Martin who was a Coast Watcher, watched from his Guadalcanal mountain hideout together with his band of native staff and police, he had no instructions except to survive and provide information of Japanese movements by his weakening radio whilst his patience and his supplies ran short. Martin made his way out of the jungle and joined Major General Vandegrift's 1st Marine Division on 15th August 1942.

Major General Vandegrift was most impressed by Martin's valuable service through Martin's thorough knowledge of Guadalcanal and he was quickly admitted to the General's "Inner Circle". Martin became an essential part of the US 1st Marine Division's "Brains Trust" that ran the ground war.

For this most valuable service on Guadalcanal, Martin who by December 1942, had been promoted to Major, was awarded the British Military Cross for heroism followed by the US Legion of Merit for his distinguished service.

H.M.A.S. TOBRUK L50 PAYS OFF

One of the R.A.N.'s longest serving ships, H.M.A.S. Tobruk L50, under the command of Cmdr Leif Maxfield, sailed into Sydney Harbour on Thursday 25th June 2015 flying her paying off pennant measuring one foot for every year of service plus 415 feet for the length of the ship. Tobruk was escorted to her berth at Garden Island by the Adelaide Class Frigates H.M.A.S. Melbourne and H.M.A.S. Darwin.

The modified Sir Bedivere Round Table Class H.M.A.S. Tobruk, a "heavy landing ship", will decommission at the end of July 2015 after 34 years of service to Australia. Tobruk was launched 1st March 1980 at Carringtons Slipway in N.S.W. and commissioned 23rd APRIL 1981. The R.A.N.'s new LHD'S "Canberra" and "Adelaide", with H.M.A.S. Choules, will now take over from Tobruk.

The ship has essentially been a multi-purpose troop and roll-on/roll-off heavy vehicle carrier. The design of the ship includes facilities for bow and stern loading, a drive through capacity and inter-deck transfers via ramps.

The British landing ships of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, of which Tobruk is a derivative, the round table design, were named after King Arthur's Knights; they saw service in the Falklands and Gulf Wars with Sir Galahad a loss in the Falklands War and Sir Tristan badly damaged.

In addition to time spent over the years in the Northern areas of Australia plus the Mediterranean, Middle East, Somalia, U.S. and Pacific, Tobruk has also supported humanitarian aid and disaster relief missions from East Timor to the Philippines. The most recent operation was "Pacific Assist 2015" following Tropical Cyclone "Pam" in Vanuatu earlier this year.

Some of Tobruk's many other major deployments were to Bougainville, Fiji, Solomon Islands and various other areas of the Pacific region; Tobruk engaged in operations which included Solace, Lagoon, Warden, Stabilize, Trek, Plumbob, Relex, Catalyst, Slipper, Astute and more.

The main characteristics of H.M.A.S. Tobruk are detailed in the following:-

AS IT WAS C'TND

Length	126 metres
Beam	18 metres
Displacement	5800 tonnes
Speed	18 knots
Crew	Up to 170
Troops	Up to 520
Armament	Mini typhoon guns and 50 cal 12.7 mm machine guns.

H.M.A.S. Tobruk is the second ship so named for the R.A.N. and it is of interest to note that almost 64 years ago the first H.M.A.S. Tobruk DD37, one of two R.A.N. Battle Class destroyers, was in action off the East Coast of Korea during the Korean War of 1950-1953. In 1951 H.M.A.S. Tobruk DD37 under the command of the late Cmdr Richard Peek destroyed an entire train transporting supplies to the enemy.

In later years Cmdr Peek was to become Vice Admiral Sir Richard Peek, K.B.E., C.B., D.C., Chief of Navy R.A.N. In his retirement Sir Richard again played a prominent role as a senior member of The Navy League of Australia's Federal Advisory Council; he passed away in 2010 at the age of 96.

The last visit to Melbourne by the current H.M.A.S. Tobruk L50 was in July 2012; prior to that period Tobruk visited Melbourne in November of 2008 during which time the League played host to her then commanding officer Cmdr Peter Thomson and Executive Officer Lcdr Tony Stringer. A luncheon presentation in their honour was held at Melbourne's Naval and Military Club, our last function at the Club prior to its closure.



HMAS TOBRUK L50



VICTORIA -TASMANIA DIVISION

Tasmania Established 1900, Victoria 15 October 1915

2015-2016 ANNUAL DUES

Please forward annual payment off **\$35** to Hon Secretary R Gill JP by **30 June** to ensure you continue receiving the Journal and the monthly email newsletter.

If you are not receiving the journal/newsletter that may indicate you have overlooked your payment for 2014-15. If so please be so kind as to send **\$70**.

Direct payment - by internet banking into our account , but please ensure your name is included

BSB 033 389 A/C No.: 107631 Westpac Bank

or POST to

P.O. Box 2340 Mount Waverley 3149

Hope you are enjoying Frank McCarthy's Monthly Email Newsletter and the Navy League's Quarterly journal "The Navy"

"Welcome luncheons" for visiting ships and "special events" are held depending on ship operations so please let Secretary Ray know you are interested in being notified of these events so we can update our records.

Monthly Newsletter has news and event items and is distributed by email. Those without personal email may have a family members or a friend to whom we can send it.

Please let us know that email address.

Ring the Secretary **9884 6237** if you and/or a friend would like to attend events or need advice.

Yours Aye!

CMDR *John M Wilkins* OAM RFD*

Past President / Hon Treasurer

03 9842 4256

Membership

Any person with an interest in maritime affairs, or who wishes to acquire an interest in, or knowledge of, maritime affairs and who wishes to support the objectives of the League, is invited to join.

OBJECTIVES

The principal objective of the Navy League of Australia is "The maintenance of the maritime well-being of the Nation" by:

- Keeping before the Australian people the fact that we are a maritime nation and that a strong Navy supported by maritime elements of the Air Force and Army and other Government Maritime agencies are indispensable elements of our national well-being and vital to the freedom of Australia.
- Promoting defence self-reliance by supporting maritime research, defence industry, Australian shipping, ship-building, port and transport infrastructure and off shore resource exploration and development.
- Promoting and encouraging the interest and training of youth in the sea.

ACTIVITIES

The Navy League of Australia works towards its objectives in a number of ways:

- By including in its membership leading representatives of the many elements which form the maritime community.
- Through soundly-based contributions by members to journals and newspapers, and other media comment.
- By publishing *The Navy*, a quarterly journal reporting on local and overseas maritime happenings, past, present, and projected.
- By organizing symposia, ship visits and various other functions of maritime interests throughout the years.
- By supporting Australian Navy Cadets, and assisting in the provision of training facilities.

Member participation is encouraged in all these activities.

POLICY

The policy of the League can be found at the back of *The Navy*.

Joining the League

To become a Member of The League, you do not need to have had any previous maritime experience. You merely need an interest in maritime affairs. Simply complete the Application Form below, and post it, together with your first annual subscription of \$35.00 (which includes the four quarterly editions of The Navy), to the Hon Secretary of the Division of the Navy League in the State in which you reside, the address of which are as follows:

New South Wales Division: GPO Box 1719, Sydney, NSW 2001.
Victorian Division: PO Box 2340, Mt Waverley, Vic 3149.
Queensland Division: GPO Box 1481, Brisbane, QLD 4001.
South Australian Division: PO Box 3008, Unley, SA 5061.
West Australian Division: 3 Prosser Way, Myaree, WA 6154.

If you live in Tasmania, please post the form to the Hon Secretary of the Victorian Division. If you live in the Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory, please post the form to the Hon Secretary of the New South Wales or South Australian Division respectively.

Subscriptions are due on 1 July in each year, and your membership will be current to 30 June immediately following the date on which you join the League, except that if your first subscription is received during the period 1 April to 30 June in any year, your initial membership will be extended to 30 June in the following year.

THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA		
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP		
To: The Hon. Secretary The Navy League of Australia		
_____ Division		
I wish to join the Navy League of Australia, the objectives of which I support, and I enclose a remittance for \$35.00 (including \$3.18 GST) being my first annual subscription to 30 June next.		
Name: [Mr] [Mrs] [Ms] [Rank] _____		
<small>PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY</small>		
Street _____		
Suburb _____	State _____	P/code _____
Phone _____	Mobile _____	
Email _____		
Signature _____		Date _____
<small>Subscriptions are due on 1 July in each year and your membership will be current to 30 June immediately following the date on which you join the League, except that if your first subscription is received during the period 1 April to 30 June in any year, your initial membership will be extended to 30 June in the following year.</small>		