

PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS – APRIL 2016

Greetings! As Anzac Day approaches we reflect on Anzac Days past, and on friends who have 'Passed over the Bar.'
Lest we Forget!

LCDR Kelly Haywood, Senior Officer Instructor at the Maritime Logistics School at our HMAS CERBERUS, gave us a snapshot of the intricate job done by the 'Pussers' of today when she spoke to us at our last meeting. Kelly has certainly had an interesting career to date and her 'Navy Stories' were listened to with a great deal of interest. Also, her abiding interest in creating awareness about suicide, depression and mental health, touched a chord in amongst her audience, to which a number responded.

Our celebration of Anzac Day begins the week before when we enjoy the film '*Gallipoli from above-the Untold Story*'. Bring a friend. It is indeed very interesting! *Our friend Captain Ian Pfennigwerth RAN Ret. has written a new book 'Bravo Zulu: Honours and Awards to Australian Naval People 1900-2014'. Volume one covers the years 1900 to 1974. How you can purchase Volume 1, and get a discount, is detailed elsewhere in this 'Dog'. Ian and his volunteer researchers have been working for 7 years on this project, and I await my copy with anticipation.*

From Naval Today March 16th and 23rd respectively:

Our first Aegis-equipped Hobart class Air Warfare destroyer, HMAS HOBART has begun integration and testing of the combat system. It is being facilitated by Lockheed Martin engineers and technicians. This system is fitted to more than 100 warships deployed world-wide and is state of the art, being capable of simultaneous operation against multi-mission threats: anti-air, anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare.



USS CHOSIN to undergo 'Cruiser Modernisation': Commissioned in 1991, this Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser will be modernised with the aim of extending her service life to 40 years. She is part of a program to modernise a select group of cruisers to upgrade shipboard combat systems to address current and future war fighting requirements.

Comment: As part of the Great White Fleet commemoration in 2008, Melbourne hosted the Arleigh Burke Air warfare Destroyer USS John S McCain, 'Big Bad John', and I met her CO, CMDR, later Captain, John S Banigan USN at a reception and I really enjoyed his company. Imagine my delight when CMDR

Banigan invited me on board his ship and personally gave me an extensive tour of his pride and joy, the USS John S McCain. The Arleigh Burke's are a very impressive war machine crammed full of incredible equipment, and I was certainly impressed. Subsequent visits over the years to USS SHOUP and USS LASSEN reinforced my conviction that this is a superb class of ship. The 'Burkes' are fitted with the Aegis combat system, as are our Hobart Class Air Warfare Destroyers, which makes our ships 'pretty potent indeed!' John Banigan went on to be Captain of the USS LAKE ERIE, retiring from the USN in April 2015. A thoroughly 'Good Bloke' and fun to be with!

Those of you who attended the splendid International Fleet review in Sydney in 2013 will have seen and or visited the USS CHOSIN. It is good that she is to be brought up to date and have her service life extended to 40 years.

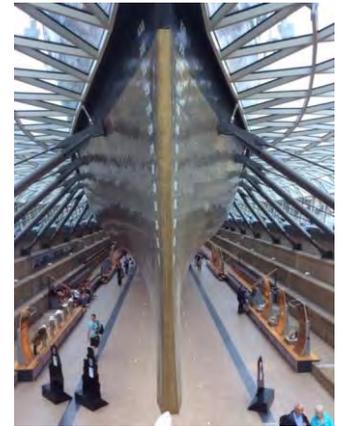


REX'S ODYSSEY-PART 5 (Greenwich August 2015)



A beautiful summer day in London on the Thames in August is a delight, but in my case marred somewhat by the school holiday crowds and the resultant queues at the wharfs. This meant a necessity to travel by train to Greenwich and to be returning by boat. The refurbished Cutty Sark was my first port of call. I recall our general dismay when we heard about the disastrous fire on the morning of 21st May 2007. The ship had been closed and partly dismantled for conservation work. Damage was extensive, with most of the wooden structure in the centre of the hull having been lost. The bow section looked to be relatively unscathed and the stern had survived without major damage. The decks were unsalvageable but around 50% of the planking, and the deck furniture and masts had been removed prior to the fire.

Cutty Sark was restored for a cost of around 46 million pounds, and reopened to the public on Anzac day 2012. Public entry to the ship via a new opening cut through the hull below the waterline in the ships starboard quarter, which leads to the lower hold. A new steelwork lower deck of contemporary design, incorporating an amphitheatre feature, was installed in the main hold while a new glass encased lift is also installed within the ship and terminates in a new steel and glass housing structure on the weather deck. A second new steel and glass box has been installed above the fore hold to enclose a new staircase. The hull is elevated by 3 metres above the dry dock floor and as the photo shows it is an excellent display area, cafe etc. During my trip last year it became obvious to me that museums both in the UK and Europe are becoming far more 'Kid' friendly. A good move!



Cutty Sark was built on the Clyde, and she was launched on November 22nd 1869. Originally a 'Tea Clipper' displacing 2100 tons with a 20' draught. Her maximum speed achieved was 17.5 knots and 364 nautical miles was her greatest recorded distance in 24 hours, with her averaging 15 knots. In December 1883, she departed Newcastle NSW with 4,289 bales of wool, arriving in London in 83 days. This was 25 days faster than her nearest rival that year and heralded a new career taking Australian wool to Britain in time for the January wool sales. Cutty Sark was the fastest ship in the wool trade for 10 years until steam ships began to dominate the trade. Now a museum ship in Greenwich, this beautiful vessel is a 'must' to visit whilst in the UK. *My thanks to Wikipedia for some of the photos and refreshing my memory of some of detail of the fire, statistics etc.*



A day in Greenwich would not be complete without a visit to the National Maritime Museum. I photographed some of the treasures for you. Enjoy!

Of particular interest is the Nelson collection which includes his uniform coat he was wearing during the battle of Trafalgar, and if you look on his left hand shoulder, you'll see the bullet hole that caused the damage. It is just below his epaulet. There are fantastic ship models, coupled with magnificent paintings for you to enjoy! Indeed the Old Naval college Painted Hall and the Chapel are just so beautiful, they just take your breath away.

YOURS AYE!!

REX WILLIAMS