



Naval Historical Society
of Australia

Victorian Chapter

President's Musings – June 2018

Our 'Meet and Greet' Meeting for our new SNO, Commodore Greg Yorke, CSC RANR, last month, was most informative and interesting. We look forward to assisting where ever possible his quest to further promote the profile of 'Navy' in Victoria. The Victorian population at large could not fail to be impressed by the 1,000 strong contingent of the RAN marching through the heart of Melbourne on ANZAC Day. They made us very proud, and it was a great start to promoting Navy as well! Congratulations to Commodore Yorke, Captain Tim Standen CSC RAN and all the matelots who took part. 'Bravo Zulu!'

In May, after attending the Graduation of Emms Division from the Recruit School at HMAS CERBERUS I attended the Opening of the Australia Room at the CERBERUS Museum in company with a number of WWII Veterans and members of the Navy family, particularly those with an association to HMAS AUSTRALIA II. Frank is doing an illustrated article in this THD on this splendid addition to the attractions on offer at the Museum. Marty Grogan and his team have excelled themselves! Attending both functions was a very pleasant experience. To be in company with the recruits and their families on this, their special day was a privilege, as indeed was being in company with our veterans was later that day!

At our meeting on June 25th, we will enjoy a video which covers WWI from an American Perspective entitled 'Changing Tide'. It has some excellent footage of Jutland and the U boat campaign. Also featured is the German Spring Offensive of 1918 and the conflict between Austria and Italy in 1917.

At our July 23rd meeting we will treat you to a video compiled by our own RAN Video Unit at Garden Island, located just near the boat-shed, our National headquarters. We screened it some years ago and it is definitely worth re screening, particularly on the excellent equipment we have at our disposal now. Both Frank Cronin and I have addressed various societies wishing to know more about Naval History and our Society. We have used this video as the basis for our talk and it has been very well received! Entitled 'The History of the Royal Australian Navy, Volume One, episode one traces the genesis of the RAN from first European exploration through to the early 20th century, as the Colonies evolve towards a collective national identity, forming Navies of their own, of various sizes, whilst under the overall protection of the Royal Navy. Episode two covers from when war was declared in August 1914 and our fledgling RAN experienced its

baptism of fire. Operating in the North Sea, Mediterranean, Pacific, the Far East and Indian Oceans, Australian ships and men fight alongside their Allied counterparts, recording both thrilling victories and tragic losses. In the crucible of total and catastrophic war, Australian sailors, like the ANZAC's ashore, forge what will become a unique and national consciousness. The Navy video Unit has done an excellent job of episodes one and two, and we look forward with eager anticipation to Volume Two of the History of the Royal Australian Navy. Bravo Zulu Video Unit!

We have some excellent Speakers lined up in the months ahead! In August we will have Captain Sheldon Williams. I got to know Sheldon well when he was SNO and CO of Cerberus, 2008/09, and it was a real pleasure to catch up with him at our last meeting. Sheldon has



INS Sahyadri in Sydney for the 2013 International Fleet Review

retired from the RAN and joined the Reserve. Realising that as his last posting was to India as Australia's Naval Attache, he would have worked very closely with the Indian Navy, it sparked my interest! Having visited their new Frigate INS Sahyadri whilst she was in Sydney for the International Fleet Review in 2013, and being duly impressed, I was anxious for us to learn more about this emerging Naval power in our region. **Sheldon happily agreed to share his experiences in India with us on Monday August 27th. Put it in your diary now!**

Captain Andrew Mackinnon CSC RAN (Retd) is currently a Naval Infrastructure Consultant, and we are very glad to welcome him and his wife, Carol to our midst. Andrew joined the RANC in 1963 and graduated in 1966. An extremely interesting and varied career followed leading to his promotion to Captain in 1990. From mid 1991-94 he served with the Department of Defence in Canberra as Director, South West Pacific Branch, International Policy Division. Then followed Command of HMAS COONAWARRA in Darwin; Australian Defence Advisor in Wellington NZ; 18 months as Director UN Peace Operations and Arms control in the Strategy and International Policy Division in Canberra. **Anxious to find out more of Andrew's career, I was delighted that he accepted our invitation to speak to us on Monday September 24th.**

On June 9th we received some exciting news!! The Governor General has approved the Award of a unit Citation for Gallantry to the RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam(RANHFV) for acts of extraordinary gallantry in action in South Vietnam from October 1967 to June 1971.

CMDR Max Speedy DSC RAN (Retd) was posted in 1968 as 2IC of RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam in the US Army's 135th Assault Helicopter Company, and Max has certainly got a great story to tell us! We are delighted to advise that Max has accepted our invitation to be our Speaker at our 'End of Year Celebration' in November. More information to follow.

There are still 'Three Headed Dog' subscriptions for year 2017/18 outstanding and we would appreciate those who haven't actually got round to paying, getting up to date. Please pay the subs to Rodney Phillips who will issue receipts on behalf of our Treasurer, Marty Grogan, who is currently in Europe. Rodney's contact details are as listed in this THD. With the new financial year there are significant changes re our THD envisaged. My lips are sealed, however we will have information at a later date. It's quite exciting, actually!

L/Stoker Jim Schofield's Odyssey - Excerpts from his Diaries 1940/41 which I am researching from the collection at the Museum of HMAS CERBERUS -will need to be put on hold for this month. My apologies!

Yours Aye!

Rex Williams.