

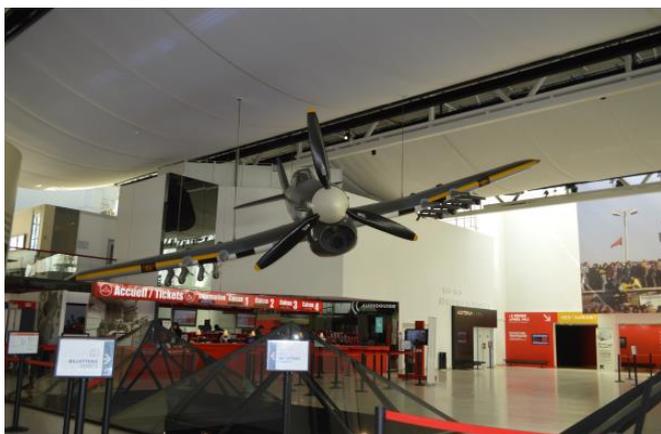
## President's Musings – June 2019

We enjoyed having Captain Mike Oborn with us last meeting and found his address most interesting. This month we will enjoy a 'Tale from the Museum', complete with the artefact, which is the 'Nestor Bell'. The former Manager of the Museum at HMAS Cerberus, our Marty Grogan, will recount HMS/HMAS *Nestor's* brief but valiant career and of her sinking, June 16 1942. Her Battle Honours were: *Bismark* 1941 – Atlantic 1942 – Malta Convoys 1941–42 and Indian Ocean 1942.

*Our National President, Captain David Michael RAN Rtd., is visiting us at our meeting on July 22nd. Further detail TBA next month. Please mark the date in your diaries.*

In my Musings last month I recounted the story of the German Cruiser *Karlsruhe* and of her visit to Brisbane 18-25th of January 1934, whilst on a world cruise. Shortly after publication I received an email from our colleague Ian Pfenningwerth to advise me that his father and grandfather had visited the ship whilst she was in Brisbane in order to meet Ian's cousin, Bernd Klug, who was serving in her as a Midshipman. *I quote from Ian's Email: "Bernd went on to an interesting career in Schnellbooten – 'E-boats', during the war and was involved in several of the famous (or notorious) actions, including the slaughter of the Allied LST's of Slapton Sands. He finished the war a Lieutenant Commander with the Iron Cross with Oak Leaf Clusters – almost a VC. He was retained in the Bundesmarine after the war, was Naval Attache in Paris and finished his career as Commandant of the Naval Academy in Flensburg as Rear-Admiral. I never met him and he had no children, but would have liked to ask a few questions!" End of quote. (In order to provide us with a piece for a future THD on Bernd, Ian has promised to research his family archives for more information. Watch this space!)*

My first experience of viewing a film in 3D was memorable, as it was the IMAX presentation of 'D-Day 3D: Normandy 1944'. Having visited the Normandy Beaches myself in September 2015, made it even more special. Try not to miss the opportunity. Check out the IMAX Melbourne website! (I note that there is only one screening of 'Dunkirk' in the IMAX format on June 28. I was very moved when I viewed the film Dunkirk previously; no doubt it will be even more special in 3D.)



My crossing the Channel from Portsmouth bound for Caen in September 2016 was by ferry, and my thoughts were of the events which took place just 72 years previously. Upon arrival, I went to the Memorial de Caen Museum which like much of Caen is relatively new, as much of the old Caen was destroyed in the war. The museum is well worth a visit and covers WWII and the cold war until the fall of the Berlin wall.

Using Caen as my base I visited Utah, Omaha, Gold Juno and Sword beaches and also Point du Hoc, where the US Rangers, 225 strong, scaled the cliffs on June 6 and by the time their relief force arrived on June 8 only 90 men were still standing. Cafe Gondree at the site of the Pegasus Bridge has interesting artefacts on display. The original bridge has been replaced but you can see where Major



Howard's three gliders crash landed. The Paras secured the bridge, and they entered the cafe at 0620 on June 6 there-by making it the first building liberated! The owners were members of the resistance and very glad to see them! Frank is featuring in some of my photos. Enjoy!

*One of our own, CMDR Jim Speed DSC RAN Rtd. relates his experiences as a nineteen and a half year old Sub Lieutenant RNVR, Beach Commando, on Sword Beach Red on June 6 1944, in a podcast available to you on the Navy Victoria Network Web site. Jim's beach, Sword Red was the closest one to the river Orne. The Commando's job was to land on the beach prior to the arrival of the landing craft containing the troops and to assist the landing craft staying 'bows on the beach', then, when they were unloaded, to help get them off. Jim was able to watch the first wave of the landing come into the beach whilst sitting in the sand, thus observing history being made whilst he was under fire! On Jim's first day, when he wasn't assisting landing craft arrive safely, he was involved in the removal of the obstacles and marking where sunken landing craft were. The first night and the two nights following, they had to man the perimeter trenches in readiness for the expected counter attack. The reality was that there were still a lot of the enemy not far away!*



To hear Jim's address go to <http://navyvic.net/associations/nhs/recordings.html>, and scroll down to the item listed for 25 August 2014. You will be enthralled for the next hour and eight minutes as you listen to Jim tell his story. Check out the website whilst you are there. It is really worthwhile exploring. <http://navyvic.net>

Yours Aye!

*Rex Williams*