

## PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS – May 2017

Greetings! Attendances were down for our April meeting, but those able to be present enjoyed an excellent film of the Gallipoli campaign played on really fabulous facilities provided to us in the Waverley RSL Sunset room. We enjoyed an excellent meal in the Warramunga restaurant before the film and it was a good night. One thing your President found was that by having our meeting so close to ANZAC day, resulted in many of us not able to make it. Lesson learnt!

***You won't want to miss our May and June meetings! Our Jan Roberts Billett, fresh from her visit to Canberra to attend the unveiling of a plaque honouring our very brave Yachties, is speaking to us on May 22nd. Jan will tell us of their exploits in WWII in the European theatre. Yachties were awarded 4 George Crosses, 19 George Medals, 31 DSC's and 1 DSM. She will tell you of the exploits of those decorated, and also of their colleagues, brave men all! June is looking pretty good too! We will hear 'Round the World Yachtsman' and RANR sailor Doug Jenkin tell us of his 'adventures' aboard HMAS Culgoa, as a National Serviceman in 1952. After you hear Doug's gripping account of the tremendous storm event Culgoa and her crew endured, you will ponder how 'on earth (sea) the ship didn't sink'!!!!. Doug backs up his account of his horrific experiences by quoting extracts from the ships log, and Captain's report for the month of April 1952.***

There is a article you can source on the web, entitled : Semaphore: Operations Hurricane and Mosaic, by Peter Djokovic, which concerns Doug's ship the Anti Aircraft Frigate HMAS Culgoa, that same year 1952. HMAS Culgoa, again with National Servicemen aboard, acted as the weather ship for the first British nuclear test, Operation HURRICANE. Semaphore is an RAN publication containing many articles of interest. You can source this particular story at : <http://www.navy.gov.au/media-room/publications/semaphore-operations-hurricane-and-mosaic>

Whilst researching material for a piece on the Battle of the Coral Sea, I went to our NHS of A website and decided to access articles on the subject which have previously been printed in our excellent publication the 'Review'. Were you aware that there are currently 1200 articles from the Review available to you from our archives? All you do is click on 'Reading' to gain access to a treasure trove of great stories! Seeing no point in 're-inventing the wheel' we include as an attachment to my Musings, a splendid article 'The Battle of the Coral Sea-May 4-8,1942 ' which was authored by the Australian-American Association, and published in the August 1972 edition of the Naval Historical Naval Review.

*I feel that it is notable that the Commanding Officer of the Australian -US support force, Task Force 44 at the Battle of the Coral Sea was an Australian. Vice Admiral, (then Rear Admiral) Sir John Gregory Crace ,KBE, CB. Jack Crace was born in NSW in 1887. He completed his education in England and joined the RN. He served in HMAS Australia I during WWI, and was assigned command of the Australian Squadron in September 1939. For more information please consult his entry in the 'Australian Dictionary of Biography'.*

**YOURS AYE!!**

**REX WILLIAMS**

<https://www.navyhistory.org.au/the-battle-of-the-coral-sea-may-4-81942/>