

The Navy League of Australia - Victoria Division

NEWSLETTER



AUGUST 2013

Volume2 No:8

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

is the principal objective of the Navy League of Australia

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RANR RFD RET'D

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CMDR John Wilkins OAM RFD
RANR

NAVAL HISTORY

Listed in the following are some of the memorable events in naval history that has transpired during the month of August:-

AUGUST 1900

It was in August 1900 that her Majesty's South Australian Cruiser "Protector" sailed for China to engage in the Boxer Rebellion.

AUGUST 1908

The United States Great White Fleet visited Australia during their World cruise, arriving in Melbourne on the 29th of the month.

AUGUST 1914

At the outbreak of World War One the Defence Minister, Senator Millen, announced in Melbourne on Sunday 9th August 1914 that approval had been given for a Military force being formed to be designated as the "Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force". The force was raised in record time and on 19th August 1914, it sailed from Sydney Harbour for active service in German New Guinea.

The Navy League member the late CMDR. Stan Veale, CMG**, RANR was a member of the force in which he served as a midshipman. CMDR Veale claimed to have been one of the first 200 Australians to go into action in World War One.

AUGUST 1941

HMAS CASTLEMAINE, the last of the 60 Australian built Bathurst Class minesweeper – Corvettes still afloat, was launched by Dame Pattie Menzies at Williamstown Victoria on 7th August 1941.

"Castlemaine" has therefore been afloat for 72 years and is moored not far from her original launching place, after having steamed some 117,000 miles during WW2 service.

I have no doubt that the reason Ex HMAS CASTLEMAINE is still afloat today, is due in no small way to the sterling efforts of Peter Williams and his loyal small band of volunteer helpers.

AUGUST 1942

It was the 9th August 1942 that HMAS CANBERRA was lost during the battle of Savo Island, the result of a surprise Japanese attack.

Eighty three of “Canberra’s” complement were lost during the action including her Commanding Officer Captain F.E. Getting.

The United States Navy also suffered heavy losses of men and ships in this action including the cruisers “Quincy” “Astoria” and “Vincennes” with the loss of 939 lives.

AUGUST 1943

On the night of 1st August 1943, a Japanese destroyer group of the “Tokyo Express” successfully ran supplies through to Villa in the Pacific despite attempts by United States PT. Boats to frustrate the effort. As the enemy ships retired on the fulfillment of their mission, the Japanese Destroyer “Amagiri” rammed and sank PT109 commanded by Lieutenant Kennedy, USNR.

Kennedy and the surviving 10 members of his crew – two were lost – reached the shore of a small island east of Gizo. From there LEUT Kennedy sent a message, scratched on a coconut shell, by friendly natives to Wana Wana Island, where Coastwatcher LEUT Evans organized the rescue of LEUT Kennedy who eventually arrived hidden under ferns in the bottom of a native canoe. Arrangements were then made for the rescue of the remainder of PT109’S crew from their island hiding place by another P.T. Boat.

And so it was that a future President of the United States of America John F. Kennedy was saved by an Australian Coastwatcher, LEUT Reg Evans RANVR.

AUGUST 1945

The Japanese Government surrendered unconditionally, thus ending World War Two.

Admiral William F. “Bull” Halsey of the U.S. Third Fleet, plus units of the British Pacific Fleet formed part of various task forces in Japanese waters at that time including British and American Task Force 37 and Task Force 38 under the commands of Admiral Sir Bernard Rawlings and US Vice Admiral John S. McCain.

United States leaders initially considered that the landing and occupation force planned for Japan was to be essentially American however, the British Pacific Fleet provided a landing force for Yokosuka and the Royal Navy landing battalion was placed under the command of the RAN’S Captain H.J. Buchanan of the Seventh Flotilla in HMAS NAPIER, which was a fine tribute to this distinguished Australian Officer.

The Japanese seaport of Yokosuka remains to this day a strategic naval base with units of the US. Navy forward deployed and home based at Yokosuka.

These ships include the aircraft carrier ‘USS GEORGE WASHINGTON’, cruisers, the command ship “USS BLUE RIDGE” and the Arleigh Burke Class Destroyers of destroyer squadron 15.

**MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE NAVY LEAGUE – RE VISITING SHIPS
LUNCHEONS**

Due to a change in RAN operational requirements, we are unable to conduct a welcome luncheon for the Senior Officers of HMAS DARWIN.

The Navy Leagues special events coordinator, CMDR John Wilkins OAM RFD., however, is now looking at a possible alternative arrangement to replace the HMAS DARWIN event in August 2013. We will keep you posted on this event.

We are also pleased to advise that the “Tall Ships” welcome luncheon has now been arranged and will take place on Wednesday 11th September 2013 at the

“Royal Yacht Club of Victoria”
120 Nelson Place Williamstown
1230H for 13000H

Further details are available from CMDR John Wilkins OAM RFD by phoning 9842 4256 or email:- jmwilkins34@netspace.net.au

LOOKING FOR AUSTRALIAN ARMY NURSE CAP, FUR FELT, GREY

An urgent request from our member the National Vietnam Veterans Museum, for anyone who might be able to provide a Australian Army Nursing Corps Cap, fur felt, grey, with black band and Nursing Corps badge as worn in the picture, for an important remembrance exhibit in the Museum. The Museum would be pleased to have a cap donated – or loaned on short term loan until a replacement can be found - for this permanent display remembering Captain Barbara Black, the 521st and only woman soldier to die as a result of Vietnam service.



If anyone can help, please contact me ASAP.



MILITARY HISTORY AND
HERITAGE VICTORIA INC.

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NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM

Notice is hereby given that the
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
of
THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA – VICTORIA DIVISION
will be held at the Box Hill RSL Nelson Road Box Hill Victoria
On Thursday 19th September 2013 at 7:00PM

REMINDER

VICTORIA DIVISION

2013-2014 ANNUAL DUES

This time of the year has rolled around again and it would be helpful if you could send your annual payment off, **\$35** to Hon Secretary R Gill JP as soon as possible.

P.O. Box 2340 Mount Waverley 3149

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

If you are interested in joining us for "Welcome luncheons" and "special events" let us know when you send your payment and we will update our records.

These events will be announced in the Monthly Newsletter and you should ring the Secretary **9884 6237** if you or a friend would like to attend.

Yours Aye!

CMDR John M Wilkins OAM RFD*Past President / Hon Treasurer,
9842 4256

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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.
Tasmanian Division: 40 Fleetwood Drive, Speyton, TAS 7310.
West Australian Division: 3 Prosser Way, Myaree, WA 6154.

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>	

Correspondence:- All articles for publication in the Navy League of Australia (Vic.Div.) Newsletter, should be addressed to the Editor, Frank McCarthy, email:- (alistle@bigpond.com). All other correspondence should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Navy League of Australia (Vic.Div.) P.O.Box 2340, Mount Waverley, Victoria 3149: (raydotgill@optusnet.com.au).

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