



Official Newsletter of the Navy Victoria Network

BROADSIDE

<https://navyvic.net/>

April 2025 -- Volume 15 Edition 4

Editorial



Guest editor:

This month's editorial has been provided by CMDR Doug Stevens RAN Rtd.

The ex-Navy Community in Victoria

The Victorian ex-Navy community is particularly well-supported by three organisations which are not present in any other State or Territory. They are the Navy Victoria Network (NVN), the Naval Commemoration Committee of Victoria (NCCV) and the Melbourne Naval Committee (MNC). The MNC is a low-profile registered charity which supports the other two organisations, as well as many other ex-Navy related worthwhile causes in Victoria.

The Navy Victoria Network



NVN Team: David Garnock, Bob Richards, Cameron Eastman, Terry Makings, Marty Grogan, Laurie Pegler & Paul Cottier.

The NVN was established in 2011, and its mission today generally remains to inform the Victorian ex-Navy community of all Navy related news. Its comprehensive 'one-stop-shop' website – <https://navyvic.net> – managed by Laurie Pegler, is its primary communications medium. It is supplemented by the monthly NVN newsletter 'Broadside'. Editorial responsibility for each edition of

Join NOW
Membership is FREE



Scan the code
or

[Click here to go to
the Registration page](#)

Events Calendar

(see [Calendar](#) for full details)

...

NOTE:



**For information on all
Shrine ceremonies:**

Phone: 03 9661 8100 or,

Email: ceremonies@shrine.org.au

02 May – 12:30 – HMAS

Castlemaine Service – Shrine –
Sanctuary

04 May – 11:30 – Battle of the Coral
Sea Commemoration – Shrine –
WW2 Forecourt

08 May – 11:00 – 80th anniversary
of Victory in Europe Day – Shrine –
WW2 Forecourt

21 May – 14:00 & 19:00 –
Soundwaves Concert – HMAS
Cerberus cinema complex

24 May – 11:30 – Battle of Crete &
Greek commemoration – Shrine –
WW2 Forecourt

26 May – 19:00 – NHSA Meeting –
Waverley RSL

Broadside rotates amongst its volunteer editorial board – pictured above.

- 👤 Bob Richards – Convenor
- 👤 David Garnock – Pres. MNC
- 👤 Terry Makings – Chair NCCV
- 👤 Laurie Pegler – Webmaster and key researcher
- 👤 Marty Grogan – ex-WOWOWTR and member of multiple ex-Navy association committees
- 👤 Paul Cottier – retired and undertaking Reserve service
- 👤 Cameron Eastman - undertaking Reserve service

Naval Commemoration Committee of Victoria



The Patron of the NCCV is Commodore Jim Dixon AM MBE RAN Retd. He succeeded Captain Benson CBE OstJ RD and Bar RANR who had been the Patron for the preceding two decades. The principal officers of the NCCV Committee currently are shown above, they are L-R:

- Marty Grogan OAM, HMAS *Sydney* Association
- Pete Johnston OAM, HMAS *Perth* Association
- Jan Gallagher, WRANS
- Terry Makings AM, Scrap Iron Flotilla
- Chris Banfield (not shown, recently retired), Scrap Iron Flotilla.

The NCCV was formed in 1965. Most of its commemorative service activities today occur at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance (the Shrine). These commemorative services have steadily increased as individual Navy Ship Associations have, one-by-one, wound up their affairs. Core NCCV commemorative services relate to:

- 🚢 the Scrap Iron Flotilla (*Voyager, Vampire & Waterhen*)
- 🚢 Armed Merchant Cruisers (*Manoora, Westralia, Kanimbla & Assault*)
- 🚢 Corvettes (*Lismore, Castlemaine & Armidale*)
- 🚢 Minesweepers (*Goorangi* – at Queenscliff).

31 May – 11:00 – Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service – Shrine – Sanctuary

06 Jun – 11:00 – Normandy Veterans Association, D Day, Shrine – WW2 Forecourt

• • •

Latest Videos, Podcasts and News Headlines

Keep up to date on all the news by visiting our website:

<https://navyvic.net>

• • •

VIDEOS.....

- *Exercise Bersama Shield 2025 concludes*
- *Talisman Sabre 2025 is coming from 13 July – 04 August 2025*
- *Chief of the Defence Force Admiral David Johnston Anzac Day 2025*
- *Exercise Bersama Shield*
- *Anzac Day preparation*
- *Young Endeavour sets sail around Australia*
- *Ground Satellite Quantum Link*

• • •

NEWS shorts.....

A new fleet of tug boats ordered for the Royal Australian Navy by the Defence Department was secretly built at a Chinese shipyard under a \$28 million contract awarded last year to a Dutch company.

Trading the desert for the ocean, Able Seaman Mitchell Rigney reflects on family, country and Anzac Day with Australia's Federation Guard – the ceremonial face of the ADF. For Able Seaman Rigney, a proud Aboriginal man from the Ngarrindjeri clan, supporting Anzac Day in France is more than ceremonial, it is special; a tribute to his family. "My family's story is entwined into this country's history," Able Seaman Rigney said. "There were many people from my

Several other Associations support the NCCV, but their involvement is usually confined to their own individual commemorative service. The NCCV team additionally involve themselves in provision of military tributes at funerals and formation of the ex-Navy component at the Melbourne City Anzac Day March.

History: The inaugural Chairman of the NCCV was Rear Admiral Lockwood RAN, see biography on the [Sea Power Centre](#) website.

The stimulus for creation of the NCCV (anecdotally) was the passing of Royal Navy Admiral of the Fleet Sir John Henry Dacres Cunningham GCB, MVO, DL RN (13 April 1885 – 13 December 1962). Admiral Cunningham was well known and respected by local Navy Veterans who served in the Mediterranean in particular, during WWII.

Original membership of NCCV comprised over thirty ship associations, predominantly comprising WWII Veterans. Sadly, as the original veterans have 'crossed-the-bar', there has been no one prepared to continue their roles. Few of the original associations exist today, but some families of the original veterans keep their memory alive by marching behind associated banners at the Melbourne Anzac Day March. The NCCV continues to honour the contribution that those ships and their crews made to Australia and the World War 2 outcome.

From the mid-1960s through to the early 1980s the NCCV was a primary participant in the organisation of Victoria's Navy Week activities. During that period there were several events arranged between Navy Day (4th October) and Trafalgar Day (21st October). Those with the highest profile were the Williamstown Naval Dockyard open day, HMAS *Cerberus* open day, and the Seafarers Church Service at St. Paul's Cathedral. These and other events were focused on promoting Navy within the Victorian community. When Williamstown Dockyard was sold by the Federal Government to commercial interests however, support for Navy week weakened.

From around 2010 NCCV, working closely with the Senior Naval Officer Victoria, endeavoured to resurrect Navy Week. The Seafarers Church Service was identified as one bookend activity for Navy Week, with Open Day at HMAS *Cerberus* being the other potential bookend event. As Open Day at HMAS *Cerberus* only occurred bi-annually, NCCV created instead an alternate biannual Navy Week Seminar. Prominent guest speakers at this seminar included Professor Admiral Chris Barrie AC RAN Rtd, RADM Goldrick AO

clan who fought in France during the war – 21 family members to be exact.

Australia handed over command of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) task force responsible for maritime security in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden to the Egyptian Navy on April 9.

Deployed on Anzac Day in the Middle East region, Leading Seaman Phillip Lofthouse will honour his grandfather's resilience as a World War 2 prisoner of war by standing silent in the catafalque party at the dawn service in Abu Dhabi.

'Woody', to his mates is a Larrikin, but on April 25 he will be stepping into a very important role, viewed live by millions of people. On Anzac Day, Leading Seaman Benjamin Woodlock will assume the distinguished position of Commander of Australia's Federation Guard Catafalque Party during the 110th anniversary dawn service at Gallipoli.

As pressure rises on the U.S. Navy to boost its shipbuilding capacity, the Pentagon has released a call for a new type of undersea vessel called the Combat Autonomous Maritime Platform, or CAMP, an unmanned system built "to maximize operational effectiveness in contested environments," according to the solicitation released by the Defense Innovation Unit.

Navy Secretary John Phelan said he's rescinding a Navy plan focused on combating climate change established by the Biden administration. "Today, I'm focusing on warfighters first and I'm rescinding the Biden administration's climate action program," he said in a video posted to X on Tuesday. "Our focus needs

CSC RAN and VADM Barrett AO CSC RAN Rtd. Unfortunately, the Covid pandemic brought these initiatives to an end.

Melbourne Naval Committee



The MNC is a small, registered charity which, within the limits of its income from investments, provides financial support to Victorian-based serving and ex-Navy personnel, Navy Ship, Branch and other Associations.

The committee which manages the MNC comprises:

- President: CAPT David Garnock CSC RAN Rtd
- Vice President: Mr. Brent Stafford
- Honorary Treasurer: CDRE Bob Richards RAN Rtd
- Honorary Secretary: CAPT Andrew Mackinnon CSC RAN Rtd

General Committee members:

- CO HMAS Cerberus: CAPT Ben Favelle CSC RAN
- PO Alison Graham RAN
- CMDR Mick Murray RAN
- Ms. Jenny Mc Gowan
- CMDR Helen Ward RAN
- LCDR 'Chuck' Connors OAM RAN



L-R: Andrew Mackinnon, Mick Murray, Alison Graham, CAPT Ben Favelle (video screen), Brent Stafford, Helen Ward, Bob Richards, Jenny McGowan, David Garnock, Chuck Connors.

The MNC:

- provides a central meeting place for men and women who have served in the RAN, RN or an allied Navy to perpetuate a spirit of comradeship and mutual assistance

to be on lethality and our warfighters."

Artificial intelligence is poised to significantly transform the Indo-Pacific maritime security landscape. It offers unprecedented situational awareness, decision-making speed and operational flexibility. But without clear rules, shared norms and mechanisms for risk reduction, AI could act as a destabilising force—particularly in contested waters where tensions are already high.

HMAS Hobart has returned to its home port of Sydney following a busy three-month deployment. The guided missile destroyer and its crew sailed more than 21,780 nautical miles across the Indo-Pacific, representing Australia and contributing to regional security.

Britain once risked a reputation as the weak link in the trilateral AUKUS partnership. But now the appointment of an empowered senior official to drive the project forward and a new burst of British parliamentary engagement reveal an ambitious new posture. This demonstration of seriousness and dynamism strengthens London's legitimacy to secure a new era for AUKUS during the administration of US President Donald Trump.

The first eight enlisted sailors and five additional officers from the Royal Australian Navy graduated from the U.S. Navy's Nuclear Power Training Unit (NPTU) Charleston as part of the Australia, United Kingdom, United States (AUKUS) trilateral security partnership. The curriculum encompassed a wide range of critical subjects, including mathematics, nuclear physics, reactor principles, and nuclear reactor technology.

- arranges, facilitates or promotes recreation, amusement and education for the men and women who are serving or have served in the Navy
- supports other groups and organisations in Victoria that provide for the wellbeing of currently serving and ex-Navy members.

Its history dates to 1945 when several senior members of the then Ex-Navalmen's Association of Australia – Melbourne, approached the then Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Sir Thomas Nettlefold, for permission to hold fund raising activities in the streets of the City of Melbourne. At that time, they were attempting to raise funds to establish a central meeting place for Navy personnel who had served and were serving in His Majesty's Navies.

Approval was granted by the Melbourne City Council, and the fund was named 'The Jack's Day Appeal'. Following the successful fund-raising activities, a committee was formed to deal with the funds raised and to act as Trustees. This committee was constituted as the Melbourne Naval Centre.

In 1947, the Melbourne Naval Centre used the funds collected to purchase property situated at 381/5 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, known as 'Tavistock House'.

This building provided meeting rooms, offices (etc.) for ex-naval organisations. At the same time the Melbourne Naval Centre, in agreement with the Trustees of the Exhibition Building, established the White Ensign Club in the then northern annex of the Exhibition Building.

The White Ensign Club tended the needs of the serving sailor in that it provided accommodation, meals and recreation for sailors ashore or on recreational leave in Melbourne, particularly trainees from HMAS *Cerberus* on weekend leave.



In approximately 1970, the recruitment intake and the policy of recruitment of naval personnel in Victoria was changed. This fact, coupled with other matters, made it necessary for the Melbourne Naval Centre to close down the White Ensign Club. The number of naval personnel and visiting ships in Melbourne were insufficient for the facilities of the White Ensign Club to remain viable.

On April 18, 2025, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) released an image of its state-of-the-art railgun currently undergoing testing aboard the test ship JS Asuka.

Latest status of rail gun development In the Japanese MoD, railgun development is conducted by the Ground Systems Research Center (GSRC), a division of the Acquisition, Technology & Logistics Agency (ATLA). ATLA began full-scale development of the railgun in 2016.

With the emergence of "a less reliable and more demanding" partner in the US, it's time for Australia to look inward for its own defense needs and to reach out to "non-US" allies in the region, according to a new report from an Australian thinktank.

Following passage of the Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support (Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025 (VETS Act), the first level of external merits review for all compensation claim decisions made from 21 April 2025 will be to the Veterans' Review Board (VRB), regardless of which Act a veteran or dependant has claimed under.

DVA is committed to making the claims process as fast as possible for the entire veteran community. To assist us in this and ensure the fastest processing time for veterans, we have asked advocates to ensure that all claims are complete and lodged through MyService. Lodgement channels MyService is the go-to platform to carry out claim's lodgement online. Access details on MyService, including How-To videos and manuals.

On Anzac Day this year, Able Seaman Rachel Brandt will have the perfect opportunity to pay respects to

Successive Chairmen of the Melbourne Naval Centre up to this time had been Sir Thomas Nettlefold, Sir William Angliss and Sir Kenneth Luke. Sir Kenneth died in 1971 and was succeeded by Captain T.E. Nave. (NVN's February 2023 [Hero](#).)

In approximately 1984, the Melbourne Naval Centre was required to carry out extensive capital works for Tavistock House to comply with health and safety regulations as a place of assembly. After much investigation, reports and costings, it was found in 1986 that the cost of the work to be done was prohibitive. A decision was then made to sell the property and invest the proceeds.

The Melbourne Naval Centre then fostered (using the proceeds from its investments) meeting places in Melbourne for ex-naval groups to come together. It leased premises in Flinders Lane which were used by various groups but mainly the Melbourne sub-section of the Naval Association of Australia.

In 1988 an arrangement was reached with the Commanding Officer HMAS *Lonsdale* whereby the mainstream of the meetings and activities by Navy and ex-Navy personnel were held in Club Lonsdale at HMAS *Lonsdale*.

At that time, approximately 35 associations met there on a regular basis.

Following the decommissioning of HMAS *Lonsdale* in November 1992, the Melbourne Naval Centre briefly took up residence in the RAAF Sergeant's Mess in Coventry Street, Southbank. It was not long before these premises were also closed and the Melbourne Naval Centre was on the lookout again for a suitable place to meet. After much searching it was agreed by the committee that the residence, known as the 'English Speaking Union', 146 Toorak Road West, South Yarra was suitable. Although this venue suited the Melbourne Naval Centre and many of the Melbourne-based Naval Associations for many years, with the planned sale of the building in late 2016, a suitable alternative venue was once again sought; this time at the Mission to Seafarers at 717 Flinders Street, Docklands.

It was also at this time that the Committee of the Melbourne Naval Centre decided to replace the word "Centre" in its title with the word "Committee" to more accurately reflect the contemporary role of the organisation. Thus, the MNC is now the Melbourne Naval Committee, Incorporated.

her great-great-uncle who fought and died in World War 1 – she will be parading at Gallipoli as part of Australia's Federation Guard catafalque party on the 110th anniversary of the landing.

Lieutenant Commander Rayne Choice joined Navy at 17 and was ready to take on new experiences. "From leaving school in Tamworth to being here as the engineer of HMAS Choules – that took 15 years," she said. Within that time, her career was nothing short of exciting. "On completion of my Navy training I went to the Australian Defence Force Academy for four years," she said.

Sydney has joined Exercise Bersama Shield and is conducting training alongside Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. Participation in this exercise follows a port visit by Sydney to Singapore, the first overseas stop for this regional presence deployment since the ship left Australian waters earlier this month.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has unveiled a sweeping development strategy for the Russian Navy, outlining plans for a significant expansion and modernization through 2050. The strategy, revealed during a meeting in St. Petersburg, emphasizes the integration of advanced technologies, including hypersonic weaponry and unmanned systems, while committing RUB 8.4 trillion (\$100.8 billion) over the next decade for the construction of new warships.

Due to an "unprecedented convergence in the strategic outlooks of all three countries," a new report stresses that Australia, Japan and the US (jointly, AJUS) must work more closely as a trilateral unit on defense issues, especially when it comes to boosting intelligence

Due to uncertainty about plans for the renovation of the Mission to Seafarers, the Committee decided to move the MNC's operations (in November 2024) to the more contemporary facilities available at the Box Hill RSL Club. All active Navy Ex-Service Organisations based in Victoria were again invited to utilise this new "Central Meeting Place" for their meetings and social activities.

Yours Aye!
NVN Team

OUR APRIL HERO



Lieutenant Commander Henry Hugh Gordon Dacre STOKER DSC MiD

Just before the ANZACs landed at Gallipoli on the morning of 25 April 1915 an Australian submarine, the HMAS AE2 set out on an historic journey. Its mission was to force a passage up the treacherous Dardanelles Strait into the Sea of Marmara, and then, in the words of the Chief of Staff, 'Generally run amok.' Such an extraordinary order required an extraordinary Captain and luckily the AE2 had such a Captain, Lieutenant Commander Henry Hugh Gordon Dacre Stoker -- an Irishman.

Henry Stoker, the second son of a physician, was born in Dublin on 2 February 1885. At the age of 12 he went to England to enter a school which specialised in training boys to pass the entrance examination for the Royal Navy, which he eventually joined at 15.

Stoker became interested in the submarine service and applied to join this relatively new branch of the Navy. In October 1906, he was selected for submarine training and dispatched to the submarine depot ship HMS Thames at Portsmouth. Stoker was very much a free spirit and revelled in the freedom that the submarine service offered. He completed his submarine training in October 1907. Then in 1913 he volunteered and was selected to serve on loan with the RAN as Commanding Officer of one of the fledgling navy's new submarines HMAS AE2.

[Continue reading about this outstanding hero.....](#)

sharing and increased real-world operational cooperation, to better counter Beijing.

President Donald Trump on April 9 signed an executive order aimed at revitalizing an American shipbuilding industry that has fallen well behind production levels of its rivals from the People's Republic of China. Language in the executive order, which cites the need to strengthen a "commercial shipbuilding capacity and maritime workforce," mirrors many concerns expressed among the industry's defense counterparts.

The Defence Science and Technology Group (DSTG) is leading a new cutting-edge quantum research project to enhance secure timing technologies in the battlespace and provide asymmetric advantage to the warfighter. Position, navigation and timing is an essential component of the command and control of deployed forces.

Amid Navy's largest anti-submarine warfare exercise in more than a decade off the Western Australian coast, one group is focused on some of Navy's most powerful and sophisticated weapon systems – its people.

"I think we are often in the right place at the right time." The ultimate understatement, illustrating the determined nature of the 'humble hero' of the Australian fleet, HMAS Choules. As spoken by its Commanding Officer, Commander Arron Convery. "People on Choules, they just get the job done. They're excited to do their job, which is helping people."

Midshipman Alex Agnew can pinpoint the moment she fell in love with music – a violin performance in a cathedral that blew her away. "I loved the feeling of the music so



If you know of any of our Navy family who has crossed the bar and don't appear on our list below or Memorial Wall on our website, please don't hesitate to contact the webmaster at: webmaster@navyvic.net. If possible, list their Rank, Name, Number, the date of their passing and their age. Thank you.

- † WOMTP J. Martin, R42419, 24 April 2025. Aged 80.
- † AB E.J.P. Austin, PM6755, 13 April 2025. Aged 99.
- † LSCK B.J. Bowes, R59020, 12 April 2025. Aged 79.
- † ABCK S.W. Watkins, R65447, 12 April 2025. Aged 78.
- † EMAW H. Ptak, R93911, 01 April 2025. Aged 78.
- † CPOETP R. Abrahams, 26 March 2025.
- † EMP P.H. Barnes, R65460, 26 March 2025. Aged 76.
- † CMDR G.W. Furlong, 23 March 2025. Aged 89.
- † CPOEAC F.I. Rubly, R54295, March 2025. Aged 85.

All of the above names now appear on the special [Memorial Wall](#) of our website.

Lest We Forget

KEILOR EAST RSL VETERANS EXPO

SATURDAY 24TH MAY 2025
FROM 11AM - 3PM.

KEILOR EAST RSL
12-22 HOFFMANS RD,
ESSENDON 3040

Participating Organisations

1. Quilts of Valour Australia
2. Ironside Resources
3. 'Of Service of House' by Jenani Therone
4. I've Got Your 6 Foundation
5. Dogs For Life
6. Path Of The Horse
7. Disaster Relief Australia
8. Royal Australian Regiment Assoc.
9. Melbourne Legacy
10. Partners Of Veterans
11. Soldier On Australia
12. Wounded Heroes Australia
13. Asset Connecting Communities / Geelong Adventure Specialists
14. Defence Health
15. Veterancann
16. Australian National Veterans Arts Museum
17. Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation
18. Kieser Essendon
19. Vet Ride
20. Fallen Diggers
21. Women Veterans Network Australia

Enjoy presentations from 11:30am to 3pm.
pick up brochures, chat with professionals and
organisations on the day.

CONTACT US

(03) 9337 7245
<https://www.keiloreastrsl.com.au/>

FREE ENTRY

much, I immediately wanted to be a part of it," Midshipman Agnew said. She started playing violin but found a new passion in classical guitar, an instrument that has stayed with her ever since.

Four of Australia's seven Anzac-class frigates sailed in formation off the Western Australian coast for ASWEX 25 this month. Their mission; to hunt Australian submarine assets to ensure Navy is fully capable of protecting Australia and its interests.

The U.S. Navy formally unleashed its newest Virginia-class fast attack submarine, the Iowa, in a commissioning ceremony Saturday in Groton, Connecticut. The 377-foot vessel, built by General Dynamics Electric Boat, can dive to depths of more than 800 feet below the surface and maneuver at speeds of over 25 knots, or nearly 29 miles per hour.

Thales Australia has partnered with Sairdrones to integrate a towed array sonar system with the Surveyor unmanned surface vessel, promising navies the ability to pinpoint underwater threats through silent operation.

It's been a quite a journey for a teenager from regional Victoria, fascinated by helicopters, to take centre stage at the Australian International Airshow representing Navy.

Visit our [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page for more news articles not included in this newsletter.