



BROADSIDE

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MARCH 2026 -- Volume 16 Edition 3

Editorial



LOSS OF HMAS VAMPIRE (I)

Launched as HMS *Vampire* in 1917, she served in the Royal Navy during the First World War. The vessel was loaned to the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and commissioned at Portsmouth on 11 October 1933. During the 1930s, *Vampire* operated as a naval reserve vessel, based at HMAS *Cerberus* (Flinders Naval Depot).



HMAS Vampire in the Mediterranean

Vampire recommissioned in May 1938 and operated in the Australian Squadron in home waters until the outbreak of the Second World War.

In late 1939 *Vampire* and HMAS *Voyager* (I) sailed to Singapore, then on to the Mediterranean to join a flotilla of destroyers that would become known as the 'Scrap Iron Flotilla'.

Vampire primarily engaged in escort and patrol duties. In July 1940 it joined the British Mediterranean Fleet. There it covered the passage of convoys between Malta and Alexandria.

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Events Calendar

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

NOTE:



For information on all
Shrine ceremonies:

Phone: 03 9661 8100 or,

Email: ceremonies@shrine.org.au

01 Apr – 14:00 & 19:00 –
Soundwaves concert – Cerberus
Band & Cinema complex

09 Apr – 11:00 – HMAS *Vampire*
service – Shrine Sanctuary

25 Apr – 06:00 – Anzac Day Dawn
Service – Shrine – WWII Forecourt

25 Apr – 08:30 – Anzac Day March
– Cnr Flinders and Swanston Street,
CBD

27 Apr – 1900 – Naval Historical
Society meeting – Clayton RSL –
Sovereign bistro – Guest speaker:
Dr John Basaran OAM – AE2 at
Gallipoli" – Details:

<https://nhsavic.navyvic.net>

On one such convoy screening the fleet and covering the passage of the convoy, its War Diary recorded that it was under repeated air attack during daylight hours and estimated that 1350 bombs were dropped either on *Vampire* or the ships it was screening.

Violent avoiding action prevented any direct hits, but the ship suffered considerable damage from splinters and near misses. Warrant Officer (Gunner) Torpedo John Endicott RAN died on 11 July from bomb splinter wounds. He was the first battle death in a RAN ship during the Second World War.

Between 30 August and 4 September *Vampire* and the Mediterranean Fleet covered the passage of convoys to and from Malta. There was no surface interference, though an aircraft from HMS *Eagle* sighted the Italian battle fleet.

On 12 October cruiser HMS *Ajax* engaged and destroyed the Italian destroyers *Airone*, *Ariel* and *Artigliere*. *Vampire* recovered one officer and 21 sailors from *Artigliere*.

On 28 October the Italian Army invaded Greece from Albania. The British reaction was immediate, and on 29 October a convoy, which included *Vampire*, sailed from Alexandria to establish a fuelling base at Suda Bay in Crete.

On arrival, the destroyers maintained an anti-submarine patrol until anti-submarine nets were laid on 1 November 1940. *Vampire* and HMAS *Waterhen* (I) then escorted the net layer, armed boarding ships HM Ships *Chakla* and *Fiona* and one of the fleet oilers to Alexandria.

In December 1940 British Army General Wavell led an offensive in the Western Desert. The objective was the destruction of enemy forces in the Nibeiwa area followed by a northward drive to Sidi Barrani on the coast. This would isolate Maktla Camp, the Italians' most advanced camp in Egypt.

On 8 December 1940 HMS *Terror*, supported by two gunboats and three destroyers, engaged in harassing bombardment against Maktla and Sidi Barrani. On 14 December *Vampire* joined the Inshore Squadron screening *Terror* for two days. At twilight on 16 December two torpedo aircraft attacked but were driven off after firing four torpedoes, one of which missed *Vampire* by 50 yards.

On 13 May 1941 *Vampire* was assigned to the 'Tobruk Ferry Run' as the shuttle service was soon named. It sailed from Alexandria to

01 May – 12:30 – HMAS
Castlemaine service – Shrine –
Sanctuary

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

06 May – 1400 & 1900 –
Soundwaves Concert – HMAS
Cerberus Band – Cinema complex

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Latest Videos and News Headlines

Keep up to date on all the news and
videos by visiting our website:
<https://navyvic.net>

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VIDEOS.....

- 📺 Sydney Opera House illuminated for 125 years of #AusNavy
- 📺 G'day, Happy Birthday, from the US Chief of Naval Operations
- 📺 Australian Navy Divers Inspect Sydney Harbour Ahead of Fleet Review
- 📺 Exercise Kakadu 2026 (KA26)
- 📺 Exercise KAKADU 2026 has started!
- 📺 125 Years of the Royal Australian Navy

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NEWS shorts.....

Western Australia's first naval nuclear foundations training course has been launched, developed in partnership with Curtin University to support AUKUS and the future sustainment of nuclear-powered submarines at Henderson.

A new multi-state research collaboration is advancing innovative waste-to-energy (WtE) solutions to support Defence operations across northern Australia.

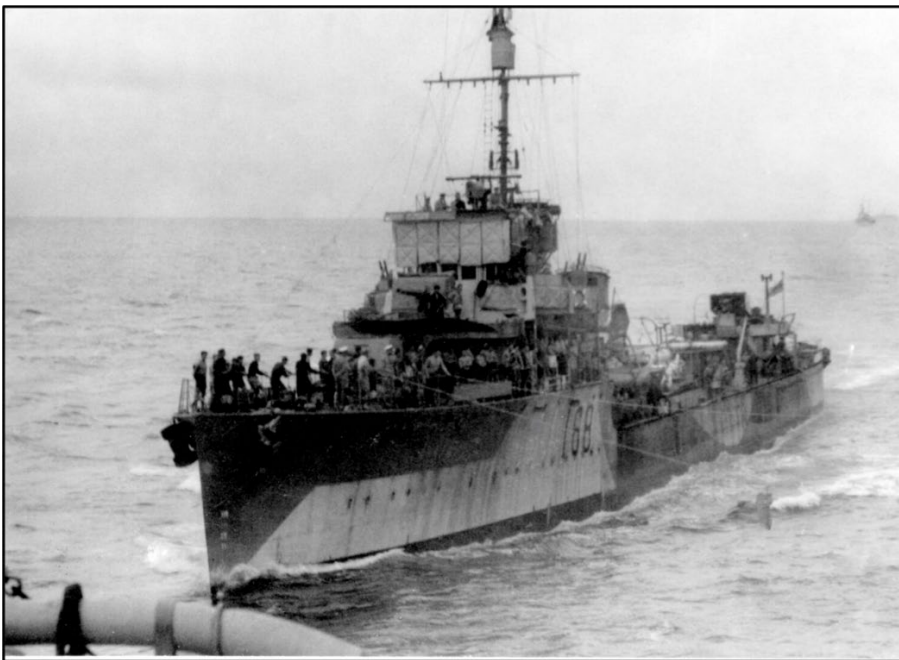
A group of journalists from across Micronesia and Polynesia visited

Tobruk carrying stores and 102 troops, returning two days later with 180 wounded personnel.

On 21 May it sailed again to Tobruk but returned to Alexandria a tired ship with mounting defects. When steaming above 16 knots, severe vibration made it impossible for it to maintain the fast transit speed needed to get into and out of Tobruk under cover of darkness. It was reluctantly decided to withdraw *Vampire* from the Mediterranean and send it to Singapore for an extensive refit.

In the afternoon of 8 December 1941 *Vampire* sailed from Singapore escorting HM Ships *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* on their ill-fated attempt to disrupt the Japanese invasion of Malaya. Following the sinking of both capital ships by Japanese torpedo aircraft, *Vampire* and the two other escorting destroyers, HM Ships *Express* and *Electra*, rescued 132 officers and 1949 sailors out of a total complement of 2921 in both ships. *Vampire* landed nine officers, 215 sailors and one civilian war correspondent in Singapore.

After the Japanese attack on Colombo in April 1942, *Vampire* escorted aircraft carrier HMS *Hermes* to Trincomalee. On 9 April, Japanese search aircraft sighted the vessels. *Hermes* was hit and sunk by Japanese dive bombers.



HMAS Vampire (1) with camouflage

Vampire was then attacked by at least 15 aircraft. The destroyer fought back, shooting down one of the Japanese aircraft and damaging others. *Vampire* was hit by several bombs and broke in half. The destroyer sank in less than 10 minutes. Her commanding

HMAS Kuttabul, Sydney, in March for a bespoke tour of the Australian Defence Vessel (ADV) Reliant.

Testing their sea legs for the first time, 45 Navy recruits from HMAS Cerberus embarked on HMAS Choules for a sea ride they will never forget.

For many new sailors on board HMAS Toowoomba, leaving the southern hemisphere could be a daunting task. Luckily for them, the ship's navigator Lieutenant Commander Brianna Webb knows the South China Sea like it was her own backyard.

Navy has launched Grey Shutterbugs: Volume Two, the latest instalment in its visual storytelling series, released to coincide with the Exercise Kakadu Fleet Review.

For HMAS Toowoomba's embarked action medical organisation (AMO) team, every day on operational deployment is a grand final.

For the first time in history, a Philippine Navy ship has sailed into Sydney Harbour as part of the multinational, Australian-led Exercise Kakadu.

For much of the Royal Australian Navy's 125-year history, a ship has served as the workplace, home, social hub and recreation centre for its hard-working crew at sea.

China is conducting a vast undersea mapping and monitoring operation across the Pacific, Indian and Arctic oceans, building detailed knowledge of marine conditions that naval experts say would be crucial for waging submarine warfare against the United States and its allies.

Portsmouth Naval Shipyard has inspected, tested, and installed the first welded additively manufactured

officer and eight sailors were killed or died of wounds. Around 600 crew members were rescued by the hospital ship HMHS *Vita*. Others were picked up by local fishing vessels, and a few were able to swim ashore.

In 2019, HMA survey ships *Leeuwin* and *Diamantina* conducted an unsuccessful underwater search for the wreck of *Vampire* off the coast of Sri Lanka. Roughly 150 square miles of the sea floor was scanned based on information from local sources, accounts of survivors, and photographic records from the battle in which *Vampire* was lost. Although her resting place was not discovered, data collected during the search suggests that *Vampire* sank in a trench up to a kilometre and a half deep.

Happily, the loss of *Vampire* (I), was not the end of that ship's name in the RAN. In June 1959 a second HMAS *Vampire*, a Daring Class destroyer, entered service with the Navy. This HMAS *Vampire* added the Malaysia 1964-66 Battle Honours to those of its namesake. Among its many tasking throughout its 27 years of service, were escort duties during the Vietnam War. HMAS *Vampire* II was decommissioned on the 13th August 1986 and is today preserved as a museum ship at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney.



HMAS Vampire at the Australian National Maritime Museum

On Thursday 9th April 2026 from 11:00am to 11:30am there will be a service conducted in the Sanctuary of the Shrine of Remembrance, to honour HMAS *Vampire* and all those who served in her. Everyone is most welcome to attend this commemorative service.



Yours Aye!
NVN Team

(AM) flange aboard the US Navy's attack submarine USS Washington (SSN 787), marking a milestone in submarine maintenance and advanced manufacturing.

The Australian Government has today launched the Propel: Australian Submarine Scholarship program, a \$15.8 million initiative to support the development of Australia's future nuclear-powered submarine workforce.

The practice of making the traditional Japanese dessert 'mochi' is a cultural event that involves local communities and families gathering together.

Officers and sailors from HMAS Ballarat exercised their freedom of entry through the streets of Ballarat on March 15, marching before large crowds under clear skies in a ceremony steeped in military tradition.

Commuting in through five-metre swells, 40-knot Arctic blasts and near-zero visibility fog might cause some concern for those on their way to work.

For more than two decades, a quiet but powerful platform has been working behind the scenes to support Navy missions across the globe.

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Matt Keogh MP, has announced the launch of a new Hellfire Pass Interpretive Centre website.

Canberra-class landing helicopter dock HMAS Canberra has led the largest gathering of foreign warships in Sydney Harbour in more than a decade.

Vietnamese-born Australian Navy Captain Cadeyrn Okely has a powerful message – you don't have to come from much to go far in the

OUR MARCH HERO



**Read Admiral Harold Bruce FARNCOMB
CB DSO MVO MiD** US Navy Cross, US
Legion of Merit**

Rear Admiral Farncomb was a distinguished senior officer who became the first graduate of the Royal Australian Naval College, Osborne House,

Geelong, to reach the rank of Captain. Known by the nickname "Fearless Frank", he was a key naval figure for Australia during World War II, commanding several high-profile ships and the Australian Squadron in major Pacific battles.

World War II Commands: He commanded several significant vessels during the war, including:

HMAS *Canberra*: Patrols in the Indian Ocean.

HMAS *Australia*: Led during the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Guadalcanal campaign.

HMS *Attacker*: Commanded this British escort carrier during the invasion of southern France.

Squadron Leadership: In late 1944, he took command of the Australian Squadron. He led the squadron through intense actions in the Philippines, including the landings at Lingayen Gulf, where his flagship, HMAS *Australia*, was hit by multiple kamikaze attacks.

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

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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.

- † ABMTPSM W.W. Stewart, R103703, 27 March 2026. Aged 73.
- † LSMTP T.W. Yabsley, R64540, 22 March 2026. Aged 77.
- † CPOETW R.J. Stewart, R43336, 21 March 2026. Aged 76.
- † Jack Linnett, 15 March 2026.
- † POME D. Wynne-Allen, R63366, 07 March 2026. Aged 77.
- † ABWM M.J.T. Grelis, R59119, 07 March 2026. Aged 80.
- † D.H. Howells, R49711, 06 March 2026. Aged 91.
- † POWRSTD B. Resor(Marshall), R85378, March 2026. Aged 82.
- † CPOATA4 P. Clark, R41699, 25 February 2026. Aged 93.
- † WRR0M A.A.A. Baggott, W86290, 10 February 2026. Aged 77.

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

Lest We Forget

Australian Navy. Now Director Fleet Engineering, Captain Okely was rescued from an orphanage during the fall of Saigon in 1975. His protectors, two Australian diplomats who would become his parents, brought him back to Australia.

Leading Seaman Razaz Glaidous grew up watching her mother rebuild her life with courage, dignity and purpose. Today, she proudly continues that legacy.

Antarctica rose to the surface of strategic competition this week. It appeared prominently in both the Australia–New Zealand Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations (ANZMIN) and in China's new five-year plan.

Washington has determined that China does not plan to invade Taiwan in 2027, according to the U.S. intelligence community's 2026 Annual Threat Assessment report published this week.

Transiting on board HMAS Choules through the Prince of Wales Channel in northern Australia, 21-year-old Seaman Medic Sienna Williams is experiencing her first Exercise Kakadu.

The Bradleys Head Naval Memorials in Sydney has been officially declared a Military Memorial of National Significance. This declaration reflects the ongoing national significance of the historic Memorials, which commemorate every Australian who has proudly served in the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) over the past 125 years, as well as all ships lost in service.

The US Navy has decided to extend the operational life of its oldest active aircraft carrier, USS Nimitz (CVN-68), delaying its planned decommissioning until 2027.

NAVY GALA BALL

Expression of Interest Form - Version Updated

NAA Victoria State Section has received a very generous grant from the Melbourne Naval Committee (MNC) in support of the Navy Gala Ball to be held on 17th October, 2026 at the Pullman on the Park, Melbourne.

The MNC grant will allow the first **200 Navy personnel and Navy Veterans** to purchase their ticket at a reduced price of **\$100**.

Partners or guests (**non-Navy or non-Navy Veteran**) will be required to pay the full amount of **\$200** a ticket.

Effectively this means a couple (a **Navy person or Navy Veteran with a non-Navy/Veteran** partner) will pay an average of **\$150 per ticket**.

If both attendees are **Navy personnel and/or Navy Veterans**, the total cost will be **\$200 for two tickets**.

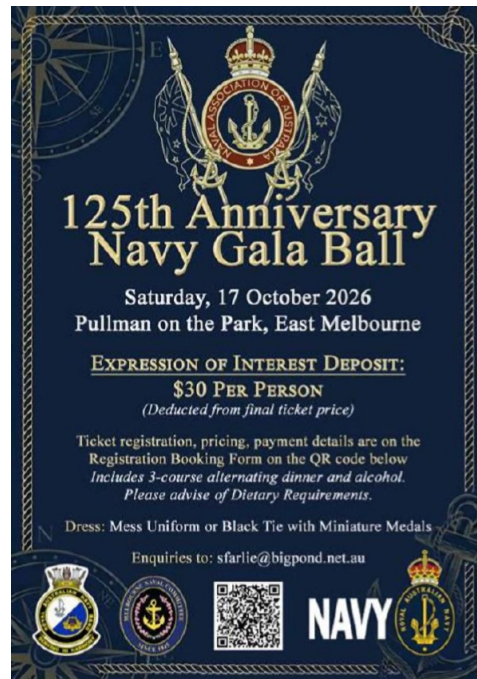
Please note that this subsidised pricing applies to the **first 200 Navy personnel and Navy Veterans** only.

Thereafter, all tickets will be **\$200** each. Please note the expression of interest note attached has the old price on it. All other details are correct.

If you have already put in an expression of interest and, you have paid in full, or you have paid **\$30.00**. This money will obviously be taken into account and you will be included in the count.

Please [contact Sandra Farlie](#) if you have paid your ticket price in full before this new amended version was published.

Download the updated Expression of Interest form / Booking form.....
[Word\(.docx\)](#) or, [Adobe\(.pdf\)](#)



When sailing north through the Yellow Sea in February, one of the battles faced for personnel on board HMAS Toowoomba was the freezing cold.

The crew of HMAS Choules celebrated International Women's Day at sea this year through the sharing of ideas, stories and experiences of supporting women within and outside Navy.

Indian Navy warships escorted Indian LPG tankers in the Gulf of Oman, after they crossed the Strait of Hormuz, on March 14.

A new software integration developed for modern naval vessels will strengthen the connection between navigation and combat systems aboard the Hunter Class frigate.

For half a century, Captain John King Davis has lain in an unmarked grave at Melbourne General Cemetery, a stark contrast to his epic contributions to Australia's Antarctic legacy.

The Royal Australian Navy has clarified plans to integrate uncrewed aerial and surface vehicles into Arafura Class offshore patrol vessels under project SEA 1180.

The service and sacrifice of our First World War veterans should never be forgotten. Yet many lie in unmarked graves because they lacked the family or funds for a funeral.

Royal Navy patrol ship HMS Tamar is ready to resume front-line Pacific patrols after completing her regeneration in Australia.

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