



Newsletter

Incorporating NCCV's newsletter Rogues' Yarn

Navy Victoria Network

March 2014

Volume 4 Edition 3

Editorial

NVN current membership: 892

(from our new apprentice editor)

Having never written an editorial before – I thought I should do some research and during that research and reading of other editorials (mainly by Andrew Bolte and Jeff Kennett in the Herald Sun) I came across the saying “Use them or Lose them”. I can’t remember the context of how that phrase was used then – but for me it rang ‘bells’ in regard to our Naval Associations and Commemorative events.

I understand that there is a time for all things. Unfortunately some associations will pass – just because they are named after ships of long ago, and with the current policy of how our fleets units are named – some of the older associations will never have another ship named after them. So they will pass into history. However there are some associations that need out support now. You can support associations and events in a lot of different ways. By becoming a member; by attending meetings, social events, being involved.

Back in the late 90’s the WRANS ASSOCIATION (VIC) came close to folding, due to the aging membership, they were struggling to get enough women to be office bearers. I offered to assist and we struggled on for another 10-12 years. Again in 2011 – having just announced that we would hold the next Reunion, we once again came very close to folding. However having got passed the reunion in 2012 – we have grown our membership by 44 new members and they are all of the younger generation.

Calendar Events

(see calendar for details of all events)

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28-30 Mar – WRANS & ex-

Servicewomen’s reunion – Hobart

28 Mar – Scrapiron flotilla luncheon

30 Mar – RAN recruits wreath laying at the Shrine

06 Apr – Daylight saving ends.

18-21 Apr – Easter

25 Apr – Anzac Day.

26 Apr – HMAS Assault wreath laying

28 Apr – NHS meeting.

02 May – HMAS Castlemaine with Tecoma Primary School wreath laying.

Latest News

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On the record: Armidale Class Patrol Boat fleet

Today in the Australian newspaper there was an article titled Times up for Navy Asylum Fleet. This article discussed the Armidale Class Patrol Boat Fleet. There were a number of errors in the article. [More.....](#)

Navy Clearance Divers honoured

The Royal Australian Navy Clearance Diving (RANCD) Memorial, which remembers those killed on duty in service of their country, was rededicated at a ceremony at HMAS Penguin last Friday. [More.....](#)

We now have a committee that loves to work hard and organize events that the other members want to attend. Not everyone wants to attend meetings, some of our girls are busy with other associations, but they love the social events that are organized for them. We welcome all to our events – members, partners, carers, non-members.

I have loved meeting all the WRANS – whether I served with them or not – we all have something in common – and it would be a shame to see the WRANS ASSOCIATION pass in to history too early.

At this time we are all looking forward to travelling to Hobart to the 2014 reunion – organized by a group of individual girls – as the Tasmania Association folded some years ago.

So don't feel guilty about not being 'a member' – just come and join in – most of the associations that I know of would love to see you at their functions.

Some of the events that are coming up are:

ANZAC Day March

WRANS – Birthday Luncheon May 3rd

Biggest Morning Tea – Bendigo May 17th and
Melbourne May 31

WRANS AGM July 26th – Bentleigh RSL

Yours Aye!

NVN Team



Col Elliott - In Between The Laughter

From a Ten Quid Pommie, to a Life in Working Class Melbourne

In the stables at fourteen, to the Navy at sixteen and sent to Vietnam at seventeen ... too young to serve. He writes a graphic account of covert operations in North Vietnam. Still a kid, in danger, under fire but still too young to vote or drink.

A life before show business as a Navy Sonar operator, Diver and eventual instructor.

PENSION INCREASE FOR VETERAN COMMUNITY

More than 272,000 veterans, their partners, war widows and widowers across Australia received a pension increase yesterday, announced the Minister for Veterans' Affairs Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson. [More.....](#)

DFWA - MEDIA STATEMENT GOVERNMENT DELIVERS ON ITS DFRB/DRFDB FAIRINDEXATION PROMISE

Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA), together with its partners in the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO), thanks the Government for today introducing legislation to the House to restore fair indexation to DFRB and DFRDB military superannuation pensions, for those aged 55 and over. [More.....](#)

NEW LOOK PMAC TO TACKLE VETERAN MENTAL HEALTH

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Senator the Hon. Michael Ronaldson, today announced the establishment of a new Prime Ministerial Advisory Council (PMAC) with a renewed focus on veteran mental health. [More.....](#)

Unit Citation Presented to HMAS Yarra

From NVN's roving reporter... On a moving occasion held at Victoria Harbour, Docklands, on Tuesday 4th March, Governor General Quentin Bryce, officiating at her last major military ceremony as Commander-in-Chief, presented a Unit Citation for Gallantry (UCG) to HMAS YARRA before a crowd in the vicinity of 400. [More.....](#)

Update to investigation into allegations of inappropriate behaviour

On 6 November 2013 the Navy advised that an Australian Defence

He spent his 18th birthday in Vietnam as part of the rescue team when the USS Forestal lost 134 lives. At 19 he was again in the rescue team when the Melbourne cut the USS Frank E. Evans in half. 74 men died that morning.

It tells of his early life with much humour and honesty.

And later you will follow his life as he and a rag tag bunch of unlikely heroes travel to exotic and often dangerous ports as a rough and ready band of wandering minstrels. Through all of this, humor plays an integral part.

It's a story of survival ... his battles with depression, alcoholism and at just 37 a major heart attack. He regroups and emerges unbeaten.

It tells of his rise through the tough ranks of aussie comedy ... 41 years of marriage, three daughters, five grandchildren and still going strong. This is an Australian story that covers all bases. Belly laugh humor, adversity, pathos, mate-ship, action and adventure.

Col Elliott's story will surprise many ... an enthralling read.

Details on purchasing the book are on www.colelliott.com.au

Note: It will soon be available via E-books.

VALE

† LTO L. Church, R52375, 21 March 2014. Aged 72.

† CERA W.J. Blackman, 06 March 2014. Aged 89.

Lest We Forget

Members: When you hear of any of our Navy family that has crossed the bar, please don't hesitate to let us know. We would like to list their names in perpetuity on our special 'Vale' page on the website. If possible list their Rank, Name, Number, Age and their date of passing. Thank you

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**Interests:** If you have a specific interest/link you think would be of appeal to the wider navy community, we would be pleased to hear about it. Just email our webmaster – [webmaster@navyvic.net](mailto:webmaster@navyvic.net) with details.

*Force Investigative Service (ADFIS) investigation team were to be deployed to conduct an investigation into matters surrounding the allegations of unacceptable behaviour in HMAS Ballarat. [More.....](#)*

### **Veterans Urged To Take Part In Consultation**

*Today the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) will begin consultation with veterans, war widow/ers, their families, the Community and Public Sector Union and DVA staff about the future of some shopfront services in Victoria and New South Wales. [More.....](#)*

### **White Cards and SRCA Clients**

*Sadly it seems that many of the people eligible for their new card have not kept their contact details with DVA up-to-date... therefore, many of these cards were returned to sender. DVA have tried a few other methods to find the clients but there are many yet to be located.*

*Pass this on and make sure your mates have updated their details with DVA recently... the sad thing is many of them probably don't even know they had one coming.*

*The best way to update your details with DVA easily, is to do it through your MyAccount login or of course call them up on 1800 555 254.*

### **Navy League of Australia - Victorian Chapter - [March Newsletter](#)**

**Australian Maritime Digest - Issue #232. [Read.....](#)**

### **NAVY NEWS**

[Click here for the latest edition.](#)

**Don't forget to visit the [website](#), there are many more news articles and information that are not included in this newsletter.**





# Naval Commemoration Committee of Victoria

## Rogues' Yarn



### Our Brave Sailors

#### DIARY NOTES

**Next NCCV meeting**  
**1030 8th April at**  
**Melb Naval Centre.**  
**All Ship/Unit/Branch**  
**Associations are**  
**encouraged to be**  
**represented!**

**Services at the Shrine**  
**of Remembrance**  
**[Everyone welcome]**

**ANZAC Day**  
**Wreath laying in the**  
**Sanctuary**  
**25APR@0830**

**HMAS ASSAULT**  
**Wreath Laying**  
**Western Gallery**  
**26APR14@1100**

Even travelling far and wide you will discover artefacts symbolising the best things of our Navy. The shield below can be found in the RSL Sub-Branch at Tennant Creek, NT. Tibals did a great job and their ship's companies are everywhere. *Photograph taken by Chris Banfield 2013*

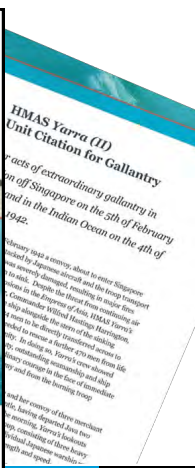


Governor-General, Her Excellency, The Honourable Quentin Bryce AC CVO inspects a Royal Guard on arrival at the HMAS YARRA II Unit Citation for Gallantry Investiture Ceremony. Held at Docklands, Port of Melbourne, Victoria. Royal Guard Commander was LCDR Peter Arnold RAN.



The Governor General spoke of the two incidents that resulted in the Citation. In particular, she said that whilst there may be instances where such bravery is matched, it will never be surpassed. These were very special moments when the Commander in Chief and Chief of Navy reflected upon the legacy of our Navy's past and the dependency on our Navy today. Chief of Navy spoke of the all of one company, working together

under the most difficult of circumstances with one thing in mind - doing their best along with their shipmates. Several hundred Serving, ex-Service men & women and Descendants and friends witnessed Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Ray Griggs AO CSC RAN receiving the HMAS YARRA Unit Citation and burgee from the Governor General. He assigned the burgee to the CO HMAS YARRA, LCDR Brendan O'Hara who accepted the burgee on behalf of the Ships Company. He arranged for the burgee to be hoisted to the mast head for all to see. HMAS YARRA ship's company had manned ship and at this point proudly cheered ship. CN said that the burgee would be hoisted on every ship YARRA on the 4th March each year. The Royal Guard stood in the sun for a long time, steadfast as they reflected on the heritage surrounding their role on the day as protectors of the colours and the Commander in Chief. This was the Governor General's final official ceremony as Commander in Chief and the moment was not lost on the GG or those present. Following the formal part of the service the GG presented a Citation Clasp to a family representative of each of the YARRA II crew members who were in YARRA II on that fateful day. This was very moving and noticeably effected both the recipients and the GG. CN followed by presenting individual copies of the Citation to the nominated descendants. He did so in a manner that was uplifting and much appreciated by all concerned. A significant experience and opportunity to reflect on how our Navy performed during World War Two, over 70 years ago.





### Disclaimer

Articles contributed are the Author's thoughts only. An article may be edited to meet the space available.

### Melbourne Naval Centre

MNC is an organization that has provided much needed funds to Ship Associations over many decades. In need of financial or administrative support, contact the MNC.

### Navy Victoria Network

The NavyVIC website is there for all to see, in particular it is for Navy Associations to provide information on their activities to the wider Navy Community. An opportunity not to be missed - Log on to <http://navyvic.net/>

# President's Report

Welcome to another edition of our newsletter, a routine effort to firstly let you know that we are still around and secondly to encourage you and the family to attend at least one Navy occasion during this year. The easiest way to achieve that outcome is to see what commemorative activities are schedule and nominate to attend the one best suited to your interests. The website is provided to also give you a solid reference point where we hope to list all activities of some interest to the Navy community. This will only work if the various ship/unit/branch associations keep this opportunity in mind.

You will have heard there is a fair amount of thinking being applied to this the start of the centenary of WWI. Much of the conversation relates to Army, however, we must not forget those significant Navy actions that also form part of the ANZAC history. The first shot fired was from Fort Nepean. We start with the Battle of Bita Paka, where the loss of Australian's first Serviceman occurred, that of AB Billy Williams, from Northcote, Melbourne.

We were also represented at the Investiture of the Unit Citation to HMAS YARRA IV. That was a marvelous ceremony and highlighted the courageous effort made by the Ships Company of HMAS YARRA I. The article at page 1 best describes the events as they occurred on the day. A proud day for the descendants. As any long term reader of Rogues Yarn will appreciate, we take the involvement of descendants seriously and think they should be actively encouraged to value the legacy of family members. Their respect and recognition of this legacy is best demonstrated by attending a service at the Shrine of Remembrance.

The NCCV Executive is also acutely aware of the need to gain the support of all ship/unit/branch associations as we collect our thoughts when contemplating our collective future. Our principle goal is to provide support for all things Navy and in doing so we continue our mindful dedication to the Australian Defence Force, Navy in particular.

*Yours aye, Terry Makings*

## The Night off Matapan

The 28th March remains a significant day for the Scrap Iron Flotilla, this being the anniversary of the Battle of Matapan. Veterans, ex-service members along with friends of the association gather to reflect on this occasion each year. The Honourable Ted Baillieu, Former Premier and Chairman of the ANZAC Centenary Committee informed those assembled with an update on the ANZAC program of activities and the support being made available by the State Government. 2014 being the first year that no members of the original Scrap Iron Flotilla were able to make it to this annual event. Notwithstanding, those able to attend reflect on the commitment endured by the Tenth Destroyer Squadron whilst it operated in the Mediterranean. The month of March was a big month as they encountered the Italian Navy and with luck on their side they managed to decimate the enemy fleet. The Squadron leader was HMAS STUART, Commander Heck Waller RAN. During the time the Scrap Iron Flotilla was deployed to the Mediterranean, HMAS WATERHEN was the only destroyer of the Australian contingent to be lost during action. Thankfully no casualties occurred as the ship's company managed to transfer to HMS DEFENDER. WATERHEN was the first Warship lost in action in WWII

## Descendants

After many years of advocating for descendants to support ex-Navy associations we look forward to seeing the continuation of the Infantry Landing Ship (ILS) associations through the commitment of a few descendants. These individuals should be congratulated for taking this step, their objective being to simply sustain the legacy of their ancestors who served in WESTRALIA, KANIMBLA or MANOORA. We are hopeful that the descendants who support DEMS will also join forces with the ILS team to make the overall structure as strong as it can be. The NCCV has changed its constitution in order to accommodate descendants. It would be encouraging to see all associations embrace descendants in this way so we can ensure our commemorative services are not forgotten. An extension of this enthusiasm is to find out who has responsibility for the many ship/unit/branch association banners. It has been suggested by the ILS association that a register be initiated so that the details surrounding safe stowage and access procedures are known for each banner. NCCV will assist with this proposal should each ship/unit/branch association be willing to advise us of their relevant particulars, where and who!



## HMS AMBUSH

AMBUSH is a 7,400 tonne Submarine, one of the world's most sophisticated nuclear boats. From keel to top of the fin equals a 12 story building – 36+ m, 88.7 m long and 10.4 m wide. She carries dozens of Cruise missiles, capable of hitting targets 1200 miles away, also carries Spearfish torpedoes. AMBUSH can detect vessels moving on the other side of the ocean, can detect a ship leaving port in New York whilst submerged some 3000 miles away in the English Channel. A sonar system reputed to have the processing power of 2000 laptops. Ambush is one of the quietest sea-going vessels ever built, enabling her to track another boat for weeks. She is capable of sneaking alongside an enemy coastline to drop off special forces using specially designed sea craft carried in the fin. Ambush uses a digital camera system to see above the surface while submerged. Two masts carrying thermal and low-light cameras replace the periscope. They break the surface for just 3 seconds, giving the Captain a 360 degree picture. Six other masts service satellite, radar and navigation systems. Her powerful nuclear reactor will allow her to cruise non-stop for 25 years with a crew of between 100 to 120. The boat has fresh water for washing and it even carries some gym equipment. Although some things don't change, the sleeping quarters remain cramped, not unlike boats half a century ago.

*Original article provided by Pat Heffernan, life member of the Submariners Association VIC.*

## ASSAULT

Chief of Navy with Cath Beazley at the naming of the LHD model 'ASSAULT'. The model is at the Port Ash ship handling training facility, inland from Nelson Bay. Nelson Bay being the location of the little known HMAS ASSAULT establishment used during WWII to train sailors for beach landings.



## AE1 & AE2 @ Gosport



The memorial to AE1 and AE2, pictured above, will be unveiled on 12MAY14 at the Submarine Museum, Gosport. The memorial illustrates the story of both submarines prior to their loss and their respective crews. The memorial is the inspiration of Tom Tribe a descendant of Petty Officer Tribe lost with AE1 off Rabaul, New Guinea. The artwork was undertaken by Rear Admiral Frank Grenier RN Rtd, now a renowned artist. Interestingly Frank is the designer of the well known Submarines 'dolphin' badge. He happened to be on the staff of Flag Officer Submarines [FOSM] 40 or 50 years ago when a badge was being considered, as a well known doodler he was encouraged to come up with a design by the then FOSM. Frank went on to be appointed FOSM himself later in his career.

Funding of the AE1 and AE2 memorial was largely by the Submarine Institute of Australia (SIA), together with donations from descendants and others. The AE1 Inc and AE2 Commemorative Foundation led by Dr Michael White QC and Rear Admiral Peter Briggs AO, CSC RAN retd respectively encouraged Tom in his endeavours. Captain Ken Greig OAM RAN Rtd as a member of both AE1 Inc & AE2CF supported Tom with fund raising, the design, build and installation process. You can see more of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum at their website

[www.submarine-museum.co.uk](http://www.submarine-museum.co.uk). We thank CAPT Ken Greig OAM RAN Rtd for the original article. Below is the product of RADM Grenier's doodling.



## ANZAC Centenary

We are now back on track with respect to our primary project, 'Answering the Call'. We will be developing the strategy around raising funds leading into construction and display. The fund raising exercise will obviously be instrumental if we are to be successful. After considerable attempts, the Foundation has not been able to have this project incur federal support through charitable deductible status. Hopefully this will not be an impediment to generating strong support from individuals, families and groups. This project provides an opportunity for the Naval community to demonstrate our regard for all those who joined the Navy in Victoria for the purpose of defending our way of life. Start saving your pennies in preparation of the 'call for help'. There has also been several pieces of public information around the first shell fired from Fort Nepean at the outset of WWI. This will be the commencement of a long series of activities focused on commemoration and reminders of significant activities that occurred a century ago.

**ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY!**



## *Items of special interest*



**Rum Issue** How many would recall the rum issue as illustrated above. A precious few we suspect.

**Naval Cadets** No doubt we are all aware of the Australian Naval Cadet organisation, maybe we are not so aware of where each Unit is located and how to make contact. Not important unless you have a family member or friend of the family interested in getting involved. Every Unit is keen to recruit youngsters and the reward to those individuals can be considerable. If this is of use, suggest they go to the website <http://www.navycadets.gov.au>

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 Website: <http://navyvic.net>

**Nuship CANBERRA** After leaving Melbourne the first LDH, Nuship CANBERRA has been busy undertaking sea trials out of Sydney. ADELAIDE is taking shape at Williamstown and continues the impressive look across the harbour. A reminder of Dogtown's capability and potential future.

**Holbrook & Submariners** All Submariners have been summoned to a weekend of ruminating about their time below and above oceans of the world. This weekend in April, commencing on ANZAC Day through to Sunday night at Holbrook should prove to be a very positive experience. Should you wish to be part of this celebration of a centenary of submarines then you must contact Kerrie Wise by emailing [kwise@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kwise@greaterhume.nsw.gov.au) or Roger Cooper [rcoopa47@gmail.com](mailto:rcoopa47@gmail.com) if need be ring Roger on 0411 207 244. No doubt everyone who attends will refresh their memory and comradeship of the 'good old days'. We also need to keep in mind one of the significant losses of WWI when HMAS AE 1 vanished off Rabaul, New Guinea. A commemorative service for AE1 will occur at the Shrine of Remembrance on 14SEP14, a century after it the tragic loss of all hands.