



Call the Hands



Issue No. 64

June 2022

From the President

Welcome to the Society's sixty fourth edition of Call the Hands and accompanying occasional papers. The occasional papers are available to members through the members' website page. They then become available to the community after twelve months. Each month the papers from the previous year are released. These are noted on page 11.

Much of the Society's focus in recent weeks has been on the conduct of three Harbour cruises which coincide with the 80th anniversary of the Japanese midget submarine attack in Sydney Harbour. These well subscribed cruises will take guests to sites where actions occurred. Guests will hear a description of the events associated with each site.

Occasional paper 138 by Dr Tom Lewis examines the matter of a Japanese sword recovered from one of the midget submarines. He analyzes the mystery of which Japanese officer actually owned the sword and whether or not there were actually two swords. The sword in question is on display in the Australian War Memorial.

Occasional paper 139 by Lieutenant Daren K Cherian RAN, provides insight into the WWII service of Robert 'John' Dowey and his experiences post War. As a sub lieutenant, John Dowey spent most of his service life in Fairmile Class motor launches. In 1944 he distinguished himself in the position of First Lieutenant in ML 814. Sadly, like so many of our World War Two veterans, John Dowey crossed the bar in March 2022. Fortunately, thanks to Lieutenant Cherian, some details of his service are now recorded.

In addition to the occasional papers this month we are pleased to publish a comprehensive paper by Tim Lyon titled *Ultra and the Battle of the Atlantic - The True Story*. Tim is a member of the Society, Vice President of the ACT Branch of the Military Historical Society of Australia and has extensively researched the Battle of the Atlantic in recent years. This comprehensive 35-page paper examines the impact of 'Ultra', the term commonly used for code-breaking intelligence or 'special intelligence', on the course of the Battle of the Atlantic. The paper, in PDF format, can be accessed via this [post](#). Alternatively, use the search function in the normal manner to locate it. The paper is available to all readers.

On page two you will see that our well subscribed monthly cruise to Navy sites in Sydney Harbour is not so well subscribed in winter. In fact, the 29 July cruise still has plenty of seats available. As we do want the cruise to proceed you may wish take advantage of a *Call the Hands* special offer. That is, pay \$65 per person in lieu of \$75. This is the same as the group rate.

Your ongoing support of the Society and our hard-working volunteers is truly valued.

Kind regards,
David Michael



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Readers Forum

Loss of HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse

Our thanks to Rear Admiral Guy Griffiths for his feedback on Occasional Paper 133 published in April 2022. The paper described the Imperial Japanese Navy's Operation C in the Indian Ocean. Included in the paper were several allusions to the loss of *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse*. Admiral Griffiths wished to ensure readers understood that the *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* were not attacked by carrier borne aircraft. They were attacked by approximately eighty long-range attack planes - Mitsubishi Nells and Bettys - equipped with bombs and torpedoes. These aircraft from the Japanese 22nd Air Flotilla were flying from airbases in Indo-China.



The Sinking of Prince of Wales and Repulse, Oil Painting by Kenichi Nakamura, 1942

Seats Available, 29 July Cruise: Navy in Sydney

The Society's popular cruises which take in sites around Sydney Harbour west of the bridge are ideal for those wishing to learn about the RAN's history in Sydney since 1788, how Navy has operated and how it has been supported. Having commenced in February 2022, they are virtually booked out until October. The exception is [July for which tickets are still available](#). Tickets for individuals are normally \$75 pp or \$65 for groups of ten or more.

As an incentive to readers discount ticket are available to you for the July cruise.

Booking is easy. Just visit the [NHSA website shop](#) and apply this discount coupon in the checkout.

Coupon code: [CTHReader10](#). Valued at \$10 it is valid for bookings made before 25 July 22. It can be applied multiple times.

Competition for School aged Students: The Submariners Challenge 2022

This educational activity sponsored by the Friends of Holbrook Submarine Museum was conceived as a fun opportunity to encourage school students to explore further the world of the submariner. The competition is designed to stimulate discovery and learning about the undersea world, generate interest in the many challenges overcome in building submarines, and learn about how the experience of serving in 'the Silent Service' has shaped the lives of submariners.

The competition opened on 2 May 2022 with entries to be submitted by 27 August 2022.

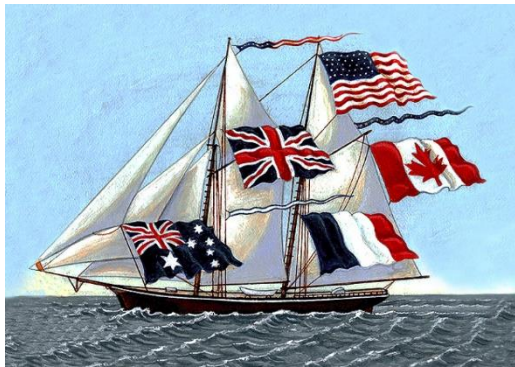
Details can be found on the [Holbrook Submarine Museum website](#).



HMAS Otway casing and fin on display at Holbrook Submarine Museum. HSM image

Marine Art Exhibitions

International Online Marine Art Exhibition Closing 30 June 2022.



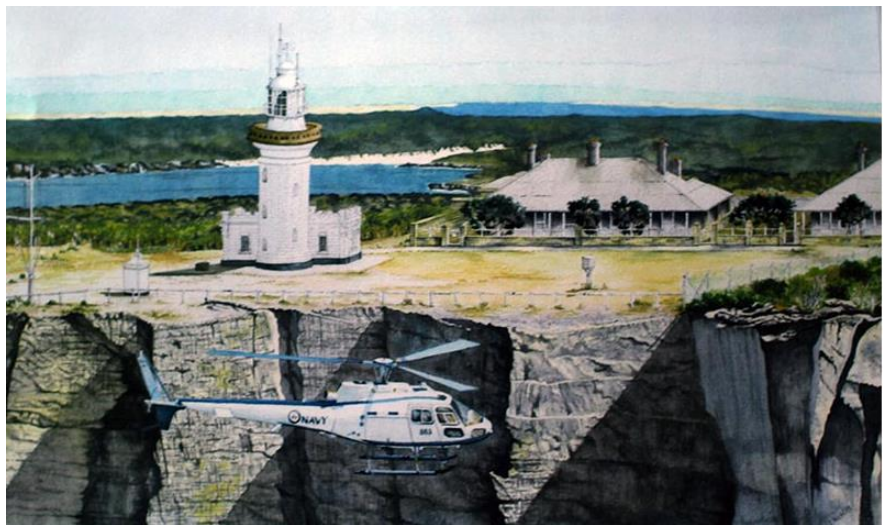
A collaboration of Marine Artists societies including the Australian Society of Marine Artists has been conducting an International Online Marine Art Exhibition since 15 June 2021. It is due to close on 30 June 2022. For those wishing to view the exhibition before its closes please use the following link,

<https://marineartistsaustralia.com.au/event/first-international-online-marine-art-exhibition/>

Australian Society of Marine Artists: 2022 National Exhibition

The [Australian Society of Marine Artists](#) (ASMA) National Exhibition is scheduled to be held at the Lavender Bay Gallery of the NSW Royal Art Society at North Sydney from 12 August to 4 September.

More details will be provided when known.



Painting by [John Heffill](#), *Lighthouse at Jervis Bay*, mixed media, 55 x 35 cm, NFS, image courtesy of ASMA

Video of the Month

HMAS Canberra II firing: 80 x 76mm rounds



[HMAS Canberra firing 80 round burst - YouTube](#)

One of six Adelaide Class FFGs, HMAS Canberra's (II) armaments consisted of one 76mm rapid fire gun, Harpoon anti-ship missiles, Standard surface-to-air missiles, the Phalanx close in weapons system and two triple-mounted anti-submarine torpedo tubes.

The 76mm gun was the Oto-Melara 3"/62-caliber (76mm) rapid firing gun. Versions of this lightweight, automatic loading, rapid fire gun system for use against surface (sea and shore) and air targets saw service in more than 50 Navys world wide.

Technical data

Calibre:	3 inches / 76,2 mm	Traverse:	360°
Barrel length:	4,72 metres	Rate of fire:	85 rpm
Shell:	76 x 900 mm / 12,34 kilograms	Magazine:	80 rounds
Elevation:	15° to + 85°	Range:	16 km with standard ammunition



HMAS Canberra fires her 76mm gun on 8 October 2005 for the last time before decommissioning. RAN image

Women's Royal Australian Naval Service: Forty-Four Years' Service, 1941 to 1985

The following story published in 'Veterans Affairs' in August 1991 covers a service to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first women entering the RAN in April 1941. The regulations relating to the WRANS were repealed in 1985 when female personnel were integrated into the RAN.

WRANS mark their 50th anniversary

MEMORIES came flooding back for about 50 ex-WRANS at a Garden Island Naval Chapel ceremony in Sydney on June 2.

NSW Governor Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair, Mrs Shirley Sinclair, patron of the Ex-WRANS Association, and Rear Admiral David Holthouse attended with families of the ex-WRANS to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first women to enter the RAN on April 25, 1941, to be foundation members of the Women's Royal Australian Navy Service.

Dr G. Clayton, Principal Maritime Command RAN Chaplain, gave a sermon about the WRANS.

From 1941 to 1945, 3000 WRANS took over naval shore base jobs such as telegraphists, writers, stewardesses and cooks, releasing men to serve in the ships of the RAN.

The ex-WRANS remembered the late Mrs Florence McKenzie, the founder of the Women's



NSW Governor Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair and Rear Admiral David Holthouse with ex-WRANS after their 50th anniversary service at Garden Island Naval Chapel.

Emergency Signalling Corps and a past patron of the Ex-WRANS Association.

A page in the Garden Island Naval Chapel book was dedicated to Ruby Boye-Jones, who was made an honorary third

officer in the WRANS while serving as a coastwatcher in Vanikoro Island in the Solomons during World War II.

It was fitting that Rear Admiral Sinclair was at the dedication service. As Australian Defence

Force Academy Commandant with the then Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Mike Hudson, he chose Ruby to be one of the seven naval heroes to have ADFA cadet accommodation blocks named after them.

RUBY BOYE-JONES: Lone gem amid an ocean of strife

By ALAN ZAMMIT

SOON after the start of World War II, the Navy installed a powerful AWA tele-radio for communication between Vanikoro and Tulagi in the Solomon Islands.

The Vanikoro radio was being operated by a qualified telegraphist who indicated he wished to return to Australia to join the RAAF. Before departing, he taught a determined lady how to transmit weather reports and operate the radio in code while she learnt Morse Code from a book. Eric Feldt, the commander-in-charge of the coastwatcher movement, had already appointed Mr and Mrs Boye as members of his organisation.

Mrs Ruby Boye-Jones lived with her husband, Skov Boye, at Vanikoro, a small tropical island in the Santa Cruz group of the then British Solomon Islands where her husband managed a timber company. After Japan entered the war and its armed forces thrust southward from December 1941, most civilian Europeans in the Santa Cruz group left for Australia. However, because Mr and Mrs Boye realised the importance of Vanikoro in relation to coastwatching, and few white men knew more about the islands than Mr Boye, he volunteered with the island engineer, George, to remain.

When the evacuee ship arrived, Ruby refused to leave, announcing that she



Ruby Boye-Jones in 1944.

proposed to stay and operate her radio. As no replacement operator was available to relieve her, it was a courageous decision.

With the evacuation of the other Europeans from Vanikoro, Ruby and Skov took on many extra tasks. They had to act as

doctor, treating the sick, sometimes a wasted effort as the natives would take off the bandages and re-wrap the wounds with banana leaves. They extracted teeth and arbitrated disputes between the natives.

By April 1942, Japanese forces had captured Hong Kong, Malaya, Java, the Philippines and most islands to the north of the Solomons, as well as part of New Guinea.

On May 3, 1942, the Japanese landed at Tulagi (once the capital of the British Solomons) and held it until August 1942. The Boye family lived at Tulagi from 1928 until 1940.

After the Japanese landed at Tulagi, Charles Bignell, a Solomon Islands plantation owner, called at Vanikoro and warned Ruby and her husband that a Japanese ship was in the Santa Anna area.

Between May 4 and 8, 1942, the Battle of the Coral Sea took place. Ruby, at Vanikoro, some 700 miles away from the Coral Sea battle area, was sending out coded meteorological data and acted as an emergency relay station in communicating reports between coastwatching stations in the Solomons and Vila, the US Navy base receiving station in the New Hebrides.

• Turn to page 7

Submarine Search and Rescue

The recent visit by [MV Besant](#) (Submarine Intervention Gear Ship) to Garden Island, Sydney sparked an interest in current RAN submarine search and rescue capabilities. *Besant* along with her sister ship [MV Stoker](#) is operated by DMS Maritime for Defence. These vessels are named after the Commanding Officers of the RAN's First World War submarines AE1 and AE2 respectively.



MV Besant at Garden Island, Sydney, 19 May 2022. NHA image

Navy's current rescue system is based around a submersible vehicle, the [LR5](#), provided by Perth based JFD Australia, designed to be transported by sea, land or air to locate a disabled submarine and rescue its crew. This makes a close working relationship between Navy personnel and private companies essential so that they can meet the appropriate requirements and be ready to move at short notice.



The submarine rescue vessel LR5 is launched off the work deck of MV Stoker into the basin at Fleet Base-West for a systems test run during Exercise BLACK CARILLON 2016. RAN image

The maintenance of rescue capabilities is tested through conduct of an annual submarine search and rescue exercise, *Black Carillon*. This RAN exercise often involves international partners. Its goal being to demonstrate a capability to perform rescues from both RAN submarines and those of other nations. The most recent submarine abandonment exercise was conducted in late 2021.

Further Reading and Viewing

FHSM and SIA sponsored Webinar, Submarine Disasters and Survival, 7 August 2021, available via [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zzy7-5xfYlk&t=60s) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zzy7-5xfYlk&t=60s>

Nick Stewart, *Submarine Escape and Rescue: A Brief History*, published by Sea Power Centre-Australia, available at: <https://www.navy.gov.au/history/feature-histories/submarine-escape-and-rescue-brief-history>

Sea Power Centre-Australia, *Submarine Rescue Vehicles, LR5*, available at: <https://www.navy.gov.au/fleet/ships-boats-craft/submarines/submarine-rescue-vehicles>

Reconstruction of World War II Japanese Midget Submarine for the Australian War Memorial

Our thanks to Society Vice President John Jeremy AM for drawing attention to an [archived paper](#) about the restoration of the Australian War Memorial's (AWM) midget submarine sections. Restoration and preservation of the sections was completed as an apprentice project between 1985 and 1987. At the time John was Chief Executive Officer, Cockatoo Island Dockyard a position he held from 1981 to 1991, having started there as an apprentice ship draughtsman in 1960. The paper was jointly presented to the Royal Institution of Naval Architects by representatives of the AWM and Cockatoo Dockyard in 1989.

Restoration by Cockatoo Island Dockyard as an external AWM project was necessary as the scale was well beyond the capacity of the Museum. It was also essential, due to a less than satisfactory preservation treatment during the war years and deterioration over 42 years on display outside the AWM. Although referred to as a submarine the exhibit is a composite of the bow section of midget submarine 21 and the midship and stern section of midget submarine 14. The project was managed as a first year Apprentice training activity on a no profit basis.

It is important to note that the nomenclature for the individual midget submarines used in the paper is different to that used in other historical records of the attack. The names used in the paper are 14, A and 21. They relate to the more commonly used nomenclature as follows;

Midget 21: M-24 (lost off Northern Beaches)

Midget A: M-22 (sunk in Taylors Bay, Sydney)

Midget 14: M-27 (caught in anti-submarine net)

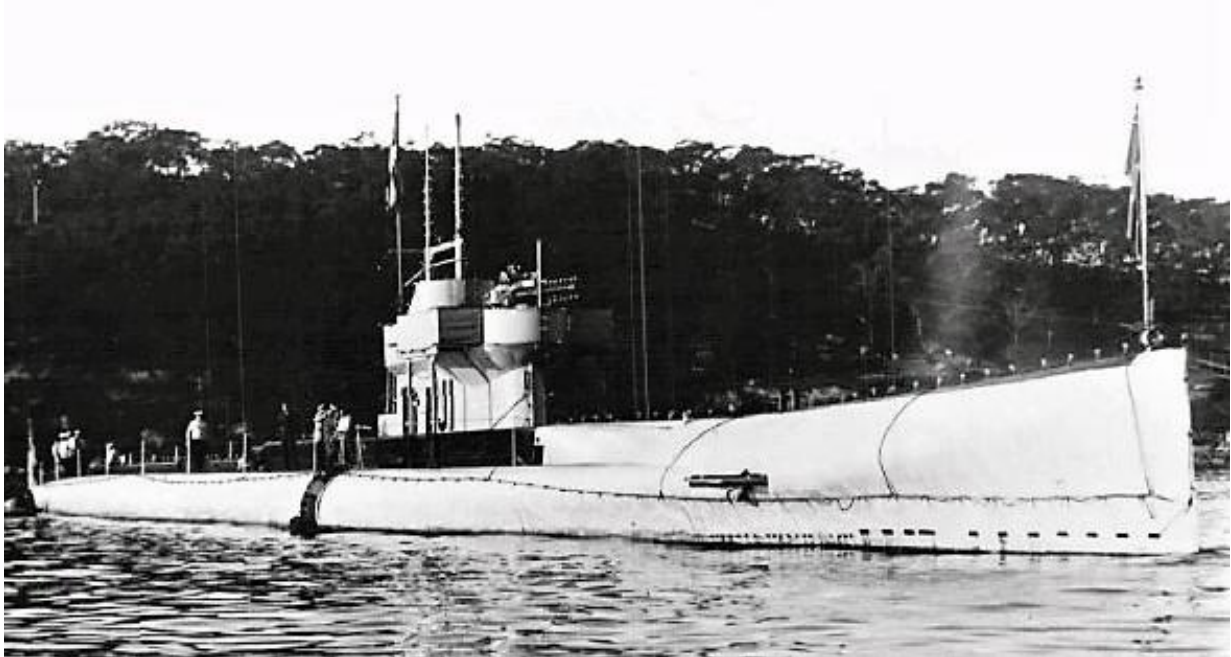
Additional confusion occurred due to the belief in 1942 that four submarines had entered harbour as recorded in the official report of the Rear Admiral in Charge of Sydney Harbour Defences at annex A of the paper.



Above, Sections of Japanese midget submarines M22 and M 27 following restoration by Cockatoo Dockyard apprentices 1987.

Left, Composite submarine ready for return to the Australian War Memorial in 1987. Images provided by John Jeremy

Photo of the Month



HMAS J1

Six Royal Navy J class submarines were offered to the Australian government after World War One. The six submarines and their depot ship left Britain on 8 April 1919, and sailed via Gibraltar, Malta, Suez, Aden, Colombo, Singapore, Thursday Island and Moreton Bay. They arrived in Sydney on 15 July 1919.

On arrival the need for a program of deep maintenance and battery replacement became urgent, given their arduous wartime service, limited maintenance, and breakdowns experienced on the voyage out. Short term repairs were made to all boats in late 1919, while *J3* and *J7* entered deep refits in early 1920 that were to last more than a year. In March 1921, it was calculated that refit costs had reached 73,500 pounds for *J3* and 110,861 pounds for *J7*. The Admiralty had previously advised that the annual operating costs for these boats was 28,300 pounds.

In April 1921, a report to the Naval Board gave the status of the six submarines as follows:

- *J1*, Sydney, Battery unsafe and must be replaced (could not dive).
- *J2*, Sydney, Heavy engine and battery defects, to enter refit when *J3* completed.
- *J3*, Sydney, Most defects made good, new batteries arrived Cockatoo and unpacked.
- *J4*, On Service, battery due for replacement December 1921.
- *J5*, On Service, battery due for replacement February 1922.
- *J7*, New battery due in May, defects will be made good by December 1921.

The heavy expenditure on submarines, poor materiel condition of the fleet, and general cutbacks in naval expenditures in the wake of the war made it clear about this time (mid-1921) that the flotilla would have to be reduced to reserve. A plan was drawn up in July with three boats remaining in service (*J3*, *J4*, and *J7*) with three laid up in reserve (*J1*, *J2*, and *J5*).

On 20 March, dredging at Flinders Naval Depot was complete and *J1*, *J4*, and *J5* were sailed around from Geelong and laid up. Shortly after, the government informed the RAN that a further 500,000 pound cut to the naval estimates would be made, leaving the Naval Board with no option but to lay up all six boats. There were a number of proposals to run on a cadre force at minimal expense with *J7*, the boat in the best condition, but these proposals were not taken up. All of the boats were progressively de-stored and sold off for disposal. Four of the submarines, *J1*, *J2*, *J4*, and *J5*, were scuttled in Bass Strait, approximately 4 kilometres (2.2nmi) west-southwest of the entrance to Port Phillip Bay, and are today popular dive sites. The remaining two submarines were scuttled as breakwaters inside Port Phillip Bay, with *J3* located near Swan Island in Queenscliff. *J7* was the last to go after more proposals to recommission her for training. She was routinely used to provide electrical power to Flinders Naval Depot. However, she was eventually disposed of in 1927 and scuttled of the Sandringham Yacht Club in 1930.

News in Brief

HMAS Parramatta Rescue

Royal Australian Navy safely evacuated a sick merchant mariner from the bulk carrier *Sea Angel* on May 2, about 200 nautical miles off the south-east coast of Victoria. Due to the distance offshore and limited daylight, civilian emergency services were not able to conduct a medevac safely and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority Response Centre requested assistance from the frigate HMAS *Parramatta*.



Parramatta's MH-60R Seahawk helicopter winched the patient from the deck of *Sea Angel* for transport to Merimbula airport where he was met by the NSW Ambulance Service.

Commanding Officer HMAS *Parramatta*, Commander David Murphy, said the ship was well prepared to conduct the evacuation. "On this occasion the vast distance from shore and limited day light meant that civilian emergency services helicopters were unable to reach the *Sea Angel*, he said." The Navy's Seahawk helicopter can fly at night and in all weather conditions.

"We continuously train and maintain a high degree of readiness for these types of emergencies. We're deeply committed to the safety of our fellow mariners and we wish the unwell sailor a speedy recovery." HMAS *Parramatta*, which is based at Garden Island in Sydney, was off the coast of Victoria at the time conducting a period of routine certification training.

HMAS Ararat Rescue

The crew of HMAS *Ararat* rescued a Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) crew last Saturday after the police vessel was reported missing.

Commanding Officer of *Ararat*, Lieutenant Commander David Martinussen, said the rescue was a collective effort between partners.

"I am very proud of how professionally the team in *Ararat* responded to assist our friends in need," Lieutenant Commander Martinussen said. "We assessed the situation and quickly closed the search area from over 200 nautical miles (370km) away."



The rescued RSIPF personnel and other passengers on board were in good health when they were found. They were transferred to *Ararat* where they were provided with fresh meals and water during the journey back to Korovou, Shortland Island.

The RSIPF vessel was put under tow and offloaded on return to the island.

HMAS *Ararat* is providing maritime surveillance support in the area at the request of the Solomon Islands Government.

New Australian Defence Vessel, ADV *Reliant*

In early February 2022 the Australian Government acquired a new ship ADV *Reliant* which is a former Platform Supply Vessel (PSV), originally named *Horizon Star* built in Norway in 2017 for Horizon Maritime, a Canadian company involved in the support of offshore industry.

Reliant displaces 5600 tonnes, is 102.8 metres long, beam is 20 metres, draft is 6.3 metres with a speed of 14.6 knots. Berthing is available for 60 persons. The ship is equipped with a 150-tonne salvage crane, a moon pool, an emergency towing winch and a helicopter deck capable of taking large helicopters.

The ship is very similar to the Australian Border Force vessel ABFC *Ocean Shield*, which is used as an offshore patrol vessel. A similar ship, HMNZS *Manuanui* is also in service with the New Zealand Navy. *Manuanui* is a multi role offshore support vessel, used in diving and hydrographic support roles.

The purchase price of AUD 93.4 million included \$5.5 million for dry docking, in the Canary Islands and \$1.2 million for management services to Horizon Management Services.



MV *Horizon Star*, now MV *Reliant* at IJmuiden, Netherlands, 2 June 2021. Image by [Vessel Finder](#).

The Governments intended role for *Reliant* is as the Pacific Support Vessel, under the Pacific Step- up commitment first highlighted in a 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper. The Pacific Step-up commits Australian support to its Pacific neighbours. ADV *Reliant* is the “large, hulled support vessel” which was part of the commitment. As such the ship will be based semi permanently in the Pacific with Brisbane nominated as the official base port close to stocks of humanitarian relief supplies. The employment of *Reliant* for humanitarian relief operations will free up the RAN’s larger amphibious ships and will be more economical.

As with many government decisions, especially defence purchases, there are criticisms. In this case it

appears they may be valid. The first criticism is that the purchase was not announced to the public. This means there was no open tender or consideration of options. The purchase was only revealed during the Senate Estimates process on the 6 April, 2022. The purchase was finalised in February 2022 but not announced until it had been completed and disclosed only inadvertently in Senate Estimates.

Another criticism was a change to the original plan, announced in 2018, for the ship to be built in Western Australia. No effort was made to fulfil that commitment. Instead, 4 years later an “emergency acquisition” was made with no tender or discussion. As Brent Clark, CEO of Australian Industry and Defence network commented, this decision “was quite simply incredibly disappointing”. He also said “if government or Defence had been able to actually go straight into a contract and look at how they would source this vessel in Australia, we would be very close to having this vessel in the water today anyway”.

Further criticism has come from Defence commentators who argue that the ship is unsuitable for the role. These criticisms include; the flight deck is up high above the bridge and is not connected to any deck where heavy loads could be placed, making it suitable only for mail and personnel delivery. It may be possible to use the large crane to transfer loads to the deck, but this appears clumsy and inconvenient. The heavy crane is well suited to salvage work but is overkill for any humanitarian work and the [moon pool](#) serves no useful purpose for the new role.

The biggest criticism is that the ship, draws one metre more water than a Hobart Class Air Warfare Destroyer. This will preclude close inshore support to many Pacific islands. On the plus side the ship appears suitable for survey work and salvage operations. Another possible role is as a test ship for new mine countermeasures equipment, before the new class of replacements for the current Huon class is ordered. This would not be the first time the media has got it wrong, and the behind-the-scenes plans were better than the public knew.

Currently manned by a crew of Horizon Maritime personnel *Reliant* is enroute to Australia having transited the Panama Canal in late May. No information has yet been announced by the Government on entry into service or crewing arrangements.

Occasional Papers

Newly posted and available through the Member website page.

- Occasional Paper 138 - The mystery sword of the Japanese midget submarines by Dr Tom Lewis
- Occasional Paper 139 - Navy Veteran Robert “John” Dowey farewelled after a life well lived... Just don’t serve him canned herring! By Lieutenant Daren K Cherian RAN.

Papers posted one year ago and now available to all.

- Occasional Paper 112 -The Hollywood Fleet in Sydney Harbour
- Occasional Paper 113 - A Sailors Life in the Mediterranean, 1940-41 Pictorial Record

This Month in History

June 1881	HMS NELSON was flagship of the Imperial Squadron on the Australia Station. Two warships of the same name were in Australian waters at this period. The second HMS NELSON, (1st rate), later reduced to a single deck ship, and re-named HMVS NELSON, was flagship of the Victorian Navy.
June 1899	HMS PIONEER later HMAS PIONEER, was launched at Chatham, England.
June 1918	HMA Ships SYDNEY and MELBOURNE, were on patrol in the Heligoland Bight with British warships, (as part of the Harwich Force), searching for German minesweepers and destroyers, when they came under attack from two German aircraft who dropped five bombs near the ships. SYDNEY and MELBOURNE each had a Sopwith Camel fighter onboard, which could be launched from a specially built revolving platform. The aircraft from MELBOURNE, (piloted by Flight Lieutenant Gibson, RAF), lost sight of the German aircraft he attacked when it flew into a large cloud bank. However, Flight Lieutenant A. C. Sharwood, RAF, who was piloting the aircraft from SYDNEY, pursued the other aircraft for over sixty miles. Sharwood managed to hit the enemy aircraft several times, and saw it go into a nose dive before he was forced to break off the attack, when he in turn was attacked by another German fighter. One of Sharwood's guns jammed, and he was forced to break off the attack on the second aircraft and make his way back to the Allied ships. He eventually put his aircraft down near HMS SHARPSHOOTER. The aircraft started to sink, and he was rescued by a boat from the destroyer. His aircraft was then salvaged by HMS CANTERBURY.
June 1926	101 Flight, RAAF, was re-formed to operate six Supermarine Seagull Mark II amphibian aircraft, for naval co-operation duties.
June 1937	HMA Ships SUCCESS, STALWART, TASMANIA, and TATTOO were sold for scrap. All four ships had been built in the United Kingdom towards the end of World War I, and gifted to the RAN in 1920. They had been decommissioned in the early 1930's due to the financial constraints imposed upon the RAN due to the Great Depression, and been placed into reserve.
June 1941	HMAS NIZAM and HM Ships NAIAD, LEANDER, JAGUAR, and KINGSTON, engaged the French destroyers GUEPARD and VALMY, in a running battle 10 miles north of Beirut, Syria, (now Lebanon). The enemy vessels withdrew into port.
June 1959	The Daring class destroyer HMAS VAMPIRE, (CAPT E. J. Peel, DSC, RAN), was commissioned at Sydney. VAMPIRE was laid down in Cockatoo Island Dockyard Sydney, on 1 July 1952, and launched on 27 October 1956. Lady Slim, (Wife of the Governor-General Sir William Slim), performed the launching ceremony. VAMPIRE was decommissioned on 13 August 1986, and transferred to the Australian National Maritime Museum in 1991, as a permanent exhibit.
June 1966	HMAS VAMPIRE and the Danish ship EMILIE MAERSK, collided in the Bangkok River, Thailand. As damage to the destroyer required dockyard assistance, VAMPIRE set course for Singapore at 23 knots, arriving in Singapore Dockyard on Saturday 11th June.
June 1977	HMAS MELBOURNE launched two of her Wessex helicopters, each carrying a World War II guns, from a position off Crete, and delivered the pieces to the newly built Cretan-Australian War Memorial at Stavromenos. Fifteen minutes later the helicopters returned with a section of the band which played the National Anthems of both nations at the ceremony.
June 1984	A flight of Grumman Tracker aircraft flew over the decommissioned HMAS MELBOURNE to mark the end of fixed wing aircraft in the RAN's Fleet Air Arm.
June 1999	HMAS JERVIS BAY, (high speed catamaran), was commissioned in Hobart. The vessel was a civilian high speed catamaran leased from the builders, (INCAT), for a two year period. She was based in Darwin and used extensively to ferry troops and equipment to and from Dili, (East Timor), following the arrival of the International Force, (INTERFET), which had been deployed to restore peace to the troubled region. Known fondly as the 'Dili-Express', she was returned to her owners in 2001.
June 2005	HMAS Tobruk (II) returned to Sydney after operations in the Middle East region under Operation CATALYST. HMAS Tobruk transported 20 Australian Army ASLAV vehicles for operations in Iraq.
June 2005	HMAS Cessnock II decommissioned
June 2017	The ADV Cape Inscription was commissioned at Fleet Base West. The two Cape-class patrol boats for the navy were built by Austal under a AU\$63 million project and leased for 2 years

The entries selected for publication this month are randomly generated from an extensive database of historic naval events. The absence of a significant event is in no way intended to cause offence. The objective is to provide a cross section of events across time. The Society's website enables you to look up any event in RAN history. Searches can be made by era, date look up or today. The latter appears on the home page. The others are accessed via the Research page. <https://www.navyhistory.org.au/research/on-this-day/>

Society Matters

On This Day: Enhancement: New Google Earth View

Most readers will be familiar with the 'On This Day' service provided on the Society's website. Based on Lew Lind's book, 'Navy Day by Day: Historic Naval Events in Australia and Abroad' entries can be accessed from either the [home page](#) or [research page](#). In the period since 1997 when Lew's book was published Society volunteers have continued to update the database. This task is currently being performed by David Stratton. Indeed, David has gone the extra mile and developed a 'Google Earth' presentation of key events in Australia's rich naval history.



You can now surf the [world map](#) and click on an icon which will reveal information about the historic event which occurred at the location. This project is 'work in progress' with entries still being added but is sufficiently populated for you to enjoy the new presentation.

Australian White Ensign Dedication: 19 June 2022

Readers of the [March 2022 edition](#) of the Naval Historical Review magazine will recall a story entitled, 'I Name this Ship'. The story focused on the Parish of St. John's Church of England in Birchgrove, New South Wales and its Rector, the Reverend Arthur George Rix who officiated at 62 ship launchings of ships built by Cockatoo Dockyard, Mort's Dock, and Poole and Steele during World War 2.

While compiling that story, Walter Burroughs discovered that the Australian White Ensign (AWE) presented to the church by Her Royal Highnesses the Duchess of Gloucester during an April 1946 service to commemorate the achievements of the Royal Australian Navy had deteriorated badly and could no longer be displayed. He subsequently sought approval from the Chief of Navy for the Society to present a new AWE to St. John's. This special event to dedicate the new AWE and decommission the old will occur on 19 June 2022 with a social event to follow.

All our readers are invited to join us. Details and an invitation can be found on the website [Events page](#). We look forward to seeing you there.