



Call the Hands



Issue No. 82

February 2024

From the President

Welcome to this 81st edition of *Call the Hands* and accompanying occasional papers. Both occasional papers issued this month were written by Society Vice President, John Jeremy AM. Many will know John through his books on the Cockatoo Island Dockyard where he spent most of his career. John held several positions in the planning, technical and production areas before being appointed Managing Director/Chief Executive in 1981. He held that position until 1991 when the Dockyard was closed.

[Occasional paper 178](#) entitled *A Short History of Building 6* is about the dockyard's Mould Loft which played an essential part in the shipbuilding process. The paper explains the process of fairing the ship's lines and producing the necessary full-size information for the construction of many parts of a ship's structure. That is, lofting is the link between a ship's plans and fabrication.

[Occasional paper 179](#) tells the story behind a World War 1 vintage Yarrow three-drum destroyer boiler which remains on Cockatoo Island having escaped being sold when the dockyard was decommissioned. Described in the paper are the circumstances of Australia's acquisition and disposal of five S-class destroyers operated by the RAN across the difficult decades of the 1920s and 30s and why one of their boilers was acquired for Cockatoo Island.

[Occasional paper 177](#) on the origins of tennis in Australia was published on 1 January 2024. It was intended to recognize the 150th anniversary of tennis in Australia and generate discussion ahead of the Australian Open. As newspaper reporting on this matter did not generate significant feedback, the hypothesis presented, that tennis was first played on Garden Island, Sydney can be considered very likely.

On page 8 of this edition, we review a recently published book by Society member and former volunteer Gordon Ramsay. This book provides excellent advice for all but particularly young adults. Interestingly, it uses examples of application of the Principles of War to demonstrate the advice offered throughout the book.

Finally, and sadly, February marks two significant anniversaries. These are those of HMAS Perth (I) lost in action, 28 February-1 March 1942 and HMAS Voyager (II), lost at sea on 10 February 1964. We note the remarkable life of the last Perth survivor, Frank McGovern who passed away in May 2023 aged 103.

On the sixtieth anniversary this year, survivors will gather in the Voyager Mess at HMAS Creswell. The senior sailors Mess at Creswell was [renamed](#) 'Voyager' in 2023 to ensure Navy's worst peacetime disaster is remembered.

I trust you will find this edition of interest.

Kind regards,
David Michael



Naval Historical Society
of Australia

Naval Historical Society
Garden Island Defence Precinct
Building 25
Locked Bag 7005
Liverpool NSW 1871

Web www.navyhistory.au
Email secretary@navyhistory.au
Phone +61 2 9537 0034
ABN 71 094 118 434
Patron Chief of Navy

In this Edition

Page	
1	From the President
2	US Navy's Constellation-Class Frigate Program
4	Significant Anniversaries: February 2024
6	Operation Hailstone: Attack on Truk Island, 16–18 February 1944
7	David Collins, first legal officer for the English Colony in New South Wales
8	New Book: Gordon's Nuggets: The Principles of War and How They Help in Love, Life & Work
9	Photo of the Month
10	This Month in History
11	HMAS Duchess
12	Video of the Month
12	Occasional Papers
12	Website of Interest
12	Society Baseball Cap and You Tube Channel

US Navy's Constellation-Class Frigate Program

In a recent post the [US Naval Institute News](#) reported that the US Navy's latest frigate acquisition program was behind schedule and that the first frigate would be delayed at least a year. The first of class, USS Constellation (FFG-62) is now scheduled to be delivered by Fincantieri Marinette Marine in 2027. The schedule slippage is due in part to workforce issues in the shipyard but also design issues. The Constellation class multi-mission guided-missile frigate is based on the European multipurpose frigates (FREMM), already in service with the French and Italian navies.

Experience in Australia has shown that taking a proven design and modifying it can lead to significant redesign effort at great risk to cost and schedule. In the case of the Constellation Program the delay is due in large part to workforce shortfalls at the Wisconsin yard where *Constellation* is being built. USNI News reported that 'The modification of the design altered almost every drawing of the FREMM and required review from NAVSEA.'

Program Management's description of rectification measures to be taken was as follows.

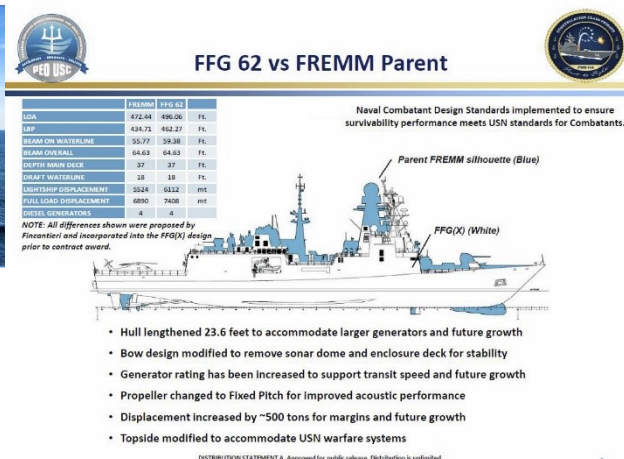
"We do have challenge in the schedule. We are working that. Fincantieri has communicated to us of challenges within the schedule," Bosak told USNI News.

"We are doing our analysis, as the Navy does, of doing deep dives of causes and effects and various different levers of which we can pull within that shipyard," he added. "And we need to, as a program, work with our leadership, kind of figure out what we want to do. And from that, we will make that assessment as to what the actual schedule impact is of where we are. And that effort is ongoing."



Above. Constellation Class Frigate, artist rendering (Fincantieri Marine Group) courtesy of US Department of Defence

Right. FFG62 vs FREMM Parent Design. Navy briefing slide provided to CRS and Congressional Budget Office (CBO) by Navy Office of Legislative Affairs, August 27, 2021, with accompanying Navy information paper dated August 18, 2021.



Constellation Class Frigate Program Overview

The Constellation-class multi-mission guided-missile frigate is based on the European multipurpose frigates (FREMM), already in service with the French and Italian navies. In April 2020, the US Navy awarded the detail design and construction contract for 10 ships to Marinette Marine Corporation in Marinette, Wisconsin. The program had lead ship construction commencing in fiscal year 2022.

Description

The Constellation-class is the next generation small surface combatant designed to be an agile, multi-mission warship, capable of operations in both blue-water and littoral environments, providing increased combat-credible forward presence and to provide a military advantage at sea.

Features

FFG 62 is to be capable of conducting air warfare, anti-submarine warfare, surface warfare, and electromagnetic maneuver warfare. Systems will include an Enterprise Air Surveillance Radar Baseline Ten Aegis Combat System, a Vertical Launch System, communications systems, countermeasures, and added capability in the electronic warfare/information operations area with design flexibility for future growth.

General Characteristics	Sensors, Weapons and Machinery Systems
<p>Builder: Marinette Marine Corporation Length: 496.1 feet Beam: 64.6 feet Displacement: 7,291 t Draft: 18 feet</p> <p>Principal Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• LOA – 496.1 ft (151.2 mt)• Overall Beam – 64.6 ft (19.69 mt)• Design Draft – 18 ft (5.48 mt)• Weight Estimate – Light Ship: 6,016 t, Full Load: 7,291 t• Installed Power 48,679 hp• Service Life 25 yrs <p>Ships: Constellation (FFG 62) Congress (FFG 63) Chesapeake (FFG 64) Lafayette (FFG 65)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combat System – AEGIS B/L 10• Radar – AN/SPY-6(V)3• Underwater Suite – AN/SQQ-89(V)16• MK 48 GWS• 1x MK 110 57mm Gun• 32-cell MK41 VLS• 16xNSM Weapon System• 1x MK 49 RAM Block III Point Defence Missile System• MK 53 MOD 9 NULKA Decoy Launching System• AN-SLQ-32(V)6 CM (SEWIP) BLK II EW System• Variable Depth Sonar, Multi-function Towed Array• Machinery: Combined Diesel-Electric and Gas (CODLAG) Propulsion Plant (LM2500+G4)• Aviation: 1xMH-60 Romeo, 1xMQ-8C UAV• 2xRHIBs

Sources:

USNI News, available at: <https://news.usni.org/2024/01/11/first-constellation-frigate-delayed-at-least-a-year-schedule-assessment-ongoing#:~:text=%E2%80%93%20The%20first%20Constellation-class%20guided-missile%20frigate%20will%20deliver,yard%20where%20it%E2%80%99s%20built%2C%20USNI%20News%20has%20learned.>

America's Navy, U.S. Department of Defence, available at: <https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2633250/constellation-class-ffg/>

Global Defense Corp, available at: <https://www.globaldefensecorp.com/2022/01/19/u-s-navy-to-start-building-constellation-class-frigate-this-year/>

Significant Anniversaries: February 2024

HMAS Voyager (II): Lost at sea on 10 February 1964

Monday 10 February 2024 marks the 60th anniversary of the tragic loss of HMAS Voyager (II), following a collision with the aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne II, Australia's worst peacetime naval disaster.

Voyager had sailed from Sydney to Jervis Bay on 6 February 1964 for a series of post re-fit trials and exercises with HMAS Melbourne. On the night of 10 February *Melbourne* was conducting night flying exercises 19 miles off the coast of Jervis Bay, with the *Voyager* as rescue destroyer. It was a moonless night and both ships had only navigational and operational lights in use.

At 8.56pm the ships collided, and the *Voyager* was cut in two. The forward section sank soon after the collision and the after section some three hours later. The crew of the *Melbourne* recovered survivors from the water and the after section of the *Voyager*. Later two search and rescue vessels, HMAS Air Nymph and HMAS Air Sprite from shore establishment HMAS Creswell assisted and succeeded in rescuing 70 men. RAN helicopters and minesweepers were also dispatched to assist with the search for survivors. Of the 314 men aboard HMAS Voyager, 82 died, 14 officers (including the commanding officer), 67 sailors and one civilian dock worker.



Commissioned on 12 February 1957 HMAS Voyager was the first of three Daring Class Destroyers built for the RAN. She was followed by *Vendetta* (II) and *Vampire* (II) commissioned in November 1958 and June 1959 respectively.

HMAS Voyager in 1961 in company with HMAS Melbourne.



Voyager Memorial Park in Huskisson Jervis Bay, courtesy Shoalhaven City Council

HMAS Perth (I) Lost in action: 28 February-1 March 1942

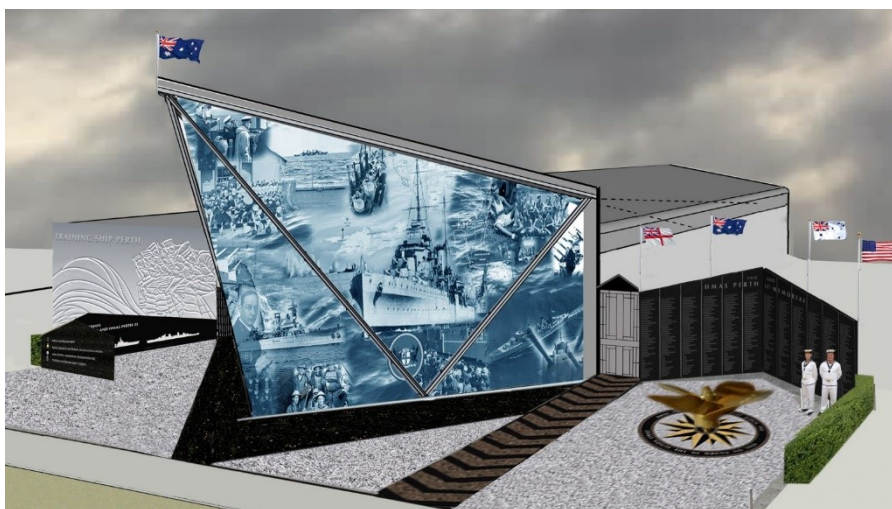
In February 1942, HMAS Perth joined the Allied Fleet defending the Dutch East Indies, (now Indonesia) and saw action in the Battle of the Java Sea on 27 February 1942. HMAS Perth and USS Houston, having survived that battle, were ordered south. Sailing in company, they encountered a large Japanese invasion fleet in the Sunda Strait on the night of 28 February. Despite gallant efforts both *Perth* and *Houston* succumbed to superior forces and were sunk shortly after midnight on the 1 March.

At the time of her loss *Perth's* ship's company totaled 681, comprising 671 naval personnel, six RAAF personnel (for operating and servicing the ships aircraft) and four civilian canteen staff. Her ships company numbers were slightly increased by several men who had been destined to join HMAS Hobart, on 24 February, but who were unable to be transferred to that ship due to an air raid on Tanjong Priok. 347 naval personnel (including Captain Waller), three RAAF personnel and three canteen staff did not survive the sinking. 328 men survived the sinking being 324 naval personnel, three RAAF personnel and one civilian canteen assistant: 17-year-old Alfred Hawkins.

Four naval personnel are then known to have died ashore, on Java, without having been taken prisoner. A further 106 men died in captivity (105 naval personnel and one RAAF airman). Four sailors were recovered from captivity in September 1944 when they were among prisoners of war rescued by a US submarine after the sinking of a Japanese cargo ship. After the end of hostilities another 214 men (211 naval, two RAAF and civilian canteen assistant Hawkins) were recovered from Japanese Prisoner of War camps and repatriated to Australia.

The last surviving member of HMAS Perth's Ships Company, Frank McGovern crossed the bar aged 103 on 24 May 2023. His remarkable story of survival and support for surviving shipmates post war, is available on the [HMAS Perth \(I\) Memorial website](https://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-perth-i). In three and half years, from February 1942 to September 1945, Frank endured two horrendous naval battles, the sinking of two ships, the horrors of being a prisoner of war on the Thai-Burma railway and forced labour in Japan. His experiences and fortitude were unique as was his service to fellow survivors. In the aftermath of his war and POW experiences Frank found it difficult to assimilate with people who had not shared his experiences, so he formed the HMAS Perth and Naval POW's Association to provide ongoing companionship and support to each other.

Further Reading: Sea Power Centre Australia, HMAS Perth, available at, <https://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-perth-i>



Artists Impression of the HMAS Perth (I) Memorial under development at East Fremantle WA, image courtesy of HMAS Perth (I) Memorial Foundation Inc

Operation Hailstone: Attack on Truk Island, 16–18 February 1944

Truk in the Caroline Islands had been the main base for Imperial Japanese Navy vessels operating in the South and Central Pacific prior to World War 2. For the first two years of the War Truk was considered unassailable by US Forces. However, by early 1944 the US Navy carrier force in the Pacific had grown in such numbers that an attack became possible. Thus, in February 1944, Task Force 58 planned an attack code named Operation *Hailstone* despite the presence of Japanese land-based aircraft on the island. Strategically, an attack on Truk was also important, as the garrison could interfere with US operations in the Marshall Islands.



Map courtesy of Great Escapes Diving Holidays

A force of five fleet carriers (*Enterprise*, *Yorktown*, *Essex*, *Intrepid*, and *Bunker Hill*), four light carriers (*Belleau Wood*, *Cabot*, *Monterey*, and *Cowpens*), seven battleships, and a full complement of cruisers and destroyers was assembled along with 500 aircraft. Forewarned of the attack most Japanese heavy vessels were withdrawn to Palau a week earlier. Several light warships, merchant vessels, and transports remained.

Ahead of the attack a small group of Japanese aircraft struck the US task group on 16 February. Except for a bomb hit on the battleship *Iowa* causing light damage, the Japanese fighters were repelled with relative ease. A nighttime torpedo bomber attack also damaged the carrier *Intrepid*, killing 11 and forcing her return to Pearl Harbor and then San Francisco for repair.

Between 17 and 18 February, aerial strikes, surface engagements, and submarine attacks were launched on Japanese targets on and near Truk. 270 aircraft which had previously harassed US shipping were lost. The importance of aircraft operating from Truk was reaffirmed on 20 February when IJN aircraft from Palau and Rabaul were transferred to Truk.



Japanese shipping under air attack in Truk Lagoon, as seen from a USS *Intrepid* (CV-11) aircraft on the first day of raids, 17 February 1944.

Japanese naval losses were also significant. Many ships were destroyed in harbour while most were intercepted at sea. A total of 191,000 tons of shipping, which included three light cruisers (*Agano*, *Katori*, and *Naka*), six destroyers (*Oite*, *Fumizuki*, *Maikaze*, *Hagio*, *Isogu*, and *Tachikaze*), three smaller warships, two submarines, and 32 transports and merchant ships, were destroyed. American losses were light with casualties including those killed before the main strike on 16 February and 21 aircraft lost to anti-aircraft fire.

As a result of the attack Truk was devastated, cut off from supplies and did not contribute to Japan's war effort again. The garrison remained until wars end suffering near starvation until Japan's surrender.

Further Reading

US Naval History and Heritage Command, Operation Hailstone—Carrier Raid on Truk Island, 17–18 February 1944, available at: <https://www.history.navy.mil/about-us/leadership/director/directors-corner/h-grams/h-gram-026/H-026-3.html>

David Collins, first legal officer for the English Colony in New South Wales

The names of numerous First Fleet naval and marine officers will be familiar to many Australians. These include individuals such as Arthur Phillip, William Bradley, Henry Ball, William Dawes and Robert Ross with their legacy being recorded in the names of landmarks around Sydney Harbour and buildings and streets in the state capitals and other cities.

One such officer was Captain David Collins, Marines who was the first Judge Advocate in the colony of New South Wales. In 1786 he was commissioned deputy judge advocate of the new colony and likewise, by Admiralty warrant, of the marine detachment commanded by Major Ross. Collins was responsible, under the governor, for the colony's entire legal establishment. He issued all writs, summonses, and processes, retained certain fees, and with one other justice of the peace formed the bench of magistrates.



Lieutenant-Colonel David Collins, c. 1802, unknown artist Engraving

Collins, who had utmost respect for Captain Arthur Phillip remained after Phillip's departure in December 1792 to provide continuity for Governor Hunter. He eventually returned to England in August 1796. He returned to Australia in 1803 after being commissioned lieutenant governor of a proposed new dependency under the governor of New South Wales. This was to be a new settlement in Bass Strait, first in Port Phillip but shifted by Collins to the Derwent River in Van Diemen's Land after finding the former location unsuitable. Collins died in office on 24 March 1810. His full biography is available via the [Australian Dictionary of Biography](#).

The Collins biography records that 'Six days later the fleet's transfer to Sydney Cove was completed and the business of settlement began. On 7 February the government was formally inaugurated, Collins reading the relevant Act, commissions and letters patent.'

Noting this historic moment in the history of Australia and recent Australia Day celebrations, Society researchers searched for speeches made on both 26 January and 7 February 1788 to no avail. However, they did find commentary on this matter on the National Library of Australia [website](#). The Library notes that in his book [The History of New South Wales](#), Roderick Flanagan states on page 29 that, on January 26, "the principal officers and others assembled round the flag-staff, drank the king's health and success to the settlement". A speech quoted in Flanagan's book was supposedly made on 7 February 1788.

From a military perspective it is quite easy to appreciate that the priorities on 26 January 1788 were maneuvering ships of the Fleet to their anchorages, planning the landing of stores and later 1300 people (approx) precluded time for a significant proclamation ceremony including speeches. It is understandable that Governor Phillip chose to formally inaugurate his government at a later date on 7 February 1788.



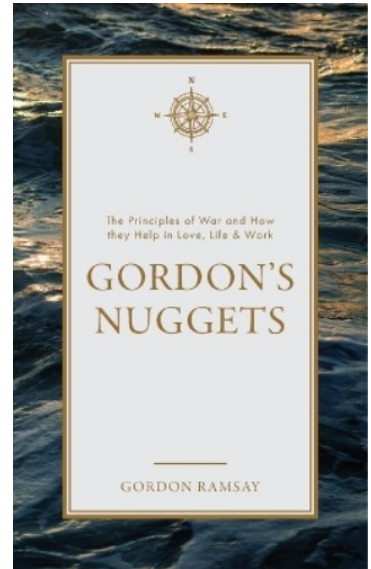
"The Founding of Australia. By Capt. Arthur Phillip R.N. Sydney Cove, Jan. 26th 1788" by Algernon Talmage RA. Image Source: State Library New South Wales.

New Book: Gordon's Nuggets: The Principles of War and How They Help in Love, Life & Work

Gordon Ramsay, a retired naval officer, management consultant and member of the Society, recently fulfilled a long-held goal and published his manifesto on how one might lead a fulfilling and successful life. His work, *Gordon's Nuggets* combines all the experience of his life with lessons from a multitude of sources and is in words of the publishers below, 'it is a kind of cook book - for life'. Perhaps a book all young people starting out in their career or small business should read.

Short Review

Well-read and enjoying challenges, Gordon Ramsay reveled in the psychology of business and turning businesses around that had lost their way became his forte. His book is full of many thoughtful and often amusing anecdotes covering the full spectrum of his "Nuggets" in which he expands upon the concept of leadership learned in the navy with the psychological understanding emphasized in management training schools. He finally ties this together with practical anecdotes to demonstrate the effectiveness of these concepts skillfully using examples from the likes of Winston Churchill and Harry Truman to the contemporary Bill Gates and Steve Jobs.



The book is in three parts; "Personal" "Leadership and Management" and unusually, Part 3 is entitled "Principles of War". The reason for this lies in Gordon's posting as a warfare instructor at HMAS Watson during his naval career. Gordon became an "ardent proponent of the Principles of War as guidelines for success in life as well as war" and he describes Admiral Lord Nelson's use of the Principles during his amazing career as an example of their application.

Publishers Description

This is a book people might read because it relates time-honoured and field-tested values and principles to the trials and challenges of everyday life; just as importantly it speaks the lessons of those principles in the kind voice of a man who has taught them and tested them in military life and then over long years employed them in his life and in his successful practice as a management consultant. Here are values you can trust, interpreted by a human you can trust. You'd read this for its hard-won wisdom and its author's gentle humanity and long life's experience. This is a rainy afternoon by a fire; this is not a lecture or a call to arms. This is NOT the other Gordon Ramsay. But it is a kind of cook book - for life, not for the kitchen.



Officiating at the book launch in December 2023 was Rear Admiral the Hon. Peter Sinclair, AC, AO. The then Commander Sinclair served in HMAS Duchess as commanding officer with Gordon as his executive officer in 1970/71.

The book is now available through the Society's [website shop](#) and all good booksellers.

Printed including postage to an Australian address: \$35
Printed including postage to an overseas address: \$50

Photo of the Month



RAN Hawker Sea Fury FB.Mk.11, WH587 / 105

This Hawker Sea Fury was manufactured in 1951 and was delivered to the RAN where it served as "WH587" from 1952 till 1963.

The Sea Fury was a British fighter aircraft designed and manufactured by Hawker Aircraft Limited and was one of the fastest production single reciprocating engine aircraft built. Development began in 1943, for the Royal Air Force (RAF), with the aircraft initially named the Fury and based on the then in-service Typhoon and Tempest fighters also built by Hawker.

At the end of the war the RAF cancelled their order; however, the Royal Navy (RN) considered the aircraft as a suitable replacement for its now obsolete carrier borne fighters. Development of the now named Sea Fury proceeded, and the first production model flew in September 1946 and by early 1947 the aircraft were in operational service with the RN Fleet Air Arm. The first 25 RAN Sea Fury's were embarked in HMAS Sydney in April 1949 and allocated to 805 Squadron. A second Sea Fury Squadron (808 Squadron) was formed in April 1950 and conducted training at sea in *Sydney* or from the Naval Air Station at Nowra.

The Sea Fury's began to be phased out of service in 1955-56 as the jet engine De Havilland Sea Venom began to enter RAN service. 805 Squadron was decommissioned on 26 March 1958; the Sea Fury's making a final farewell flight over Sydney Harbour on 18 March.

The remaining Sea Fury aircraft were sold during the period 1959 – 1963 and a few were used for fire-fighting training at Nowra in the early 1960's. 724 and 725 Squadrons operated some Sea Fury's as training aircraft with the last recorded flight in October 1962.

Full list of RAN Sea Fury aircraft here [Hawker Sea Fury \(adf-serials.com.au\)](http://Hawker%20Sea%20Fury%20(adf-serials.com.au))

This Month in History

February 1861	A naval brigade of 74 officers and ratings from HMS FAWN, (screw corvette), was dispatched from Sydney with a military contingent to put down lawlessness amongst miners at Lambing Flats, NSW.
February 1893	HMQS PALUMA floated free from Brisbane Botanical Gardens after being stranded by record floods in the Brisbane River.
February 1916	While HMAS PSYCHE was visiting Port Swettenham (Kelang) tensions aboard ship came to a head and seven stokers refused duty, an action that eventually led to their respective court martials. There were several issues that led to this incident: <i>Psyche</i> was an old ship with little to alleviate the difficult conditions experienced in the tropics; the long and monotonous hours spent on patrol; an intensive training program; the malaise which affected the crew almost from commissioning; but the one thing which eventually brought these tensions to the surface was food. Complaints about the food on board were common virtually from the time <i>Psyche</i> left Australian waters. Tinned fish, green or rotten meat and rotten eggs were all too common in <i>Psyche</i> 's mess with one stoker testifying that the food he himself obtained whilst in port was of a better quality than that served up by the mess. At 10pm on 12 February, Stoker Albert Hummerston refused duty in protest at the standard of food on board and was consequently placed under sentry's charge. Over the course of the evening six more stokers refused duty in support of their shipmate and all were consequently placed under sentry's charge. All seven were found guilty of willful disobedience of a lawful command at their respective courts-martial and received sentences ranging from 12 to 24 months imprisonment as well as dismissal from the RAN.
February 1917	The Australian transport BERRIMA, formerly HMAS BERRIMA, (armed merchant cruiser), was torpedoed by a German submarine in the English Channel.
February 1929	Six Seagull Mk III amphibian aircraft embarked in seaplane carrier HMAS ALBATROSS at Melbourne.
February 1940	HMS KANIMBLA, largely manned by the RAN, arrived at Yokohama to release German technicians captured by HMS Liverpool on a Japanese ship. The Japanese liner ASAMA MARU had departed San Francisco on the 6/1/1940 with 51 German seamen from the crew of German liner COLUMBUS. On the 21/1/1940 HMS LIVERPOOL stopped her 35 miles off Nojima Zaki near Yokosuka and removed 21 German technicians. After strong protests from Japan and Germany nine were finally released.
February 1942	Japanese bombers attacked Darwin. HMA Ships MAVIE and KELAT, USS PEARY, and merchant ships BRITISH MOTORIST, NEPTUNA, ZEALANDIA, MAUNA LOA, and MEIGS, were sunk. HMA Ships PLATYPUS, SWAN, GUNBAR, WARREGO, KARA KARA, KOOKABURRA, KANGAROO, BAROSSA, and COONGOOLA, the hospital ship MANUNDA, USS WILLIAM B PRESTON, and five merchant ships were damaged. One hundred and seventy of the 250 dead in the attack were ships' complement. The Walrus from HMAS AUSTRALIA crashed on landing. "Shortly before noon, and after circling the Walrus came down to land on an oil slick. Owing to some yet unknown cause, he came in too close to the ship, and crashed head-on into the ship's port quarter just above the water line, breaking up and bursting into flames immediately. The second whaler as crash boat was immediately lowered, and the first whaler was also sent away as a lifeboat. A motor surfboat from USS CHICAGO reached the spot where the aircraft had sunk first, and succeeded in saving the Observer, Sub-Lieutenant Jackson, and the Air Gunner. The pilot, Flying officer E. J. Rowan RAAF, was not seen.
February 1945	Carrier-borne aircraft from the British Pacific Fleet landed at Nowra, NSW. The air station was in use by the RAAF from 7 May 1942 until it was transferred to the RN as an air station on 15 October 1944. On the departure of the RN the station was in disuse until taken over by the RAN and commissioned as HMAS ALBATROSS in 1948.
February 1949	First Douglas C-47 Skytrain was delivered to the RAN FAA. A total of 4 were acquired and the last left service in 1974.
February 1952	HMAS BATAAN carried out her first air spot bombardment using spotters from HMS GLORY, to shell enemy troops encamped outside the village of Pungchon. Later the same day as dusk was falling a brief duel began between the ship and 75mm shore batteries, ending with silence from the enemy and a single hit on the captain's day cabin after 78 rounds of 4.7-inch ammunition had started two fires on the battery positions
February 1964	HMAS MELBOURNE and HMAS VOYAGER collided in a night exercise off Jervis Bay. VOYAGER sank with a loss of 82 lives. The GC was awarded posthumously to CPO Jonathon Rogers, DSM, for conspicuous bravery in rescue. The subsequent inquiries and two Royal Commissions into the cause of the collision shook the RAN to its foundations.

February 1967	Clearance Diving Team 3, LEUT M. T. Shotter, RAN, arrived at Vung Tau.
February 1970	Fast troop transport HMAS SYDNEY left Garden Island, Sydney for Vietnam with the 7th Bn RAR.
February 1980	HMAS DIAMANTINA and the last World War II ship in commission in the RAN, was paid off for disposal at Garden Island, Sydney. She had steamed 615,755 miles since first commissioning. She left Garden Island on 1 October 1980 after being donated to the Queensland Maritime Museum Association. <i>Diamantina</i> is now on permanent display in Brisbane and restored to her World War II weapons configuration.
February 1982	The Australian Government announced it intended to purchase the aircraft carrier HMS INVINCIBLE as a replacement for HMAS MELBOURNE. The carrier was to be renamed HMAS AUSTRALIA. However, because of the Falklands War between Britain and Argentina the purchase was delayed. When negotiations were later recommenced the Government in Australia had changed and decided to cancel the purchase.
February 1992	HMAS DARWIN departed Fremantle for service in the Arabian Gulf as part of the RAN's Operation Damask commitment.
February 2002	HMAS CANBERRA apprehended the MV LENA near Heard Island and a boarding party fast roped on to the illegal fishing vessel. The next day CANBERRA apprehended the MV VOLGA, which was also fishing illegally in Australian waters. During this time CANBERRA was supported by HMAS WESTRALIA, (tanker), which refueled the frigate regularly to allow her to extend her time in the area.
February 2006	HMA Ships WOLLONGONG II and BUNBURY II decommissioned at HMAS COONAWARRA, Darwin

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/>

HMAS Duchess

The Daring Class destroyer, HMS *Duchess* (V), was loaned to the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) by the Royal Navy (RN) after the tragic loss of HMAS *Voyager* (II), after her collision with HMAS *Melbourne* (II) on 10 February 1964.

The eight Darings built for the Royal Navy were considerably larger than previous destroyers, and their main armament was comparable to a light cruiser. The first three Darings featured composite/riveted construction, while the remaining five, of which *Duchess* was one, were of all welded construction. Weight was also saved by utilising light metal alloys and using neoprene sheathing and aluminium cable carriers in place of the more traditional lead and steel.

The three Australian built Darings were similar to the eight vessels built for the RN, but with modifications for Australian conditions. Good ventilation and air conditioning were a priority.



From an operational perspective, the loss of *Voyager* in February 1964 made it very difficult for Australia to meet its Far East Strategic Reserve and South East Asia Treaty Organisation Exercise commitments, particularly in 1964 and 1965. In response, the British Admiralty offered a choice of two Darings, HM Ships *Defender* or *Duchess*, on long term loan. Although badly in need of a refit, the latter ship was preferred because she was AC powered and partially air-conditioned. In addition, *Duchess* was currently serving in the Far East, whereas *Defender* was in Britain undergoing a major refit. *Defender* was DC-powered and not air-conditioned.

Further Reading.

HMAS *Duchess*, Sea Power Centre Australia, available at: <https://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-duchess>

Video of the Month

The Scrap Iron Flotilla - Australian Destroyers in the Mediterranean

Available at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04jjgbfMb1k>

Duration: 1 hour 25 minutes



Occasional Papers

- Occasional Paper 177 - Australia's First Tennis Match
- Occasional Paper 178 - A Short History of Building 6
- Occasional Paper 179 - A Boiler without a Ship

Website of Interest

Australian War Memorial Places of Pride

Available at: <https://placesofpride.awm.gov.au/>

This Australian War Memorial initiative provides a National Register of War Memorials across Australia. It features the location and photos of every memorial.



Society Baseball Cap



www.navyhistory.au

We are pleased to announce the arrival of the Society's new ball cap.

It is available for sale through the website shop for \$35 posted to an Australian address.

Stocks are also available from the Victorian and WA Chapter Committees locally. Members in these areas are able to purchase them direct at a reduced price of \$30.

Click here to see the [NHSA Baseball Cap](#) at the NHSA website shop.

YouTube Channel

Catch up on recent Zoom presentations to members on the Society's You Tube channel.

Visit: <https://navyhistory.au/nhsa-youtube-channel/>