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A Japanese Pilot of WWII

**Maritime Advancement Australia
Award 2008/9 details**

**The Electrical Supply System in
*HMAS Voyager***

The RAN and Recruit Seaman Andrews – Part 1

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Philip Vian

JOURNAL OF THE

Australian Naval Institute





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President's Message

By the time that you read this, some of the major activities of the Institute will have taken place, including the King-Hall Naval History conferences, at which we have sponsored Professor Eric Grove as the ANI Speaker, and the Vernon Parker Oration, which Mike Carlton has delivered on the subject of 'The Not So Silent Service'.

But there are other events in train. The Institute is sponsoring a seminar at *HMAS Watson* in Sydney on Friday 5 October. This will focus on current and future developments in naval warfare and should have a strong turn out. We have invited other organisations, such as the Naval Warfare Officers Association, to participate and have received an enthusiastic response. Details are available on the ANI Website – if you haven't registered, there may still be space, but don't delay!

I draw all members' attention to the Maritime Advancement Australia Award competition, of which further details are available elsewhere in this issue. This is a significant award, allocating \$22,000 a year to the winner for two years for a project of benefit to

maritime Australia. Please advertise the competition as widely as you can, even if you are not applying yourself! It is a great opportunity and the only real limit is that the final result should be something of real benefit to maritime Australia. So it is not purely or even primarily a naval venture – industry, academia, science and so on are all areas of potential endeavour. Please put the word out and consider applying yourself. Entries close on 31 October.

If you haven't put the Pacific Maritime Exposition 2008 in your diary for 29 to 31 January, please do. The RAN Sea Power Centre will coordinate the Sea Power Conference, while there will be the accompanying civil maritime conferences and a huge range of industry exhibitors. The Chief of Navy will announce the winner of the Maritime Advancement Australia Award on the last day of the Conference. If you wish to register for the Sea Power Conference, just visit the website <www.seapower2008.com>

Best wishes,
JAMES GOLDRICK
Spring 2007

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Flight Deck
Marshall Petty
Officer Rodger
signals as Sea King
Shark 20 conducts a
flying exercise from
the flight deck of
HMAS Manoora

Photograph left:
HMAS Kanimbla and
HMAS Balikpapan at
anchor in the exercise
area during Exercise
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A Japanese Pilot of WWII

BY PETER WILLIAMS

What was it like to fly for the Imperial Japanese Navy in WWII? Author Peter Williams, now completing his PhD on the Japanese experience of war against the Australians, is interviewing survivors of the war. . . Tsunoda Kazuo served as a fighter pilot in the Imperial Japanese Navy from 1937 to 1945. He gained the rank of Lieutenant and was credited with 13 aerial victories, many of them Australians he fought in New Guinea. Now 89 years old, he lives in a cottage in the countryside in Chiba Prefecture where he was interviewed by Peter Williams and translator Yayoi Akaboshi. Mr Tsunoda used his papers to aid him in remembering dates and events.

I was born in Awa, Chiba prefecture, in 1918. At 15 years old I entered a school for those who wished to be Imperial Navy aircrew. For almost three years I studied general subjects and military science. After graduation I was accepted as a pilot trainee and for eight months learned flying in a biplane, a type 93 trainer, at Kasumigaura Pilot Training School. Then for advanced training I moved to Yokosuka Air Squadron where I flew first line aircraft for another eight months.

Upon completion of training I was posted to the Saeki Squadron on the aircraft carrier *Soryu*. We flew Claude, type 96 fighters. The carrier sailed for the war in China in 1937. At this time the air component of the navy was small, only 200 pilots, so we all knew each other. I knew the ace Sakai Saburo and flew with him for six months. There was very little opposition from the Chinese air force. The Claude did not have the range to strike their air bases, nor did they have the range to



attack the carrier, so we conducted ground support missions for the army up and down the coast of China. To me the most difficult aspect of operations from a carrier was landing on the deck. The tail hook landing was always challenging. There were sometimes accidents and I saw aircraft crash and the pilots were usually killed.

From February to November of 1940 I was transferred to the 12th Air Flotilla which was land based at Wahan in China. In August we received the new fighter, the Zero. Now, with increased range, the squadron could join in the air battles taking place over Chongquing and Chengdu and strike at enemy airfields. There were more pilots than aircraft in our squadron at that time so my opportunities for air combat were limited as I had to take my turn. Also the weather seriously influenced operations which often had to be aborted. Our role was again ground support but once that was done we could hunt for the enemy in the air. I missed the two big battles on 13 September and 4 October, 1940. In the first of these Lt Shindo led 13 Zeros and shot down 17 enemy planes and on

the second occasion we destroyed six planes in the air and 19 planes on the ground. It now appears though that six of these were decoy aircraft placed on the airfield to look like real ones.

On 26 October I finally joined the air battles being fought over Chengdu. Our formation was eight Zeros under Lt. Iida. I found the Chinese biplanes remarkably slow and had a lot of trouble with my fast Zero. I hardly had a chance to fire before I had flown past them. I shot down only one plane that day and that was the only aircraft I shot down in China.

I was ordered to return to Japan to Yokosuka Naval Air Base to train other pilots. On 28 July 1942 I received another order to leave there and go to the front once more. We embarked on the *Yawata Maru* which was a private passenger ship converted to carry and launch aircraft. After leaving port we were told our destination was 32 Air Flotilla in Rabaul. On 5 August we passed by Truk and began flying air patrols. Off Kavieng, New Ireland, the whole squadron took off from the ship for Rabaul. We landed at the eastern airfield on a small runway. On the way

76 Squadron RAAF
Kittyhawk P-40M's

*I was ordered to
return to Japan to
Yokosuka Naval
Air Base to train
other pilots*

in I saw the harbour was full of ships. It was the South Seas Detachment, about to sail for New Guinea. They were the ones who marched on Port Moresby.

The next day our squadron, with 15 aircraft, began operations. Initially we flew combat air patrol over Rabaul. From there in August 1942 we flew missions over Milne Bay and Port Moresby. At this time we had the impression the enemy strength in the air over New Guinea was about the same as ours. We received word the Americans had landed on Tulagi and had taken our airfield at Guadalcanal. At that time I was a flight sergeant though I sometimes led my squadron. Later in the war I became a Lieutenant.

One day, shortly after we assembled in formation over Rabaul, we encountered 13 B-17s coming to bomb. I was surprised at the size of the B-17. It was much bigger than I expected, making it difficult to judge the correct distance for firing at it. Coming in 200 meters above, as I had practiced,

I executed a head on attack at the leading plane. It had no effect - he kept on coming and we passed by very close as I dived away below then climbed to the right for a second pass at the formation. As I did this I was watching the other Zeros attack one after the other. I heard a shrill sound in my right wing but could not see any damage at that time. For my second pass I chose the aircraft on the extreme right hand side of the formation. This time my shooting was accurate but again I heard that sound in my wing and saw fuel gushing out of the wing fuel tank. Only then did I realize what the noise was and that I had been hit. I knew the Zero easily caught fire in such circumstances so I decided upon a forced landing at Rabaul. Thereafter when I was hit I usually, but not always, pulled out of the fight for fear of catching fire. It was a very dangerous feature of the Zero.

On landing I heard the rest of the air group had been sent to attack Guadalcanal. I knew the shorter range

Zeros would not have the fuel to return and the plan was for them to ditch at Shortland Island where they could be picked up by our seaplanes. Of 18 pilots only five survived.

On 9 August I commanded eight Zeros which attacked four unescorted B-17s which had come from Port Moresby. I shot down a B-17 but it was not easy. After a long air battle it finally began to emit fire and black smoke. In such favourable conditions our eight fighters shot down only two of the four. I felt in the future we would have a lot of trouble with them.

On my next mission I commanded a flight in a squadron attack on Milne Bay under Lt Kurakane. On that day my unit had no enemy air opposition. About 12 August I was escorting the transport fleet bound for Buna. I discovered seven B-17s on their way to Buna and attacked them. I hit them three times but as my responsibility was the protection of the transport ships I did not chase them too far.

Several days later

I was sent to Surumi airfield in New Britain to escort more convoys going to New Guinea. At this time the air situation in New Guinea was not that bad. We had a few skirmishes with B-25s and B-17s. In one of these I was again hit in the fuel tank and had to make an emergency landing at Surumi. At Surumi we lived in tents with the army and got on well with them. Relations between the Army and Navy were good at that time. The food they gave us was basic, mostly just rice. It stuck me how much the Army relied on the Navy air squadrons

Tsunoda took this picture of fellow pilots of aircraft carrier *Zuiho*.



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and I felt a great responsibility towards them.

On 17 August I first flew in a strike against Port Moresby. We strafed hangars at the airfield but did not encounter any resistance in the air. By way of preparation for our invasion of Milne Bay we attacked the airfield there too. In the first such sweep 16 of us under Lt Nakajima attacked the airfield but no one came up to fight us.

When our troops landed at Milne Bay we went there again to buck them up. This was my first large air fight against enemy fighters in New Guinea. Six of us under Lt Kurakane dropped through the cloud to commence strafing the airfield and bounced 10 Australian P 40s. They did not see us coming because of the cloud. One was directly below me so I did a high speed dive and got him with my 20mm cannons. My wingman got another one. In that fight I shot down two Australian P-40s though I could not confirm the second one on

account of the bad weather. We claimed nine Australians but four were unconfirmed.¹

Upon returning we discussed the fight. The pilots who were below yet another cloud layer had a harder fight; mine was really quite easy. We also discussed how different were the battles here from those in China. We realized circumstances here were much harder than the Sino Japanese war and we would probably not live to return to Japan. We mentally prepared ourselves for death sometime in this war. I wore a parachute when I took off from the airfield but on entering the enemy air space I took it off. Every pilot did the same thing. We believed it was better to die than be captured.

Then, on 25 August, our squadron was moved to the newly constructed airfield at Buna and came under the command of the Tainan Air Group. There I had my second air combat against fighters in New Guinea. On the following morning our nine planes

were starting to take off for a raid on Milne Bay when 15 P-40s appeared suddenly and attacked us. Our first aircraft, that of Lt Kaneichi, was ready to go when the lookout reported the enemy. The strip was narrow so only one plane at a time could take off. Our first three Zeros off the ground were immediately shot down, two becoming fireballs at just 10 meters above the runway. As I have said once a Zero is seriously hit it is likely to catch fire. I was next off. I took off close to the edge of the jungle to avoid being sighted by the enemy. It took some time to get the plane into fighting condition. I had to adjust the flaps, prime the guns, drop my long range fuel tank and other things. I was attacked before I was ready to fight. I could hear the bullets hitting my plane. There was fuel in the cockpit and white smoke. I looked down and saw another Zero falling into the jungle, a mass of flames. However I was not deterred and made it to 1000 meters when I turned to

582nd Air Group outside the mess at Lae in November 42. Tsunoda is second from right in front row. Three quarters of them, says Tsunoda, did not survive the war.



*We were covering
the mother ship
for our seaplane
reconnaissance
aircraft but
nothing
happened*

attack them. By this time the enemy was departing. I caught one, diving down on him and shooting with both my machine guns and my 20mm cannons. I was determined not to return to base without a good result. I think I shot him down. I came back to the airfield where I received the signal to land. This was difficult as the aircraft was damaged but on my second try I managed it.

On 2 September we escorted light bombers to Milne Bay as we heard there were enemy ships present. There were six Zeros. Lt Kurakane was in command and I led the second flight of three. As it turned out there were no ships in the bay. Owing to bad weather some of our aircraft failed to return. They came down in the jungle and the crews died fighting the Australians.

At this time we heard about the South Seas Detachment struggling over the Owen Stanley Mountains to attack Port Moresby. On 6 Sept we volunteered to drop them food supplies. We took canned food to drop at Kokoda though it was far from enough to supply the whole Nankai Shitai. Later on in November I escorted another air drop of supplies to them.

In August and September of 1942 our base was usually Rabaul and we flew to attack Port Moresby or against other targets in New Guinea. In September we received the improved Zero with a longer wing span and range. Then we started to fly to Guadalcanal where the enemy was the Americans. I believe at this time our Navy changed its strategy. At first we made an equal effort in New Guinea and Guadalcanal but from this time on, for a period, we focused almost entirely on Guadalcanal.

On 14 September we escorted bombers to Guadalcanal. Eleven Zeros went, again under Lt Kurakane with me as second in command. I was positioned high and in front of the

bombers. I chased one F4F Grumman and shot him down from around 2000m. After this fight I was passing Savo Island when I saw three other Zeros in a fight with Grummans and rushed to help them. I regret now I was concentrating too much on shooting down enemy planes and not protecting our bombers. I came close to one of our bombers after it had been attacked by Grummans. It was trailing black smoke and the pilot waved to me in a calm and quiet way. That bomber crew knew they were going to die.

By October I was operating from Buka Airfield near Bougainville. I led nine Zeros on several escort missions towards Russell Island. We were covering the mother ship for our seaplane reconnaissance aircraft but nothing happened. On 11 October we left Rabaul to escort a reinforcement convoy for Guadalcanal. We could see smoke fifty kilometers away showing us there was a severe battle in progress. We had been told the convoy we were to escort had six transport ships but by the time we got there only four were left - some of them already on fire. I could see them unloading the supplies and troops into smaller boats to take them to the shore.

When we first arrived there were no other Japanese aircraft present, apart from my formation, just enemy bombers and fighters - United States naval aircraft. I saw their bombs dropping. They clearly did not want a fight and as we commenced our attack they flew away. There was not much I could do as I had to stay with the transports to protect them. The Americans would refuel and rearm from Guadalcanal and come back but we did not have enough fuel to stay long. If they would fight we would beat them but they would not fight. I led my seven Zeros in line astern as long as our fuel lasted. The enemy aircraft would not come close. All we could

do was drive them off. After a while in the distance I saw one Zero dive into a large formation of American fighters. They broke up and ran. Then six more Zeros arrived to replace us and we flew home.

There was a big difference between American fighting spirit and that of the Australians. The American was very passive. They fled promptly even if there were four Grummans against one Zero. The Grumman was heavier and could always get away in a dive. On the other hand the Australians were very aggressive. Even if the number of their planes was less than us they would attack. I recall one occasion when I led 16 Zeros and the Australian formation of P-40s had seven aircraft, less than half our strength, yet they attacked us. It was so brave. The Australians were a worthy enemy.

In November I was ordered to escort 11 transport ships, one cruiser and a few destroyers which were heading for Guadalcanal. I was told this was the last reinforcement and resupply for our troops on the island and if we did not fulfill our role and the ships did not get through then the soldiers on Guadalcanal would die of starvation. I was truly anxious about this as I had only eight aircraft.

From somewhere about Rendova Island, we could see a fine white plume of smoke in the sky on the horizon. When I came closer I saw five of the transports were already on fire. There were three formations of enemy aircraft, some large ones at 10,000 meters, some torpedo bombers below them and fighters below them again at 4000 meters and off to the east. I attacked the torpedo bombers to prevent them attacking our ships. I attacked from head on and above and dove through below them and repeated this tactic. It seemed to me if I kept doing this I would die but I had to stop them attacking our ships. However

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they eventually turned away and I realized my formation should now ignore them and go for another enemy formation closer to our ships. I gave the signal to the other Zeros but they did not obey me and continued to chase the torpedo bombers. I climbed to 2000m and placed myself between our ships and the new threat. They turned out to be Grumman F4Fs carrying bombs. I got many shots in but did not shoot any down. I was happy though as I had prevented them bombing our convoy. I was eventually damaged by enemy fire so I turned for home. My fuel tanks were hit and the engine was smoking but it ran for an hour so I got that much closer to Rabaul. Eventually I had to ditch in the water and was lucky to be picked up by the destroyer *Tenryu*. Our convoy to Guadalcanal did not get through and *Tenryu* and the other surviving ships made for Buin.

In late November 1942 our squadron was moved back to New Guinea, to Lae, where we opposed both

Australians and Americans in the air. Our job was to escort supply ships to Buna and later to escort the bombers in their attacks on Dobodura. I was surprised at the much increased enemy air strength since I had last operated in New Guinea. When we struck at Buna there were two big Allied airfields at Dobodura which had obviously been constructed in a very short time, within a month or so.

At Lae the air battles were fierce. We often took off three times in a day. As we did not have any advanced warning they could easily make a sudden attack on our airfield. We did the same thing to them, sometimes twice a day, but the Australians had reconnaissance troops in nearby hills reporting on us so they knew when we took off. Around this time I had my first encounter with a P-38. Five of them attacked suddenly as we were forming up above our airfield. I was leading six Zeros from our air group which had, incidentally, been re-numbered 252. When we went at

them they fled and were much too fast for us. I chased two but they just climbed away. The speed, especially in ascent, was too much for us. In general American planes were quite fast and well equipped with machine guns.

The next day we were attacked by one B-17 and four P-38s at dawn. I immediately led nine Zeros in a counterattack. Again we could not catch them. We returned, refueled and left to attack Buna. There we found two Douglas transports and seven P-39s. We shot down the two transports but had trouble with the P-39s. My wingman was shot down. Then I went down to attack a Douglas on the Dobodura airfield. As I raced down the strip from the jungle alongside many machine guns began to fire at me - I could see their flashes. There was also an anti aircraft gun position that opened up on me.

On a second pass I tried to hit their ammunition stockpile. At Buna the Australians had stockpiled huge

I gave the signal to the other Zeros but they did not obey me and continued to chase the torpedo bombers

Men of the 252 Air Group, Imperial Japanese Navy, at the airfield in Rabaul in front of the group's scoreboard. Tsunoda is second from the right.



amounts of supplies brought in by sea and air. In among these were tented camps which had large Red Cross flags displayed. We did not attack the camp near the Red Cross flags but it was a very sneaky trick to do this. On this occasion I gave up firing because my target was too close to the Red Cross markers.² I climbed away and assembled the formation for the return trip. None of our bombers were hit and we had destroyed two DC3s and two P-39s though we lost one Zero.

I continued to operate over New Guinea until February 1943 when we were called upon for another large operation at Guadalcanal. I led a formation of Zeros to escort a group of destroyers running supplies into our force on the island. Over Buin we joined other formations making 36 Zeros in all. After an hour escorting the ships we encountered the enemy. I was flying high cover so I dealt with the enemy fighters, P-38s, while the others attacked the enemy bombers. We had to climb to meet them and though we offered them a chance to attack us they stayed higher than us and would not come down. Eventually they turned away so there was no fight. As usual I found that while the American navy bombers made aggressive attacks their fighters avoided battle with Zeros. Anyway this convoy to Guadalcanal was successful.

A week or so later we performed the same task. This time I led one of three formations of 12 Zeros. The whole was led by Lt. Suzuki. We saw one destroyer give a smoke alert to let us know there were enemy aircraft about. There was a large air battle. There were 30 of them and 36 of us all at around 10,000 meters. We lost only one aircraft though one of the destroyers was sunk. When we got back I was stunned to learn our destroyers had not carried anything to Guadalcanal. On the contrary they were being used

to evacuate the garrison there. I was in fact also a bit relieved to hear this.

In April 1943 our squadron again began operations over New Guinea. There was a large air battle over Port Moresby which I missed as I was detached for a few days to provide an escort for Admiral Yamamoto who was visiting the area. A few days later, on 18 April, Admiral Yamamoto was shot down while flying to the Shortland Islands in a bomber. Of course we did not know this at that moment but noticed unusual enemy air activity over our own base at Buin. They came over three times that day whereas once was the norm. Each time we chased them off. Then one Zero landed, the sole survivor from the fighters escorting Yamamoto, and told us what had happened and asked for help. We did not take off though because it was much too late. We were told Yamamoto was going to Barale airfield for a meeting but that seemed very strange to us because that airfield did not have the facility to land large planes and was a very dangerous place.

In May 1943 I was ordered to transfer to Atsugi Naval Air Base in Japan. For a year I again trained new pilots. During that time my unit, 582 Air Group, was completely destroyed in the fighting in the Solomons and New Guinea. Of my squadron at Rabaul only three survived the war.

Then in June 1944 I was sent to Iwo Jima with the Yokosuka Naval Air Group. The situation there was shocking. In three major air battles we lost 60 planes, our whole force. Our pilots' skills had deteriorated after the losses of air crew at Midway. With no aircraft remaining the surviving pilots were moved to Taiwan and then to the Philippines where we were re-equipped in time to fight in the Leyte Gulf battle. I noticed the American pilots had become more skilful and more aggressive though their teamwork was

still poor. Their aircraft too were better. I have discussed these things with American pilots since the war. Even though there are still occasions when I meet American pilots I find I have never really been able to get along with them.

At first we strafed enemy airfields but then I was asked to take charge of escorting the kamikaze aircraft. Initially this was done unofficially but later in Manila I received my orders. The job was to lead the kamikaze to the target, protect them from enemy fighters and report on the results. I believe the kamikaze system was the only way left for us to fight as things had become progressively worse. I was in China for ten months and my squadron lost no pilots killed in combat. Then in Rabaul we lost almost every pilot and at Iwo Jima 50 pilots were killed in three days so I knew there was no other way to fight anymore. Having said that it was also the saddest thing to see the young men die as kamikaze. I watched them for their last minutes on earth.

After the Philippines I went to Taiwan and I was there when the war ended. On 15 August 1945 we were ready to fly on a mission towards Okinawa. We were on the runway with engines warmed up but were told the mission was cancelled. No reason was given. For a week we knew nothing and wondered what had happened in Japan. When I heard we had lost I felt released, I thought it was good. From the time we retreated from Guadalcanal I had been sure that Japan would lose this war.

I was sent to Sinsha airfield in Taiwan. It was a prison camp. We farmed there. Almost no one watched us, we were virtually free. The Chinese in charge of us did not even confiscate our personal weapons. I was there for a year then came back via Kyushu by ship. I caught a train from Kagoshima to Tokyo and I went back to my home.

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My memories are very clear. Looking back I feel my battles at Buna and Milne Bay were the most rewarding. To be a good pilot I think imperturbability and eye sight are the most important things. When I was a child I learned Zen and so I was able to really concentrate. When I do this I open my eyes and watch just one point. I feel I can see 180 degrees without turning my head and this is very useful for a fighter pilot. I shot down 13 aircraft in the war and my colleagues and I together destroyed hundreds more. I was shot down twice though I was never injured. Whenever I shot down the enemy, I did not feel that I had killed someone. For me it was just an airplane. I did not feel it had a human being in it. 🚢

*Peter Williams was born in Hobart and now resides in Canberra. He is the author of **The Battle of Anzac Ridge, 25 April 1915**. He lived in Japan for several years and is currently completing a doctoral thesis on the Kokoda Campaign.*

Yayoi Akaboshi is a Tokyo based translator who specialises in Japanese Second World War documents.

Tsunoda Kazuo was a country boy who really wanted to fly - he saw some of the first aircraft to ever fly in Japan when he was about five years old and it motivated him enormously. His perseverance and success gaining a place in the naval flying academy in the 1930s was an impressive achievement for "a yokel".

After the war he was 28. He returned to his small rice farm in the countryside several hours by train north of Tokyo – then out in the countryside - which he still runs. He married, and is now 89, but still works on the farm, with one of his grand daughters taking care of him. His children and his grandchildren are immensely proud of his war service, as is everyone within several kilometres of his house.

(Endnotes)

- 1 The Australians claimed four Zeros in this combat of 11 August 1942. No Zeros were shot down according to Tsunoda's notes made at the time. The Japanese claimed nine Australian P-40s. Four were actually shot down. Gillison D. Royal Australian Air Force 1939-1942: Australia in the War of 1939-1945, Canberra, Australian War Memorial, 1962, p 607.
- 2 The Australian official history account suggests Tsunoda's wingman may have been shot down by an Australian Hudson. Ibid p 663

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The Relevance & Value that Conventional Maritime Forces offer Governments in Responding to the Threat of Terrorism & other Asymmetric Threats

BY **LIEUTENANT MICHAEL PAES**

In the contemporary climate, naval strategy has had to respond to the stimuli of two types of security threats. Firstly there is the threat of rival states, within the realist context, being able to wage armed conflict against the interests of another. Secondly there is the threat of non-state entities (NSE's). The latter are primarily transnational in character and make use of mobile smaller forces that can out-run and remain off the radar of larger platforms. The purpose they serve is to engage in smuggling/piracy operations or random and indiscriminate attacks with a view of projecting their influence as a ubiquitous force.

This article discusses the role of maritime forces in combating NSE threats by first examining some of the NSE threats that exist around the globe, and then present the various ways in which naval forces can be employed in combating these groups and others like them.

RECENT EXPERIENCES

Seapower involves capital intensive investment. The resources and financial backing required to maintain the ability to project power in the maritime environment has meant that this theatre of conflict has largely been the exclusive domain of nation states. However, the de-colonisation process and ending of the Cold War towards the close of the twentieth century has seen the rise of mobilised groups of people sharing a common agenda being able to engage in armed conflict. Such groups have had to combat existing government structures and armed forces in order to achieve their objectives. Their motivations vary; however, the relative situations of these groups in their capability to wage conflict on land and at sea with an established state apparatus remain similar.

Al-Qaida. The Al-Qaida movement consists of a loose conglomeration of primarily Sunni Islamists seeking to create a transnational Caliphate. It espouses religio-political theories stemming from the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt.¹ Its tactics have generally involved the harnessing of civilian objects to engage in sporadic attacks on targets ranging from Western military and government assets to civilian areas of work and leisure. This achieves the purpose of creating the fear of an existential threat in civilian populations which is disproportionate to Al-Qaida's actual capabilities. Al-Qaida's transnational character means that governments

have to use different diplomatic and military options depending on which state Al-Qaida is operating in and to what extent foreign governments are complicit in the group's activities.

Al-Qaida's strategy exposes the weaknesses of Western democracies in that fearful populations, who do not believe that their government is doing enough to protect their well being, tend to create instability in the politics of that state. Maritime aspects of Al-Qaida include an attack² and a failed attack on a US warship,³ and an attack on a merchant vessel.⁴ Al-Qaida's reliance on legitimate businesses for financing also sees it utilise sea borne trade to raise revenue. In addition to this the operations against Al-Qaida in Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia has seen members attempt to use ocean routes to escape the forces of various governments in the US led policy of 'War on Terror'. These routes have usually led to countries such as Yemen wherein Al-Qaida operatives are able to disappear amongst the local population.

Tamil Tigers. The Tamil Tigers are a separatist group, which mainly confines itself to operations in the northern tip of Sri Lanka. Despite their limited geographic objective, they operate internationally via extortion and smuggling activities. They have also conducted operations against Indian interests in retaliation to Indian governmental support for Sri Lanka. Being located on a small island they receive many of their weapons via the sea. In addition to this, they have engaged in both conventional and suicide boat attacks on the Sri Lankan

Navy and Indian shipping in order to decrease these countries' ability to interdict Tamil Tiger maritime operations. As such, they have developed a need for seapower. Their order of battle (ORBAT) consists of small boats with three requirements, transport capability for personnel and contraband, combat capability to protect transport ships from Sri Lankan Naval vessels and suicide craft, which can hold large amounts of explosives and move at fast speeds in order to strike before evasive action can be executed.⁵ They can boast the most successful NSE naval force to date.

Abu Sayyaf. This is a nationalistic group with an agenda to create an independent Islamic nation on the islands in the Southern Philippines, primarily Mindanao. This organisation takes part in extensive criminal activity including kidnapping, piracy as well as attacking local law enforcement and military forces in guerilla style strikes.⁶ Their contact with Al-Qaida means that Abu Sayyaf poses a strategic threat to other states as well as The Philippines.

On February 27th, 2004 Abu Sayyaf attacked a passenger ferry resulting in the death of 116 civilians. This ability to commit criminal acts at sea demonstrates Abu Sayyaf's reliance on the sea for revenue via piracy and use of the sea to project power.

Union of Islamic Courts. (UIC) This organisation grew out of the factional warring parties in Somalia post-1990. It has an Islamic ideology with a nationalistic agenda. Having achieved control and administration

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of Mogadishu in late 2006 it set up a society that was similar to the Taliban government that had previously governed Afghanistan. Whilst not posing an international threat in itself, its sympathetic appeals to the likes of Al-Qaida and other Islamist groups created a strategic threat for bordering states and the United States.

Combined operations with Ethiopia, former Somali troops and the USN moved in on the organisation and deposed it at the turn of 2006-2007. The USN provided a Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C₄ISR) capability as well as hunter-killer operations whereby US warships patrolled the Somali coast for fleeing UIC members once Ethiopian troops had retaken Somalia.⁷

FARC. FARC are a remnant of the Colombian Civil War whereby a group of agrarian-socialists attempted to create a utopian society, in the true sense of Thomas More's fictional state, within Colombia. They predominantly wage guerilla war with Colombian regular forces as well as engaging in criminal activities such as kidnapping and smuggling. FARC finance themselves through the booming cocaine trade thus their supply lines have strong maritime dependency via the Caribbean to the US and across the Pacific to Asia and Australia.⁸

The above groups provide examples of NSE's that have varying degrees of reliance on sea lines of communication (SLOCs) for their existence and, as such, create a need for naval forces to neutralise the threat that they pose.

THE ROLE OF NAVAL FORCES

Seapower has traditionally worked in two ways. Firstly there is the combat role of a fleet to engage an enemy's ORBAT thereby reducing their

ability to wage war. The second is the role of naval blockade in commerce prevention. The slow grueling effects of *guerre de course* and deprivation of sea trade on an enemy state provide a strategic leverage to naval powers in gaining political concessions from the enemy. As is evident from the examples of NSE's, these two roles, in their conventional sense, need to be tempered to effectively combat the security threat that asymmetric forces pose.

In terms of ensuring fleet engagement capability, the case of the *USS Cole* demonstrates how warships provide large cumbersome targets for terrorist groups thereby becoming centres of gravity in themselves. These ships become a liability in that they are relatively easy to attack when they are alongside. Naval forces have no choice but to rely on the security and intelligence of host country governments when on deployment. When force protection is very weak this provides an easy target for exploitation, which forces such as FARC⁹ and the Sea Tigers¹⁰ have capitalised on.

One of the fundamental problems for navies in dealing with asymmetrical forces is that the weaker force has no interest in securing control of the sea and instead invests in sea denial capabilities that turn larger navies into targets rather than weapons. The initiative is usually vested in the guerilla force who is able to choose the time and place of any attack.¹¹ It ultimately depends on the agenda of the group as to how they use seapower. Al-Qaida and Abu Sayyaf tend to concentrate on sea denial capability to project power. The Sea Tigers and FARC prefer to keep SLOC's in dispute in order to use the seas as a supply line and to fund their efforts. The UIC ultimately used the sea as a route of retreat, which in turn exposed a weak flank for the USN

to exploit.

Groups who wish to keep control of the sea in dispute can take advantage of the fact that large warships at sea are easily avoided by smaller and weaker forces, such as FARC drug runners, whose goal is to evade them. Indeed Corbett highlighted this issue in dealing with the problems associated with possessing a solely 'blue-water' fleet.¹² In this sense small agile vessels are required to intercept NSE sea operations. Given the limited range of small vessels one finds that this is primarily a coastal defence role for conventional forces and when operating within domestic waters need to be reconciled with rule of law issues, which will be discussed further on in this paper.

This leads on to the other aspect of seapower, commerce prevention. In its traditional use, it deprives a nation state of seaborne trade, this can be viewed as counter-productive in attempting to win the hearts and minds of local populations who have enemy NSE's operating within their communities. Examples of this include Iraq and Lebanon whereby the UN sanction regime in Iraq reduced elements of the population to an impoverished, disenfranchised collective with high levels of animosity towards the United States.¹³ This in turn provided a recruitment base for criminal groups. Lebanon, on the other hand, has routinely been subject to Israeli military intervention to curb the influence of Hizb'Allah; however the results of such strategies have been varied and in some respects weakened government structures and in turn increased the influence from outside states such as Iran and Syria on Lebanese security.¹⁴

In this context superior technology and military action is not enough to win a battle.¹⁵ Tucker discusses the issues of conventional warfare in battles whereby the hearts and minds of people in foreign territories need to be won. In studying the political warfare of the French in Indochina and the Cold War in Europe, Tucker observes that the battle space required political tempering as, "the key to victory was not defeating an enemy force or seizing territory, but winning ... loyalty."¹⁶ Unlike the case of the North Sea blockade against the Dutch during World War I,¹⁷ military planners in an asymmetric environment must be sure that their efforts are not working against them in providing sympathisers, safe havens and recruitment grounds for enemy NSE's.

Modern day navies face a myriad of political, legal and functional requirements, which have resulted in naval forces having to possess greater levels of flexibility and take on roles not associated with classical notions of commanding the oceans. As discussed earlier in this paper, different NSE's utilise the sea via different means and to different ends. How these means and ends can be prevented require creative

whole of government and international approaches.

To address the challenges of the current security climate, the USN has developed an approach that sees its conventional naval forces as fulfilling a five tier role. Using concepts that stem from Mahan and Corbett and combining them with modern ideas of Network Centric Warfare, the US has come up with *Sea Power of a New Era*.¹⁸ This publication defines five roles for the navy, these being,

- a. Sea Strike;
- b. Sea Shield;
- c. Sea Base;
- d. FORCENet; and
- e. Sea Warrior.

It is this author's assertion that if we are to use the above concepts in conjunction with traditional principles of sea power and whole of government approach, we are able to assess the utility of conventional navies in dealing with the various asymmetric threats.

SEA STRIKE

Sea strike is a concept that develops on previous notions of naval gunfire support (NGS) expanding into the realm of air power and joint operations. Sea strike discusses the various aircraft that the USN proposes to use as their attack capability to strike deep into enemy territory;¹⁹ it also establishes the NGS proposals in support of expeditionary forces.²⁰ Its utility lies in the maintaining a strike capability against states that harbour enemy NSE's, NSE held territory in allied states and combined operations against NSE's in host nations that give consent to other nations to launch an attack on their territory.

Israeli operations against Hizb'Allah in Lebanon provide an example of how NGS retains its utility when dealing with NSE's within foreign

territories. US operations against Afghanistan show how developments in technology have extended littorals to include landlocked countries.²¹ In addition to this manoeuvre warfare uses the sea as flanks to land forces and having this capability means that naval powers can tackle asymmetric forces ashore and still avoid disadvantageous engagements on the ground.²²

Royal Navy forces have utilised submarines in this aspect as a platform to deliver special forces clandestinely into NSE held territory. This can be achieved with or without the consent of the official state government of that respective territory depending on the political situation.²³ Seapower is thus used in this sense as an enabling agent to strike against NSE forces.²⁴

SEA SHIELD

Corbett understood the importance of intelligence in combat. He saw the role of frigates, the more agile of the RN warships, as crucial to the role of naval intelligence.²⁵ In the network centric environment, sea shield utilises unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV's) as well as other supra and sub surface reconnaissance assets that can monitor enemy movements at sea and around the world's littorals.

In addition to intelligence, the concept of sea shield can be expanded upon to incorporate missile defence for the protection of coastal states. This is not a function that is exclusively for the domain of inter-state conflict; Hizb'Allah's actions in 2006 demonstrate how an NSE can harness missile technology against an established state. Furthermore sea shield provides a means to interdict NSE SLOCs. Whether it be to prevent smuggling, pirate or attack craft, having a sound intelligence network at sea backed by naval power is a way in which naval forces can aid in the suppression of NSE's.

Naval forces essentially become the line of defence acting as constabulary units providing intelligence and a security network. Interdicting the Colombian drug trade through sea shield networks and monitoring UIC movements out of Somalia demonstrate the role of conventional forces in combating asymmetric threats in this respect.

SEA BASE

In the post colonial world, forward bases in foreign territories can no longer be defended with the use of military force. The loss of the USN base in Subic Bay in The Philippines and the refusal by the governments in Turkey and Saudi Arabia to allow the use of US bases within their respective territories for the purposes of the 2003 invasion of Iraq,²⁶ provide examples of how reliance on other nations can be detrimental to military policy. As such, naval platforms enable states to establish a military presence in international waters providing C₄ISR as well as a base to launch action from.

Sea basing is demonstrative of the flexibility that seapower gives a nation in responding to threats whilst diplomatic initiatives are underway. The build up of forces against Iraq in 2003, and insertion of US Marines into The Philippines to combat Abu Sayyaf have relied heavily on sea basing. In addition to this, coalition warships provided C₄ISR for operations in Afghanistan from 2001 onwards. In terms of gunboat diplomacy, the placement of a battle fleet in international waters off the coast of a state which is reticent to combat NSE elements within it is the ideal way for other states to declare their intent to launch anticipatory self-defence strikes should co-operation not be forthcoming. When a state partakes in this activity, navies are able to engage in picture building activities. By this they are able to use intelligence sources to establish a picture of what is happening ashore and then when they have a favourable set of circumstances, force may be deployed as and when it is suitable to them.²⁷

FORCENet

NCO/W derives power from rapid, robust, and secure networking of well-informed, geographically dispersed war fighters that will enable an overpowering tempo and a precise, agile style of manoeuvre warfare. Using effects-based operations, the aim is to sustain access and decisively impact events ashore.²⁸

Whilst FORCENet is primarily concerned with war-like operations, as has been canvassed, the use of naval forces can extend beyond armed conflict in combating the NSE threat. To address this, inter-service co-operation needs to go beyond the armed forces and extend to law enforcement

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agencies and the civil community. FORCENet touches on this in respect of the use of commercial satellites in assisting in USN communications.²⁹ However, combined operations against NSE's inside a co-operative nation's territories need to embrace civil co-operation. For example, the Australian experience in the Solomon Islands is demonstrative of civil-military policing inside foreign territories.³⁰

For countries that have legal prohibitions on military forces policing domestic territories, such as the US and Japan, Coast Guard forces need to be incorporated into the FORCENet scheme in order to ensure the seas are kept in good order. Australia has set up an intra-governmental approach whereby different government departments rely on Department of Defence and Customs to provide policing for areas such as immigration and fisheries.³¹ The spoils of illegal activities in the latter two areas tend to fund criminal organisations which may ultimately fuel NSE capabilities, such as FARC, Abu Sayyaf and Al-Qaida. For the purposes of this paper this author's has expanded FORCENet into peace time operations involving constabulary duties to combat NSE's. This goes towards the wider concept of viewing seapower as more than mere notions of command of the ocean, instead it extends maritime security to ensuring good order at sea against NSE's and criminal groups and securing the sovereign integrity of coastal states as well as the free passage of international trade.³²

SEA WARRIOR

"You think their discipline is poor," I said. "You are wrong. Their discipline is very good. What holds them back from exterminating every male child, every last one of you, is not compassion or fellow-feeling. It is discipline, nothing else: orders from above, that can

change any day. Compassion is flown out of the window. This is war."

J.M. Coetzee, *Age of Iron*

This aspect of Sea Power focuses on the human element in naval forces. Whilst the Sea Warrior ethos focuses on US efforts at retention and recruitment of its naval personnel,³³ at its heart is the establishment of a professional fighting force. The recent experience with US troops in the Abu Ghraib Prison as well as the conduct of certain personnel in combat operations in the Middle East³⁴ demonstrates how dangerous it is when forces breach disciplinary and ethical codes when working in the urban environment. As has been discussed, when dealing with asymmetric threats there is often a battle for the local population's loyalty that will determine the success or failure of an operation.

In the network centric environment one of the greatest risks in keeping command and strike structures distant and far away from the actual area of combat is the risk of ensuring proportionate strikes within civilian areas. Having a widely dispersed military force that takes orders from a distant command chain in relation to strikes upon urban built up areas poses a fundamental problem for ensuring proportionality in military operations.³⁵ It is very easy to disregard this aspect of military planning in pursuit of achieving the objective, however, failure to do so runs the risk of adverse strategic results. One consequence is the potential criminal sanction that could flow from a disproportionate attack,³⁶ the other is endangering the long term support of the population, both the enemy's population and domestically.³⁷

CONCLUSION

A counter to this is the humanitarian assistance role, which a naval force can perform in order to gain the good

will of the population in an area of conflict. The vision of warships bringing supplies to such a population can aid in the battle for the loyalty of the people and curb the influence of NSE's such as Al-Qaeda and Abu Sayyaf. Naval units have proven capability in this area with operations that involve evacuation from disaster stricken areas and the provision of supplies to areas cut off from their usual trade routes.³⁸

Naval forces can therefore be best viewed as possessing the following roles in combating the asymmetric threat.

Constabulary utilisation with mobile smaller platforms for interdiction of smuggling operations;

The use of larger and agile platforms to provide a means of combating pirates and asymmetric fleets such as the Sea Tigers;

Capital ships to provide C₄ISR, NGS and Sea bases for expeditionary forces in major campaigns against enemy states and inland coalition operations against NSE's; and

Supply ships to provide humanitarian assistance to civilian areas adversely affected by conflict.

In doing this, one must view conventional naval forces as the international water-borne capability within a whole of government approach towards asymmetric threats. Rather than being a single option in dealing with asymmetry, they form part of a network in a range of options that states can use in combating NSE's. Jointery with other services, including domestic law enforcement agencies, is crucial to achieve this. Whether it is as part of NCW or constabulary operations, the ORBAT of naval platforms needs to be diverse in order to fulfill the varying roles naval forces may be called upon to perform when combating asymmetric threats around the world. 🚢



Lieutenant Michael Paes completed studies in Law and International Studies from Flinders University and Asian Studies at Adelaide University, and was appointed as a legal officer in the Royal Australian Navy in 2004. He is currently serving as a legal advisor at Russell Offices in Navy Headquarters.

(Endnotes)

1

Notes

See *Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism Reports* – 'Al- Qaeda', at jtic.janes.com accessed 1 February 2007.

2 The USS Cole was attacked by a suicide boat in October 2002.

3 It is believed that the USS Sullivan was also targeted by Al- Qaida, however the boat that was meant to carry out the attack sunk under the weight of its own explosives.

4 The merchant vessel, The Limburg, was attacked in 2002 by a suicide boat, revealing Al-Qaeda's desire to attack trade routes as part of their global strategy.

5 *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Maritime Threat: Tactics and Technology of the Sea Tigers, at jtic.janes.com accessed June 01, 2006.

6 See generally, Banlaoi, R. 2005, 'Maritime Terrorism in Southeast Asia: The Abu Sayyaf Threat', *Naval War College Review*, Autumn, Vol 58, No 4.

7 Reuters and AFP, 'US Ships Hunt for Somali Islamists', as reported on *The Australian* website www.theaustralian.news.com.au on 5th January 2007.

8 See generally; *Jane's World Insurgency and terrorism Reports* – 'Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC)', at jtic.janes.com accessed 1 February 2007.

9 On 1 February 2005, FARC attacked the Iscunde naval base killing 15 people and injuring 26.

10 Maritime Threat: Tactics and Technology of the Sea Tigers.

11 Till, G. 2004, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, Frank Cass Publishing, London, p 158.

12 Corbett, J.1988, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, p 117.

13 Many NGO's have written papers on this topic, for the purposes of this paper this author has referred to The Bossuyt Report, The Adverse Consequences of Economic Sanctions on the Enjoyment of Human Rights, Commission on Human Rights, June 21, 2000, at <http://www.globalpolicy.org/security/sanction/unreports/bossuyt.htm#case-a> accessed 8 February 2007.

14 The BBC reported on the lifting of the blockade and its effects in *Israel Imposes Lebanon Blockade* at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/5175160.stm accessed 7 February 2007.

15 Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century* c, p 212.

16 Tucker, D. 2006, *Confronting the Unconventional: Innovation and Transformation in Military Affairs*, US Army War College, October, p 10.

17 The English blockade of The Netherlands resulted in the starvation and impoverishment of the Dutch population, nevertheless English Courts held this to be a legitimate means of waging the war against the Germans in *The Hakan* [1916] P 266.

18 *Sea Power for a New Era: Sustainable Combat Readiness with the Right Combat Capabilities*, United States Navy, 2006.

19 *ibid*, p 44.

20 *ibid* p 52.

21 The USN was able to fire Tomahawk missiles into Afghanistan as well as insert Marines via helicopter over Pakistani territory, the longest sea based marine insertion in history. See discussion in Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, p 263.

22 This concept is expanded upon in the Marine Corps Association, 1996, 'Operational Maneuvers from the Sea: A Concept for the Projection of Naval Power Ashore', *Marine Corps Gazette*, June, p 5.

23 Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, pp 261-262

24 Examples of such use include the use of tomahawk missiles into Afghanistan and Iraq in operations against Al-Qaida and their sponsors.

25 Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, p 117.

26 See discussion in, Dalton, J. 2006, 'Future Navies – Present Issues', *Naval War College Review*, Winter, Vol. 59, No. 1 p 2.

27 Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, p 258.

28 *Sea Power for a New Era: Sustainable Combat Readiness with the Right Combat Capabilities* p 127.

29 *Sea Power for a New Era: Sustainable Combat Readiness with the Right Combat Capabilities* p 135.

30 The Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was a response to the deterioration of the Solomon Islands as a viable state. Whilst no threat to other nations was imminent, the collapse of the Solomons would be a strategic problem for the Pacific. Organised crime and ethnic rivalries would flourish in such circumstances providing a fertile breeding ground for the likes of transnational criminal groups, some of which have political agendas. The ramifications of failed states in the Pacific are discussed by O'Connor in; O'Connor, M. 'Australia and the Arc of Instability', *Quadrant Magazine*, November 2006, Volume L, Number 11 http://www.quadrant.org.au/php/article_view.php?article_id=2288 accessed on 12 January 2007.

31 This unit has been set up as Australia's Border Protection Command.

32 See Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, p 377.

33 *Sea Power for a New Era: Sustainable Combat Readiness with the Right Combat Capabilities* p 169

34 The torture of prisoners inside Abu Ghraib prison at the hands of US Defence personnel and the case US Army soldiers involved in the rape and murder of an Iraqi family on March 12, 2006 illustrate the setbacks in discipline that can occur, and their ramifications, when combating asymmetric forces in the urban environment.

35 USMC, 'Operational Maneuvers from the Sea' p.4.

36 Any attack that results in civilian casualties must be justified by the military advantage gained by the attack. This is enshrined in Art. 57(2)(iii) of The Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, relating to the Protection of

Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I) of 8 June 1977, as well as the Hague Convention IV of 18 October 1907 Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land and its annex: Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land at art.23(e).

Failure to apply this principle is punishable in accordance with the Rome Statute. Not all countries have signed up to these provisions, however the principle itself is still considered part of International Customary Law and is thus binding on all states.

37 Such strategic thinking has proved necessary with modern day humanitarian assistance missions and operations in Serbia and Kosovo 1999, East Timor 1999, Iraq 2003, and The Solomon Islands 2003. All of these required a winning of the hearts and minds of the population amongst which the military operations were, and are still, being executed around.

38 Till, *Seapower: A Guide for the Twenty-First Century*, p 269.

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AUSTRALIAN NAVAL INSTITUTE MARITIME ADVANCEMENT AUSTRALIA AWARD 2008-2009

The Australian Naval Institute (ANI), supported by the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS) at the University of Wollongong and with the sponsorship of Booz Allen Hamilton (Australia) Ltd, Saab Systems Pty Ltd and EDS, is pleased to announce the opening of competition for the 2008-2009 **Maritime Advancement Australia Award**.

Purpose

The purpose of the **Maritime Advancement Australia Award** is to promote the development of knowledge relating to the maritime sector that will be of benefit to Australia as a maritime nation.

The **Maritime Advancement Australia Award** is awarded biennially to fund an original research project up to a value of \$22,000 per year over a maximum two-year period. The recipient will be expected to produce a tangible research outcome by the conclusion of the two-year term of the **Award**. The recipient of the **Award** will be publicly announced at the *Pacific 2008 Maritime Exhibition* in Sydney, February 2008, and will be expected to report the findings and/or demonstrate the output of the research at the following *Pacific Maritime Exhibition* in February 2010.



Eligibility Criteria

The **Award** is open to all individuals, companies and institutions, with the exception of Government departments and agencies and sponsoring organizations. Applications are not restricted to Australian citizens or residents, but the recipient of the **Award** must develop a research project that is of direct benefit to Australia and its maritime activities.

The **Award** is an inclusive one, open to applicants from all fields of endeavour relevant to the maritime sector, including, but not restricted to: science and technology, law, policy, defence, marine industries, engineering, information technology and history. No reasonable application will be excluded from consideration for the **Award**.

Judging

Applications will be considered by an Australian Naval Institute **Maritime Advancement Australia Award** Selection Committee, consisting of the President of the ANI (Chair) and one other ANI member nominated by the Council of the ANI, together with a member nominated by ANCORS, a member nominated by Booz Allen Hamilton, a member nominated by Saab Systems and a member nominated by EDS. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair will have the casting vote. The Selection Committee may invite representatives of other maritime organisations to advise on the applications, but these representatives will not have voting rights.



Application Procedure

Applicants must submit three copies of the application form (photocopies of the form are acceptable) **[to contain personal/institutional details etc]** together with three copies of the research proposal and any supporting material.

All applications must be submitted in hard copy and the declaration on each copy of the application form must be signed.

The research proposal should consist of no more than one to three pages and must convey sufficient information for the Selection Committee to be able to understand the aim of the project, the process to be undertaken, its originality, merits and national benefit.

Supporting material may be submitted, but final decisions will be based primarily on the research proposal.

The application must be received by the Australian Naval Institute at the following address by 30 September 2007:

Maritime Advancement Australia Award Competition
Australian Naval Institute
PO Box 29 RED HILL ACT 2603

Sponsors

The Maritime Australia Award enjoys the support of Booz Allen Hamilton (Australia) Ltd, Saab Systems Pty Ltd and EDS as its major sponsors. Booz Allen Hamilton (Australia)'s, Saab Systems' and EDS' involvement in this important initiative reflects their commitment to the development of Australia's maritime interests as a vital element of the nation's future.

Terms and Conditions

1. The winner of the **Maritime Advancement Australia Award** will receive \$22,000 per year for a maximum of two years to fund the successful research project.

2. The project **must** produce a tangible output within the biennial timeframe. The type of output is not prescriptive, however, and, as possible examples, may take the form of an invention or design, some other type of product, a publication, software or educational material.

3. The money will be disbursed to the winner in two separate payments of \$22,000 in March of each year of the **Award**. The second payment will only be disbursed on receipt by the Selection Committee by the beginning of the previous month of a satisfactory report on the progress achieved during the first year of the project.

4. The recipient should produce a final report on the project for the Selection Committee, which would also be published in *Headmark: Journal*

of the Australian Naval Institute. In the case of a project which is itself a thesis or written study, publication will be considered by ANCORS as part of its series of occasional papers, but this option does not exclude publication by commercial publishers or other authorities.

5. The recipient of the **Award** must agree, if requested by the Selection Committee, to attend the public announcement of the winner at the *Pacific 2008 Maritime Exhibition* and present the findings/output of the research at the *Pacific 2010 Maritime Exhibition*.

6. The research must be new and original and should be a stand-alone project that advances maritime-related knowledge in Australia. The **Award** can not be used to fund projects already partly funded from other sources.

7. The **Award** can not be used to fund research relating to the award of a degree or other qualification. Current and prior research undertaken as part of a degree or other qualification is ineligible for consideration for the **Award**.

8. Applicants may submit more than one project for consideration, but these must be made as separate applications, posted in separate envelopes.

9. **All applications must be received by 31 October 2007 to be eligible. Late, incomplete or incorrectly completed applications will not be considered.** Applications will be acknowledged in writing by the Australian Naval Institute.

10. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application(s) by 01 December 2007. All applications and supporting material will be retained by

the Australian Naval Institute.

11. The decision of the Selection Committee is final and no correspondence will be entered into with unsuccessful applicants. The Selection Committee will have sole and complete discretion over the acceptance of applications and over the identification of a winning application.

12. The Selection Committee will not enter into any correspondence with potential applicants prior to their application.

13. The Selection Committee reserves the right not to confer the **Award** if they decide that none of the entries meets the desired standard.

14. The disbursement of the **Award** does not infer any commercial or other endorsement of the research output by the Australian Naval Institute or the sponsors of the **Award**.

15. The Australian Naval Institute reserves the right to cancel payment of the **Award** if at any time the terms and conditions of the **Award** are found to have been breached.

New Construction Submarine – Analysis of National Benefits and Costs

BY CHRIS SKINNER, CAPTAIN RAN (RTD)

Submarines are the subject of awe and envy, yet they are also misunderstood and undervalued due to their quintessential stealth and invisibility. The development of the submarine in some ways has paralleled the development of aerospace vehicles. In both spheres more than two centuries earlier there had been recorded attempts with limited success. Again in each case serious development dates from the turn of the twentieth century, and took place in the USA.

For submarines a primitive underwater craft was used in an attempted attack on ships of the Royal Navy [RN] in the War of American Independence. In the American Civil War a confederate submarine succeeded in sinking a Union warship.

Much later, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, John Holland developed the first practical submarines for the United States Navy, and within a short time the new capability had been adopted by other major naval powers.

For Australia, a country newly formed in 1901 from British colonies, this was the time when the imperatives of maritime trade and security were

recognized and steps taken to create the Australian Navy. Admiral Creswell and his colleagues at the time saw less value in submarines for Australia as they were regarded as suitable only for coastal defence, but the prime minister of the day, Alfred Deakin, after briefing and demonstrations in the UK, thought otherwise, and decided that the new Australian naval forces would include two modern E-class submarines, later to be named *AE1* and *AE2*. These submarines were substantial vessels with crew of more than 30, four torpedo tubes and carrying eight or more torpedoes. They were constructed in the UK and arrived in Australia in time to participate in the early part of World War I – *AE1* disappeared without trace while operating in the capture of German territories in the south west Pacific; *AE2* was the first Allied ship to penetrate the Dardanelles and engage Turkish forces before itself being disabled and scuttled to avoid capture.

Further experience with submarines was spasmodic involving transfer of six obsolescent J-boats from the RN only to be paid off to reduce operating costs, the new construction of two O-class submarines that were soon

given to the RN as an economy measure, plus the stationing of submarines from Britain and other countries in Australia during and after World War II. The latter experience convinced the RAN to acquire its own submarine capability again; a decision that took effect on 18 August 1967 with the arrival of *HMAS Oxley*¹ and the commissioning of the submarine base *HMAS Platypus*².

Over the following fifteen years the Australian Submarine Squadron was expanded from four to six boats and was the subject of an innovative home-grown modernisation program called the Submarine Weapons Upgrade Program or SWUP. These Australian submarines demonstrated their exceptional capabilities in many exercises and other less well-publicised intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance [ISR] activities. Together with the in-country skills demonstrated in SWUP these feats gave rise to the widespread acceptance of the capability to develop our submarine capabilities further in the future.

Although the life of the O-boats was significant, so also was the lead-time for their replacements, and thus it was in 1983 that the project was conceived for the so-called New Construction Submarine [NCSM]. This project was unusual in a number of respects, not least because of the complexity of the design and of implementation. It has been at times a controversial project but one of great significance to Australia and this is the subject of my project that received the Maritime Advancement Australia Award for 2006 – to research and write about the NCSM project and its benefits and costs in a manner that would be better appreciated by the Australian people. The Benefits include industrial capabilities acquired as well as the strategic defence capabilities.



HMAS Rankin by Chris Sattler

My research has proceeded into some of the main areas of interest and revealed a growing awareness of the industrial and operational capabilities that have been created. At the same time the challenges of project management and technical integration have also been acknowledged, providing lessons to be applied in similar projects in the future. One of these is likely to be the design and construction of the next generation of submarines for the RAN. Who knows - there may even be an export market opportunity as well.

There are issues to be addressed but there is also the confidence that we, Australia with help from the experience of our primary ally, USA, and possibly the help of other friendly navies, will deal with the issues as we have in similar cases in the past. Some issues that remain before us include:

- Air-independent propulsion capability to reduce the indiscretion rate for submarines when on patrol
- Intelligence gathering surveillance and reconnaissance [ISR] - optimising the submarine contributions
- Mobility – especially sustained speed of advance – for oceanic manoeuvre to exploit wide-scale ISR information from networked sources
- Network centric warfare [NCW] and the challenges of maintaining continuous communications of sufficient bandwidth with dived submarines
- Strategic operations of submarine forces through real-time near-continuous command, control and communications [C3]
- Deterrence capabilities based on submarines; these include submarine-launched cruise missiles, mines and unmanned undersea vehicles [UUV]
- Operations in conditions of Nuclear, Bacteriological and Chemical Defence [NBCD] contamination
- Manning levels and the challenges

of recruitment, training and retention of submarine-qualified personnel

- The capability for deployment and support of special operations forces, especially relevant to littoral warfare
- The employment of submarines for anti-submarine warfare [ASW] in the face of growing numbers of submarines in the Asia-Pacific region
- The timeline for the development of the next generation submarine capability as described in the concept SM2020 espoused by the Submarine Institute of Australia [SIA]

On the 18 August 2007, 40 years after the creation of the Australian Submarine Squadron, there will be much cause for reflection on how far Australia has come since the time a century ago when the AE-class boats were ordered. Perhaps even more so will be the cause to reflect on what we have learned and the resources we have built to sustain the next stage of this epic story. 🚢

Acknowledgement: The Maritime Advancement Australian Award 2006 has provided me with two essential capabilities that would not otherwise have been at my disposal:

- The generous financial contribution to my project has enabled me to defray the expenses needed to attend paid events, travel and acquire research material. Without this financial support it could only have been an intermittent hobby, and even with the support there have needed to be some periods of low activity as income-earning activity was progressed.

- The recognition of the award and its implied endorsement of the subject of my project have been of great importance. It has opened doors and appointment books to me that would have been difficult otherwise.

It now remains for me to ensure the result of my work is worthy of this support and is truly an advancement of Australian maritime knowledge and competence.



Captain Chris Skinner RAN (retired) served at sea in six RAN ships and in acquisition projects and secondments to the Defence Science and Technology Organisation and the US Naval Sea Systems Command as

a weapons and electrical engineering officer. He was project director for the forerunner of the ANZAC Ship Project and completed a postgraduate degree in software engineering. In 2006 after several years in industrial project and general management he was awarded the inaugural Maritime Advancement Australia award for his project to research the national benefits and costs of the New Construction Submarine project.

(Endnotes)

- 1 The second submarine of this name; the first having been constructed for Australia in 1928 and gifted to the RN in 1931.
- 2 Named after the submarine tender constructed for the RAN in World War I and employed at various times as submarine and destroyer tender until paid off in 1956.

The Electrical Supply System in *HMAS Voyager*

BY JOHN WALLER

HMAS Voyager was the first RAN ship to be fitted with an Alternating Current (AC) supply system. Previous RAN ships used Direct Current (DC). I was the Deputy Electrical Engineer in *Voyager* in 1959, and I am writing here about my experiences therein.

HMAS Vampire, now a museum exhibit in Darling Harbour, was a sister ship of *Voyager*. As Daring-class destroyers, they were the last of the British destroyer type to be built, being characterised by no 'tween-decks passage fore and aft and an open bridge. The former was required for the torpedo tubes.

Nearly every reader will know that *Voyager* was tragically lost by being sliced in two by *HMAS Melbourne* in 1964. I happened to be at sea for Ikara missile trials in *HMAS Stuart* and saw the aft section just before it sank.

Just as the RN was slow to embrace steam power it was slow to embrace electricity. The first use was to employ electrical firing of guns. It must have satisfied some admiral's sense of orderliness to have the guns go "bang" simultaneously. More seriously, though, it was necessary with main armament, as the guns were not stabilised and needed to be fired when the ship rolled to the right angle.

But, I am not about to write about weapon systems, I want to tell you about *Voyager* and AC.

I obtained an electrical engineering degree at Melbourne University, having joined the RAN in 1947. At first I was training as a seaman officer but switched to the fledgling Electrical Branch ("greenies") in 1952. Prior to that, electrical matters had been handled piecemeal by those who used electricity. Just as marine engineers were a breed to be looked down on, greenies were even worse! For a bit of fun, ask a greeny to tie a bowline on a bight! I have often wondered if the USN arrangement, where officers don't specialise nearly as much, might have been better.

The battle between AC and DC is best described as rivalry between Tesla and Edison in the USA towards the end of the 19th Century. Edison wanted to use DC because he did not believe transformers would be efficient enough. Tesla showed otherwise. Transformers are used to distribute electricity over long distances by transforming the power to and from a very high voltage, for low loss with a long transmission path. Such transformers are typically 99% efficient at full load. Doing the same thing with DC would have been very messy in Edison's day, although it is now possible.

But ships do not have long transmission paths, so DC is fine. The RN opted to use DC. As time went

on, however, electrical and radio systems grew and grew, with each new gizmo requiring a different voltage. At the time, a different voltage from the ship's standard



distribution required a special motor-generator, an expensive and heavy piece of equipment.

In contrast, the USN went for AC. Not only was the "hotel" power at AC, many ships used AC motors for propulsion. Eventually the RN had to switch. As far as I know, the Daring class was the first with AC. Now North America uses a mains frequency of 60 Hz (cycles per second), whereas much of the rest of the world, including the UK and Australia, uses 50 Hz. There is no particular virtue using one as against the other, but they don't always mix easily!

The RN, in the spirit of NATO, I suppose, decided upon the USN standard of 440 volts, 3 phase, 60 Hz. Low-voltage distribution followed the North American domestic standard of 115 volts, 60 Hz. Australia had no choice but to follow suit.

What are the advantages of AC in the ship environment? Transformers (no moving parts) may be used to obtain different voltages. Different frequencies still required motor-generators, but much more rugged with AC.



Ships are full of fans which require periodic maintenance. I was in *Melbourne* in the tropics just before joining *Voyager*. A key fan motor in officer territory required maintenance and everyone crowded onto the Quarterdeck to try and cool off. After I joined *Voyager* I found the maintenance schedule for fan motors was the same as those for a DC ship. Now the fan motor in an AC ship is an induction motor. With a 3-phase supply there is no brush gear required (as in a DC motor), so nothing except the bearings to wear out. Times between maintenance were greatly increased on my recommendation.

Is there a drawback to AC? Yes there is, in that it is more difficult to connect generators in parallel, compared with DC. Ships are fitted with several generators, maybe only one or two are required at any given time, and the rest are on standby. But when changing generators the aim is not to interrupt the supply, so the generator going off line must run in parallel with the one coming on line, for at least a brief period.

Now, you cannot connect generators in parallel unless their voltages are about the same. You will break something! Matching voltages is not hard to do with DC but, with AC, the voltages are bobbing up and down 60 times a second. The two generators must be **synchronised!**

The main power control board in an AC ship contains a "synchroscope". This takes its input from two generators so the operator can determine when they are outputting the same voltage. The speed of one of the generators, normally the one coming on line, is adjusted until the synchroscope indicates the two generators may be connected together. Then power is transferred to the generator coming on line, and the other disconnected.

Without giving a tutorial in electrical engineering, suffice to say there is a right way, and several wrong ways, of carrying out the above procedure. The right way means nobody else in the ship, unless standing next to either of the two generators concerned, knows a generator change has been made. The wrong ways, at best, cause a temporary brown-out, or at worst, break something.

The change over was normally performed by PO Electricians. In *Voyager* they were all trained with DC and older than I was. Here was this "green" "greeny" telling them what to do. The complexity of changing over generators and the consequences of doing it wrong, understandably had them nervous. But we managed not to break anything.

The consequences of adopting 115 volts for low-voltage

distribution meant that no appliance designed for use in Australia could work aboard an AC ship. Products made in North America would be fine, once the connector had been changed to the RN standard. I did purchase some small transformers locally for electric razors to operate at 230 volts. These don't care too much whether they are supplied with 50 or 60 Hz. I made up boxes fitted with the Australian-style socket and distributed them amongst the messes. Even though the boxes were labelled "for razors only", sooner or later someone would plug in an iron; poof!!

Amongst *Voyager's* many problems were the boilers. Crossing from the Philippines to Hong Kong, in company with many ships, one of the two boilers blew up. Since only one boiler was normally used at economical speed, the ship went dead in all respects, except for emergency lighting. Fortunately it was day time, so flag signals worked!

The engineering and electrical staff immediately set about getting diesel-driven generators up and running. Now the ship had only one functional boiler, and it was decided to run diesels, which were not normally used while underway. In the circumstances it was very desirable to distribute the power so that there was as little disruption as possible if something else went wrong. The standard power distribution arrangement did not facilitate doing this, so I ran a number of emergency cables instead. This was an opportunity to use the emergency power distribution other than during an exercise. Everything worked as expected, except there were some water-tight doors which could not have been closed. The Captain, Bill Dovers, accepted the limitations.

Now, nearly 50 years on, I remember much of what happened so vividly. I moved on to other things not connected with operating the power supply in ships, but I will never forget *Voyager!* 🇦🇺



John Waller was born in Melbourne in 1933. I joined the RAN College in 1947 with the view to becoming a seaman officer, but switched to electrical in 1952. I graduated with a Bachelor degree in Electrical Engineering from Melbourne University in 1955. Following my duty in HMAS Voyager I joined the IKARA project in 1960. In 1967 I left the RAN to join the RAN Experimental Laboratory where I worked until I left the Australian Government Service in 1988. I then went to work in the USA, where I now live in retirement.

Australia's Secret War

Chapter III

BY HAL G.P. COLEBATCH

At this time they also deliberately wrecked American aircraft-engines as they were being unloaded

AROUND THE WHARVES – ADELAIDE

Part III in the continuing story of the secret battle on Australia's wharves in WWII

Port Adelaide watersiders struck to prevent Australian munitions being unloaded from ships bringing troops from the Middle East for the defence of Australia early in 1942.

At this time they also deliberately wrecked American aircraft-engines as they were being unloaded, until American servicemen opened fire with Tommy-guns and used stun-grenades. Mr E. D. ("Dave") Patton (No. NX25097) was a Sergeant in the First Australian Corps of Signals, serving from 1941 to 1948. He recalled:

"There were two incidents which occurred at Adelaide on our arrival from the Middle East in 1942 on board the Dutch tramp steamer *SS Jetersum* with approximately 100 personnel of various units. Our cargo consisted of 5,000 tons of ammunition, 25-pounder field guns, 200 truck-pens plus four Bofors 40-mm anti-aircraft guns mounted on deck. The ammunition was covered by about 3,000 tons of sand, and 80 tons of gun-cotton was below water-level in the anchor-chain lockers.

As soon as we tied up at the wharf the wharfies came on board asking various members of the crew and Army what we had on board, especially under the sand. Well, no one would tell them but they soon found out about the ammo and demanded danger money. Not receiving same they went on strike.

The Army was called in to unload the ship. In the meantime some of the wharfies would not get off the ship,

so the Army removed them, then continued the task of unloading.

There was another incident, which happened on board the ship berthed in front of our vessel. It was an American Liberty Ship which was unloading Allison Aero Engines. I was watching the procedure from the bow of our ship and could see all that transpired between the Americans and the wharfies. When the cargo nets were lowered into the hold the engines in their flimsy crates were loaded, then the winch-driver would snatch the net up and swing it over the side and let it drop on the concrete wharf - as a result the engines were damaged.

The Americans told them to stop dropping the engines, the wharfies took no notice whatsoever. As a consequence the Americans armed themselves with Thompson sub-machine guns and fired a number of short bursts up in the air. That quietened them for about half an hour, so some of the crew produced some plastic stun-grenades and dropped them down into the hold. That put a stopper on their shenanigans."¹

At Port Adelaide in 1942 watersiders also refused to unload artillery returning from the Middle East to help in the defence against the Japanese advance in New Guinea.

Mr J. S. C. ("Jim") Cumpston (WX10998) was a West Australian volunteer in the Second AIF. He served in the Middle East with the 2/3rd Field Artillery Battery and later in New Guinea with the 1st Mountain Battery. His military career was marked by some not untypically Australian clashes with authority and his rank fluctuated between Gunner and Sergeant. He is mentioned and pictured in Jack Allan & Chris Cutts, Eds., *As it Seemed To Us: The 1st Australian Mountain*

Battery RAA AIF (Aegis, Brisbane, 1994). Following the war Mr Cumpston became the proprietor of a well-known engraving business in Perth. He recalled:

"The 2/3rd Battery came back from Palestine in 1942 in the *Felice Rochel*, a French ship, generally known as the Hell Ship. When we came into Adelaide we had to unload the ship ourselves, because the wharfies demanded danger money. They gave no reason.

We unloaded in a day and a half - the 25-pounders, shells, charges and fuses. The wharfies, about 40 or 50 of them, came down and started abusing us. I was in charge of the guard at the gang-plank numbering about 12 men, and I had great pleasure in giving the order to fix bayonets. We all felt the same way. They stopped in their tracks when they heard the sound of the cold steel being drawn. We loaded one round ready, and advanced on them with our rifles at High Port. They took off at a gallop.

Later, when we had nearly finished unloading, after midnight, some of them came back, and started shouting: "Now you've done it! You can't unload boats! We're key personnel!" They went on abusing us, calling us mugs and telling us how long they could make the job last. Their job as "key personnel" was to lead horses pulling little trolleys. We had done the labouring.

After this went on for some time the Sergeant-Major, a huge man, slapped the leader, picked him up by the seat of his pants and the scruff of his neck, carried him at arm's length to the edge of the wharf, held him out at arm's length and dropped him off. We realised that if it was good enough for him it was good enough for us. In a short time we dropped a couple

of dozen of them off the wharf. They came out whining and snarling that we would never get the job finished now. We ripped boards off packing cases, with the nails still in them, and went for them, whacking them. Anyway, they finished the unloading after that. We were waiting to go on leave so we got a bit cross.”²

The Berry diaries (QV) refer to a similar strike regarding the unloading of another ship returning from the Middle East.

BRISBANE

The Brisbane wharves were the scene of one of the most obvious and dramatic instances of sabotage of the war-effort by watersiders in 1942, though apparently without any action being initiated by the Australian Government to stop it or punish the guilty parties. This incident was witnessed by Ian L. O'Donnell, and also mentioned in the book *East Wind, Rain*, by US Army Brigadier-General Elliot R. Thorpe, a member of MacArthur's Pacific Headquarters stationed in Australia from 1942 to 1945. As Mr O'Donnell recounted it:

“The stevedoring unions didn't like the war or any part of it, so many a ship stood idle while ruffled feelings of the “wharfies” were smoothed out. In Australia, a custom had grow up before the war that each stevedore took his lunch in a large hand-bag rather than a dinner-pail. This bag was the means whereby pilfering of cargoes was made simple. This looting got to such a stage that the American Provost-Marshall in Brisbane set up an inspection system when the wharfies left the docks to go home.

On one evening as the labour gang left Breakfast Creek docks, an examination of the “dinner bags” resulted in the seizure of over 800 cartons of cigarettes intended for

American troops. This seizure caused a great row that brought a Cabinet Minister from Canberra to Brisbane at double time. The wharfies insisted they would not go back to work until they were assured that in the future they could leave the docks without their loot being examined. This assurance was not forthcoming, but their leaders finally got them back to work.

As a means of “getting even” with the “bloody American MPs” the wharfies proceeded to wreck four P-38 fighter planes that had been shipped from the United States. They simply hooked the lifting crane onto the planes and, without unbolting the planes from the decks, would signal the hoisting engineers to lift, which effectively tore the planes to pieces. These men could or would not believe their country was threatened by Japanese conquest.”³

In September, 1942, at South Brisbane, watersiders refused to work after midnight unless paid time-and-a-half when the 2/1 Battalion, AIF 6th Division, was being rushed to New Guinea to defend Port Moresby. Australian crew on the ship *Anhui*, carrying them, refused to work the ship. Jack Prichett (No. NX 26473) was a Sergeant with the 2/2 Battalion, AIF 6th Division. He recalled:

“On 13 September we had formed up at South Wharf for movement to Port Moresby, to board the *Anhui* of the China Navigation Company, then manned by an Australian crew. After a long time it was revealed that the wharf labourers were refusing to work after midnight unless paid time and a half. As orders were to sail at 0300 hours with or without stores our CO took charge and 14 platoon loaded the stores and we sailed late. It was essential that we got to Port Moresby to prevent the Japs capturing it.

On 14 September, in convoy proceeding up the Queensland coast, with all Bren Guns manned, we learnt

the crew were in revolt because they knew the ship was entering dangerous waters. At Townsville half the crew walked off the ship and so our CO had the gangway manned with a machine-gun to prevent further loss of crew. Volunteers were called [from among the troops] to man the ship, mainly to act as stokers to fire the boilers. Thus we made our way to Port Moresby.”⁴

Mr Ken Bilney wrote in the *West Australian* newspaper of 20 May, 1995, of a strike on the Brisbane wharf in 1945:

“We had similar problems at Brisbane in early 1945 when loading equipment for Morotai ... which was a staging-post for the invasion of Borneo in the first half of 1945. The trouble stated some time before dawn when we were loading stores and heavy equipment by crane. When the crane-driver refused to operate, he was smartly removed and his position was taken by one of the soldiers.”

Naval Officer, Master Mariner and Perth City Councillor Ean McDonald, (QV) recalled:

“I remember my ship's company having to physically fight Brisbane wharfies to get our ship loaded in time to get back to the fighting fronts ... Wharfies in Melbourne struck because they wanted more pay for handling soldiers' bullets but the AIF stripped them naked and plastered them with molasses. Victoria railway unions joined those wharfies on strike, refusing to handle AIF baggage. Young militia men in their baptism of fire against the Japanese on the Kokoda trail found their radio equipment lacked the batteries that had been stolen by wharfies in Sydney. Every serviceman will have a story like these. Australia should remember so it won't happen again.”⁵

The history of the 2/6th Field Artillery Regiment AIF, *The 25-Pounders - From Egypt to Borneo*,

I remember my ship's company having to physically fight Brisbane wharfies to get our ship loaded in time to get back to the fighting fronts

Australia's Secret War – Chapter III

recounts the following incident in September, 1942. The regiment had arrived in Brisbane to embark for New Guinea, after having been recalled by the Curtin Government from the middle east:

“The Watersiders’ Union, Communist-led, refused to load the ships. They claimed danger-money to be essential before handling the ammunition. Refusing to load the guns and ammunition, they went on strike, unconcerned by the Japanese invasion of New Guinea. We manned the winches and loaded and stacked the cargo in record time. It seemed that the wharfies were at war against our society and our country.”⁶

Alan Marks (No. 446059), wrote:

“I have been saving this story for 50 years, and I am glad to pass it on as I was a so-called wharfie. I was a half-trained aircrew in 1943 when all air-crew training was scrubbed owing to the large numbers returning from Europe. While in camp in Brisbane we were sent to the Hamilton wharves where the wharfies were on strike. Our particular job was to unload a Liberty Ship which was loaded with jeeps packed in large wooden crates. The inexperienced work-crew was something to behold. During one day’s work the hand-operated winch managed to slip off a crate while it was swinging off the ship. Down she went [into the harbour], observed by a Yank officer. He ordered a diver down to get it back. After some time the diver came up. He commented that there were at least 8 crates down there and should he get the lot?”⁷

CAIRNS

Henry Banton (“Jo”) Gullett, was the son of Sir Henry Gullett, one of the three Ministers of the first Menzies Government killed in the Canberra

air disaster of 1940, and himself later a Liberal politician. He was one of the AIF’s most distinguished fighting soldiers in terms of continuous action. He enlisted in the ranks, was wounded three times, and was awarded the Military Cross. He wrote in his memoirs that when the 6th Division was embarking for the New Guinea in mid-1942, waterside workers at Cairns:

“Stole our military stores in the loading, not only little things, but items like compasses, sights and arms on which our capacity to fight depended. This surprised us because these men were no less Australians than we were. Yet they seemed not to be on our side. Anyhow, we put guards on them and the watersiders went out on strike. So we loaded the ships ourselves. Our rate of loading was exactly twice theirs.”⁸

Mr Bruce Ruxton, President of the Victorian Returned Services League and probably Australia’s best-known ex-service advocate and activist, wrote: “[The watersiders’] attitude to the war was, to say the least, most obscene ... I remember particularly an incident that took place one night in North Queensland ... While awaiting travel to the Tablelands, I managed to get a job one night on the Cairns wharf as a “lumper” loading molasses on a ship that was later sunk. The waterside worker in front of me in the line of trolleys that night told me things weren’t too good these days because the war was going further away and danger money had ceased. I certainly let him have it for saying that.”⁹

DARWIN

By 4 November, 1939, railway employees had begun the first wartime strike at Darwin, resulting in the loss of all perishable foodstuffs at a time when the Navy and Army were struggling to develop it as a defence base. Darwin depended on shipping for

most supplies, so when the waterside workers held strikes in late 1939 and early 1940 it was found necessary to use the military to unload three ships. Strikes were encouraged by the union-run paper *Northern Standard*. An Army assessment of 1940 classified the North Australian worker’s union as a subversive organisation. This noted that the acting Union secretary, Lindsay Craig, and Dr Ian McDonald, a guarantor of the *Northern Standard*, had Communist Party affiliations.¹⁰

However, strikes went on at Darwin throughout the war in strategic industries for the most frivolous reasons despite the Communist Party’s 1941 about-face and despite the Japanese threat. One military reviewer described Darwin as “a boil on the Australian defence system.”¹¹ There is a further point to be made: the main part of Sparrow Force, the 2/40th Battalion, which as described above was rapidly over-run by the Japanese in the Timor landings in February, 1942, had previously been in the Darwin area for almost a year, and had suffered a good deal of sickness. By the time the men got to Timor their general state of health was a real problem and probably had a major effect on the battalion’s fighting ability and on its mobility. The Commandos of the 2/2nd Independent Company, much healthier and more resilient, who fought on and never surrendered, had previously trained in Victoria and then been quartered not at Darwin but at Katherine. I know of no research on the matter but it seems at least possible that the generally inadequate facilities for the military at Darwin in the early part of the war had contributed to the battalion’s poor health. The main health problems in Timor were malaria and dysentery and other stomach disorders, which are obviously made much worse for men with already weakened constitutions.

Official war historian (later Liberal

Alan Marks (No. 446059), wrote:

“I have been saving this story for 50 years, and I am glad to pass it on as I was a so-called wharfie.”

politician and Governor-General) Sir Paul Hasluck, wrote that at the time of the 1942 bombing of Darwin, war-emergencies had increased the inward freight of the port by about 500% but ships were still being delayed owing to slow handling on the wharves. The Board of Business Administration and the Defence Committee recommended a suitable area be declared a Defence Area, within which transport, building and works pertaining to defence would be under military control. However, according to Hasluck: "The Menzies Government was plain scared of the effect such action would have on the labour movement throughout Australia and on 5 March, 1941, deferred the consideration of the recommendation. Industrial hold-ups at Darwin occurred throughout 1941."

When the Curtin Government came to office in October, 1941, one of the first actions of Eddie Ward as Minister for Labour and National Service was to agree to the demands of striking Darwin watersiders in terms that amounted to complete concession to them. However, as their behaviour at the loading of the Timor convoy shortly afterwards, described above, indicates, this did not buy them off. Rather, it appears to have encouraged further militancy both on the Darwin waterfront and on other wharves around Australia, and to have served notice to other unions that they could expect the same. According to Hasluck:

"In the growing urgency of defence demands towards the end of the year, and in January, 1942, the labour troubles on the Darwin wharves caused serious concern. The United States General, Brigadier Barnes, complained bluntly to the Advisory War Council and asked for military labour. The government's policy, however, was not to allow any servicemen to be used on the wharves until all local labour had been absorbed.

The Americans complained that the *Holbrook*, with American artillery equipment on board, had waited at Darwin for three weeks before the equipment could be taken off. Two other ships for Darwin had been held up at Townsville because the berths at Darwin were not being cleared. Under the importuning of Barnes, Curtin agreed on 12 January to have immediate inquiries made ... belated attempts to deal with unsatisfactory conditions in the harbour had not been good enough, however, and on 19 February [when the Japanese attacked] the harbour was dangerously congested.¹²

Among the ships in Darwin Harbour were blockade-runners preparing a desperate attempt to supply the besieged American troops on Corrigidor. Eight ships were sunk and about 15 others badly damaged. At least 243 people (possibly more) were killed, of whom about 160 were on ships. The *Zealandia*, which had taken the 2/2nd to Timor a few weeks previously despite a wharf strike, was sunk. An ammunition ship, the *Neptuna*, was hit while waiting to discharge cargo at the wharf and exploded. Waterside workers were among those killed.

The Left have frequently suggested that the poor state of Darwin's defences when the Japanese attacked in 1942 was the result of Blimpish arrogance and complacency by the Menzies Government, or because the Anglophilic Menzies had sent all Australian forces to aid Perfidious Albion. In fact the strikes had delayed the plainly necessary strengthening of Darwin's defence facilities, and for more than four months there had been a Labor Government which had not taken the matter in hand. The Darwin watersiders maintained their principles steadfastly for decades. In 1979 they went on strike and declared the Shell

tanker *Entalina* black for having rescued anti-Communist Vietnamese boat-refugees and bringing them to Darwin. The *Entalina*, under Captain Norman Sloan, had picked up about 150 refugees from a boat, a large proportion women and children. Some had been raped and killed by pirates or died of starvation and exposure and the boat was sinking when the *Entalina* found them.

One of the refugees, Mrs Cam Ha, whose husband was a former South Vietnamese Army Officer who had been in a North Vietnamese prison since the fall of Saigon ("I have had a very sad time"), said: "If the British ship had not stopped we would have been dead. Twenty-two ships passed us by and we waved and put up white flags but they did not stop." The waterside workers said political differences made the refugees unacceptable. There were a number of similar incidents, such as that involving the *Song Be* 12.¹³

FREMANTLE

Frank Smith was a private and Gunner in the Second AIF. After the war he was a well-known journalist in Western Australia, writing for the *Sunday Times* and other publications. Mr Smith told of unionists fleeing from the sight of ammunition being loaded and refusing to help prepare the defences of Rottneest Island, which was guarding the Port of Fremantle and the City of Perth with 9.2-inch and 6-inch guns in August, 1942. Another part of Mr Smith's account is given in the section dealing with the Sydney waterfront.

"The first time I came across this inexplicable behaviour by citizens of a country under dire threat of invasion by a brutal and all-conquering enemy was in Fremantle in August, 1942. I was then with an artillery unit assigned to take the first anti-aircraft guns to Rottneest Island. The island was one

Australia's Secret War – Chapter III

of the vital defence points on the Australian coast, but it was without ack-ack because there were no guns available in those desperate days.

The Labor government had reached an agreement with the unions that troops would only do a percentage of any defence work so as not to be taking jobs from union members (in 1942 the Yanks offered to replace, at no cost, the rickety old 1890s causeway bridge at East Perth, but the government refused because of the agreement. It took another 10 years and a lot of tax-payer money to get a new bridge and it is a wonder the old one did not fall down in the meantime).

Ammunition for our Rottnest guns was to be transported by a barge and we had early breakfast so we could be on Victoria Quay by daylight. We had to load two-thirds of the cargo, the remaining one-third would keep workers' jobs safe.

The shells were packed securely in steel boxes with handles at each end and we had endless lectures (even before we knew what a shell looked like) on how the things were designed so they would not go bang when they were not supposed to. We were familiar with all the safety precautions and what you could and could not do if you wanted to stay alive.

The barge was way below the level of the wharf and the boxes were heavy, so we used our initiative, scrounged some lengths of timber and invented a series of slides - ammunition-truck to wharf edge, wharf-edge to barge, with pairs of men to guide the boxes as they slid down to where other willing hands stacked them in the hold ...

We were going a treat as truck after truck of ammo. rolled in and was unloaded, and about 9 am. some friendly-looking citizens drifted along, greeted us with smiles and said they were looking for some ammo they had to load.

"This is it, Mate. Want to lend a hand?" The friendly faces turned white and backed off a few paces."

"B-b-b-but, that stuff's dangerous!"

"Never in a million years, Mate. It's as safe as houses."

They did not wait for explanations, they bolted. We finished our two-thirds and were back in camp in time for morning tea. The truck drivers returned late, grumbling about having to sit on the wharf until noon waiting for the missing workers to turn up, and the barge could not sail till three p.m.. the following day because loading of the obligatory one-third was not completed until then. The wharf gang, incidentally, outnumbered ours by at least two-to-one and no doubt was paid danger money for the dreadful risk involved.

Throughout the war we came across many such cases that made us wonder why we bothered to fight. Maybe this country needed an invasion to drive home to some people what a fortunate lot they were. We heard of the Townsville dunking case in 1942 and marvelled that there had not been a lot more of it.

I worked in Fremantle in the 1950s and tried to understand the mentality of people who refused to see beyond their own narrow point of view. They're a funny lot, deeply imbued with the herd instinct and sticking by your mates (no matter what skulduggery those mates might get up to), but, on the other hand, generous to a fault when it came to supporting a charity or donating blood to the Red Cross ... There used to be a bleat of frustration in the AIF: "Why do we fight?" I still wonder sometimes if it was worth it."

Mr James Ahearn (No. 83396) RAAF, wrote:

"I am a 70-year-old former serviceman who, during World War II, served 24 hours a day, seven days a

week with no such thing as overtime. As a 19-year-old I was ordered to report to the Fremantle South Wharf in December, 1944, to help unload ammunition and vital war supplies because the wharfies were on strike.

After several days of shift-work we were accosted, spat on and called scabs by some wharfies. Even today some servicemen consider the attitudes of these people to have been approaching that of a Fifth Column.¹⁴

"War-Bride" Mrs Vida Moir wrote:

"I spent the war in England and served in the British WAAF as a wireless operator at a Coastal Command station in Plymouth. The aircraft were [Short] Sunderland flying boats and the crews and ground-staff were mainly Australians. In 1943 I was married to an Australian and when the war was over I came to Perth by ship along with many more war brides and some small children.

As we were going through the Suez Canal we had to stop in a sort of lay-by to let a troop-ship returning to England pass by. Some of the troops called out to us and asked where we were going and when we said Australia they told us we were going the wrong way. We asked why, and the reply was: "Everybody strikes there except their matches."

We duly arrived at Fremantle all very anxious to see our husbands who had returned home some months earlier and they were there with flowers, etc. and just as anxious as we were. To our dismay we were told we would have to sit out in Gage Roads as there was a wharfie strike on. Many tears were shed but nothing could be done and the night was spent on board ship. Eventually we came ashore the next day. The troops in the Suez Canal knew what they were talking about. All this happened on 13 June, 1946.¹⁵

Maybe this country needed an invasion to drive home to some people what a fortunate lot they were

NEWCASTLE

Newcastle was both a port and a major coal-mining and industrial centre.

It is therefore not surprising that it was the centre of many strikes. Mark Bates wrote of miners and merchant seamen at Newcastle trying to induce Australian servicemen to desert in World War II:

"At Balmoral Naval Depot, 50 or so of us were given an hour's notice to entrain to Newcastle to man BHP's *Iron King* (three sister ships sunk in the past six months) whose crew walked off for more danger money. We went to the Great Northern until 10pm sailing-time and were approached by seamen and miners to go adrift (Absent Without Leave) with all expenses paid. We told them to go to Hell. About three months later I became part of a second Naval crew to man *SS Canberra* to carry troops and supplies to New Guinea when merchant seamen refused.¹⁶ 🚩

"Australia's Secret War" continues next issue.



Hal G.P. Colebatch has an MA in History/ Politics and a PhD in Political Science and is the author of several books as well as many articles in The Australian, Quadrant, The American Spectator etc. His book Blair's Britain was chosen as a Book of the Year in the London

Spectator. His latest book is Steadfast Knight: a life of Sir Hal Colebatch (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, WA). This is an extract from his unpublished book Australia's Secret War.

(Endnotes)

- 1 Letter, 21 April, 1996.
- 2 Interview, Perth, 20 January, 1996.
- 3 Letter, Australian, 19 April, 1996.
- 4 Letter, 10 April, 1996.
- 5 Fremantle Community News, 9 May, 1995.
- 6 Quoted in Australian, 8 April, 1996.
- 7 Letter, 27 June, 2001.
- 8 Henry Gullett, Not As A Duty Only (Melbourne University Press, 1976), p. 94.
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- 10 Alan Powell, The Shadow's Edge: Australia's Northern War (Melbourne University Press, 1988), p. 48.
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- 13 Hal G. P. Colebatch, An Analysis of the Australian Reception of Political Refugees with particular reference to the case of the Vietnamese Boat People (PhD Thesis, Department of Political Science, University of Western Australia, 1995), pp. 285-289 and passim.
- 14 Letter, West Australian, 20 May, 1994.
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THE RAN AND RECRUIT SEAMAN ANDREWS...

...SOME THOUGHTS ON A CHANGE OF LIFE-STYLE.

PART 1

BY GRAEME ANDREWS, R51410.

The press advertisements of the 1950s regularly exhorted Australia's young males to 'Join the Navy and get ahead.' The slogan was usually deliberately misunderstood by the said youth with the subsequent comment 'I DID join the Navy and look at the head they gave me!'

From the age of six or seven I developed a fascination with things that floated, firstly Sydney ferries, then the immaculate ships of British India and finally the RAN.

Time was spent as a Sea Scout and then as a Sea Cadet, at Boom Defence Base Waverton. From Waverton I was able to enjoy a brace of weekend trips, once in *Anzac* and one other, I think in *Wagga*.

I was becoming aware of international matters and it seemed to me that, with the Korean War freshly in mind and the British, French and Egyptians being beastly to each other, that World War Three was soon to start.

In retrospect it might be that some academic will one day postulate that WW3 did actually start with the matter of the Berlin Airlift and finish with the demise of the Soviet Union. Considering the many large and small, diverse and well-scattered wars of that period.... - I digress.

In September 1955 I turned 17 and my father and mother were forced to face up to the fact that I was not intending to be a brain surgeon - I really thought I wanted to join the RAN. There was some continuity here. In 1952 I had made it as far as the selection board for officer and the failed. Rodney Gatacre *was* accepted.

Eventually my instructions to go to FND for training arrived. I was in!

What a shame I did not keep them. I was required to present myself at the Naval RTO (Rail Transport Office) at Central Station in Sydney. This was a sort of portable building established at the eastern end of the Station Concourse, about a couple of arms lengths from the curve of the tram tracks.

My career had not started off auspiciously. As we drove out of Castle Hill a young girl, known to my family raced out from her front gate and shot across the road and was hit and fatally injured by one of a stream of cars heading the opposite way to us. The legal aspects of this had me called as a witness several times over the next several years.

Central Station was, in those days, a most impressive place. Suburban electric red rattlers ran past on the eastern side while intra-urban and long distance trains puffed, steamed, rattled and clanked, all to the accompaniment of a permanent pall of smoke.

My father, remembering his time in the RAAF during 'his' war, insisted I take a tired old blanket with me. 'You'll use it and it doesn't matter if it doesn't come back.' How right he was.

On the platform was a gaggle of young males, all trying to crack hardy and all confused. Several uniformed sailors shunted us here and there as parents and girlfriend tried to find something useful to say and then; we were off. It was about 7pm and cold and there were six of us in the compartment. We had a railway glass bottle of water with one glass, to cope with possible dehydration and off we went. Strathfield, Liverpool Goulburn..... ah! Goulburn, time for a cuppa at about 10pm. Ten minutes to



queue up, get a cuppa and pie and get back into the train. Railway tea rooms have long gone the way of steam trains but we relished the few on the way south.

After Goulburn, it getting cold and dark and me being one of the lighter ones, I took my Dad's advice and climbed into the luggage rack above the seats - Dad had told me to make sure I used the front one. 'That way you don't fall out if the train does a crash stop!' The blanket came in handy and so to Harden.

At Harden, at perhaps 2 am we stopped for another ten minutes and learned how cold Harden can be in October.

How many similar posed photos did the Base photographer deliver? This is Recruit Seaman Andrews, R51410, 1955.

Taken in 1978 this view of the Main Gate at Cerberus was missing the sentry that was always there when I was at the big base.





Looking across the playing field of FND towards the old Drill Hall with the gunnery school at the right.

Next stop Albury. Here the first traces of daylight assisted us as we straggled along, under the guard of a bleary sailor, from the back end of one train, past the engine and the along the full length of the Victorian gauge train. Missed breakfast and away.

Belting along through the flat land of Victoria we peered out at this strange new place. Soon it was Spencer St and 'gee', Melbourne looked pretty big. Into another smaller and much slower train. The steam loco looked as if it might have been one of the first in Victoria but a few hours later it completed its duty and dumped us 60 odd miles at Cribb Point. We were to find out that this interesting little train was known locally as 'The Spirit of Protest.'

Flinders Naval Depot – *Cerberus* – was huge!

There were sailors marching everywhere. Hundreds of them marched past – running! What were we in for?

We were checked in and checked out and we had some preliminary needles on the spot with a threat of more to come. We were taken to a great store shed where various supply people hurled various items of kit at us. We shoved it all into a kit bag which we had just stamped with our names using black paint and very sticky letters. We were given two hammocks, blankets, sheets, a pillow and so on and then we were ordered to pick it all up and 'get fell in!'

A few hundred metres or so away we were introduced to our 'donga.' This building with half a dozen or so large rooms was to be home. The iron bars above and the tiny wooden lockers looked interesting but it was time for our first meal.

We were 'marched' across the road to the Ship's Company café and entered to the boos, jeers and catcalls of those many 'old salts' who might have been in the Navy as long as one month. Tin tray in hand, we moved along the servery with the various indentations being filled with hot and unidentified food. The fellow in front of me looked at his helping and stated to a cook that he didn't like any of this. Very kindly the cook reached over and taking the tray in hand, said 'Sorry about that son, we'll see you at supper.'

Meal over and back in the donga, we received rapid instruction in how to wear our uniforms, how to rig one's hammock and who to say 'sir' to – just about everybody.

The Able Seaman instructing warned us that he would tell us everything we needed to know – once, because he had a 'make-and-mend' and he wasn't going to waste it on us.

And so our first day in Victoria and FND passed. Tea, at about 3pm, offered bread, golden syrup, cheese and tea, lots of it. An hour or so later, that time having been spent trying to locate a shop from which to buy basic foodstuffs – like chocolates and milkshakes- we



I was able to find the time to learn more about sailing. In this photo I'm in the white submarine pullover. Can anyone identify the PO or the sailor at left?

were ready for supper which was followed by a meeting with our new instructor.

Leading Seaman Brown was immaculate and marched himself everywhere and spent an hour telling us what was to come on the following day. He showed us once again how to



The *Cerberus* seamanship school was a fascinating, make-do establishment that dated from pre-WW2, and looked it.

THE RAN AND RECRUIT SEAMAN ANDREWS... ***...SOME THOUGHTS ON A CHANGE OF LIFE-STYLE.***

slung a hammock and how to get into it and out of it. He threatened us with unimaginable horrors if we made so much noise that he would be disturbed in his bedroom during the night and disappeared, no doubt to the Ship's Company wet canteen to discuss 'his' latest bunch with his mates.

Our night was cold and quiet although I'm sure I heard some sniffles, perhaps some-one had a cold?

On the following morning, at 0530, our naval life started. Dressed in bright shiny clothes that were called No.8s, we ran, no, we 'doubled' down to the Seamanship School. Here at about 0700 we were issued with a set of khaki gaiters to go with our brand new black boots. Having learned how to put on these odd things, we then had breakfast. We were then doubled around to the Depot barber – short all over, no thank you, bad luck! From there, to the Hospital for some needles and then, back to the seamanship school – we seemed to spend our whole time doubling everywhere, except when we were learning to march, in step, on the bull-ring.

The Bull Ring, it seemed, was mainly intended as a way of wearing out boots quickly. At the end of the first week, we all put our boots into the depot bootshop to have horseshoe heels and sole studs fitted. In the meantime, we wore our good shoes.

The whole place was fascinating. There were marvellous 3m high hedges everywhere. Behind them could be found the naval college and behind that the wrannery 'don't go near there – they're for officers.' WRANS were rare and exotic creatures who travelled in sleepers in trains when the sailors sat up all night. So much for sexual equality.

As one came through the main gates – sentry and all – there was about half a mile of impressive driveway down to the Police Office. Occupying this place were odd type of sailors known



Every second Thursday we mustered at the covered parade to be handed very little money.



This was one of a series of photographs that the Depot Photoshop found a good market for. Many parents would probably not believe it.

as Regulating Petty Officers or Leading patrolmen or Master at Arms – very much, best avoided, it was said. There were several cells out the back of the Police Office just in case you hadn't avoided them.

In the centre of FND there was a sort of great green area. On the one side were the majestic two-storied accommodation blocks that were part of the original base structure. On the other side was a parade ground, various training schools and the gymnasium, drill hall and movie theatre, sadly long gone.

At one end was the Wardroom, sequestered behind enormous hedges and behind it were more training schools. FND had an indoors swimming pool where I found that I could swim in my clothes and take my shoes off, in the water, and I could stay

afloat for a half an hour – or was it more? Seemed much more.

Down behind the Seamanship School which was under the command of Senior Commissioned Boatswain Peter Turgeon, an amiable bull frog of a man, was a WW2 minesweeper, *Castlemaine* which was populated by trainees who'd been in much longer than we 'rawbones' of S74.

The Navy obviously had the idea that idle hands get into mischief and ignored the old saw that 'all work and no play makes jack a dull boy.'

The pressure was on from 0530 to 1800 and sometimes to 1900. Saturday forenoon was drill and Saturday afternoon was compulsory sport. Sunday was free time, mainly to learn how to wash and iron clothes, write letters and try to ring home.

Ringling home involved booking either three or six minutes – one period for family the other for girlfriends – and then paying the money and waiting in a line as the solitary phone operator put through calls, one at a time. 'Two and a half minutes, are you extending?'

One month after arriving at FND, able now to tie cap ribbons, iron uniforms and salute the correct people, we

were allowed our first weekend leave. We were going to be sailors on leave – lookout Melbourne. It was a full month since we'd been off base and there were some pretty towey 18 year olds ready to dispose of all their money – roughly \$2.7 and 6d. a fortnight. I'd spent my first two weeks naval pay – all of it – on a copy of *Jane's Fighting Ships* – which I still have.

We'd learned about 'train smash,' 'piss strainers,' 'toad in the hole,' 'cockie's joy' and burgoo. We knew how to skulk and to Clean the Heads and to Stand Rounds and how to give the soft answer that turneth away wrath. Most of all we knew we were sailors and that there were various joys available to us in Melbourne, if and when we could get there.

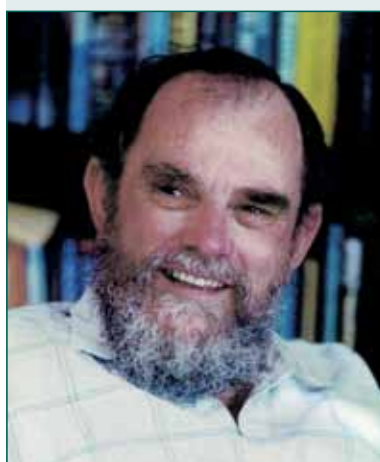
One Friday afternoon, in November at about 14.00, after Divisions, the Spirit of Protest wheezed away from FND, hauling perhaps 1000 sailors, including National Servicemen all heading for the Big Smoke. She was scheduled to get to the Flinders St. Station just 15 minutes before the beer went off at Young and Jacksons. We just made it and the beer did go off at 1800 – the famous Six o'clock Swill.

In the middle of December we were given Christmas leave. Dressed in our full uniform, No 2.s and carrying our small navy blue kit bags we piled aboard the faithful 'Spirit' which took us as far as Frankston this time to where the electric line ended. Melbourne's unique side-door electric carriages then whipped us around the coast of the big bay as far as Spencer St. station. We had several hours before the train left Flinders St. for Albury and the reverse of that memorable run from Sydney. This time I had no blanket but I had the RAN's general purpose Burbury. And, away we went.

More later. 🚢



Swimming in the heated indoor pool in winter required some elementary ability to navigate in a fog!



Graeme Andrews joined the sea cadets in 1953; the Navy in 1955, and left full time Service in 1968, staying a member of the Reserve forces until 1979 when he retired with the rank of Petty

Officer. From 1975 to 1988 he was the Australian and Pacific representative for Jane's Fighting Ships, and from 1970 to 1980 a full time professional writer. From 1980 to 1993 Graeme was master of various Manly ferries and coastal tugs. He was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in 2000 for voluntary work with the Sydney Heritage Fleet and for his many books and other publications on Australian matters maritime over more than 40 years. He has published, he thinks, about 28 books, and is now writing for Afloat magazine in Sydney.



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Transcript of a Speech given by Chief Of Navy, Vice Admiral Russ Shalders AO, CSC, RAN, to commemorate 65 years since the sinking of HMAS Yarra

The Memorial Service was held at the HMAS Yarra Memorial, Yarra River, Williamstown.

Mrs Chris Hirschfield,
Councillor Peter Hemphill,
Commanding Officer and Ship's
Company of HMAS YARRA IV, cadets
from Training Ship Voyager, Ladies and
Gentlemen.

I am delighted to join you here today to mark the triumph and the tragedy of His Majesty's Australian Sloop of War, YARRA, lost to enemy action 65 years ago. YARRA's officers and men, through their actions, bought for themselves, and their ship, the deep respect and admiration of the generations of the RAN who have had the privilege to follow them.

They won this imperishable fame at a terrible cost to themselves and their ship. This gallant Ship's Company deserves our remembrance and our gratitude.

Through gathering here today, at this dedicated place, we bridge the generations between Yarra II, III and IV and we keep fresh and green the ship's laurels and her battle honours. It is both the least, and the most that we can do in memory of their sacrifice.

Yarra is remembered for the blaze of glory in which she was lost, but her whole wartime career was one of arduous and difficult convoy escort work. Let me try to describe at least some of that work.

On the 5th February 1942, a month before she fought her last fight, Yarra was escorting troopships into Singapore under intense Japanese bombing. The converted liner *Empress Of Asia* was hit amidships and uncontrollable fires broke out.

She had two thousand five hundred troops onboard. Hundreds of soldiers dropped into the sea to avoid the encroaching smoke and flame. Her escorts closed in to assist.

It was the Yarra, under her Commanding Officer, CMDR Harrington, who placed her bow to the stricken liner's stern, manned her boats and lowered Carley floats and rafts. Yarra's crew rescued 1804 British soldiers from the water and the liner's deck. With that number on his upper deck, CMDR Harrington wrote;

'I was becoming a little dubious of the stability of my ship and on getting clear gave orders for all hands to sit.'

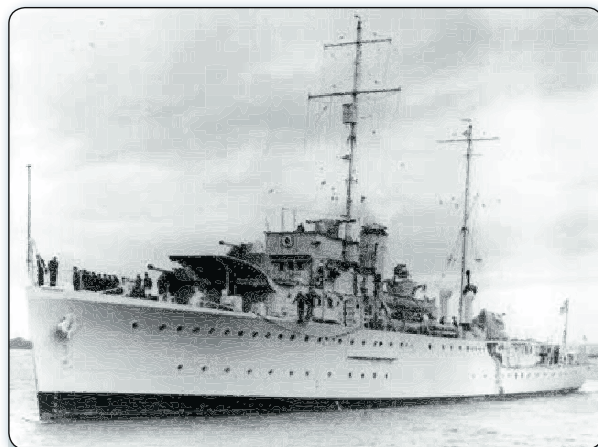
Finally, through the skill of Yarra, Wollongong and Bendigo, only 30 men were lost on the *Empress of Asia*. This feat of professional seamanship would be remarkable in peacetime, let alone while under intense air attack.

Yarra's gunners, with their ship a stationary target, fired back at their attackers and shot down at least one aircraft, probably two more, and drove off many others. Yarra's sailors had lived up to the highest ideals of the Navy. CMDR Harrington, wrote of them;

'my officers and men performed their various tasks with that coordination and cooperation which they are accustomed to show in unforeseen circumstances.'

He singled out Leading Seaman Ronald 'Buck' Taylor's conduct;

'The Captain of No 2 gun deserves commendation in that on this occasion, as on many others, he controlled his gun with judgment and determination. His keenness and courage are an example to all those in his vicinity.'



Courage, skill and luck combined that day to give Yarra's crew a victory against the odds, and a quiet satisfaction that they had saved life in an exemplary manner, in circumstances of utmost danger to themselves.

Luck ran out for the little ship just over a month later. At dawn on the 4th March, Yarra, under her new Commanding Officer, LCDR Robert Rankin, found herself and her convoy trapped by three Japanese 8 inch cruisers and two destroyers. There could be no escape and Rankin must have known it. The odds were impossibly weighted against Yarra and her convoy. LCDR Rankin had a choice as to whether he would try to scatter under a smoke screen with his convoy, or place his ship between the merchant men and the attackers, and lay down a screen of smoke for them to flee behind. He chose the latter path.

He ordered the helm hard over towards the enemy and worked up to his best speed which was about 16 knots. He was trying to save his convoy by drawing the enemy's fire, and to close the range so that his four inch gun's crews could engage the cruisers.

If ever a ship and her Captain died fighting, it was Yarra. Rankin's courage in fighting for his convoy is now widely regarded as one of the finest moments

Transcript of a Speech given by Chief Of Navy, Vice Admiral Russ Shalders AO, CSC, RAN, to commemorate 65 years since the sinking of HMAS Yarra

in the century long story of this nation and our Navy.

The Japanese cruiser *Maya* brought up onto her deck the survivors of the British destroyer *HMS Stronghold* to witness the end of *Yarra* and her convoy. They saw that *Yarra* was being repeatedly hit by shellfire, but they also reported seeing 'odd gun flashes' as one of her 4 inch guns was still being fired. One of *Stronghold's* men wrote later that they were all moved by what they saw and were 'vividly impressed' by the fight that *Yarra* put up.

We know now that the gun flashes came from Leading Seaman Taylor. He had told his gun's crew to join the general abandon ship order but he stayed at his post. He then single handedly performed the lonely tasks of loading, aiming, firing and clearing his gun. Survivors reported that he scored at least one hit on the leading cruiser. He continued firing until *Yarra* was torn apart by shell fire and bombs. He made his choice and he died at his gun. His calmness and defiant courage that morning was typical of him, and of the whole Ship's Company.

The subsequent ordeal by thirst, exhaustion and exposure endured by those who survived the sinking is beyond my capacity to describe. I leave that to those few who lived to tell the tale. Thirty four men left the ship and only 13 survived to be picked up by a Dutch submarine. They all have our profound admiration and respect.

Robert Rankin's name lives on in the Navy in the Collins Class Submarine named after him. His sword and medals have a place of honour at the Royal Australian Naval College where he was educated and trained. His story, and that of his men, is told to every officer in the College as an enduring example of the Navy's Values.

We fervently trust that we will never again be required to place our ships and our people in mortal danger, but that is a hope, not a guarantee in the business in which we are engaged. Indeed, every month of every year, Navy people are required to act with courage and to show endurance in the face of a variety of challenges. These young men and women are upholding our Navy values, which they know connect us with the heroic generations that forged those values.

Yarra's story of courage is an inspiration to those serving in the Navy today, as it will be to future sailors and officers down the decades and centuries yet to come. *Yarra's* last fight has become the 'gold standard' for the conduct of Navy business which is to 'fight and win at sea'.

As the Chief of Navy, I pay tribute to all those gathered here today, and those here in spirit, who lost a husband, a father, a brother, a grandfather or a loved one in *Yarra II*. Your loss is remembered by the nation, and by the Navy.

The remains of *Yarra's* men are not here, or in quiet cemeteries where you may visit. They have no grave but the cruel sea. Most of them lie with their ship, still at their post. This monument is where we can, and do collectively pay our respects. Their spirit lives on here. It also lives on in *HMAS Yarra IV*, and in all our ships, in home waters and overseas, wherever our people are serving Australia.

Yarra's men are not forgotten by the RAN and they never will be.

May they rest in peace. 🇦🇺

Petty Officer Boatswain Harry Carruthers controls a "stern door marriage" between HMAS Tobruk and HMAS Betano





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ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET SIR PHILIP VIAN, GCB, KBE, DSO (III), RN

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Sirte constitutes a naval episode of the highest distinction and entitles all ranks and rating concerned, and above all their Commander, to the compliments of the British nation.

Winston Churchill

THE QUANDARY FOR ANY BRITISH ADMIRAL AFTER THE TIME OF NELSON IS TO RECONCILE HIS LEGACY OF AGGRESSIVENESS WITH THE REALITY THAT MODERN NAVAL TECHNOLOGY GIVES THE MORE CAPABLE FORCE A QUANTIFIABLE EDGE THAT TRAINING AND ÉLAN RARELY OVERCOME. THE DEADLY ARITHMETIC OF THE SURFACE ENGAGEMENTS OF CORONEL, FALKLAND ISLANDS, DOGGER BANK, JUTLAND AND MATAPAN BORE THIS OUT.

IT TAKES A RARE COMMANDER TO CHALLENGE THIS ORTHODOXY, AND IT IS RARER STILL FOR A COMMANDER TO WIN A MAGNIFICENT VICTORY WHEN FACING A PREDOMINANT ENEMY SURFACE FORCE AS WELL AS OVERWHELMING ENEMY AIR SUPERIORITY AND THE SUBMARINE MENACE. PHILIP VIAN WAS SUCH A COMMANDER. THE BATTLE OF SIRTE, WHICH WAS HIS FINEST HOUR, IS ENSHRINED IN THE FOLKLORE OF THE ROYAL NAVY, BUT IT IS ONLY ONE OF A NUMBER OF SUCCESSFUL ACTIONS SPANNING WORLD WAR II IN WHICH VIAN WAS A KEY PARTICIPANT.

THE CAPTAIN OF A DESTROYER FLOTILLA AT THE START OF WWII, BY ITS END HE WAS A VICE ADMIRAL COMMANDING THE BRITISH PACIFIC FLEET'S (BPF) AIRCRAFT CARRIERS, THE MOST POTENT CONVENTIONAL STRIKE CAPABILITY EVER TO SAIL UNDER THE WHITE ENSIGN. VIAN COMMANDED AT SEA THROUGHOUT

THE MAJORITY OF WWII, EARNING HIS PLACE AS ONE OF THE RN'S FINEST FIGHTING ADMIRALS, VIRTUALLY BECOMING CHURCHILL'S NAVAL MASCOT.¹

This article critically examines the command effectiveness and overall performance of Admiral Vian, highlighting why his command and leadership are worthy of such a study. Admiral Vian's career will be reviewed, from his early experiences and influences to the effectiveness of his command during WWII. Finally, it will discuss whether Vian would succeed in today's Australian Defence Force under the present Chief of Defence Force.

WHY VIAN?

The RN has an illustrious history with a catalogue of glorious victories. Many British admirals have left their mark across the centuries, providing a rich tapestry from which to choose a commander. Yet only a few have commanded during battles considered amongst the 'finest actions in the entire history of the service',² as did Vian at the Battle of Sirte. In this battle Vian avoided annihilation by forcing the withdrawal of a vastly superior force in a complex, multi-threat environment. The fight was atypical in that no ships were sunk, which accounts for the relative obscurity of the battle and its commander, yet in his day Vian was widely known throughout Britain.

Vian was a remarkable man: successful in the tactical and operational spheres, from destroyer actions through to complex carrier operations. He was



Vian as CinC of the Home Fleet after the war.

given great autonomy, and many of his actions had strategic significance. While books on Vian are rare, it is possible to examine his career and his character through the many personal anecdotes which appear in written histories.

Vian's fighting abilities were universally commended, yet his character was the subject of much conjecture. He was considered a hard commander, admired by some but reviled by others. Vian's career provides an opportunity to examine the command effectiveness of a commander who consistently defeated the enemy, yet was not universally admired by his superiors or subordinates. War allowed his ability to emerge, resulting in promotion to high rank and appointment to critical operational commands that may have never occurred in peacetime. This dichotomy poses a serious question for modern militaries – how can commanders in Vian's mould reach the upper echelons of the military – for ultimately, as one reviewer of Vian commented, 'in war it is better to be led by an unpleasant winner than a likeable loser'.³

VIAN THE COMMANDER

PRE-WORLD WAR II

Early career. Philip Vian was born on 15 June, 1894, in London. He had an unremarkable childhood, entering the RN College Osborne as a 13-year-old cadet Midshipman, graduating from the

RN College Dartmouth in 1911. Early in WWI he found himself conducting repetitive patrols far from the decisive theatre in obsolescent ships and pleaded desperately with the Admiralty for a more exacting posting. His persistence was rewarded and Vian found himself onboard the modern destroyer *Morning Star* at the Battle of Jutland, which was the only major Fleet engagement of WWI; however he was only a witness to the battle. As it was for most naval officers of his generation, WWI was a frustrating period, bereft of glory.

Gunnery specialist. After WWI Vian became a Gunnery specialist and served in a number of ships in this capacity. A subordinate remembered Vian as 'a quiet, efficient and then kindly, if serious officer'⁴ who was interested in developing both the professional and sporting prowess of his charges. On promotion to Commander in 1929, Vian commenced his first shore job as a gunnery analyst at the Admiralty, after which, in 1932, he was appointed to command the destroyer *Active*.

Vian's pre-command period is characterised by extensive experience at sea, with a short period ashore, in his chosen specialisation of gunnery. Vian was influenced by two admirals under whom he served: Admirals Keyes and Tyrwhitt. Both were amongst the few RN officers whose reputations were made in WWI and both were hard men with demanding standards, which were characteristics Vian would emulate in his own career.

Command. Apart from a short period in WWI, Vian had not served in destroyers, but he overcame his unfamiliarity by displaying a willingness to learn the intricacies of destroyer operations and to accept responsibility when he made errors. These were enduring features throughout his service. While commanding *Active*, Vian served under Admiral Cunningham, Commander Mediterranean Destroyer

Flotillas. On promotion to Captain in 1934, Vian left for 'courses ashore and half pay, [and] from this predicament Mussolini saved me.'⁵ The Abyssinian Crisis in 1936 required a rapid reinforcement of the Mediterranean Fleet and Cunningham asked personally for Vian to return as 19th Destroyer Flotilla Leader.⁶ This was Vian's first command of a flotilla. However, the crisis subsided and, with it, Vian's appointment. He was transferred to command 1st Destroyer Flotilla and, while sailing to Britain to de-commission it, a crisis once again erupted seeing him drawn into the Spanish Civil War. Vian oversaw the evacuation of British nationals from Spanish ports in a volatile political environment.

After the evacuation ended, Vian accepted the offer to become the Flag-Captain of *Arethusa*, flagship of the 3rd Cruiser Squadron. Vian's pre-WWII command experience was extensive, and he was influenced by two admirals, Cunningham and Pound, who were tough, ruthless and purveyors of excellence.⁷ Vian gained a reputation as a decisive and demanding commander in peace and crisis. With the outbreak of hostilities he would have the opportunity to demonstrate his prowess in the cauldron of war, and he would soon make the most of it.⁸

WORLD WAR II

Destroyer Flotilla Leader. Initially Vian was tasked to re-activate a reserve destroyer flotilla, but by end of 1939 he was appointed to command the Home Fleet's modern 4th Destroyer Flotilla. It was at this time that he first came to prominence as a result of the '*Altmark* Incident': an operation in which he led his ship to liberate 300 British prisoners from the armed German supply ship *Altmark*, despite the difficulties of darkness, a narrow fjord, and *Altmark's* location inside the waters of neutral Norway. While a minor incident, it was an example of his command ability: 'Vian as not an above average ship-handler, but as always in an emergency, his performance was immaculate.'⁹ It gained Vian national attention, that of Churchill in particular, and the boarding party's call of 'the Navy is here!'¹⁰ became a rallying cry for a nation starved of victories.

During the German invasion of Norway, Vian's Flotilla experienced the effects of enemy air power and the Flotilla lost *Gurkha* and Vian's *Afridi*.¹¹ Vian accepted full responsibility for both losses.¹² This was made with the knowledge that his immediate superior, Rear Admiral (Destroyers), was of the opinion that 'whether a ship was struck or not by bombs was purely a matter



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of the competence of the individual commanding officers in taking avoiding action.¹³ Norway was a harsh introduction to war, however Vian learnt from his mistakes becoming convinced that highly trained ships with an alert commander were essential to success.¹⁴ Those who couldn't reach his standards were dismissed.

With the danger of invasion diminishing as 1940 wore on, the Destroyer Flotillas were tasked with offensive sweeps in the North Sea. Off Egros Light¹⁵ Vian's flotilla was the first to encounter an enemy convoy. As no tactics existed for such an encounter, Vian relied on surprise, aggressiveness and deft control of his flotilla. The night attack was devastatingly effective: the convoy of two escorts and four merchant ships was annihilated.¹⁶

In May 1941 Vian was a key participant in the sinking of the *Bismarck*. Vian's flotilla was re-tasked from convoy protection to escorting the battleships of the Home Fleet. While enroute to join the Home Fleet Vian realised his flotilla was the only force capable of intercepting *Bismarck*. He disobeyed orders, in an example of inspired mission command,¹⁷ and headed for the enemy, locating *Bismarck* in the evening twilight. The 4th Flotilla attacked throughout the night until the arrival of the Home Fleet battleships. Rather than admonishment for disobedience, Vian received his third Distinguished Service Order¹⁸ and early promotion to Rear Admiral.

Cruiser Squadron Command. On promotion, Vian was part of a mission to Russia. He recommended the War Cabinet not commit a surface force to aid Russia during summer.¹⁹ However, this was politically untenable and the recommendation was overruled, thence Vian found himself in command of Force K, the surface force allocated to support Russia! From the outset, Vian went on the offensive, targeting the

Spitsbergen Islands. When returning to Britain, Vian was alerted to the presence of a German convoy off North Cape. He took two cruisers close inshore into the fjords, work more suited to destroyers. In darkness and atrocious weather, Vian intercepted the German convoy, initiating one of the War's closest actions.²⁰ Vian closed the enemy so aggressively that his flagship inadvertently rammed and sunk a German cruiser. The commencement of organised convoys to Russia resulted in Force K being dissolved. Force K had met the strategic requirement of demonstratable support to the beleaguered Russians and Vian successfully engaged in battle most would have declined.

Vian was re-assigned to command of 15th Cruiser Squadron, under Cunningham, based in the Mediterranean. A key military task at the time was the resupply of the strategic island of Malta. By March 1942 the situation at Malta was perilous. Vian was selected to command the convoy which the War Cabinet stipulated was to be the primary military commitment in the Middle East theatre.²¹ The effort was to be made at the nadir of the RN's fortunes in the War.²² Undaunted, Vian pre-briefed his Commanding Officers (COs) and rehearsed the tactics he intended to use against the superior enemy submarine, surface and air forces.²³

The convoy was soon under sustained air attack and, with the knowledge that heavy Italian surface units were at sea, Vian was within his purview to abort the mission. He pressed on. Mid afternoon on the 22 March, off Sirte, the enemy was sighted.²⁴ Vian's force was about to challenge a vastly superior enemy force in daylight, against all canons of Naval warfare.²⁵ Vian's ships repelled incessant air attack while interposing themselves between the Italian force and the convoy. Innovative tactics,



spirited British attacks, the approaching darkness and deteriorating weather forced the enemy to withdraw. Vian's Command was still intact and the convoy unscathed. One CO recalled: 'what was achieved was only made possible by team work: a complete and utter trust in our leader, and the knowledge that this was reciprocated by him.'²⁶ Cunningham described Sirte as 'one of the most brilliant naval actions of the war, if not most brilliant.'²⁷ Churchill passed on the compliments of the British nation. Malta held on.

Amphibious operations. Vian was relieved in September 1942, exhausted, and sick. He returned to duty with his appointment as Commander Force V, an amphibious force earmarked for Operation HUSKY.²⁸ Vian worked hard to 'master the intricacies of a form of naval warfare to which he was a complete stranger.'²⁹ Transferred to command a light carrier force for

Operation AVALANCHE,³⁰ Vian was again commanding forces with which he was unaccustomed. His covering force had limited endurance, however aware operations ashore were going badly, he consented to the land commander's request to remain on station, using his emergency fuel to do so.³¹ It was enough.

After AVALANCHE, Vian was appointed Commander, British Naval Force, for Operation NEPTUNE.³² Admiral Ramsey selected Vian for the position, for the 'operation on which the fate of the free world depended'.³³ Ramsey thought that Vian was 'temperamental and at times a great annoyance'³⁴ but Ramsey never doubted his ability. Vian orchestrated the movements of his great armada, defending his area of responsibility from all threats, while providing Naval Gunfire Support (NGS), including one NGS mission with a grateful Churchill onboard. The Germans acknowledged NGS as one of the key contributors for their defeat.³⁵

British Pacific Fleet. Following NEPTUNE, Vian was appointed Commander of the BPF aircraft carrier squadron. The East Indies station had long been a backwater, however with his appointment 'the fleet needed no further assurance that the game was once more afoot'.³⁶ The BPF carrier squadron demonstrated its prowess in operations off Sumatra, Formosa and ultimately, Japan. Vian lacked the opportunity to display his aggressive flare in the vast USN controlled operations, and on occasion his inexperience with carrier operations showed, in particular his management of his new aircrews. Despite this, his superior, Admiral Rawlings, with whom he had a testy relationship,³⁷ stated that the BPF's 'success derived directly from the sustained determination and leadership of Vian himself, for on him fell the conduct and handling of the fleet during

its most active periods'.³⁸

Post War. Vian ended his career commanding the peacetime Home Fleet. On retiring he was promoted to Admiral of the Fleet in recognition of his wartime service, an honour normally only bestowed on First Sea Lords.

COMMAND EFFECTIVENESS

How effective was Vian? The RN espouses three basic tenets of effective command: timely decision making, understanding of superior commander's intention with the onus on the subordinate to fulfil this intent (mission command) and effective leadership (epitomised by a refusal to be dominated by circumstances).³⁹ From *Altmark* to Japan, Vian's battles typified the RN's expectation of command effectiveness. An illuminating example of his successful mission command was the *Bismarck* chase, during which he disobeyed orders when he (rightly) believed they jeopardised the commander's intent. Vian was renowned for his eagerness to engage the enemy, whatever the circumstances. His officers and men never doubted that he would endanger their lives unless there was a reasonable chance of success.⁴⁰ His effective leadership traits were crystallised during action, however outside of action his leadership flaw was readily apparent: use of intimidation and verbal abuse.⁴¹ Sparing with his praise, Vian's inability to engage and mentor his subordinates ensured he was not as beloved as Nelson. Although he was not well liked, he was respected. Vian lived by his own dictum: 'Any bloody fool can make things complicated. It takes a little more to make them simple'.⁴² In action he was 'quiet, calm and very, very quick...he was a genius'⁴³ and he 'demonstrated a quick appraisal of the situation, [giving] clear decisive orders, was unhesitating in acceptance of responsibility and showed a willingness to delegate'.⁴⁴ However,

what sets Vian apart from most of his contemporaries was that he routinely showed the 'dash and daring Churchill so admired'.⁴⁵

Churchill famously declared, shortly after becoming Prime Minister: 'what is our policy? I will say: it is to wage war, by sea, land and air...What is our aim? I can answer in one word: it is victory'.⁴⁶ Churchill 'made [the offensive spirit] his god'⁴⁷ and he valued those who, like Vian, displayed it. It was a measure of Churchill's high regard for Vian's command qualities that he ensured Vian was a contributor to almost every offensive action taken by the RN during WWII.⁴⁸ In a war of national survival, Churchill overlooked Vian's interpersonal deficiencies, as Churchill recognised that Vian was excellent with a fighting fleet at his command.⁴⁹ By Churchill's measure, Vian was effective because he delivered a long list of dramatic victories, won during the darkest hours, continuing as the allies were in ascendancy, thereby entitling him to be considered one of the RN's most successful admirals.⁵⁰

COMMAND EFFECTIVENESS IN TODAY'S MILITARY

Successful admirals are required to do rather more than fight,⁵¹ and it is interesting to consider Vian's potential performance under the present (Australian) Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Houston. CDF encapsulated his expectations of command through seven themes:

- *PEOPLE,
- *VALUES-BASED LEADERSHIP,
- *OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PREPAREDNESS,
- *STRATEGIC DIRECTION,
- *CAPABILITY,
- *RELATIONSHIPS, AND
- *GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.⁵²

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Not all the themes are crucial in determining whether Vian would succeed in today's ADF. The themes of operational performance, capability, people and values-based leadership will form the basis of the hypothesis.⁵³

Before evaluating Vian through this lens it is essential to understand what Vian himself believed were the keys to successful command: 'first, ships under command must feel that their every movement, good or bad, is under appraisal by the [commander], and second, the [commander's] ship must herself always be on the ball.'⁵⁴ Vian was a perfectionist who went to extreme lengths to ensure that his ship was beyond reproach: he kept personnel on their toes,⁵⁵ or some would espouse, he ruled by fear.⁵⁶ He gave credit when it was due and it was often gladly received as it was not lightly given.⁵⁷ Vian was notorious for providing frank, negative feedback, however was just as hard on himself when he made mistakes, accepting full responsibility. Vian's mentors were admirals renowned for their exacting standards. A common trait of RN commanders at the time was to be initially antagonistic to those they met, and willing to dismiss people who did not stand up to them, even bordering on bullying.⁵⁸ Vian was a zealous proponent of this trait and applied it to all officers serving under his command. When commanding *Cossack*⁵⁹ he sacked six of 12 officers.⁶⁰ He was 'unbelievably rude, hot tempered, and needlessly offensive',⁶¹ however those that withstood his tirades earned Vian's trust. A former Executive Officer simply stated: 'I would have followed him anywhere.'⁶² Another subordinate recalled being dismissed from the bridge for standing up to Vian, only to be recalled shortly afterwards to receive an apology.⁶³ In a war of national survival, Vian had no time for those he thought may 'take a risk rashly or [cause] accidents.'⁶⁴ The result was officers and men who displayed superb fighting skills. COs who served under Vian were universal in their praise.

(ENDNOTES)

1 Operational performance. Vian demonstrated the ability to operate in complex multi-threat environments. He commanded squadrons of small ships, amphibious assault and landing forces, and carrier operations, and engaged in the full spectrum of maritime tasks.⁶⁵ He consistently succeeded, even against overwhelming odds. The command effectiveness he demonstrated in WWII is as applicable today as then. Vian would likely excel as a modern wartime operational commander.

Capability. Vian showed great success in exploiting the capabilities of the forces under his command. Furthermore, where no tactics or doctrine existed, he improvised and/or developed them. Hard, realistic training and mission rehearsal were features of his commands. While sometimes slow in

adapting to new technology,⁶⁶ he nonetheless managed to master it and use the resources under his command to devastating affect. Vian's ability to optimise capability to fulfil mission requirements would likely satisfy CDF.

People. Vian believed that it was not enough to be fearless against the enemy; commanders had to be tough enough with their own side.⁶⁷ In surface warfare no-one doubted him, however this was not the case in air operations. He found it difficult to relate to some of the Fleet Air Arm (FAA) squadrons, resulting in much antagonism on both sides.⁶⁸ Vian's people management approach, while tolerated in war, did not endear him to his subordinates in peacetime. In one instance when commanding the Home Fleet after the War, Vian sent all the performance reports back to their point of origin, indicating that he could not believe that the Fleet had so many outstanding officers, and demanding that all reports be revised.⁶⁹ Vian's sometimes antagonistic approach to managing his individualistic FAA personnel and appraisal of his subordinates differs significantly to the empowerment principles CDF espouses.

Values-based leadership. The ADF's commanders are required to lead by example and communicate with their people, aiming to find a balance between people-friendliness and decisiveness and assertiveness.⁷⁰ CDF and Vian agree on leading by example but their communication methods are diametrically opposed. Vian's communication style is not balanced and could not be considered people friendly. Given the demographics of the modern ADF, his style would undoubtedly alienate many of his subordinates.

Assessment. While Vian's war-fighting prowess is timeless, it is unlikely Vian would excel in the modern ADF due to the CDF's emphasis on people, and in particular, values based leadership. Herein lays the dilemma.

Commanders of Vian's vein may not fit the template, yet they maybe needed during a nation's crisis. Vian is evidence that navies promote very different people in wartime from those they promote in times of peace.⁷¹

CONCLUSION

While Nelson's legend enshrined the dictum 'no captain can do very wrong if he places his ships alongside that of an enemy', the reality of modern naval warfare assured near-certain destruction awaited small ships engaging large modern ships armed with heavy guns. Vian demonstrated at Sirte that this did not apply to great commanders. Vian held command throughout the majority of WWII. Gunnery was his forte, during WWII few would match his prowess. It was no mistake that Vian was present at some of the fiercest, most important, engagements of the War. He was put there by Churchill, who prized aggressiveness and the offensive spirit above all else in his commanders. Vian did not disappoint Churchill: in the process becoming one of the most effective commanders in the RN's history.

Vian's reputation was built on successful mission command. An acknowledged master of all facets of naval warfare, he exploited existing capabilities and new technology to achieve devastating results; tenants that would see him excel in naval warfare of any age. Yet Vian was a complex commander. Hard on both himself and his subordinates, he expected excellence and was dismissive of those who he believed incapable of providing it. While excusable in wartime, his command style did not suit the upper echelons of the navy hierarchy in peacetime. Vian's personnel approach is the antithesis of that expected by CDF and would likely see Vian struggle in the modern ADF. The modern ADF expects likable winners. 🚩

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1. Stephen, M. 1991, *The Fighting Admirals*, Leo Cooper, London, p 15.
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7. Stephen, M., op. cit., p 54.
8. Vian, Admiral P., op. cit., p 10.
9. Howarth, E., op. cit., p 494.
10. *ibid.*, p 495.
11. The first of two Commands to be sunk under Vian. He also lost the *Dido* Class Cruiser *Niaid* in March 1942, once again accepting the blame for the loss.
12. 'Gurkha should not have been allowed to become detached – the responsibility for failure to call him in was wholly mine...' and 'I asked him to continue [Afridi's] turn to starboard – this was fatal' Vian, Admiral P., op. cit., pp 37-48.
13. Vian, Admiral P., op. cit., p 38.
14. *ibid.*, p 50.
15. Off the Southwest coast of Norway.
16. As a result of this night action Vian recommended the introduction of flash-less cordite and the abolition of searchlight designation—two significant improvements to RN night-time combat.
17. Gordon, A. 2003, 'Operational Command at Sea' in Reeve, J. & Stevens, D. (eds) *Face of Naval Battle*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney, p 40.
18. Vian received his first Distinguished Service Order (DSO) after the *Altmark* affair and his second after the Egros Light engagement. Very few Officers received three DSO's, and only one received four.
19. Vian, Admiral P., op. cit., p 67.
20. Howarth, E., op. cit., p 500.
21. Cunningham, Admiral A., op. cit., p 449.
22. In the preceding three months *Prince of Wales* and *Repulse* had been lost, *Queen Elizabeth* and *Valiant* sunk at their moorings in Alexandria Harbour, the German's dramatic "Channel Dash" and lucky escape of *Tirpitz* had occurred and the Allies were defeated at the Battle of Java Sea, with subsequent loss of *Perth* at Sunda Strait.
23. Pack, S. 1975, *The Battle of Sirte*, Ian Allen Ltd, London, p 28.
24. Initial enemy contact report was of a force of three battleships, soon to be clarified as one battleship, two heavy cruisers, a light cruiser, with attending destroyer screen – a force far more powerful than Vian's.
25. Vian's force consisted of a mix of Destroyers and light Cruisers. Vian's total broadside weight was 5,900 pounds versus the Italian Admiral Iachino's 24,000 pounds – one hit from either the battleship *Littorio* or heavy cruisers would disable any ship in Vian's force whereas, apart from torpedos, Vian's surface attacks would be mostly ineffective.
26. Pack, S., loc. cit.
27. Cunningham, Admiral A., op. cit., pp 452-454.
28. Codename for the invasion of Sicily.
29. Vian, Admiral P., op. cit., p 105.
30. Codename for the invasion of Italy.
31. Hickey, D. & Smith, G. 1983, *Operation Avalanche: The Salerno Landings, 1943*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, p 172.
32. Codename for maritime component of the invasion of France (Operation OVERLORD).
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39. BR 1806—*British Maritime Doctrine (Edition 3)*, The Stationary Office, London, 2004, p 110 *passim*.
40. Whinney, CAPT B., op. cit., p 80.
41. Howarth, S., op. cit., p 505.
42. Whinney, CAPT B., op. cit., p 85.
43. *ibid.*, p 92.
44. McCall, H., 'Obituary of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Philip Vian' in *Royal Naval Review*, Volume LVL, 3 Jul 68, p 302.
45. Stephen, M., op. cit., p 155.
46. Jenkins, R. 2001, *Churchill*, Pan Books, London, p 591.
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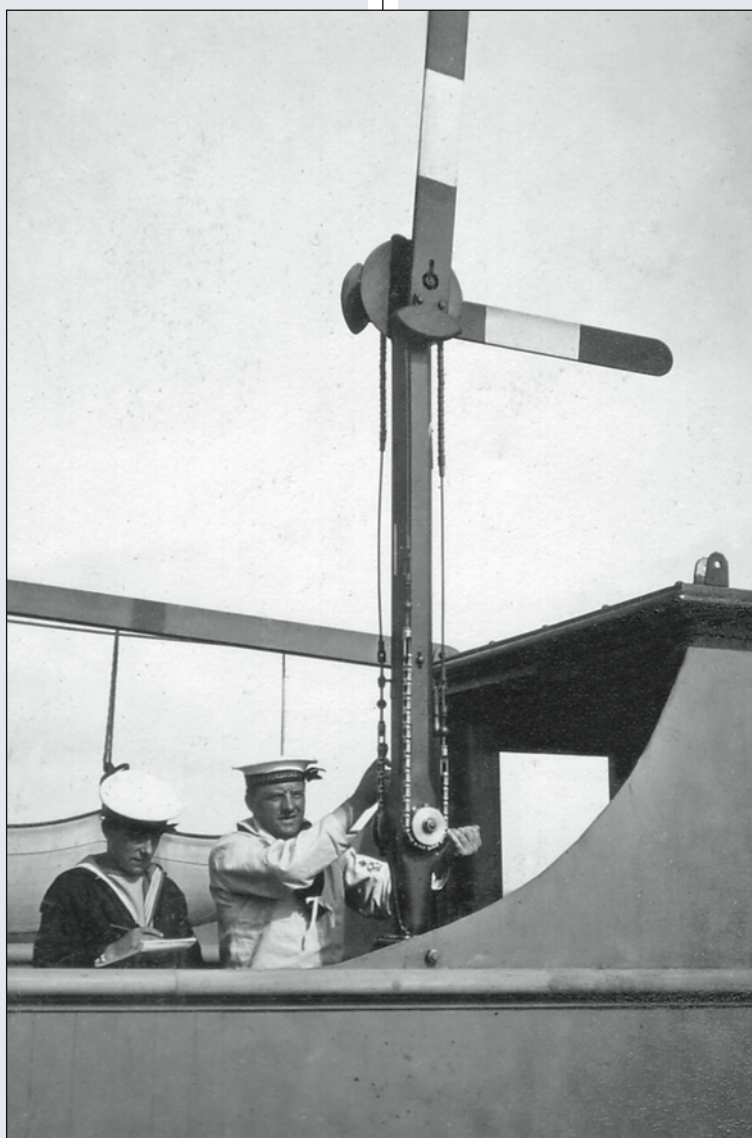
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Visions from the Vault



The second half of the 19th century witnessed something of a communications revolution at sea with the introduction of flashing light using the code developed by Samuel Morse. Other means of visual signalling were also trialled, and around 1874 the first ships of the Royal Navy were fitted with mechanical semaphore. This system evolved from a French invention and involved the use of a post fitted with mechanical arms which could be positioned to form various angles, each representing a different letter of the alphabet. By 1880 it was realised that the position of the mechanical arms could be replicated by signalmen using hand flags, and this became the standard means of conducting short-range semaphore. The mechanical semaphore, usually positioned on the bridge wings or flag deck, remained in use in larger ships of the Commonwealth navies until finally withdrawn in 1943. Throughout this period it remained a convenient means of providing accurate, reliable and covert communications between ships in company. Semaphore signalling using hand flags ceased to be used as a formal communications medium in the RAN on 24 November 2005.

BOOK REVIEWS

POSITIONING NAVIES FOR THE FUTURE



Edited by
Jack McCaffrie

THE SEA POWER CENTRE - AUSTRALIA

Positioning Navies for the Future: Challenge and Response

by Jack McCaffrie (ed),
*Broadway NSW, The Sea Power
Centre-Australia and Halstead
Press, 2006, pp.272, index, ISBN 1
920831 33 9*

This book is the edited proceedings of the RAN Sea Power Conference held in Sydney in February 2004, including a summary of the discussions after each conference session. It is in five parts. Part 1 sets the scene with two papers – the first by the then Chief of Navy and the second by a senior scholar of international relations. Vice Admiral Ritchie provides an overview of issues, including the strategic situation, force structure, costs, technology and people that the RAN must consider in planning for the future. He rightfully acknowledges (p.23) that “constabulary tasks are a growth area”. Professor Reus-Smit then reflects on underlying sources of international security and insecurity with some keen observations on what he calls the “domesticisation of war” with the rise of anti-systemic violence, and on how the revolution in military

technology might have the undesirable consequence of making governments more confident that political problems can be solved by military means.

Part 2 is about strategy and includes views from the United States, Britain, Australia and Southeast Asia. The first three papers are predictable in their approach extolling the advantages of navies in dealing with contemporary events. It is only the Southeast Asian paper that provides some alternative views. The current emphasis in Western navies on power projection contrasts with the situation in Southeast Asia where regional navies are focussed on sea denial and the sea is seen more as a resource to be managed rather than as an arena for manoeuvre.

Part 3 addresses operational issues and is in two sections. Papers in the first section cover resource issues and oceans governance; an Australian perspective on maritime operations and counter-terrorism; and the legal dimensions of maritime operations. The second contains two papers on littoral operations – one from Australia and the other from the United States. Taken together, these papers highlight some apparent contradictions as to how navies are facing the future. The first Australian paper accepts that there is ‘no exclusively military solution to the problem of terrorism’ (p.94) but then goes on to claim that “maritime power is eminently suitable to fighting terrorism” (p.109). It talks about the need for higher and lower end capabilities but then dismisses an Australian coastguard because it would over-emphasise lower end capabilities. The legal paper stresses freedoms of navigation but also discusses how the seas are now less free with, for example, limitations on military operations in the EEZ. It also talks about avoiding “gunboat diplomacy” although other papers at the conference were all about expeditionary operations – a contemporary form of

“gunboat diplomacy”.

Part 4 is a mixed bag of papers on technology and transformation. An American paper provides the standard view of transformation in the USN. A more interesting paper from the Chief of the Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) reflects on how the RSN is handling the dilemma of maintaining a high level of current readiness while building future capabilities. Force transformation is readily apparent in the RSN with “state of the art” technologies being incorporated into its new frigates and the new Naval Underwater Warfare Centre. A paper from India describes how the Indian Navy is dealing with major challenges in the achieving of greater self-reliance in terms of the acquisition of platforms and systems. The last paper in the session discusses links between Defence and industry in Australia.

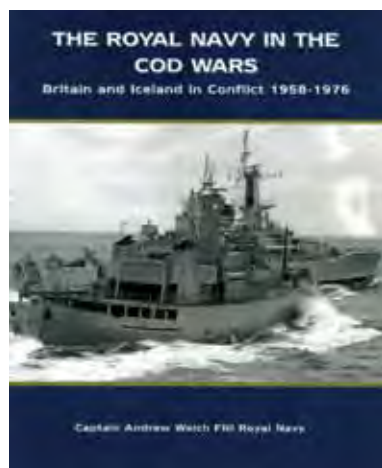
The sub-title of the book – challenge and response – is the subject of Part 5. An initial Australian view is provided by a panel of “Young Turks”. They have much of interest to say about what the RAN might look like in the year 2022 when they, as the present generation of junior officers, might be holding senior positions. However, what they do not say is also significant. They mention that in 2022 the RAN engages in one war-fighting task but do not say what it is, and then they refer to “Coastguard Base Hobart” without specifically saying that Australia has established a Coastguard. In making their assessments, they unquestioningly accept “the philosophy that if it works for the upper end it will also work for the less complex aspects of conflict” (p. 194). The other papers in Part 5 address the Challenge for Asia-Pacific Navies and the Vision and the Future. The paper presenters are from Australia, Canada, Chile, France, New Zealand and the United States. It is disappointing that no Asian perspective was included.

It is interesting to reflect on how maritime security has changed in the three short years since the 2004 Sea Power Conference was held. As the war in Iraq grinds on, there is now less enthusiasm, at least outside of the United States, for military responses to terrorism. The USN is promoting the idea of the global “1,000 ship” navy while facing enormous problems at home with its shipbuilding programme and a diminishing naval budget. Globally, concepts of maritime security have evolved with implementation of the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, wider consideration of maritime domain awareness, and the establishment of a system for the long range identification and tracking of ships. In Australia, the Border Protection Command has been established and increasingly we are moving towards an arrangement that looks like a “coast guard” in everything but name.

Positioning Navies for the Future is a very “naval” book of interest mainly to naval professionals, close watchers of the changing naval scene, and other members of the maritime security community. Its focus is mainly on war-fighting and technological developments. Most papers “preach to the converted” with little critical analysis of how navies are planning for the future, including their response to emergent trends with maritime security. The challenges of oceans management and increased policing tasks at sea are often mentioned but with the exception of papers from Chile, France and New Zealand not addressed in any detail.

Sam Bateman

*Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security
University of Wollongong*



The Royal Navy in the Cod Wars: Britain and Iceland in Conflict 1958-61, 1972-73, 1975-76

***Captain Andrew Welch FNI, RN
Maritime Books,
Liskeard, Cornwall, 2006
Xii + 324 pp, illustrated, charts, no
index but extensive lists of ships
and their deployment dates and
commanding officers.***

ISBN 978-1-904459-23-1

This detailed study of the conflicts over fishery rights between Iceland and Britain that came to be termed the ‘Cod Wars’ is a book written by a professional, himself a veteran of one of the campaigns, for professionals. Andrew Welch’s very detailed analysis not only provides a shrewd assessment of the complex political and legal background, but details the operations at sea in a way that makes very clear the difficulties under which all concerned were operating and which is immediately engaging to the seafarer.

In one sense, the Cod Wars were a very civilised conflict. In general, all concerned bore in mind that the dispute was about fish and restraint was much more the theme on both sides than aggression. The Icelanders were determined to increase their

jurisdiction over local fishing stocks – a key element of their own economy. The British were determined, albeit with much less confidence that the future was on their side, to resist the Icelandic campaign. But ‘war’ was never really an apt description of what followed. The fishermen and the Royal Navy clearly respected the Icelandic Coast Guard and this was usually reciprocated – Welch even retails the story of the hot pursuit of a British trawler being interrupted for 30 minutes while the skippers of the trawler and the Icelandic gunboat got their lunch.

Nevertheless, the encounters could be extremely dangerous and the wider ramifications were profound. At the height of the Cold War, Iceland provided bases and air staging facilities which were of vital significance to the tapestry of arrangements to protect Scandinavia and the Atlantic shipping lanes from the Soviet threat. Britain could never afford to bully Iceland to the extent that the latter would be justified in withdrawing from NATO. The Icelanders themselves, particularly those charged with the execution of the campaign, also usually had a clear view of the fact that they had to moderate their own use of force in order to present themselves to the outside world as the outnumbered, weaker party. In many ways, they proved to be the masters of the media in presenting their case.

On both sides, the key weapons at sea were the ships themselves and manoeuvring the primary mode of tactics. The Icelanders came up with a sweep cutting device for the second conflict and most of the encounters centred upon British units trying to ride the Icelanders off from the trawler fleet. The tough little Icelandic vessels were rather better suited to graunching or collision, but the British, particularly in the later conflicts, proved remarkably effective. The RN had to

BOOK REVIEWS

accept, however, a much greater bill for damages as thin skinned frigates bore the consequences (although damage control efforts sometimes didn't help – the wardroom of one *Leander* which had been stove in ended up completely trashed).

The environmental conditions were often appalling. It is notable, despite the lessons of the Battle of the Atlantic, that many of the RN units in 1958-61 were not well equipped for such extreme conditions (the Type 14 utility ASW frigates of the Fishery Protection Squadron are a particular case in point), while the well conceived *Leanders* of later years were much better seaboats and much more comfortable for their crews in every way. One of the interesting vignettes is that of the large Royal Fleet Auxiliary which was warned off from acting as a marking unit by the Ministry of Defence, despite her success in the role. On reflection, a big tanker has certain qualities in such circumstances which the MOD seems to have ignored.

The book is particularly strong on the challenges of creating a coherent national policy and the associated rules of engagement (ROE) in such a situation. Andrew Welch's underlying thesis is that the British Government was almost always in a reactive mode and that the British were very slow to appreciate the extent to which concepts of international law were evolving, very much in Iceland's favour. This not only meant that Britain failed to achieve the best possible compromise with Iceland, thus ensuring the complete destruction of a deep water fishing industry which might have been able to survive on a limited, but still substantial basis. It also meant that the British entered the European Economic Community as the victims of an arrangement which gave them only a limited share of the fisheries in their own 200 mile EEZ, when that came to be declared. Your

reviewer's memory of the depression and unemployment in Hull and other East Coast ports in 1980 confirms Welch's comments as to the disaster that overtook the offshore British fishing industry. If there is a lesson from Welch's analysis it is that governments are generally better off if they maintain a proactive rather than a conservative approach to the development of the law of the sea – a process of development which is by no means complete.

In the case of the British, there was constant debate between the ships and sea and the authorities ashore over the suitability of the promulgated ROE for the situation. The sophistication of naval and even government thinking on such matters was clearly much greater in 1972-73 than it had been in 1958-61, nevertheless it is apparent from Welch's narrative that even more could have been done in 1972 to examine branches and sequels and work the government through the available options than was the case. The fact that the RN never at any point had any real authority over the trawlers themselves was another problem, only partly alleviated by the assignment of former fishing skippers to the frigates as liaison officers.

The book is nicely put together and extensively illustrated, with some spectacular photographs of close encounters and collision damage. The book is available direct from the publisher, Maritime Books of Cornwall, who have a long and impressive publishers' list as well as producing the bi-monthly magazine *Warship World*, and operating as an online naval and maritime bookseller. They can be accessed on line at <www.navybooks.com>, with an email of <sales@navybooks.com>

In all, very highly recommended to bridge watchkeepers, navigators and warfare officers, ship captains and to all those not at sea who are or may be involved with questions of maritime

international law and boundary disputes. Balanced, dispassionate and comprehensive, Welch's book will be a vital reference for years to come. Recommended as all this and as a very good read in its own right.

In closing, your reviewer can only accuse Welch of excessive circumspection in one case. In 1973, a diesel powered, twin screw controllable pitch Type 61 frigate, the *Lincoln*, succeeded in warding off an Icelandic from a British trawler at very close quarters by, amongst other things, rounding in front of the trawler with one screw at full ahead, rudder hard over and the second screw at half astern. After the event, the trawler's skipper is alleged to have broadcast, 'Chr...ist. I didn't know an effing frigate could effing turn like that.' With some experience of British fishermen on radio circuits, your reviewer suspects that at least two effings have been deleted.

James Goldrick



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Adler, Bill (Ed.) *Letters from Vietnam*. New York: EP Dutton and Co., 1967.

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HMAS MANOORA AT ANCHOR IN DARWIN HARBOUR



AUSTRALIAN NAVAL INSTITUTE 2007 WINTER/SPRING EVENTS PROGRAM

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	COMMENTS/CONTACT
SYNNOT LECTURE (DR ERIC GROVE) & UNHOSTED LUNCH	23 JUL 1000-1200	KUTTABUL WARDROOM FHQ - LVL 6	CDRE GRIGGS
KING HALL SEMINAR	24 JUL	SYDNEY	
CTP	24 JUL 1800-2000	NHS	CDRE(RADM) COATES AND/ OR CDRE JONES
KING HALL NAVAL HISTORY CONFERENCE	26-27 JUL		
SYNNOT LECTURE (GARRY WEIR) & LUNCH (TBC)	30 JUL 1400-1500	R1 THEATRETTE	CN(TBC)/CDRE GILMORE
SYNNOT LECTURE (DR ERIC GROVE) DRINKS TO FOLLOW	30 JUL 1700-1800 1800-1900	ADFA MILITARY THEATRE ADFA O's MESS	CAPT MURRAY
PRESENTATIONS IN WOLLONGONG, JERVIS BAY & ADELAIDE BY DR WEIR & DR GROVE	31 JUL - 3 AUG		POC: DR DAVID STEVENS, 02 6127 6503, DAVID.STEVENS3@DEFENCE.GOV.AU
VERNON PARKER ORATION - MIKE CARLTON (TBC) ANI ANNUAL DINNER	24 AUG 1800 TO FOLLOW VP ORATION	ADFA MILITARY THEATRE ADFA O's MESS	RADM GOLDRICK/ CAPT MURRAY
WARFARE SEMINAR	5 OCT	HMAS WATSON	CDRE GILMORE (PROGRAM) / CMDR HORNSBY (LOG)
WA EVENT	Nov	HMAS STIRLING	CDRE GRIGGS

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ANI ON-LINE: A GUIDE TO THE NEW WEBSITE.

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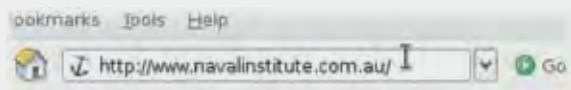


Figure 1

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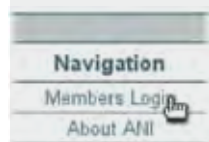


Figure 2

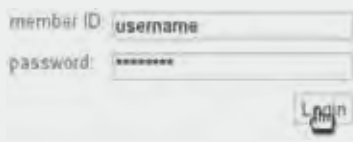


Figure 3

LOGGING IN TO YOUR ACCOUNT

Once you have your account details, you are ready to login and access the new features of the site. In order to login, navigate to the website (figure 1) and click the "Members Login" item (figure 2). Enter your member ID and password as they were provided to you, then click the "Login" button. The case of the member ID and password are important: i.e. "CaSe" and "case" are considered entirely different words by the authentication system. Each letter of the password will appear as a single "*" to prevent others from seeing your password as you type. If you have entered your details correctly, you will be presented with the news page. The grey status bar at the top notifies you of the account you are using (figure 4). You are now able to access all of the new features of the site.

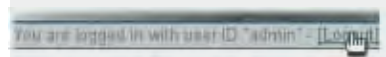


Figure 4

LOGGING OUT OF YOUR ACCOUNT

In order to protect your identity and to prevent malicious use of your account by others, you must log out of the site when you are finished browsing. This is especially important on public computers. In order to log out, click the "Logout" link in the grey status bar (figure 4).

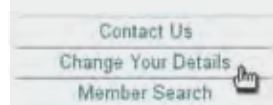


Figure 5

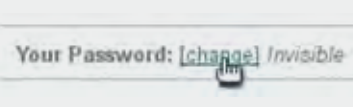


Figure 6

CHANGING YOUR DETAILS

When your account is created, only your member ID and password are stored in the system for privacy reasons. However, you may provide other details that are visible to other ANI members. In order to change your details, login and click the "Change Your Details" menu item (figure 5). Then select the "change" link (figure 6) next to either your personal details or password. Change the text appropriately and click the "save" button (figure 7).

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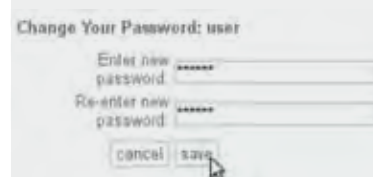


Figure 7

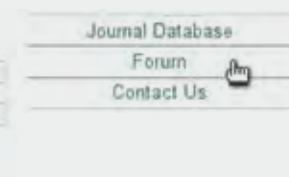


Figure 8

PARTICIPATING IN THE FORUM

In order to post topics and replies in the discussion forum, first login and click the "Forum" menu item (figure 8). Then select a forum that you would like to view by clicking its "View Topics" button (figure 9). Select a topic that you would like to read by clicking its "View this topic" link (figure 10). If you are not interested in any particular topic, you may add your own by clicking the "Add New Topic" button (figure 10). Similarly, once you are viewing a topic, you may post a reply by clicking "Add New Post". Fill in the heading and body of your reply and click the "Submit" button to add your reply to the topic. If you change your mind while writing your reply, you may click the "Cancel" button and your reply will not be added to the topic.

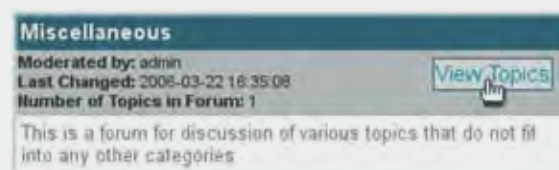


Figure 9

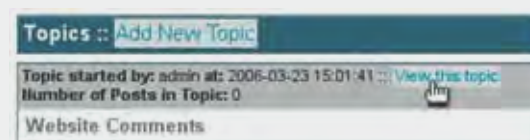


Figure 10

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