



NOTICE TO MARINERS

Newsletter 32 Small Ship Squadron Association Incorporating RAE Tn

Patron: Colonel K L Duncan (RL)

President's Message

On behalf of the Patron and families a merry Christmas

I wish to thank Ross McMurray and they put into fine tuning my thoughts to the Australian War Memorial Both committee members were the ships of the Squadron and our war service commitments in both Borneo and South Vietnam and would be a permanent dedication to all members.



committee I wish all members and their and a happy new year for 2006.

Ian Johnston for the considerable effort on the structure of the plaque submission Memorials Plaque Dedication Program. adamant that the plaque had to represent

It is also worth mentioning the co-operation that the committee has received from Andrew Smith, Plaque Planning and Production and Martin Hanson, Ceremonial Officer of the Australian War Memorial.

The committee would appreciate the attendance of as many members and their families as possible so please think about attending the dedication at the Australian War Memorial and the commemorative dinner on Thursday 6 April 2006.

It is pleasing to receive correspondence from the schools we have presented books to this year. In the letter received from Riverside Girls High School Ms. Wendy Chamaoun, Teacher-Librarian acknowledged the contribution of "Voyages to Vietnam" and noted "Vietnam is now a topic in our History curriculum and what a positive way to ensure that the memories of Australia's combat become a vibrant part of the educational experience of the young".

Ms. Bronwyn Curtis, Co-Ordinator of Libraries SCEGGS Redlands acknowledged the contribution of "A Doctor's War" by Rowley Richards saying "This book will be a great companion to "Weary: The Life of Sir Edward Dunlop" and on a purely personal note, I will also read it with great interest as my father was a POW who was captured in Singapore, worked on the Burma-Siam Railway and was transferred to Japan".

JAMAIS ETRE REMORQUE





A letter from Dazz Graney about Pandanus Park.

G'day Ross,

How are you mate? I'll try and answer your question regarding Pandanus Park as the Vets call it or Kalpower Station as it is normally known. About five years ago five or six blokes got together to see if they could come up with a place where veterans could get away from it all and give each other mutual support. Les Hiddens - "The Bush Tucker Man" - was one of the originals and he reckoned that Kalpower Station, which is a lapsed cattle lease, would be the ideal place. So the bunch of them along with the then mayor of Cook Shire went and scouted the place out and found some good camping areas along the banks of the Normanby River. The main camp area at Kalpower is about 80k due north of the town of Laura and about the same south of Princess Charlotte Bay. Bordering it to the west is Lakefield National Park and to the east is mainly old leases and aboriginal land. All in all it's a fairly big block of ground, about 80k long north to south and 20 to 25k wide, and being surrounded by vested interests we are having a hard time of it by the Qld government, Parks and Wildlife and the local aboriginal council. What they don't seem to understand or don't want to understand is the fact that all we wanted was access to the place. Seeing as how they all seem to be so bloody minded we are now asking for the whole place and with a bit of luck we might get the part we wanted access to called the Green Ant Block. If you ever go there you will understand why it is called that.

There is absolutely no infrastructure on the place so it is back to basics camping. If you want something you bring it in with you or go without. The only thing that has been built on the place is a memorial that was dedicated and consecrated last year. If you want you may place a stone or plaque with your mates name on it on the memorial and that is where it stays. Each year a service is held at the memorial site on Long Tan Day and for the last two years there has been about 350 to 400 people there which is a pretty good role up considering you basically need a 4WD to get there. IN 2003 when Helen and I visited for the first time I thought I was going to be an orphan child and be the only Small Ship bloke there, but Blue McClymont and Reg Hamman turned up and we had a good old chin wag and a drink. We met at a place they call the RAP. This is a cleared area in the bush where everybody gets together about 1500 hrs and generally socialises for an couple of hours. All news and general information is disseminated from here plus any anecdotes, jokes, yarns and general bullshit. This runs amazingly well as the person who stands in the circle of knowledge has the floor until he/she is finished or gets chucked out for being long winded. This year I made orphan child status, but I was with the friends I made last year. It was to me a great experience to meet other vets from all over the country and from all different arms and services. Some of the blokes I met there I'm sure will be friends for life. On the night before Long Tan Day this year John Williamson came up and gave us a free concert. What a great night. If he didn't have 400 fans before he certainly did after the show. Also the next morning, looking pretty much worse for wear, he led everybody in Waltzing Matilda before the dawn service. The service is conducted by the Padre of Cape York who also doubles up as the bugler. He does a good job and runs a very moving service.

The country up there is all low open bush with water holes all through it as the Normanby, Kennedy, Hann and Moorehead rivers plus numerous creeks flow through the area and in the wet end up as one big flood plain. Where we camp on the Normanby, in the dry season when we are there, it is a chain of waterholes with some flow through them. The river has generally high steep banks lined with trees and bush. The high banks come in handy as it tends to keep the snapping handbags away. There is a fair few of them there and we often see them cruising along of an evening or out sun baking during the day. On Kalpower is a region of lakes called Jacks Lakes. When we were there last year they were just about dry with only a small amount of water in them. This year after a good wet season they were full and covered in blue water lilies. On the coast in Princess Charlotte Bay is one of the prettiest beaches I've seen at a place called Bathurst Head. Good fishing, crabbing and a great camping spot. It was in the news recently when that bloke got dragged out of his tent by a croc and grandma jumped on top of it and made it drop the bloke. Just off shore from there is the Flinders Island Group where I spent my 21st birthday on the Harry Chauvel, never thought I would see them again let alone from the land side.

That's about it mate, I'll include a map and a couple of photo's and hope to see a few of our blokes up there next year.

Cheers,

Dazz Graney.





Some of the crowd at the Dawn Service, Pandanus Park 2004



Les Hiddens addressing the Dawn Service at Pandanus Park 2004



Dick Schafer in the circle of knowledge. Note the bottle of Pandanus poteen.



Not a bad yabby and good chewing to boot.



**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR...**

I'm not sure when these newsletters started but it was probably over fifteen years ago when Jack Peel kicked off Notice to Mariners (no doubt someone will correct me on this) but in all that time there has never been Letters to the Editor as such. We do occasionally get an email thanking us for putting it out, and of course we get articles from members for whom we are grateful, but rarely do people write in and relate some personal experiences that they feel could be of interest to others. Anyway, we received these four letters recently and I hope the authors don't mind us publishing them.

The first is from Brian Willcock of Shelley, WA.

"I attended the Dawn Service at Albany which was conducted at the memorial on Mount Clairmont and is a replica of the Light Horse Memorial first erected in Egypt, but destroyed during World War II. The service was very well attended and I was quite surprised at the number of young people there. Being the 75th anniversary of the first official ANZAC Dawn Service it was very special. A Requiem Mass was held at St John's Church at midday and this was also significant because the first ever service to be held on ANZAC Day was in this church.

The memorial is sited East and as the weather was fine but cool the sunrise over the King George Sound was spectacular. The Mount Clairmont area commands a view of the entrance and anchorage of the Sound, and quite a lot of the original six inch coastal batteries, magazines and associated buildings have been preserved, along with a museum. It's certainly well worth a visit."

Regards,
Brian

The next one is from Bob Clarke of Glenorie, NSW

"Please find enclosed my subscription. I was overseas for all of April so did not receive my renewal notice until my return.

I have a daughter living in London so was able to take her and my grandson with me to Gallipoli for ANZAC Day. While I missed the reunion at Hunters Hill I was thinking of you guys on the day. What an experience!"

Best regards,
Bob

Here's one from Don Kennedy of Forestville, NSW

"The arrival of Notice to Mariners served to remind me of my failure to renew my subscription. I am a World War II survivor who later spent 16 years at Georges Heights in the CMF/ARes and reached retiring age in 1976.

It was interesting to hear of Wal Beckhouse in the newsletter – and the names he mentioned; all well known to me. Certainly Harry Tompsitt and Barry Smart have "crossed the bar" but not so sure about the others.

I keep in touch with Mike Askey who, for several years, was our OC in 33 Terminal Squadron. He is now the RSL sub-branch President at Roseville.

cont.





ANZAC Day is pretty busy for me – Dawn Service at my Forestville sub-branch, then to the city, first to march with what is left of the World War II Merchant Navy bods, and then, if fit enough, I try to go around again with one of the other three organisations to which I still belong. Unlike they who “grew not old” we who survived do grow old!”

Best wishes,
Don Kennedy

One from Les Muras of Baulkham Hills, NSW

“I attended the funeral of Graham Taylor on 27 July 2005. He first introduced me to the Association through RAE Tn. Graham had attained the rank of Captain in the Terminal Squadron and I met up with him again when he joined the Baulkham Hills Rural Fire Service (RFS) and served with our Round Corner Bush Fire Brigade. He was a very active member for many years until the late 1990s when he and his wife, Christine, moved to the Central Coast where he became involved with the RFS in that region.

Graham loved services life, on the ships, in the Army and in the RFS. He called a spade a spade and was a stickler for perfection.

The attendance at his funeral reflected the wide range of community family and friends that were part of his life. Personal tributes were given by Mike Askey (a friend and formerly RAE Tn) and Bjorn Isberg (a friend and a member of Round Corner Bush Fire Brigade). There was a large representation from Baulkham hills and the Central Coast RFS, and these members formed an Honour Guard at the funeral.”

Sincerely,
Les Muras

Thank you Brian, Bob, Don and Les for these letters, and hopefully this will spur on others who would like to share some news with us.

RAFFLE PRIZE

In the last edition we couldn't remember who won the third prize in the ANZAC Day raffle (we must have been tired and emotional). Well, the book, “Voyages to Vietnam” went to Jim Young of Canberra. Sorry about that. Next time we will be more attentive.

VIETNAM AND ASSOCIATED FORCES DAY – SPRINGWOOD NSW

On Sunday 21 August 2005 a large contingent of Vietnam veterans and their families took part in this annual event at Springwood. Our Association was represented by our Patron, Colonel Ken Duncan, President Ocka Murray, Ian Johnston, Ken Shannon and Ross McMurray. With us were the President and Secretary of the Army Water Transport Association, Norm Rolands and Cec Weekes. Assisting with the banner were Heather Cradige and Tom Egan from 21 Cadet Group, Penrith. As usual the weather was perfect and after the ceremony we adjourned to David Younan's excellent Royal Hotel where he shouted us lunch.

To members living in the Sydney and surrounding areas, why not come up to the mountains and participate in this ceremony. Bring the family and make a day of it. Having said that, next year will be the 40th anniversary of the major RAE units deployment to Vietnam and there will be ceremonies all over the country to mark this milestone. A significant program at SME is being organised for the period **15 – 18 August 2006** and we will be involved in it. More details will be made available in the New Year, but mark your calendars now.





EXERCISE SEA EAGLE

This month more than 500 Navy and Army personnel were involved in an amphibious training activity, Exercise Sea eagle, at Cowley Beach, north of Townsville. The two week long exercise was part of the ongoing development of the Australian Defence Force amphibious capability.

Exercise Sea eagle involved the Amphibious Transport Ship, HMAS Kanimbla, along with two Landing Craft Heavy, HMAS Tarakan and Betano. Also deployed were elements of Townsville based 2 RAR, 5 Aviation Regiment and 10 Force Supply Battalion.

The exercise focussed on the planning and conduct of amphibious operations leading to a work up involving the embarking and disembarking of troops, vehicles and equipment, and tactical insertion from ship to shore using helicopters and landing craft. The main activity was a simulated evacuation of Australian citizens from Cowley Beach.

Our thanks to the Department of Defence for providing this article and photos.

Does anyone remember Exercises 'Carbine' and 'Longshot'? Pretty much the same, don't you think ?





NEW ARMIDALE CLASS PATROL BOATS

In June this year the first of fourteen patrol boats entered service with the Royal Australian Navy. The Armidale Class was named after the original HMAS Armidale, a Bathurst Class corvette sunk during World War II.

It is of mono hull aluminium construction displacing 270 tonnes and a length of 57 metres. It carries a 21 man crew and its propulsion consists of two MTU 16V M70 2320 kW diesels driving twin screws. Its operational speed is 25 knots and has a range of 3000 nautical miles. It is armed with a Rafael 25 mm Typhoon stabilised cannon and two 12.7 mm machine guns. The boats are being constructed by Austal Ships WA.

The boats will operate from Darwin and Cairns and will be used to better patrol and protect Australia's coastline.





NEW MEMBERS

Well, two new members anyway. Kevin Hackett joins us from Wodonga, Victoria. He served on AV1354 Brudenell White in the early sixties. Welcome aboard, Kev.

Vaughn Ruddick served on AV1354 Brudenell White and AV1356 Clive Steele in Vietnam. He now lives in Oak Park, Melbourne. Glad you could make it after all those years, Lurch!

DONATIONS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thanks to Les Hockings and Ken Burchill for their kind donations we recently received. Also, thanks to the members who were in arrears with their subscriptions, and paid them. Well done.

LATE SAD NEWS

We were just about to go to print when we learned of the deaths of two shipmates:

Major Paul Baker (Rtd) was an OCS graduate and served nearly 25 years in RAE. He died on 13 December 2005 after complications from surgery for cancer. His postings were mainly in the Accommodation and Works area, but a lot of us would remember him in the 1960s when he was with 11 Movement Control Group, which included service in Vietnam. In recent years, after he retired from the Army, he was heavily involved with the RAE Museum. His funeral arrangements are not yet known.

Corporal Henry Adidi (Rtd) died on 11 December 2005 in Liverpool Hospital. He too was suffering cancer. Henry served in the Army from 1971 to 1991, some of his service was with 35 Water Transport Squadron. Henry's funeral service will be at Pagewood NSW on 21 December 2005.

Our hearts go out to the families of these two fine gentlemen. It's hard enough coming to terms with tragedies such as this, but especially so at this time of the year when we are gearing up for Christmas festivities and looking forward to celebrations with families and friends. Rest in peace fellas.

Ubique



Mick Ryan, President of the Sappers Association of WA, sent us this photo entitled "A Centurion arriving at Vung Tau from Australia". However, looking at the red dirt on it, it appears that it has been in-country for some time. Does anyone have any details?





The LCM 8 replacement project is nearing completion. Here is one of the seven new craft undergoing its final sea trials. Although it is seen here in its towing mode there is scope in its design to provide a Johnson 40 hp outboard. Should the need ever arise it could be fitted to the stern (with the 20 litre fuel tank on top of the container).



Here are the seven new craft being delivered to 35 Water Transport Squadron. Well, there were seven when they started the trip...





2005 - WHAT A GREAT YEAR

By Peter Tierney

2004 for my wife, Sue and I was one that so little was achieved. Sadly my father in law's health did not improve and he passed away late in the year, so as a result we committed ourselves to 2005 as catch up year for the travel we wanted to do

The year started with a 28-day tour of Cambodia and Vietnam. We chose a tour on the advice of our travel agent. It was a great decision because the tour was well organised, a terrific guide especially in Vietnam and fortunately only one day of very light rain. We wanted to take from the tour the great sights and people contact in Vietnam not necessarily digging up the past, so although time was spent in Saigon (a small part of Ho Che Minh city now) we did not get to see Vung Tau and other places we had the pleasure of visiting in our previously fully paid and catered trip in 1966. Our arrival in Saigon was on the celebration of the new year (year of the rooster) and our hotel was on Nguyen Hue Street, the main boulevard. That road had been transformed into a display of all things Vietnamese such as village life, colourful flower displays, and fountains, ponds complete with fish, festival type floats, and hundreds of thousands of people moving slowly up and down the display that covered perhaps half a kilometre. The atmosphere was electric, friendly and open from the people. Because of my size (6'4") and shape I was chosen by the locals as "The Happy Buddha", as a result constantly having my tummy rubbed and had many babies thrust in my arms to be photographed along with much laughter and genuine friendliness.

The rest of the trip included visits to Can Tho, Dalat, Nha Trang, Quy Nhon, Hoi An, Hue, Hanoi, Harlong Bay and Sapa. There is so much beauty in the land and scenery and interesting influence in the architecture from the many countries that invaded Vietnam, the temples and palaces from the past are sights not to be missed. Sapa, in the highlands west of Hanoi was a highlight because we had two and a half days of fine weather, which our guide said was most unusual. The colours of the original dress of the village people are spectacular and we arrived at a time of festivities where people walk for miles to participate in traditional games and celebrations. Back home a month later we visited Western Australia (to see a daughter) and catch up for a great lunch with Colin Symons, Barry Woods, Bill Culbertson, Mick Ryan and others (including wives).

Our return on the Indian Pacific from Perth was a highlight Anzac Day with the march in Sydney, a great lunch at Hunters Hill RSL and a catch up with former shipmates was yet another "year topper". Wonderful to see the interstate guys like Arthur Jackson, John Purcell and others visit as often as they do.

Then on the road again for seven weeks with our caravan, we visited the back blocks of NSW, far west Queensland, Northern Territory, South Australia and back home through Broken Hill. This is truly a great country and it has beauty that cannot be seen anywhere else.

Again on the road, and this time to the Water Transport get - together in Brisbane, well organised by Bob Bailey (except for rain). Again this was a wonderful opportunity to see all those young fellows (still young) from 1965, 66 and 67, when I was a guest on the Army for two years. Colin Barker came out of the woodwork this year along with Vaughn (Lurch) Ruddick and that exceptional cook, Bill Irvine and some 260 (I am told) at the Saturday night function was the icing on the cake for me. The next meeting is in the "West". My suggestion - at any cost do not miss it!!!!

Now for a great family Christmas, cheers to all, make it safe and make it a good one.

Peter Tierney





AUSTRALIAN ARMY WATER TRANSPORT REUNION

Bob Gunn recently reported on the Water Transport Reunion at the Brisbane Holiday Park at Eight Miles Plains during 14 – 16 October 2005. He said that there was a record crowd of over 250 people and apart from the weather the event was a huge success.

On Friday night a barbeque was held to meet and greet everyone, and to renew old friendships. The beer flowed pretty well and a good time was had by all. On Saturday a guided tour through Victoria Barracks was organised, along with lunch. That evening the contingent packed out Romas Restaurant at Garden City. Excellent food, good wine and great company ensured that everyone enjoyed themselves. Sunday poured with rain and most people slept in, but headed for the barbeque again at lunch time, where it was announced that the next reunion in 2007 will be held in Western Australia – probably Perth. It will be organised by Sam Stirnolo and Bob Saunders.

Bob Bailey was congratulated on his efforts in organising this years reunion and many people commented that if the WA one is only half as good, it will be a resounding success.



Left.... **Bruce and Joyce Reilly.**



Right...**Tony and Dal Harris.**



Left.. **John Lalor, Dave Perham and Bob Gunn.**





A ROUGH START

By Ian Johnston BEM

Unless you have some idea of what I did prior to joining R.A.E. Tn you will not understand why I had difficulty coming to terms with 'Transportation'.

Before joining the Army in 1958 I had spent six years in the R.A.N. My trade in the Navy was visual signaling. This involved using morse light, semaphore, flag hoist, cryptography, cipher and I also did some time as a teleprinter operator in a tape relay centre.

Now you may well ask what that had to do with my time in the Army – well, it had a lot to do with it, at least initially, for in fact when I joined the Army I was a Corps enlistment for Signals.

When I signed the enlistment papers I had no idea the Army possessed a tiny navy and had I not been subjected to pressure from a most persuasive person I most certainly would have gone to Signals and my Army experience would have been quite different.

When I commenced my recruit training at Kapooka I was placed within a platoon that had started twelve weeks prior. It was considered that I did not need all the square bashing and the like of the first 3 months so I joined the platoon when they were about to start their automatic weapon training. My time at Kapooka was therefore much shorter than for most other recruits.

Now there were two others who started with me – they both had previous Army service and had re-joined. I can recall the name of one, a chap called Leo Hutley but I am afraid I have forgotten the name of the other.

I suppose it was only to be expected that I should make immediate friends of these two since we were commencing together and as well as that I found them to be very likeable but it was Leo I got to know best and it was he who applied the most pressure for me to ask for a change of Corps.

He and the other chap had spent their previous engagement in 'Transportation' and they both told me many stories of the good times they had in the Army's navy. Leo stressed that as a signaler I would be well received since 'they are always looking for people to operate their radios'.

He also assured me that the Signal Corps were a bunch of people who suffered from a then (it's O.K. today) much despised sexual deviation and that since I was ex navy I would have to prove that I wasn't that way myself and in his opinion the best way I could do this was by not going to Signals.

Let me hasten to say here that during my time in the Army I met many Corps of Signals people and they all appeared to me to be normal – I suppose you might say that their only real problem was that they were not Engineers.

Needless to say Leo finally prevailed and I did put in an application to change from Signals to Engineers. The transfer took some time and in fact I was held back at Kapooka for about two weeks after the platoon completed training. I was told that Signals were not at all happy about releasing me. However the transfer finally was approved and I was sent to S.M.E. for Corps training.

cont.





After my navy training that lasted for nine months and could well be described as severe (not quite brutal – though it did border on that from time to time) I found the Army training easy, with the discipline firm but quite fair (at least by comparison).

I suppose if I was asked to give a clear reason for leaving the Navy – that I liked very much in most respects – I would have to say that it was due to the manner/ behaviour of some of the commissioned officers. Although the majority of navy officers were fine men there were some who did no credit at all to their rank. If one of this type took a dislike to you your day to day life could become a living hell.

To continue – on completion of Corps training the three of us were loaded into the back of a truck and taken from Casula to Chowder Bay.

We were unloading our gear outside the wooden barrack block when a very big voice told us to ‘Get yourselves down here’ (to ‘A’ deck).

Leo said to the other chap ‘Christ – God’s still here’. I said ‘Who’s God’. He replied ‘He’s the Adjutant and he is a real tough customer – his name is Frank Guest.’

When we got to ‘A’ deck we found the R.S.M. John Toomey and God waiting for us. God took us to the top of the stairs that led down to the lower levels where he pointed to the end of the wharf and said ‘There is a workboat down there – get your gear onboard – you are on the ‘Vasse’.’

As we carried our stuff down to the workboat I said to Leo ‘What’s the ‘Vasse’ and he said ‘It’s 300 tons of floating firewood and I hope for your sake that you don’t suffer too much from sea sickness as she will roll her guts out on the proverbial mill pond.’

My first sighting of ‘Vasse’ was almost a non sighting – she was within a tiny floating dock at Sydney Slipway and all I could see was a bit of the stem and stern but it was enough for me to realize that she was the same type as the Navy’s ‘Woomera’.

During my navy time people tended not to talk about ‘Woomera’. Without a doubt she was the most despised/ feared vessel in the Navy and I am sure we didn’t speak about her for fear it might cause the worst possible luck to happen in that you might get posted to it.

On boarding ‘Vasse’ we found it to be in a high state of activity since the dock was in the process of releasing her. We were met by the ship’s first officer – a very nice bloke by the name of Bob McLeod. Bob took us into the officers’ mess where we fronted the skipper, Captain Lawrence. He knew the other two quite well and told them to go forward to the forecastle mess, get into working dress and then help the other crew members with getting the ship underway. He then looked at my papers and said ‘You’re ex-navy! Do you know how to take helm orders’. I said ‘Yes’ and he said ‘Great – get yourself into the wheelhouse – I’ll be taking the ship out for a bit of a test and it will be nice for a change to have some who responds correctly to my orders’.

When I entered the wheelhouse I was somewhat taken aback for there was a wheel that would have done credit to an old windjammer. I tried the wheel and to my surprise found it to be remarkably light and responsive especially since it was a manual chain and wire system.

I had spent quite a bit of time as helmsman on navy ships and had no trouble steering ‘Vasse’ or complying with the helm orders.

When we reached Bradleys Head harbour duties ceased and sea duties took over so I found myself stood down.

cont.





Now I guess since everything was so new and I was very busy with the wheel I didn't pay much attention to the engine orders even though I relayed them to the man on the telegraph but when I left the wheelhouse I had no memory of the engine orders or of the current state of the engines.

I wandered to the stern of the ship and there was the cook, Beau Geste (a legend in his own time) peeling spuds. I introduced myself to Beau and then looked over the rail and saw that we had virtually no wake – so I said, more to myself than to Beau 'I wonder when the Skipper is going to open her up' and Beau said 'You silly bugger – we have been going flat out since we left Sydney Slips.'

To my horror Beau then told me that the only time the ship ever exceeded 5 knots was when there was a howling gale blowing with her and even then it was rare for it to do more than 8 knots. For the very first time I had a terrible feeling that in joining Tn I had made a very big mistake.

My mate Leo had certainly been right about the 300 tonners being a wild ride at sea. However I personally found 'Vasse' to be quite tolerable and most certainly they were much more comfortable than the L.S.M.s. When unladen they took on a pronounced down by the stern attitude which gave them something of a seagoing waddle and when loaded they gave a rather good impression of a submarine that was trying to submerge but couldn't quite make it. This last characteristic was in fact a very real worry for they had a remarkably small freeboard and when loaded the main deck was constantly underwater and we all knew that the only thing preventing us from foundering was the rather flimsy hatch boards with their canvas covers.

I suppose I had been spoilt by the Navy for even when proceeding at economical speed most navy ships made twelve knots (Woomera excepted). At one time in Korea the frigate I served on worked up to twenty knots whilst my last navy ship, the then brand new and state of the art destroyer 'Voyager' made thirty five knots when we put her through her acceptance trials. So here I am on my first Army ship – that I have been told is one of a pair and the flagships of the fleet and I have a strong feeling that provided I found a way of walking on water, I could hop off and make better progress.

Everything went well on our short spin 'outside' and we ended the day at about 2000hrs secure at the Chowder Bay wharf.

It turned out that Tn. was gearing up for a big unit exercise that was to take the form of a run to Lord Howe Island. It appeared that there was a problem to do with the flying boats that were the normal means of taking people and provisions to the island and the Army had been asked to help out by taking several hundred tons of stores, provisions and vehicles over. Tn. apparently were quite happy to comply since it would work in well with their training program.

In fact the entire Sydney based ocean going fleet made the run and it truly was a memorable experience but it really has no part to play in this story.

I will finish this little discourse by saying that my introduction to Tn. was something of a shock to a bloke who had spent a bit of time in the Navy. The biggest difference was in the way the discipline worked – the Army discipline was most certainly there but seemed much freer and much less severe. Punishment seemed only to be used when people got way out of line. The Navy discipline was quite different! They relied on a rigid application of what was called the 'scale of punishment'. If you did something wrong, and got caught, you knew exactly what your punishment would be even before you went before the man. It tended to be rather unthinking/mechanical and at times quite petty. During my six years in the Navy I had a very long list of 'crimes' against my name but in my Army service of eighteen years I had a clean sheet.

I loved the Army! It treated me well and once I got over the initial shock I took to it like the proverbial duck to water.





AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL – PLAQUE DEDICATION AND DINNER

In the last edition we talked about the upcoming Plaque Dedication Program at the AWM. Our intention is to have a bronze plaque installed and dedicated to 32 Small Ship Squadron at a special service there on Thursday 6 April 2006. That evening we plan to hold a dedication dinner and also to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the deployment of the Squadron to Vietnam. It is planned to hold the dinner at the Yowani Country Club in Dickson ACT. So far about 30 members have indicated that they may attend. Most will be bringing their ladies, and also guests, which puts the total at around 55.

The dinner will consist of three courses from a selection of three choices. Vegetarian and special dietary needs can be arranged. The price of \$50.00 per head for an a la carte menu which will include wines and beverages with the dinner, is very good value. There is limited motel type accommodation available at the club for around \$99.00 per couple. There are quite a few motels in Dickson, some within walking distance. In the next edition we will provide details of them. Association member, John Merrick, is a member of the club and through him we are able to keep the costs reasonable. Thanks John.

From the returns to date it would appear that the popular choice of dress will be coat and tie. The dinner will be a fairly formal affair, so this should be the minimum standard.

For those who have not yet indicated their attendance, please give it some thought, and if you are able to attend (or might attend) fill out the enclosed pro-forma and send it in the enclosed envelope to Ross McMurray. If you have already indicated, disregard this. For those on the net, please email your response to...

rossmcmurray@optusnet.com.au **Do not send any money, yet. I'll give you all the final details in the February 2006 edition of Notice to Mariners.**

This will be a good opportunity to make our mark on the AWM and will give us a permanent symbol dedicated to the hundreds of men who served in the Squadron from 1959 to 1971.



Wishing everyone a
MERRY CHRISTMAS
and a safe and prosperous
NEW YEAR.





ATTENTION !!!!

Any member who receives their Notice To Mariners by email and would also like a hard copy please contact Ocka Murray to be placed on the mailing list. Back copies are also available. Changed your email address ? Let Ross McMurray know.

Disclaimer

Thoughts expressed in this newsletter are those held by the writers and contributors and are NOT necessarily those of the editor or the Association Committee or members.

Committee Members

This committee of the Association meets on the third Tuesday of each month at the Hunters Hill R.S.L. Memorial Hall at 8 pm.

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Publisher	Roger MacDonald		

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Property for Sale

Ties.....\$18.00	Collar Badges.....\$6.00
32 Small Ship Sqn. Book.....\$30.00	Flag Army Afloat..... \$50.00
Assc. Aniversary Plaque.....\$25.00	Ass. Caps (navy)..... \$12.00
Assc. Patches..... \$8.00	Assc. Polo Shirts, White, Red
LSM Badges\$12.00	and Navy To Order.....\$25.00

Contact Ken Shannon 02 9871 466



**PLAQUE DEDICATION AND DINNER – AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL CANBERRA.
THURSDAY 6 APRIL 2006**

Name.....

Please circle your appropriate answer. Note that this is only to get an idea of how many would attend. We will call for confirmation in early 2006.

Attendance at Dedication Ceremony at AWM

Yes No Maybe

Attendance at Dinner

Yes No Maybe

Number of guests at Dinner

Dress

Dress for the Dedication Ceremony would be coat, tie and medals. Please indicate your preference for dress at the dinner.

Black Tie Lounge Suit Coat and Tie

Comments

Any comments or questions?.....

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.....

Thank you for your participation. Please return this questionnaire in the envelope provided to:

Ross McMurray
14 Hillary St.
West Pymble NSW 2073