

# *Vung Tau Express*

AUGUST 2009 Issue



## **Presidents Report**

At our meeting in June those present voted to move meetings to the Eastlake club for the remaining 3 meetings of this year. These 3 meetings are to be a trial so we can consider whether to stay there next year and onwards or look for another venue. The Board of Management at Eastlake has waived the hire fee for a meeting room but they have requested that those who are not currently members may consider joining at a cost of \$2.20 for 12 months membership. Joining is not compulsory and there will be enough of us who are already members who will sign you in should you choose not to join.

## **ANNUAL DINNER**

Our Annual Dinner will also be held at Eastlake this year. Details appear elsewhere in this VTE. We have managed to keep the function as all inclusive but unfortunately the price for this year has to be put up to \$50 per head. I think that is still a reasonable charge for a night out these days. Your guests are most welcome at the same price; just encourage them to dig deep for the raffle.

Guest speaker this year will be John Perryman who was on board the GeoSounder when Sydney II was found last year. Mike Hardwick is once again liaising with the RAN to provide a band for the evening. The Navy initially responded stating that they would be sending 15 to 20 bandies for the evening. I have had to decline that number as we would never fit them in. Negotiation is ongoing but I am hopeful we will have a Navy Band present of around 6 members.

The Dinner will be only 2 ½ weeks after our next meeting so we will be looking for your commitment and attendance fee at the next meeting if possible. Those of you who cannot attend the meeting can of course reply by mail. I will need to confirm numbers with the club by cob Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August. This dinner, along with ANZAC day, is the highlight of our social calendar for the year.

Everything is in place for a great evening all we need now is your attendance. So if you are wavering about coming along or have not been to one of these functions in the past, take the plunge, I am confident you will have a very enjoyable night.

NEXT MEETING – EASTLAKE CLUB Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 1930.

ANNUAL DINNER – EASTLAKE CLUB Saturday 22nd August 1930.

Cheers  
Jim Quick

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#### **SECRETARY'S BLURB:**

**Changed your email address lately?** If so could you please advise Graeme Bee, copied to John Curbishley at your earliest convenience. Our email addresses and phone numbers are at the end of this newsletter.

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#### **THE EDITOR'S MUSINGS:**

##### **Annual Dinner:**

**Date: Saturday 22 August**

**Venue: Eastlake Football Club 3 Oxley St Griffith**

**Cost: \$50 per head.**

Bookings (with money) should be sent to the treasurer asap. As usual the VP will be arranging the seating plan. It would be much appreciated if preferences for party groupings (8 per table) could be advised either to the Treasurer at time of booking or to the VP by phone (62317541) or email, [kenphilc@ozemail.com.au](mailto:kenphilc@ozemail.com.au) asap. The alternative is VP will use his discretion.

## **Name Badges:**

**Do you have your HMAS Sydney, Escorts & VLSVA name badge or will you be one of the few without one at the Annual Dinner?**

You can order one direct from emailing [sales@badgeline.com.au](mailto:sales@badgeline.com.au) or by phoning 02 6103 9095. Cost \$11.90 + \$2.50 postage at the last check. If you experience any difficulties please contact Ken Cartwright at [kenphilc@ozemail.com.au](mailto:kenphilc@ozemail.com.au) or on 6231 7541.

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## **THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY- Between The Wars 1918-1939**

### **Part 2**

I continue to draw with much appreciation from the information contained in John Bostock's 1975 book Australia's Ships of War.

*HMAS Adelaide* Light Cruiser, (Improved version of the "Chatham" group of the British "Town" class with twin screws, part oil-fired boilers, 4 funnels and nine 6-in guns. She was laid down at Cockatoo Island Dockyard Sydney in January 1915, launched 27 July 1918, completed 31 July 1922 and commissioned 5 August 1922. In April 1924 she accompanied the RN's Special Service Squadron to England via Panama, returning to Australia via Suez and Singapore in 1925. *Adelaide* was laid up in reserve between 1928 & 1938 and between 1938 & 1939 was extensively refitted at Cockatoo Island. She was converted to all oil-burning. The fore-funnel, the two forward boilers and the torpedo tubes were removed. She was thoroughly modified and re-commissioned on 13 March 1939. After taking part in a series of trade-defence exercises with other RAN and RNZN ships she was again laid up in reserve, the ship's company then taking passage to England to commission *HMAS Perth I*. During WWII she served in patrol and escort duties in Australian and South West Pacific waters and was paid off on 26 February 1945. In 1949 *Adelaide* was stripped in Sydney and towed to Port Kembla where she was broken up.

*HMAS Platypus* although being built in Scotland during WWI as a submarine depot-ship for the RAN served in that capacity as an RN ship because both the Australian submarines had been lost prior to her completion. She was commissioned into the RAN on 13 March 1919 and escorted the "J" Class submarines to Australia. She served as their depot ship being based in Geelong Victoria. On 1 July 1922, the "j" Class submarines having been paid off and proceeded to Sydney where she became depot-ship to the "S" Class Destroyers. She was also used as the squadron repair-ship and "maid-of-all-work", being used for target towing, carrying stores and other tasks. With the arrival of the submarines *HMA Submarines Oxley I and Otway I* she reverted to her role as submarine tender. The two submarines were soon paid-off into immediate reserve and it was decided to use *Platypus* as a stationary depot-ship at Garden Island, Sydney and also acting as parent-ship for the submarines. *Platypus* was paid off on 15 August 1929 and re-

commissioned the next day as the depot-ship *HMAS Penguin*. On 26 February 1941 she was re-commissioned under her previous name and resumed seagoing service. In May 1941 *Platypus* departed for Darwin and later sustained engine-room damage when the lugger *Marvie* was sunk alongside her. On 1 January 1943 she sailed for Cairns where she was based until May 1944 when she proceeded to Williamsontown for a major refit and conversion of two of her four boilers to oil-burning. In December 1944 she sailed for Sydney and on 5 January 1945 departed for New Guinea, to serve as a repair and maintenance vessel at Madang, Hollandia and Morotai, returning to Australian waters in December 1945. She was berthed at Watson's Bay, Sydney for some years as headquarters vessel for the S/O reserve ships. On 1 November 1956 after thirty-nine years service *Platypus* was paid-off for the last time. She was stripped and in June 1958 was towed to Japan to a shipbreaker's yard.

*RAFA Kurumba* Built as a Fleet Oiler for the RAN at Wallsend on Tyne. She was laid down in September 1915, launched 14 September 1916 and completed in January 1917. She was manned by a British crew and served with the RN for the duration of the war. *Kurumba* in May 1920 and served with the RAN until she was sold out of service in 1948 to Greek ownership and was eventually scrapped in 1966

*RAFA Biloela* Built as a Fleet Collier for the RAN at Cockatoo Island Dockyard, she was laid down on 21 October 1918, launched 10 April 1919 and completed 5 July 1920. *Biloela* was sold out of service in March 1931 and renamed *Cree*. She was torpedoed and sunk during WWII.

*HMAS Cerberus III* was built at Williamstown as the diesel tug *Kooronga*, in 1919, she was commissioned as name-ship *Cerberus* at Flinders Naval Depot, Westernport, Victoria on 6 June 1924 and employed as a tender. During WWII she was used as for elementary sea training for RANR ratings passing through the depot. She was sold out of service in 1948 and replaced by the tug TB10.

N.B. *Kooronga* was the first diesel-powered vessel owned by the RAN.

*Moombah* was laid down as a Coal-storage Lighter at Cockatoo Island Dockyard on 21 October 1920, launched 23 April 1921 and completed 20 February 1923. During the 1930's she was towed to Melbourne and lay idle at the entrance to Victoria Docks.. Put back in service during WWII *Moombah* was towed to Darwin in 1944 and then to Port Moresby by the Navy tug *Heros*. Later, after service at Morotai she was towed back to Sydney by the Fleet Tug *Reserve*.

*Wattle* (Harbour tug) was built at Cockatoo Island. Launched on 27 June 1933 and completed 15 February 1934, she was employed at Garden Island

until she was laid up in the late 1960's and in 1971 was acquired by the Lady Hopetoun and Port Jackson Steam Museum.

*HMAS Morseby* was built in Glasgow for the RN as the Convoy Sloop *HMS Silvio*.

In 1924-25 she was refitted at Pembroke Dockyard, South Wales as a survey vessel and was transferred to the RAN and commissioned as *HMAS Morseby* on 20 June 1925. She arrived in Brisbane on 9 September 1925 and commenced survey duties. Paid off due to drastic defence cuts in 1929, she was recommissioned in April 1933 and resumed survey duty. On the outbreak of WWII she was refitted and armed as an escort vessel. In 1941 *Morseby* was reconverted as a survey vessel. In December 1941 she was rearmed and commissioned once again as an anti-submarine escort vessel. Late in 1943 *Morseby* was again commissioned as a survey vessel. On 11 September 1945 at Timor, documents of Japanese surrender of that area were signed aboard *Morseby*. She paid off for the last time in Sydney on 18 January 1946 and sold for scrap on 3 February 1947.

**In the 1920's a New Construction Programme was commenced.** This will be taken up in the next issue.

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## **IMPORTANT NOTICES**

**The next General Meeting will be held at 1930 on Tuesday 04 August 2009, at EASTLAKE FOOTBALL CLUB, 3 Oxley St, GRIFFITH.**

The remainder of the meetings for 2009 and The Annual Dinner on Saturday 22 AUGUST 2009 will also be held at EASTLAKE FC

## **CONTACTS**

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**MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING OF HMAS SYDNEY, ESCORTS &  
VIETNAM LOGISTIC SUPPORT VETERANS' ASSOCIATION  
02 June 2009**

1. **The President** opened the April 2009 General Meeting at 1934. 24 members were in attendance, with 13 apologies.
2. **Attendance:** Jim Quick, Ken Cartwright, Graeme Bee, John Curbishley, Garry Pearson, Mike Harrison, Alex McGown, Brian Johnson, Lew Horsfield, Hugh Petty, Peter Burn, Peter Davey, Ken Doolan, Graeme Quinn, Colin Fitzgerald, Sam Hughes, Geoff Hardwick, Peter Kalkman, Peter Cooke-Russell, Guy Wall, Tiger Lyons, Dave Semmens, Phil Roberts, Red Lipscombe.
3. **Apologies:** Ian Spaulding, Fred Curbishley, JJ Harrison, Lofty Greig, Ron Jemesen, Bob Simms, Doug Moore, Mike Hardwick, Mike Baranovsky, Lance Foxon, Robert Ward, Doug Collins, Chas Petersen.
4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**  
Not read but accepted.  
Proposed Peter Kalkman. Seconded Graeme Quinn. Carried.

**Business Arising from the Previous Minutes:**

There was no business arising from the previous minutes.

5. **President's Report:** As contained in the June 2009 edition of the *Vung Tau Express*. Jim spoke about meeting venues, the new Hellenic Club in the City would not be open until around mid-August and there were rumours that the Canberra Club would perhaps close for refurbishment in the near future. Jim indicated he would speak further in General Business about the meeting venue for the remainder of 2009.
6. **Treasurer's Report:** The President presented the Treasurer's report which shows a bottom line of \$1816.74.  
Acceptance proposed Ken Doolan. Seconded Peter Cooke-Russell. Carried.
7. **Correspondence:**  
The Secretary outlined correspondence in and out from April to June 2009 - as per the attached correspondence list.

There was general discussion about a letter from Jeremy Hanson, the ACT Shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs in which he introduced himself and asked for input from local ESO's. It was suggested we raise the issue of travel passes for ACT veterans in line with the NSW scheme. It was also

proposed that we invite Jeremy to a future General Meeting where he could outline any proposals he has to support local ESO's.

Another issue raised during tabling of correspondence was the support of the ACT Kindred Organisations Committee. Peter Cooke-Russell gave a brief summary of the ACT KOC meeting he attended on 26 May which discussed a VVF proposal to set up a Joint ESO Committee to replace the ACT KOC. The VVF meeting was called on the premise that the ACT KOC had been disbanded. Pat McCabe (Chair of the ACT KOC) tabled a paper that refuted the demise of the KOC and asked for more support from local ESO's. In short, the system was already in place and open to all. A vote was taken (and carried) for us to affiliate with the ACT KOC. Our representative will be Alex McGown. The next ACT KOC meeting will be in July, Alex will give a report to the August GM on any issues raised by the KOC.

## 8. **General Business:**

**Future Meeting Venue:** Jim advised that because of the uncertainty with venues in the city, he had tentatively pencilled in Eastlake Football Club (the venue for our Annual Dinner on 22<sup>nd</sup> August) as the meeting venue for the remainder of the year. This was opened for general discussion, with the Manuka Services Club also suggested as a likely venue. After the matter had been discussed it was proposed Jim Quick seconded John Curbishley that the Eastlake Football Club be the meeting venue for the remainder of the year. Carried.

Jim also mentioned our Annual Dinner to be held as listed above. The function room at the EFC is a great venue that should suit our needs, particularly by providing the facilities for the electronic display to be given by our guest speaker, John Perryman. John is the Senior Naval Historical Officer at the Sea Power Centre and was onboard the SV Geosounder during the discovery of the wreck of HMAS SYDNEY II in March 2008. The Annual Dinner will (as always) be a great night and Jim urged members and their guests to support this very important function. Due to increased costs and change of venue, the cost per head this year would be \$50.00.

There being no other general business listed, Jim invited members to add their contribution:

- ✓ Peter Kalkman advised that Sharkey Ward was still undergoing chemotherapy but was progressing well.
- ✓ Guy Wall advised that this would be his last meeting as he was retiring and heading for Bribie Island. Anyone visiting this area in future could find Guy via the Bribie Island RSL.
- ✓ Ken Doolan advised that the Jackstaff from HMAS BRISBANE (DDG) was 'on loan' to him and would shortly be proudly displayed at Ken's property. Ken intends to invite NAA and VSLVA members to a ceremonial gathering to dedicate the Jackstaff sometime towards the end of the year. Ken also

advised that he was working on a new book - Steel Cat - the story of HMAS BRISBANE.

The other exciting announcement from Ken was that it appears he will be elected as the National President of the RSL (replacing MAJGEN Bill Crews AO (Retd)). This announcement was met with congratulations from members present and a hearty round of applause. BZ Ken.

- ✓ Peter Cooke-Russell briefly mentioned the work being done behind the scenes to keep the DFRB/DFRDB indexation issue alive with the Commonwealth Government. It may be that the Government is biding its time on the issue until more favourable economic circumstances prevail.
- ✓ Peter Burn mentioned the HMAS DUCHESS reunion he had recently attended in Hobart - a great reunion with excellent facilities at the casino. Unfortunately, Kel Duncan couldn't make it this time. Peter also mentioned his ongoing battles with DVA and the review of the MRCA system.
- ✓ Garry Pearson mentioned the DVA Homefront scheme that assesses your home for safety problems and provide assistance with the fitting of handrails and other items.

9. Raffle: Both prizes drawn by Guy Wall.

1<sup>st</sup> Prize (\$40 Gift Voucher) won by Lew Horsfield.

2<sup>ND</sup> Prize (Bottle of Shiraz) won by Mike Harrison

10. There being no further business the President apologised for the unusual length of the meeting but there had been a lot to discuss. He thanked members for their support and closed the June 2009 General Meeting at 2045.

**The next General Meeting will be held at Eastlake Football Club on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2009 at 1930.**