

President's Report – September – November 2016

Shipp Division Presentation: On 21 September - after consultation with both the Commanding Officer of Recruit School, Cdr Luke Ryan, and the Divisional Officer of Shipp Division, Lt. Jeff Thornton - two members of the VVAA Education Team and three members of this Association gave a presentation to Shipp Division at the tail-end of week four of their training. This activity was to give the new recruits a bit of a gee-up. It was also to give them an idea of what RAN service was like 50 odd years ago, and how the values and traditions of our service have remained with us to this day.

Included in this presentation was the handover of the *Navy in Vietnam Banner* which led the 2016 ANZAC Day parade. This handover was to give the new recruits a sense of tradition, by relating the ships, units and numbers of RAN personnel who took part in the Vietnam War. This Association will retain custody of the Banner when Shipp Division passes out, and present it again for the incoming intake of Shipp Division, thereby preserving the tradition of naval solidarity.

Captain Bowater's Luncheon: While I'm sometimes unable to attend in person, I always attempt to assist our Hon. Secretary's social events in whatever way I can. To this end, I produced one of my solid pine boxes - based on the Naval Shipwrights toolbox, that all Naval Shipwrights of my era had to make as part of their training - to be raffled on the day. Rumour has it that when Mrs May won the box, Mrs Bowater offered to take it off her hands. However, on 24 October, in recognition of the cooperation afforded this Association by Captain Bowater, in his capacity as CO *Cerberus*, our Hon. Secretary and I presented him with an identical box.

Frederick Ian McLeod-Dryden: On Sunday 6 November, I received a phone call from Fred's son Douglas to inform me that Fred had passed away. The circumstances of his passing are of no consequence here, suffice to say he appears to have passed away peacefully. It goes without saying that Fred will be missed. His efforts on behalf of almost 11,000 of his shipmates - and many others - will always remain as a silent tribute to the man himself. While many clamour for fame and recognition, Fred was just the opposite, a quiet achiever, who saw that an injustice had been perpetrated upon those who served, and then did something constructive about it. Rest in Peace old shipmate.

Shipp Division Passing-Out: On Thursday 10 November, 79 members of Shipp Division made their final parade as Recruits during a Ceremonial Sunset Graduation, an event which should live in their collective memories for the rest of their time in the service - and probably beyond. As invited guests, members of the Association and members of the VVAA Ed Team were present to witness this



occasion. Both Gary Taylor and I were given the honour of presenting awards for Academic Excellence and for Leadership Potential. The complete list of recipients and photographs of the events are included.



Academic Excellence: Recruit Bosuns Mate, **Jessica Whelan**.

Leadership Potential: Recruit Bosuns Mate, **Joseph Canning**.

Sports Person of the Intake: Recruit Marine Technician, **Mitchell Parker**.

Top Shot: HMAS Warramunga Assoc. Recruit Marine Technician, **Luke Byron**.

WO Navy Excellence Award: Recruit Bosuns Mate, **Jessica Whelan**.

Recruit of the Intake: Recruit Maritime Logistics **Lafu Sofele**.

In a letter from the CO of Recruit School, dated 15 November, Cdr Luke Ryan writes, in part: *The presence of the members of the HMAS Sydney and VLSV Assoc. demonstrates to the graduating recruits that they are joining a distinguished (Senior) Service with a proud history. I also appreciate Gary Taylor presenting the Leadership Potential award and you accepting the invitation to present the Certificate for Academic Excellence award.*

Thank you again for your continued support of Shipp Division.

We hope to see you again in the new year.

Yours Aye,

L R Ryan

Sydney-Emden Mess Dinner: On 11 November, the Wardroom Mess at HMAS *Cerberus* played host for the annual *Sydney-Emden* dinner. The guest speaker for this event was our very own Rear Admiral John Lord AM RAN (Rtd), who gave an interesting and topical talk on his experiences and related these to the occasion. It is not commonly known that John served in four ships during the Vietnam War, HMA Ships *Anzac*, *Derwent*, *Sydney* and *Brisbane*. (he had to be reminded about *Derwent*!). A very enjoyable evening.

Frederick Ian McLeod-Dryden: On a warm sunny Wednesday afternoon, on 16 November at 1400, Frederick Ian McLeod-Dryden was laid to rest at his funeral service held at the Police Academy Chapel, Glen Waverley. Over 200 people made the effort to pay their respects and bid farewell to our old shipmate. Several members of the congregation remarked on the numbers present. This would have been of no surprise to those that knew and respected Fred. His legacy we proudly wear each time we wear our medals. May his memory linger on fondly, in the minds of all who knew him. He will be missed.

Sydney-Kormoran Service: On 19 November at 1200, the Association held its annual service at the Shrine of Remembrance for the 75th anniversary of this action. This was a sombre occasion for the few who attended. Of those few in attendance was one of our younger members, Laura Benney, who had made her annual journey all the way from Ballarat to participate. It's a pity a few more had not made a similar effort.

Amongst those attending, was a group of Royal Navy and Royal Marines who were in Australia competing in a boxing competition. None of them realised that HMAS *Cerberus* existed and that there was a large naval presence in Victoria. Someone in Defence P R needs to be chastised I feel.

As the festive season draws ever nearer, might I take the opportunity to wish all a very safe, happy and enjoyable Christmas, and a very prosperous New Year.

Regards to all

Dr John Carroll

20 November 2016