

President's Report - September- November 2017

Alex Lloyd 'Life on the Line' Podcasts. On the weekend of Friday/Saturday 15/16 September, eight Association members were interviewed at the Navy Club for the podcast series *Life on the Line*. Members may view some of Alex's work, which includes in-depth interviews with Guy Griffiths and Andrew Robertson, who were senior naval officers of the Vietnam era.

As podcasts, they are not filmed, but recorded as verbal recollections, with several photographs included to add interest. To the best of my knowledge and belief, none of the interviews - carried out on the weekend mentioned above - have been reproduced for wider dissemination.

Committee Meetings: As a sign of the times, the committee meeting scheduled for 19 September had to be cancelled, due mainly to illnesses all round. In similar fashion, the alternative date of 26 September was also cancelled. While not of major concern to those who may read these few words, it is a sign for future consideration by those who only sit and wait. A willing volunteer is worth ten pressed men, or so the parable goes. Constructive membership involvement is always welcome.

VVAA Museum - Phillip Island: In late September, I was approached by Marian Brennan, a representative of the Museum, and asked to give some advice in setting up an HMAS *Sydney* and RAN-Vietnam display. I can report that, while small in comparison to the vast bulk of the other services displays, the RAN display is representative of the times. There is only so much one can do with what little memorabilia still exists, and in some instances, is displayed elsewhere.

Shipp Division: On 12 October members of the Association, and members of the VVAA



Members witnessing Shipp Division Graduation. One or two may be readily recognised including self and Haydn (Slim) Whitfield.

Education Team, were invited to the Passing Out Parade and Graduation of Shipp Division. This event included a Ceremonial Sunset, with Deputy Chief of Navy, Rear Admiral Mike Noonan AM, presiding as the Reviewing Officer. Representing this association, I was asked by the CO of Recruit School, Cdr Luke Ryan, to make the presentation to the Recruit who had attained Academic Excellence. I can also report that Shipp Division is a credit to the Navy and to themselves. BZ Shipp Division.

The following were recipients of prizes on the night.

Top Shot: Recruit ET Ayden Paterson.

Leadership Potential: Recruit CSO Hayleigh Reid

Sportsperson of the Intake: Recruit ATA
Gene Johns

WO (N) Excellence Award: Recruit ET
Zach Woodruff

Recruit of the Intake: Recruit BM
Alexander Mercer

Academic Excellence: Recruit MT Timothy
Balzer



Presenting the prize for academic excellence to Rct MT Tim Balzer.

Sydney-Emden Commemorative Dinner: On Friday, the 10th of November, the *Sydney-Emden* dinner commemorating this action some 103 years ago, was held in the Warrant Officers and Senior Sailors mess, HMAS Cerberus. Guest speaker for the occasion was none other than John Hasker, an Associate Member in good standing of our Association. John is the son of Surgeon Commander John Reid Hasker, who was serving in HMAS *Sydney 2* when that ship was lost in action with the armed merchant cruiser, HSK *Kormoran*. John was just two years old when this action took place. He is always on the lookout for photographs of his father, especially those which may have been taken of him in uniform. Members may be able to help John in his quest.

Shrine of Remembrance - Fred McLeod-Dryden's Bequest: On Wednesday 15th of November, I attended the Shrine - as the representative of our Association - and met up with the McLeod-Dryden family to present a cheque for a further \$2,800 to the CEO, Mr Dean Lee. Members may or may not remember that, on the day of Fred's funeral there was \$2,200 collected on Fred's behalf.

Fred had requested in his will that any donations made in his name, be then paid to the Shrine to assist them with their education programs. In the intervening time, Fred's family have donated a further \$1450, and the Association has added a further \$1350, to make up the \$5000 needed for Fred to be acknowledged, and therefore recognised as a Donor to the Shrine. Mr Lee has assured both the family and I that, following the Shrine's AGM, approval will be given for Fred to be acknowledged as a Donor, and, consequently, his name will be appended to the Donor Board.



The McLeod-Dryden family from L to R: Ayla, Shelly, Jessica, Scott holding Jack, Ray, Self, and Shrine CEO Dean Lee.

His name will also appear as a Donor in the Minutes of the Shrine's Annual Report. A fitting tribute to one who did so much for so many.

Chaplain's Guidance -1st RANBT service 2018: On 18th November, both the Hon. Secretary, David Dwyer, and I met up with our Chaplain, Dennis McMillin, to formulate

an Order of Service for the commemoration and unveiling of the **1st Royal Australian Bridging Train** Plaque at the Shrine of Remembrance. The service will be held at 1000 on Saturday 24th of February 2018, at the site of the **1st RANBT** tree.

This service will be attended by the CO of HMAS *Cerberus* - representing the RAN - and a small section of the RAN Band (Victoria). Members are encouraged to attend this very important occasion. Further information will be circulated closer to the day.

HMAS Sydney 2 Commemoration Service: On Sunday 19th November, I again attended the Shrine of Remembrance for the Commemoration service, with reference to the loss of HMAS *Sydney 2*, and all who sailed in her. This was the 76th anniversary of this tragic event, and member numbers were down compared to previous years. If this service is to continue will be an item for the committee to give some consideration as to its future viability.

As usual, member Laura Benney gave a stirring rendition of Mrs Margaret Ellen Wade's poem, *A Tribute to HMAS Sydney*. For the information of members, Laura and her family had travelled all the way from Ballarat to enable her to deliver this recital.

Classification of Recruits: With reference to the classifications of the current crop of Recruits, the following interpretation may assist members in relating what these are now and what they were in our time. ET = Electronic Technician; CSO = Combat Systems Operator; ATA = Aircraft Technician Avionics; BM = Bosun's Mate; MT = Marine Technician. I hope this information proves helpful.

Last Graduation for 2017: On the evening of Thursday 07th December, Emms Division will be graduating from Recruit School, HMAS *Cerberus*. This will be the last of these occasions presided over by Cdr Luke Ryan RAN, who has been appointed Commanding Officer of HMAS *Warramunga*. Members who wish to attend, please contact either myself or the Hon. Secretary with your details, and that of your mode of transport. A very worthwhile event.

In closing, I wish members and their families all the very best for the forthcoming festive season. Be safe, and hopefully, I will make further contact with relevant and interesting information early in the New Year.

Kind Regards;

Dr John Carroll.

22 November 2017