

## President's Report – 1/2018

**Commander Luke Ryan RAN.** To those who have attended Shipp Division Passing out Parades over the past two or three years, and/or have assisted with presentations to Shipp Division, will know Commander Ryan as a quiet achiever, who has presided over Recruit School in a way which will only be of great benefit to the Service. Now that his tenure of the School has ended, it can be assumed with some certainty that he has gone on to do what all RAN seaman officers aspire to, and that is the command of one of HMA Ships. We wish him all the very best for the future.

**Shipp Division Presentation 7 Feb 2018** We were brought up on the tune, 'You'll be wet homesick and frightened, but the pride of the fleet will be you' Nothing was said about 'hot, sticky and uncomfortable' but there you have it. On the evening of the presentation it was just that. Then add 140+ new members of the RAN into Club Sobroan, and it was not a very conducive place to be to give a presentation to such a large group. However, we did it, much to my surprise. There were plenty of questions and queries which is a sure sign of general interest. No one fainted or asked to be excused. The only downside was the lack of former Navy people, which left me to quietly spin as many 'dits' as I could without being picked up by anyone. Better luck next time. An occasion not to be missed if you feel that you can make a difference to the up and coming naval generation by telling them about your service - during the Vietnam era.

**1<sup>st</sup> RANBT, 24 February 2018.** To those who have kept a weather eye on this issue, it has finally happened. A new Plaque has been installed at the Shrine of Remembrance, commemorating the service of the 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Australian Naval Bridging Train, at their respective tree. Whether by design or intent, the new Plaque, I am informed - after the event I might add - is deep in Army territory, as designated by the Shrine authorities. It did not seem to faze the Shrine Governor assigned to this occasion one bit, in fact he thought it quite fitting, and suggested getting rid of the incorrect plaque to prevent confusion.

Captain Standen, CSC, RAN, CO of HMAS *Cerberus*, and at the time Senior Naval Officer- Victoria, and Cdr John Goss AM, RANR, represented the RAN on this occasion. The RANBT Banner was also provided, and thanks must go to Cdr Goss for attending to this very important aspect of the ceremony. Thanks must also be extended to David Dwyer and his ever present assistant, Ron Bowkett, in providing and setting up facilities for a most welcome morning tea.

This occasion also had a sprinkling of our members present. Foremost amongst these was former CPO (ME) Peter Foote from Geelong, who is the grandson of

AB Driver Peter Jacobs, MID, RANBT. Mary-Ann Gourley, grand-daughter of the Commanding Officer of the RANBT, Lt Cdr Leighton Bracegirdle RAN, also graced us with her presence, as did Bill McDonagh, grandson of AB Driver John Henry Palmer, RANBT. The placement of this Plaque goes some way towards affording the 1<sup>st</sup> RANBT proper recognition of their service as a Royal Australian Naval Unit, and the most highly decorated RAN Unit of the First World War.

**Commander Andrew Hough RAN.** The new CO of Recruit School is the former XO of HMAS Melbourne. Cdr Hough has witnessed the above presentation to Shipp Division and came away suitably impressed with the depth and breadth of what we had to offer the new Recruits.

**Shipp Division Graduation.** This is being held on the 29 March 2018. I would suggest that numbers may be limited, as the division consists of 140+ members, and seating might be scarce due to an unknown number of family, friends, and relatives attending.

Having said that, those members wishing to attend would need to let either myself or David Dwyer know in plenty of time, say at least one week before, with your personal details and the type and registration number of your vehicle. This event is due to commence 0950 so you would need to be in place and seated by 0945. Light refreshments are available upon completion of the Graduation.

**HMAS Sydney 5.** As members would no doubt appreciate, the name *Sydney* will be carried on in continuing perpetuity in the shape of the brand-new Air Warfare Destroyer (AWD) nearing completion in South Australia. This vessel is being launched on Saturday, 19 May 2018. This Association has been fortunate by being invited to attend, but only ten members may participate in this historical occasion. Further information regarding this event will be circulated when known.

Kind regards to all,

Dr John Carroll

14 March 2018