

Addendum to Report to Members 3-2020

Apologies to all. In my most recent missive to you the members, I was rather remiss in not mentioning the following. To make amends please continue reading

Petition to the House: On reflection, and as a way of emphasising the fact that we, the HMAS Sydney Assoc. (Inc. Vic.), still have the potential, with just over 300 active members, to increase the numbers of responses to the Petition to the House a lot further.

If we had continued with the longhand, pen/paper version which had 28 places for signatures on the Response Sheet, we had the potential with 300 plus members at 28 signatures per member of obtaining 8,400 signatures.

Yes, this would have involved a little effort by each of us to take the time to obtain these numbers, and yes, some of us managed to do just that, and then some. See the enclosed listing for those who have contributed thus far.

We now live in strange and decidedly dangerous times when social distancing, and adhering to rather restrictive rules, and Government directions, makes social interaction almost impossible. However, thanks to Steve Mika and his grand-daughter, there is a viable and easy to manage alternative.

This alternative appears on the Home Page of the HMAS Sydney Association's website and is readily accessible to all our members, and their immediate family, their close circle of friends and any of their other acquaintances. As a reminder, the URL for you to respond will be found at the following:

<https://www.gopetition.com/petitions/agent-orange-exposure.html>

If those amongst our membership, and others, who have yet to respond to this genuine call for assistance, you might like to turn this URL up on your computer or similar device, and see the numbers of signatures, and some of the comments, which directly relate to the main objectives and stated outcomes of this Petition. Some are quite revealing, and in some instances quite confronting. Members may also note that it is not just former members of the RAN who have responded, but where they have, it's not just sailors who have signed.

Request for Assistance from the HMAS *Hood* Association: In mid-August our Webmaster, Laurie Pegler, received an email from Rob White of the HMS *Hood* Association in the UK, asking whether or not we would be prepared to support a Nomination for an Award to David Mearns administered in the UK under the Imperial System. After a bit of to-and-fro with our Hon. Secretary, David Dwyer, the following was sent in response. (David Mearns was involved

in finding HMAS Sydney II, and was recognised with an Hon. Australian OAM).

My written response to this request reads thus:

Good afternoon Rob,

With reference to your recent email regarding the nomination of David L Mearns for an honour/Award via the Imperial System, I write to you on behalf of the HMAS *Sydney* Assoc. (Inc. Vic).

As President of the Association, it would not be right or proper for me to write anything which would support your nomination, as I for one do not know David Mearns personally. One of the first requirements here in Australia for Honours and Awards is one must know the Nominee personally.

I am aware of his contribution to the quest to find HMAS *Sydney* II, and I know of several widows, descendants, former shipmates and others who are eternally grateful that they now know where their loved ones lie.

To assist you further in your quest I am suggesting you make contact with former Commodore Bob Trotter OAM, RAN (Rtd) at btrotter@bigpond.net.au and Mr D John Perryman CSC, at Duncan.perryman@defence.gov.au .

Both these gentlemen were fully involved with David Mearns before, during and after the discovery of HMAS *Sydney* II, and would be in a far better position to assist you than would I.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, Bob is still involved with the organisation which funded and help carry out the search, and John was nominated as the Royal Australian Navy's representative during the search. John retains a position within Defence, and is fully involved at the RAN's Sea Power Center, Canberra, Australia.

Both gentlemen are very approachable and very cognisant of doing things correctly. I don't think you will be disappointed with my choices.

I remain yours sincerely,

Dr John Carroll.

This email was cc'd to Bob Trotter and John Perryman and was received with thanks, and assurance of their cooperation with this nomination. Bob has also sent an informative paper which should appear in future editions of the GFL regarding the background and eventual discovery of HMAS *Sydney* II.

Rob Edgell VVAA Ed. Team, 63	Jen Schulz, (Yass), 5
Garon Ockwell, 13	Tas Browning, (Tas) 12
Diane Eggins (Tas), 5 (Widow).	Joe Ferrari, 15
Bob Hill, 6	Brian Hite, 23
Care of David Dwyer, 64	Noel Lelievre, 90
NAofA (Vic), 15	Colin McKenzie, 30
B Richie, 1	Noble Park RSL, 28
J Rees, 9	Trevor Coleman, 3
H Ristrom, 1	Mandurah NAofA (WA), 7
David Dwyer, 28	Trevor Coleman, 3
Paul White, (Qld) 22	Chris Thompson, P I RSL, 27
Murray Marsh, 28	Gary Taylor, 22
Alan Lees (SA), 28	Mitzi Mann, 1
R Markiewicz, 30	C Graham-Measor, 1
Keith Taylor, FAA Assoc. 14	Rob Canning, 1
Russell Williams, Ulladulla RSL. 55	John Douglas, 1
Noel Mclean, Bayswater RSL, 45	Bill Swanwick, 1
Haydn (Slim) Whitfield, 84	Kevin Cottam, 1
Willie Beattie, 45	Les DeBonde, 1
Stan Park, 1	A A Farrugia, 1
J Meldrum, 15	Ron Francis, (SA) 1
Vic Boreham, (WA) 56	Ralph Anesbury, 1
John Ferguson, 10	Michael Berry, 28
Martin O'Shannessy, 3	George Azel, 1
John Camilleri, 1	Pat Mitchell, 1
J Legg, 30	Bruce Eddes, 1
Gordon Townley, 28	Total: 1006