



Edition No 42 - March 1st 2013

We heard



Jeff Wake suffered a heart attack 28th January, however he has now recovered and back at home. A stent was put in an artery near his heart. The blockage was in the order of 98% so he is very lucky. He was reading the Sunday

Times when it all happened.

Alison McCarthy - I am looking for Lisa Nicholls. I did some reserve time with her at HMAS CRESWELL around the year 2000. If you have information on Lisa please email us.

Cindy Gallahar advises the next **WRANS/RAN Servicewomen Reunion is in Hobart 28-30 March 2014**. Expression of Interest can be downloaded from www.wransvic.org.au or queries can be addressed to wrans.reunion2014@yahoo.com.au



Lest we Forget **Keith Harris-Walker**

7th February 2013. Served 1964-68
Passed away in West Australia after a battle with cancer.



Keith was a Life Member of Touch Football Western Australia who had had a long involvement in the sport over many years. His achievements include representing Australia at a number of international events as well as being an assistant coach at an Australian Men's Open level in the 1990's. In recent times Keith had been a coach for South Africa in the 2003 and 2007 World Cups

Cerberus Museum - Feb 2013

4 Legends of the Writer Branch in the Pay Office at the Museum.

All serving WOWTR'S.

l-r Jo Jordan, Jim Hart, Marty Grogan and Jeannie Roberts

NAVY BEREAVEMENT PIN



The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) has commissioned a Bereavement Pin to recognize the valued contribution of all Navy personnel who lost their lives while in the service of the RAN, and the nation.

The Navy Bereavement Pin (NBP) is a distinctive 20mm gold lapel pin which has the crest of the Royal Australian Navy encompassed by wreath 'supporters'.



The NBP has been developed to meet an expressed wish by many families, who have lost a close family member while they served in the Navy, to have a tangible yet discrete memento of the service of their loved one. The NBP is a symbol that can assist family members to commemorate the life and service of a relative who was lost while serving in the Navy.

To date, over two thousand NBP have been provided to descendants and family members of Navy personnel. Of note, Navy Bereavement Pins have been issued to family members of some of the earliest RAN wartime casualties which occurred during World War One, as well as to the families of Navy personnel who have died in service more recently.

It is the Chief of Navy's wish that, by prominently wearing the NBP, or having it as a special keepsake, the Pin will assist relative to remember proudly a family member who lost their life while serving in the RAN.

Eligibility

Criteria for a family member to receive the NBP are:

- a) the passing of the Sailor or Officer occurred while they were a member of the Royal Australian Navy,
- b) the applicant, and any other persons included in the nomination, is/are related to that Sailor or Officer.

All family members of Royal Australian Navy personnel who died while serving in the Navy, since Federation, during war or peace, on active service, or even off-duty, are eligible to receive the NBP. Eligibility extends beyond immediate family and may include members of an extended family.

Nominations

If you are related to a person who passed away while serving in the RAN and wish to apply for the Navy Bereavement Pin, the application form and other information is included on the Royal Australian Navy website at:

<http://www.navy.gov.au/about/our-people/navy-bereavement-pin>

Please allow up to five to six weeks for your nomination to be processed. Your NBP will be mailed to you. Relatives without internet access should call the Navy Bereavement Pin Information Line, (02) 6265 3383, for an application form.

Marcus Bowra - Biography



In 1973 I joined the RAN from Bundaberg, QLD. At 15 years, 9 months, I was sworn in at the recruiting office in Brisbane, then by transported by rail to Sydney and across to Perth WA on the Indian Pacific and joined the 42nd intake at HMAS LEEUWIN as a Junior Recruit in Morrow Division.

Following a year of Naval oriented schooling and route marching I undertook Initial Writer Category Course at Cerberus (Writer 2/74 25Mar74-21Jun74) I had a huge crush on Shirley Makin and narrowly missed Marion Twisse with a stapler (sorry Marion). Nevertheless, I was promoted to SMN WTR on 21 Jun1974.

By July 1974 I was at HMAS ALBATROSS in the Registry. Six months later, in early December 1974, I was posted to the fleet oiler HMAS SUPPLY starting off my sea life as a tough tenacious tankerman. Mid-way through December I went on leave back to Bundy. I was only there for a few days when a burly policeman knocked on the door bearing a travel warrant and telling me I had to return to my ship in Sydney. I returned to find the SUPPLY in the middle of storing ship. We stored ship day and night for another few days and then sailed in company with HMAS MELBOURNE (flat top) for Darwin to provide assistance in the aftermath of Cyclone Tracy.



There were no wharves available in Darwin so, each day, we went in teams by workboat from the SUPPLY to the MELBOURNE and then went by HELO to the Darwin sports oval where we then were given areas to clean. Extremely hard work and heartbreaking. I saw Christmas trees and tinsel caught up within the rubble of houses and I saw where straw from a straw

broom had penetrated into the woodwork surrounding a doorway. In August 1975, I was posted to HMAS MELBOURNE (the first time) working the Captains mail and updating manuals. (I could never understand why page 274 was "Intentionally Blank"). I was only there for a month before being promoted to ABWTR (September 1975) and being posted to what was then called FOCEA (Flag officer Commanding East Australian Area)

This meant working on the 22nd floor of the Remington building in Sydney for the Command Technical Officer. It was there that I met CPOWTR Peter Charlton and immediately developed a lot of respect for someone who knew just about everything about the RAN.

I was promoted to LSWTR (the first time) in July 1978. I then worked at the Fleet Supply Unit for 6 months before being posted to KUTTABUL Pay Office in March 1979. I remained at KUTTABUL pay for only a month before being crash posted to HMAS SWAN (left) (April 79) as the LWTR in Accounts.



I thought I worked well on the Fluffy Duck however I had a personality clash with the CPOWTR. The rest of the WTR Crew were great, Jack Onaca, "Tax" Mattocks (?), and a pommy guy whose name escapes me for the moment. (Left Killick WTR Bowra and SEA-



CAT launcher.) We had some interesting times on the SWAN. Once, when coming into Manus, the CO fired a depth charge and exploded it fairly close to the surface. Lots of fish were brought to the surface by the use of this “expanding bait”. Many small boats then came out to meet us and salvaged all the fish. We were treated like royalty after we docked. I passed out for Petty officer on the SWAN but always seemed to butt heads with CPOWTR Atkinson. At the time, I thought he was a weird man obsessed with medals and ingrown toenails. I am much more mellow these days and even had a beer at Rockers with him some years later. Nevertheless, I was reverted to ABWTR and was the only ABWTR passed out for PO that I knew of.

For my sins I was posted back to the MELBOURNE in Feb 1980. Turned out better than expected. CPOWTR Charlton was now on board as a WO, and I made great friends with the Scribe staff including WTR Speight. (I was to have a long association with Dave as we seemed to follow each other’s steps through the RAN). We took on the CAG (Carrier Air Group) writers who were full of knowledge about mysterious birdie allowances and refunding of life insurance policies and slipped from Sydney to pick up aircraft off Nowra. I was amazed to see Tracker aircraft and Skyhawks landing on the deck and being packed away in their hangers as we set off for RIMPAC 80.

RIMPAC 80 turned out to be a great run. I was only in trouble once and that was due to my shirt being found on the flight deck. It was normal practice to climb from the S&S Mess at 4 November Starboard Outer up through the centrecastle and emerge on the “goofers” deck (where people who were not on watch would sometimes be found goofing off) to view the events below on the flight deck. This particular day I left my eight’s shirt on the goofers deck which somehow blew over the edge and landed on the flight deck. I was then at the mercy of WO Tim Collins, the most feared WO COXN in seven navies. My ears were ringing for days afterward. I was working in the Ship’s Office with signals, files and correspondence and rotated through the pay office. These were the heady days of cash, and just before deployment on RIMPAC 80 the armoured vehicles would arrive and we would have to count out around \$1 Million.

I was promoted to LSWTR (the second time) in May 1981. This was followed by a posting back to ALBATROSS as the LSWTR in charge of pay. I remember doing all of the discharges. They were sometimes tricky and took the longest. Heaps of writers at the ‘tross and a pretty good “wets”. Dave McIver, Maggie Varga, Shakey Bennett, Spider Tattnell et al.

In Jan 1982, I was posted to HMAS HARMAN. For a few months I was at HARMAN managing the registry with ABWTR Tindale-Biscoe (Tin-o-biscuits). I was then sent to HARMAN (Navy Office) in Accounts. During my time at NOPO we were still required to keep duties at HARMAN. Doing rounds one night I inadvertently locked the XO inside the Admin building. As soon as he got up from his desk, the alarms went off and I led duty Watch to the Admin building to see the fuming expression on the XO’s face. After some



deliberation I unlocked the door and let him out. I was on Credential Guard duty for the next three months.

I stayed at NOPO in charge of Accounts until August 1986 when I was posted to HMAS PERTH as Capt. Sec./ Pers O. We did a few good overseas runs but the fun was over before too long. I was onboard the PERTH when the CO misjudged the approach to the wharf in Hobart. We were still doing around 6 knots when we hit the wharf and did a lot of damage to it, the ship and a vehicle which was parked on the wharf. I would have liked to have read that insurance claim. The next

day, people were selling “Wharf Buster” badges and tee-shirts.

In April 1987 the PERTH went into refit and I was posted to HMAS SYDNEY (FFG) as Capt Sec. After a few ‘show the flag” runs. We had to change course for Suva as Col. Rabuka had just staged a coup in Fiji. This was an interesting time as Col. Rabuka used the presence of HMAS SYDNEY to give credence to his coup by showing that he was supported by Aust. (obviously not the case). The expats had to be evacuated and it was a tense time all round. Flights to and from Fiji were cancelled and we waited for the TOBRUK to show up to ferry expats off Fiji. I was good mates with the PO SBA onboard as he had mixed up some araldite to put into a hole in my tooth so I could finally get some sleep. The CO sent him and me ashore to put down all of the pets as they could not return with their expat owners due to quarantine. A really hard day. After some time we decided to leave Fiji. All PO’s and above were issued with sidearms and the QMGs set up the .50 cal on the port side. We left without further incident.

I was promoted to SBLT SDSU in JUL 1988 and posted to CERBERUS to undertake the Supply Officer’s and Administration course. I was then posted back to Canberra to DNOP (Directorate of Naval Officers Postings). The director was CMDR Brian (Clockwork) Gorrange who was also an ex-WTR. I was promoted to LEUT SDSU in JUL 1990. After DNOP I was posted to the Australian Defence Force Academy to complete degree studies. I went to the General List (LEUT GLSU) in March 1992.



My last (ahem) sea posting was in June 1996 as the Deputy Supply Officer on board HMAS KANIMBLA. The KANIMBLA was moved (under tow) from Garden Island to the

FourJacks shipyard in Newcastle where it was to undergo extensive refitting.

In August 1996 I was posted to HMAS KUTTABUL - Headquarters Australian Theatre as Staff officer 3 Co-Ordination providing IT support for administration and communications.

I posted to shore, after completing 25 years full time service, in Jan 1998. Marcus Bowra now works as an IT Team Leader in the Department of Human Services, CBD, Brisbane.

