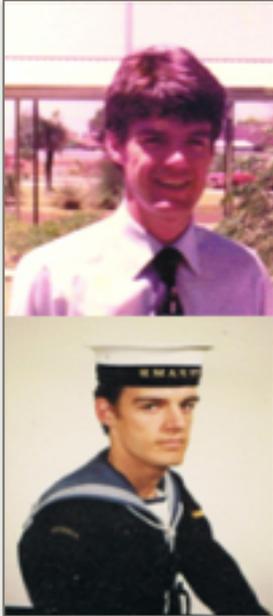


E NEWS

R O Y A L A U S T R A L I A N
N A V Y W R I T E R S
A S S O C I A T I O N

Looking for details about **LS Bruce Whitaker.**



Bruce sadly passed away in March 1999. His family are endeavouring to find out more information about Bruce's navy career. We are asking anybody that knew Bruce to send in any information/stories about him. It is believed Bruce started his career as an MTP then

transferred to Writer. He served in Stirling around 1979-81.

Reunion 2015 - Nowra

Don't forget to get your applications and monies in as soon as possible. All details can be downloaded from our web site at:

<http://www.ranwriters.com/reunion2015.html>

So think about registering and paying for your attendance now. You can register for the cost of \$20 per person and pay the rest later. Refundable if you cannot attend.

Trevor Sweeney writes about his service:

Joined 11 Jul 77 in the 60th intake at Leeuwin, Writer training in April 1979 with Dave Whelan as instructor on course with Andre Clay, Bruce Kelman and Simon Read. Went on to postings at Creswell, Jervis Bay, Leeuwin (LSWTR), Stuart, Leeuwin again, Cerberus, Harman (NOPO and Harman) POWTR, Stirling, Derwent (CPOWTR), NOCWA, UN in Cambodia, Joint Exercise Planning Staff/Commander Joint Forces Australia (the precursor to the current Joint Operations Command at Bungendore, DSP/DSCM (WOWTR), Australian Embassy Rome to open the DA Southern Europe office and then Recruiting in Melbourne prior to paying off in 1998.

Since then briefly worked with the City Of Melbourne as their Information Manager, prior to rejoining Defence as a Public Servant as the Regional Information Manager for Victoria and subsequently as the Base Manager for Cerberus. I continue to work for Defence now after 37 years.



Bomber (AL) Brown's biography:



I entered the RAN on 8th MAY 1965 from the little hamlet of Benalla in north east Victoria, ten days after my 17th birthday. I had previously tried to join through Leeuwin at the end of the '63 school year, but being academically unsound at that point, I was dispatched back to school by the recruiter for another 12 months to sharpen up on the 3 R's. Successful at the 2nd try, I

bussed it through the gates at Cerberus with around 120 other raw-bones to the cries of "you'll be sorry" coming from all those who had logged up a month already. Other notables on the bus that day were Kev Drinkwater and JJ Nash. John had some previous parade ground experience from the Pommy army I think, so he was a shoe-in as our class leader. He seemed to get us around the Depot without too many issues, considering we couldn't understand half the orders he barked at us in some foreign language.

Recruit training passed without too many incidents, however I won't ever forget my first shave. My one very insignificant whisker was spotted by Lt Wally Farquahar at parade one morning, and apparently wishing to make an example of my slackness, directed me to go to my cabin and return with my razor, soap, and my placky brew cup filled with warm water. He then told the assembled parade that I would be demonstrating the gentle art of shaving, without the aid of a mirror I had brought down. Needless to say I severed nearly every vein in my face. By the time he was happy I'd learned my lesson, the concrete at my feet resembled the floor of a cage fighting arena.

I'm sure I nearly bled out, but sure as hell I stood in front of the mirror every morning from then on to make sure I hadn't sprouted another bastard hair on my chin. On completion of Recruit training I was advised that contrary to my request to be any sort of Seaman category (I think we all wanted to be like our recruit school instructors, 3 badge dibbies), I was to be content with things as a communicator. I was promoted O/CO, and posted to the Melbourne.

It sailed for Brisbane and PNG on the Monday morning. I was allocated the forecastle as part of ship, and it was magic standing right at the nose during flying ops watching Gannetts and Sea Furys just about belly flop into the water in front of the ship before getting enough lift to fly. On our return to Sydney it seems Vampire, which was nearing the end of a refit, needed a stack of ords, so a number of us were posted from Melbourne to Vamps.

Only a week or so before completion of the refit, we headed out to carry out the burial at sea of Admiral Sir Hastings Harrington. His determination to remain afloat, even

after death, is well documented. I saw the coffin slip off the ship with at least 2 4.5 inch shells in canvas bags as extra weight, holes in the bottom to encourage water intake, and yet the coffin was ejected from the depths to which it had sunk with such force I thought it was coming back onboard.

Early in the New Year we headed off for a good long run up top - doing all the usual ports of call. Gary Brazier and John Arro were onboard. It was a great deployment, made more memorable by a collision in the river in Bangkok as we were leaving harbour. Vamps was being man-handled by the fast flowing river while a pommy cruiser left harbour ahead. All this manoeuvring resulted in a Danish freighter at anchor mid-stream getting in our way, so we T-boned it. The exchange between our

Forecastle officer Bill Hackworth, and some crewman hanging off the bridge-wing of the freighter was not to be missed. "Have you bastards finished?" yells the Dane after our bow smashed a big hole in their ship's side. "Not quite!" yells back Hackworth as Vampire's bow rakes along the side of the freighter and smashes a beautifully ornate ladder off their ship and sends it to the bottom of the river. I suppose if the threat of sinking hadn't been reasonably real it would have been bloody funnier.

(Photos Parramatta 1971 left from top: Wally Sweet, Nick Geyer and Bomber Brown; Sweet, Nick Geyer and Bomber Brown; Nick Geyer, Bomber Brown and Steve Ossie Osment, Ship's Party right Nick Geyer and next to him Bomber Brown; Hong Kong; and onboard getwellers time Bomber in the centre in white)

The following few years were pretty uneventful; Cerberus for comms training, followed by postings to Harman (NO), Cerberus and the EDP centre in GI. Fellow workers during this period were Drinky, Billy Burns, Scruff Williams, Eric Brenton, Don Carmichael, Denis McNamara, EG Wilson, and a stack of other good blokes. There was also a stint at Platypus during those years. I was accommodated at Penguin while at Plats, and recall with no pleasure the daily run to Plats and back on a bus full of Pommy submariners from HMS Trump, who were in desperate need of a



bloody good scrub. I was selected for the Scribe conversion course in mid '69 and posted on completion to the Ships Office at Kuttabul with Dave Jordan, Graeme Brookes, Rocky Stone and Ellen Saxby (Blayden).

In Jan '70 I was down the aisle with Gail, with many workmates in attendance, and after 44 years we still frequent the aisle, only now I push the shopping trolley. At the end of '70 I was posted to the Parramatta, which was near completion of refit in Willdock. It left for Sydney early in the New Year, we did some work-up trials and headed up top in Feb '71. Wally Sweet, Nick Geyer, a fresh faced Steven Osment and me. And it seems we had a chief. Ross 'if anyone needs me, I'm in the Mess' Tilney.



The deployment was a beauty. The only disappointment was 2 ports in Taiwan were bumped only a few days before we sailed. It seems some political unrest there caused some concern for our safety. On return to Sydney Wally, Nick and Ossie posted out, and were replaced by Ken Roberts and Bob McGrath.

I left Parramatta in May '72 and headed for a posting to Cerberus that would total 25% of my career, in one go! Early positions included the removals section with a newly promoted WO Tammy, personnel with Ocker, a crack at XO's scribe, and then to where I was most comfortable, the Pay Office. Every scribe in the depot at that time gathered at the Pay Office at lunch time, every day, with the hope of finding a spot on court in what in my opinion were the highest-level volleyball matches this side of the Olympic Games. So many were the players waiting to get on court, that a rotation system was introduced so everyone could get their share of play during lunch hour. Everyone played to win, and it was serious stuff. On court on a given day, Marty (best setter in the world) Grogan, Trevor Plymin, Lew Smith, Ken Roberts, John Halpin, Marty McFadden, Ocker, and a heap of talented players. And Wettex.

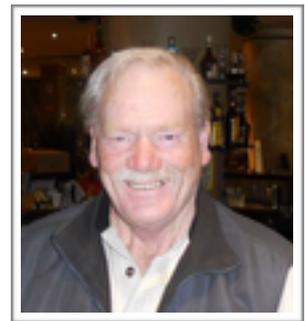
He was a real thinker on court, he could tip a ball over your head at the net and make you look silly. The downside, he had a smash like a powder puff, and was not responsible for **any** of the 45 windows we broke in the surrounding building over all those years. Promotion to PO followed, and I was moved to the Supply School as an instructor. 2 and a half years there, it was good fun working with Sid Nolan, Shiner, Lew Smith and others. I even had a bit to do with the early shaping of a few blokes' careers. Bruce the Beast, Mark Chee and Graham Campbell amongst them.

August '77 I joined Stalwart to replace Max Bronson. I had spent over 5 years straight at Cerberus, apart from 2 weeks advanced NBCD at Penguin, so I was glad to be moving. A little disappointed at the posting initially, but building 215 did 2 trips to Hobart for the Regatta, and 2 decent trips to Singapore and surrounds in '77 and '78. At the beginning of '79 I posted off Stalwart to take up my first ever posting as a scribe to Navy Office, as the PO in greenies postings alongside Terry Wigney. Among the Posting and Promotions Chiefs and POs were Lew Smith, Pete Sanders, Terry

McHarry, John Reading, the Kinnear Bros, Sharky, Mick Gleaves, Tiger, Sue Finch and a goodly number of hard working junior sailors and Wrans. I reckon Terry and I got most of the greenies where they wanted, but there was always that 1 Sydney native who would rather jump off the harbour bridge than fill that billet at Cerberus. That's life.

Early in '82, the Browns packed their possessions and headed to the USA to fill a position in the FFG shore support office in the US Naval Shipyard, Long Beach California, with Lcdr Bob Potts and Leut Kev Whiteway leading the way. Banjo Pattison, John Bevis and Peter O'Brien were the scribes. Banjo posted home and was replaced by John Arro, and Brose Palmer arrived around the same time. We relocated the office to Seattle around August '82, and set ourselves up in a new office complex in the middle of the suburb of Bellevue. Frank Shugg arrived and took over the reins and almost immediately introduced golf on Wednesday arvo, workload permitting. We had a solid turnout every week, with 10 of the staff becoming regular golfers I picked up my buttons in October '82, and despite being overborne, I lasted through to August '84 till DSP recalled me. With Brose and Shirley Makin picking up their second hooks, we were somewhat top heavy.

I took up my new posting as Chief of Greenies postings in August '84, worked through till the end of August '85 and called it a day. After a 6 month break I secured a job with the federal Attorney General's office, "D" Branch, working with them for 23 years till I retired at 60. Gail and I still live in Latham in Canberra, travelling away in our van when possible, and we have become big fans of ocean cruising in the last few years, having enjoyed 3 cruises so far, with 2 more up the spout. If anyone is coming through Canberra on holidays, we would be glad to have you swing by.



Ambrose Palmer visit to Australia.



Brose was recently in Australia from USA and he presented the Associations Dux award to Natalie Carey of the 2nd 2014 Initial ML-P class.

He also attend a number of dinners/drinks whilst he was here. Right John 'Olly' Twist, Max Bryant, Brose Palmer and Marty Grogan.





**Advanced ML-P (208385) –
Session 013 – 05-21 August
2014**

Rear (L-R) – PO Genevieve Richardson, LS Brendon Davies, PO Roger Isaaks, LS Susan Butler, PO Brett Ellis (Instructor) Front (L-R) –CPO Patricia Kelly (Manager), LS Lorna Brew, LS Heidi Gardner, PO Lynzey Downey



**ML-P (208385) – Session 015 –
26 May – 01 August 2014**

Rear (L-R) – CPO Patricia Kelly, SMN Natalie Initial Carey, SMN Erin Kelly, PO Brett Ellis (Instructor). Front (L-R) –SMN Lorraine Uluikavoro, SMN Claudia Hardie, AB Shona Compton, Kirsty Burbidge.

Top right the Associations President presents Brett Ellis Senior Instructor with an engraved pen for his work in assisting the Association.

Bottom right shows Lew presenting the Dux award to the Advanced course to Roger Isaaks.



37TH ANNUAL SYDNEY WRITERS' LUNCHEON**By Mark Mobley:**

Well, Spring is just about upon us once again and it's time to think Annual Luncheon. The 37th such event will be held in the Illusions Bar, 2nd floor City of Sydney RSL Club on George Street on Friday 3rd October, 2014 commencing at 1130. Partners are, as always, most welcome to attend.

We will host the Annual General Meeting of the Writers Association at this gathering. This takes only a few minutes and provides an opportunity for our Sydney-based scribes to be part of what is happening in our National organisation. The luncheon will commence on conclusion.

Inflation has raised its ugly head and costs have risen slightly so I have reluctantly raised the price this year to \$32.00 per head. This price will, as usual, include the meal, bread rolls, coffee, wine and orange juice when served at the luncheon table. The meals will, also as usual, be from a set menu served to alternate seats. The menu for this year is:

Mains: Dory Fillet, - *grilled with lemon butter sauce*

Alternate: Chicken Kiev – *chicken with fresh garlic and herb butter and a hint of vodka*

And for dessert: Vanilla Cheese Cake or Italian Gelato

Please advise me of your intention to attend by calling me on one of the numbers listed below at any time, drop me a line or send an email. Owing to the need to secure firm catering arrangements with the caterer, we need payment no later than 26th September. Cheques or Money Orders can be made payable to the 'Sydney Writers Luncheon' and sent to the address below or an electronic transfer can be made to our Australian Defence Credit Union account BSB 642 170 our Account number is 667972. If this "bounces" please use the alternative account number 100065517. Please don't forget to put your name in the comments box so that I know who it's from.

Hoping to see you in October

mark.mobley1@defence.gov.au

markmobley@isp.net.au

Mark MOBLEY

11 Peter Wilson Street,
GLENWOOD NSW 2768

PH: 02 9359 4505

MOB: 0407 782 731

FAX: 02 9359 4003