



# Royal Australian Navy Band Association Magazine

Summer/Autumn 2019

[www.ranbandassoc.net](http://www.ranbandassoc.net)



*A Magazine for Association members and serving Band members of the RAN*



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## A sad month just passed.

End of March and the magazine is finally ready for release. This Summer/Autumn edition is filled with many reports regarding sad loses within our membership. It is something that is becoming more frequent and I keep thinking of those that have passed away we don't hear about or, find out much later, a good example was Jack Griffiths, his wife advised me not to send the mag as he passed away August last year. There was not much I could say except our condolences, but it was sad that we could not inform members earlier.

We need to be aware that the inaugural members of our association are aging though we do see them often with the closeness of our reunions just lately and local together so we don't notice it as much.

Get-togethers at a state level to me are important, they might only need to be a couple of times a year but with reunions becoming harder for some to attend local functions have their place in our social calendar. When is your next function I ask, but we all should be aware of their health and constantly question how they are.

We do have some feel good stories and important information regarding the structure of our association so I hope there is something for everyone.

I had the pleasure of entertaining the Victorian membership down at the Cerberus Museum along with our other volunteers and it turned out to be a very memorable day. It was the first time we had catered at the school with a BBQ and we plan to do more. The Volunteers commented on how well our association does with numbers and events and they only wish more Branches would do this sort of thing. The WRANS Association led by Jan Gallagher (See page 13) is also very active in creating events for her membership.

Enjoy the read.

Regards,

Errol.

Editor.

**RIP**

Blue, Peter, Jesse,  
Len, Jack and  
Mouse.



Now that we have Christmas & New Year celebrations behind us the year is starting to accelerate away. In mid January I hit the road for about 5 weeks. In that time I visited Paul & Julie Williamson at Crystal Brook SA, Dean & Elaine Butler at Minlaton on the Ayre Peninsula SA, attended the Victorian chapter get together and on my final leg home caught up with Clive & Noelene Smith at Bonnells Bay NSW & Ralph & Cheryle Daines at Port Macquarie.



For those who may not be aware Paul Williamson is suffering a number of health issues, in particular his Emphysema now requires 24/7 oxygen and uses an electric chair to get around the house. Considering his health issues he is in good spirits and enjoys his afternoon beer and the odd smoke. We hung out for about 5 days and had quite a few laughs on various subjects including past sins and politics. Julie is now Paul's full time carer and is doing a marvellous job. I would encourage anyone who worked closely with Paul to take the time to give him a call. I am sure he would be glad to hear from you. You may find he may not answer his phone as he does have the odd bad day. Can I suggest if you can't get an answer to leave a text message which I sure he will respond when he is well enough. Paul's contact number is 0427 200 234.

I also had a great 2 days with Dean & Elaine Butler and was given the VIP treatment. Whilst our time was restricted we managed to visit some magical destinations on the Ayre Peninsula. I have to admit I drank more beer at Dean's place than I had in the previous year. I was impressed with Dean's Man Cave where most of the beer was consumed & his wood working shed which has every conceivable wood machining tool known to mankind. I am keen to return at some time in the future to explore more of the Peninsula,



especially down the southern tip.

The Victorian chapters get together was held at the Cerberus Museum on Sunday the 10<sup>th</sup> Feb. Errol and the Museum staff pulled out all stops on the catering front. It was an exceptionally well organised event. After lunch we had time to wander through both museum buildings, one of which was the old School of Music. Security on all military establishments is thorough and Cerberus is no exception, so with the arrival of some 50 + people at the same time it caused the small number of weekend staff to be overwhelmed. Some members had to wait nearly an hour to be processed through security. I dare say this is an indication of the world we now live in. I was impressed with the patience and understanding of most attendees. Well done to Errol and the Museum staff.



On the final leg of my recent road trip I noticed an interesting property sign. As I was heading north on the Princess Highway about 10 klms south of Grafton I noticed a large sign on the left hand side of the road pointing to a driveway into a property. Two things about this sign caused me to narrow it down to who may live on that property, the first being an anchor and the second was the

name “Shina”. I quickly went to my phone contacts and gave Shina Wright a ring, who confirmed that it is where he currently lives. He was in Sydney at the time but did say that anyone passing through is more than welcome to pay him a visit. He has a small hut and a caravan at the moment but is awaiting building approval to build his house.

I spent about a week in Melbourne mainly to visit my oldest son John who had recently returned from a six month deployment to Afghanistan. He worked with the NATO Special Operations Component Command – Afghanistan. On the completion of his deployment he was awarded the US Bronze Star medal for Meritorious Service in a Combat Zone, this was in addition to the NATO Medal and the new Australian Operations Service Medal. As you can imagine the family is very proud of his ARMY service which totals more than 20 years and 3 tours to Combat Zones. The family would be only too glad for him

to take some more mundane roll back home, but like all current service members being able to serve the country overseas is what they join for.

Finally, whilst I was able to update members on Paul Williamson’s health issues I am aware that we have a number of other members not travelling too well, but my thoughts go to the families of Peter Arrowsmith, Blue Newton, Len Western and Jesse Watson on their sad passing. On behalf of all our members our thoughts are with you at this time.

John Lennon Secretary

Secretary - RAN Band Association

## RANBA | PRESIDENTS REPORT: Ralph Daines

Greetings for the New Year and our first magazine for the year 2019. The year hasn’t started too well for the Association having lost five Members, Maurice “Blue” Newton, Paul “Mouse” Blankesteijn, Len Weston, Peter Arrowsmith and Jesse Watson. Condolences of the Association go out to their families.

It would be a good idea for me at this time to point out to our members that there are a number of our friends out there who are doing it very, very, tough and are missing contact with their old mates. I would like to ask members who are aware of these situations, to make contact with the State Representative who will endeavour to make contact and make all members aware via the website, etcetera and give contact details.

I am aware that the permission of the family is required before we can publish information, but the State Representative has the authority of the Management Committee to look after these details. One such case is that of my dear friends Bill and Robyn Middleton. Robyn has kidney dialysis every day and Bill has been in Hospital since before Xmas as a result of the Cancer he has and now with complications, is unable to walk. They both miss our “family” and would love to hear from people, even just to say hello. Bills number is 0408 922255 and Robyn can be contacted on 08 92797735.

I was chatting to Bill Farrell the other day and he was looking at the Service booklet from the Naval Funeral of Cap-

tain J.P. Stevenson, Captain of HMAS Melbourne at the time of the collision with USS Frank E Evans and noticed on the back two pages were a collage of family photos, among these was only one photo of other naval personal, the official photo of the **1969 Fleet Band**, says something about the Navy Band.

At the moment there are three avenues to get your messages out to friends, the Association Web Site, RAN Veterans Band Group Facebook page and the **unofficial** RAN Band Facebook page and the one that gets the most attention of Members is the unofficial Facebook page. I understand the unofficial page was started by Mal Codling and is a good site and well used by our Members which proves that our Members want a Facebook page and I agree fully.

I would like to think that if the unofficial page became official and incorporate the RAN Veterans Band site, we would have a page for all to use. I have asked Errol to follow this up with Mal and make this proposal.

Until the next Magazine stay as well as can be.

Ralph Daines

## **EXPLANATION OF RANBA ORGANISATIONAL CHART**

At the last General Meeting it was painfully obvious that very few, if any of our members, had any clue of the Association's Constitution, even after I have been constantly "rabbiting on" about the Constitution we introduced in 2013. The Constitution is basically the same as any Constitution used by ALL Incorporated Associations but for some reason our members don't want to follow any of our By Laws, even though they follow the leader in other Clubs etc that they belong to. The Constitution is there to protect ALL Members and especially the members who volunteer to take on positions in the Association's Committees.

After the General Meeting and hearing various suggestions to improve the Committee structure I have decided to put an Organisational Chart in place so that we are all on the same page when we take on a task within the Organisation and what responsibilities you need to adhere to. I urge you ALL, as you guys will be the future of the Association, to voice your opinions at any time about any part of our Organisation.

In future emails relating to a particular committee will be sent to all relevant members, general information will be forwarded to all committee members. I have listed in order of the Association's By Laws, the relevant parts of the By Laws concerning your positions, full copies of the Constitution/By Laws are available on request.

## **5 FREQUENCY OF REUNIONS**

- a) Reunions will be held bi-annually on a State rotation basis and on a date approved by the Management Committee.
- b) The Management Committee will decide on the State allocation
- c) States can put forward a proposal to the Management Committee for an exception for a special occasion.

The Management Committee's decision is final and no further correspondence will be entertained.

## **7 RAN VETERANS BAND**

The Royal Australian Navy Veterans Band is the official and exclusive title of the musical combination that represents the Royal Australian Navy Band Association.

- a) It is possible that there may be more than one RANVB performing at the same time which will be co-ordinated by the RANVB Co-Ordinator and permission granted by the Management Committee.
- b) All members of the Royal Australian Navy Band Association are eligible to be a member of the RANVB.
- c) From time to time, to be able to have a balanced combination, non-member musicians may be invited to join the Band for that particular performance/s and wear the uniform.
- d) The official uniform of the RAN Veterans Band is; long sleeve white shirt with Association shoulder boards, black tie, black trousers, black shoes, Association cap and medals to be worn in accordance with the accepted protocol. Alternate parts of uniform to be used in various weather conditions are a short sleeve white shirt and navy blue jumper with epaulettes.
- e) The RAN Veterans Band will be co-ordinated by a member appointed by the Management Committee.
- f) Association members who wish to participate with any other Band for whatever occasion should wear the uniform of that Band not the Association uniform.

The Veterans Band is not your usual Community Band; it is the only Band that can officially be called Royal Australian Navy, by permission of Defence; the Band does not have auditions; ALL members of the RANBA are able to play in the Band regardless of level of musical ability or state of health; all members are advised first of upcoming gigs prior to contact being made with non ex-Navy musicians; the Band is put together by the RANVB Manager; the Conductor is appointed by the RANVB Manager and together with the Conductor



Very sorry to hear about Blue Newton. He was an amazing character and an excellent trombonist. He helped me gain confidence as a young struggling French horn player in the late 50's and early 60's on the Melbourne and at Watson. He will always be remembered

Tony (Stretch) Buddle.

The effort you your team and yourself for the BBQ was much appreciated mate and I thank you for time spent preparing the band CDs which will be played regularly on my programme.

Don't know when I will see you again, but a chaser on Paul Farrugia would be welcome and a frequent update on Nellie Gwyn who has cancer also, it was a shock to see him, and please take up the idea we discussed about an 'element of care' toward members by having the state reps check in on isolated older members.

Cheers yogi.

## VALE

CAPT J.P. Stevenson AM RAN Rtd. 29 January 2019.  
Aged 98.

Captain Stevenson's highly successful career ended prematurely as a result of the Melbourne and USS Frank E Evans collision in 1969.



## RANBA | QUEENSLAND REPORT: John Lennon

Qld has seen its fair share of the wild weather over the last few months and this has not been restricted to only Qld. I can report that our 2 north Qld members Peter Martin (Townsville) & Leon Stucas (Home Hill) survived the North Qld floods without any water lapping at the front doors & no damage. My last message from Peter at the height of the flood crisis was "there is more water up here than in the Coral Sea".

We in Qld also acknowledge the devastating bush fires down south and the unbearable heat that our southern and western members and families have been suffering. During my recent trip down the Newell Hwy to SA I witnessed firsthand how dry it is with dust storms and dried up dams. The Copeland Dam at Bingara NSW which provides water for Cattle & Crop irrigation is down to 11.9 % and dropping. This Dam is a major water source for North West NSW farmers.

The other Dam which is almost empty is the Keepit Dam which is at 0.045 %. I visited Keepit Dam near Manilla NSW, this being the site of the Lennon family farm which was settled in the 1800's and is now part of the catchment area. I was able to drive into the catchment area and visit the Keepit cemetery where some of my relatives are buried, which would normally be under several metres of water. At

one point on my trip my dash board outside temperature was displaying 49 degrees. These temperatures followed me all through NSW, Victoria and South Australia.

I know this will sound crazy but I was glad to get back home to Qld where the weather was a lot cooler. So if any of our southern members are looking for a cooler climate you may consider moving to Qld.

Finally, having attended the Victorian chapter get together in February, it reminded me how organised the Victorians are at having these regular functions. One of the problems facing us in Qld is the geographical spread of our members. It has given me some motivation to try and come up with a place which may be geographically suitable to attract Qld members for a get together sooner rather than later. I had a thought that the Aardvark Brewery Robina could be an option. It would mean a drive down the Gold Coast for the Brisbane members, which may be compounded by heavy traffic if held on a weekend. I guess what I am asking the Qld members to do is throw some suggestions at me. Until next addition stay safe and keep smiling.

John Lennon

QLD Representative

Your correspondent can honestly say once again the he has not heard of any goings on, either honest or nefarious concerning our cohort of ex-bandies here in the west, so it has to be assumed that they are all well and carrying on in the manner befitting their status.

One thing that can be reported is that Fred Brewer has recovered from his hand injury but it has put paid to his career as a manufacturer of Harps. Fortunately, he is still able to perform so his musical career has not been completely shattered as he is the member a "Group of Harpies" - or is it Harpists?"

The "old man of the sea,"

Ted Lincoln, has returned home from hospitalization although he is still suffering from some pain from disc damage in his back. Your correspondent has spoken to him and he still maintains a solid front as usual. In addition, it must be reported that Bill Middleton has been hospitalized for some time due to two bad falls. He is not receiving any chemotherapy for the cancer from which he had suffered, but is receiving regular daily physiotherapy in Hollywood Hospital Hopefully, by the time you read this article, he will

be back at home. It is very obvious that has definitely been through the ringer over recent months. Best wishes for full recoveries to both.

Like our contemporaries in the east, we have come to Autumn with the facts that Perth has had it's driest summer for decades and one of the warmest, but not the hottest. Some members of the association may not be aware that Captain J P Stevenson, AM, RAN (rtd) the skipper of HMAS Melbourne during the collision with USS Evans has passed away at the age of 98. His memorial service in the chapel on Garden Island was a "Sell-out", attended by a real who's who of the Navy. A type of Eulogy to this fine Captain, written by your correspondent is published in this edition of the magazine.

Once again it can be stated that we are a happy bunch of Sand-Gropers, or Vegemites - Whatever, over here in the west, so don't you forget it!

Cheers, Until next time,

## RANBA | CAPTAIN J.P STEVENSON, AM, RAN By Bill Farrell

### **A different perspective of Captain J.P Stevenson, AM, RAN (r'td.)**

For reasons lost in the annals of antiquity, the members of the 1969 – 70 fleet band were posted to HMAS penguin in early December of the previous year. During then and mid-January, apart from designated band rehearsals and commitments, regular visits were made to Garden Island for cleaning and painting duties on board HMAS Melbourne. As I stood at the foot of the flagship's gangway in late January, I looked at my future home for the next two years and a touch of excitement, mingled with a little apprehension, overtook my thoughts. There I was, a lieutenant SDBD with 1 year's seniority, about to take charge as fleet band officer on board HMAS Melbourne, flagship of the Australian fleet. This was my first sea posting as an officer, and this mixture of excitement and apprehension was a real thing. What would my future hold?

I strode up to the gangway, saluted the quarterdeck and made myself known to the office-of-the-watch.

Over the next few days, I settled in, met up with the band

again and most importantly arranged to meet with the captain, the well-known and equally respected Captain John Stevenson. Junior officers have ways of anointing their seniors with nicknames, and this captain was no exception, being offered the sobriquets of Steve, JP, The Skipper, Johnno, plus of course the more proper terms of respect, Captain Stevenson and Sir.

This meeting with the captain was indeed a pleasant occasion and really great experience. He was interested in my musical credentials, where I had trained and what were my proposals for the band's future role on board.

Naturally, our initial tasks revolved around the Admiral's requirements, both ceremonial and social, but there were also ship's concerts, wardroom dinners and concerts ashore in the various ports that the ship was scheduled to visit.

One of the earnest desires of the band was to have an official photograph taken with the captain to which request, Steve readily agreed.

As is the case on all the ships, officers are assigned additional duties above and beyond their branch qualification. Mine was designated as a damage control officer of the watch, a task for which we were given some basic training followed by "learning on the job."

Fast forward to early May, and Melbourne was in Asian waters undertaking SEATO exercises with units of US fleet. On board the flagship, a request had been made through the Admiral's office for the band to undertake a 14 day in-country tour of Vietnam. This request had been granted by the Admiral and the Captain, both of whom had agreed to the plausibility of such a visit, so planning was underway.

2355 on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup>. June, and Luet. SDBD Farrell sat in the chair as DCOOW in DC headquarters about to commence the middle watch in what turned out to be the ship's longest day for this particular cruise.



At approximately 0300, the ship was ordered to flying stations with the Captain in charge on the bridge. A mere 7 minutes later amid an alarm sounding, a further pipe was made "hands to collision stations." Being in an enclosed office on deck 4, it was difficult to imagine the scene topside and on the lower decks, but one had to believe everything was under control.

Suddenly, there was a crashing sound and Melbourne came to a complete standstill. Pipes were limited with the majority emoting from the bridge as the crew positioned themselves in their emergency/collision stations. It was obvious by these pipes that the ship had stuck another, causing grievous harm.

The Captain often spoke on the piping system over the next couple of hours, sounding completely composed and in

total control.

My relief arrived at 0355 and then, did I realise that the latter part of my watch had been monitored by LCDR John Asker, the doyen of damage control and the ship's DCO, who was standing to my rear.

Sailors were moving in all directions going about their lawful business in the manner expected of a well-disciplined crew/ at about 0600, a pipe resonated, "Band Officer, Bridge." There I was confronted by JP who stated that he wished a concert to take place on the quarterdeck as soon as possible to entertain the survivors of USS Evans.

"Aye, aye Sir," was my retort as I departed the bridge thinking to myself that this man had a lot on his plate yet he still thought of the humanitarian side of things.

First task, locate the librarian, now the president of the RAN Band Association, and direct him to select suitable, and as much, American-type music as possible and take it to the band members from all over the ship, collect their instruments, band stools and be prepared to play. This was achieved and the performance commenced at about 0715.



The survivors were an extremely bedraggled lot, no doubt thinking of their shipmates who were lost in the sinking, and there were between 70 and 80 of them. During the latter part of the concert, the Captains of both ships came to the quarterdeck and spoke to some of the survivors offering solace and comfort. On competition, at about 0900, a short prayer service was conducted.

One of the most poignant sights was that of a tall negro sailor, dressed only in a white t-shirt and white boxer shorts, sitting cross-legged crying uncontrollably looking at photo of his children which he took from his only posses-

sion, a biscuit tin.

It is understood that these survivors were left in a much better frame of mind at the conclusion of this morale boosting parade of American music.

That evening at 1700, a memorial service was held on the flight deck attended by all survivors and a large contingent of the Melbourne's crew. This service was commenced by Captain Stevenson followed by a scripture reading from Corinthians, chapter 15, verses 51-58 read by the Chaplain Batt, the ship's Anglican Chaplain – (quote, in part ... 'for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable ... o death, where is thy victory? ... o death, where is thy sting? ...) all present said the 23<sup>rd</sup>. PSALM, followed by prayers lead by the Catholic Chaplain, Father Breslan, for the departed, for those who mourn and for Thanksgiving. The service concluded with the naval hymn, Last Post, reveille and the benediction.

The Captain then proceeded to the bridge and Melbourne's slow journey to Singapore commenced at 1750 at a speed of 10 knots. Sporting damage caused by a peacetime acci-

dent which could have been avoided and was in no way the fault of the larger ship.

Throughout this day, Captain John Philip Stevenson was the epitome of a person who was in humanitarian strength plus inspirational leadership.

This narrative is written by someone who was part of this day, which occurred 50 years ago this year. On the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup>. anniversary memorial service, held in Canberra on 3/6/94, Stevenson was greeted with a standing ovation from his ship's company on his arrival at the function.

Incidentally, the Vietnam tour did not eventuate that year because the Admiral 'suggested' that he had enough on his plate without the concern of his band wandering through a war-torn country giving concerts. It was undertaken in 1970.

LCDR Bill Farrall, AM, RAN (r'td)



From the **POWER** of the Crow

There is nothing better than getting together with old mates, family and friends from time to time to catch up and spin a few yarns. For us here in Adelaide South Australia this occurs once or twice a year. If possible meeting at a pub for lunch or dinner and on some occasions we tend to visit each other's house. There is only a few of us, some ex navy and ex police bandies come together to chew the fat.

Other states have a much bigger association membership and probably do this on a bigger scale and more frequently. To catch up with old friends when and where is a great past time to talk about, 'do you remember when'?

What comes to mind and is very dear to us is the comradery that exists between all of us. This is a benevolence that exists between us ex service men and woman and is not very common in a civilian work place.

One can remember the parties and the barbeques. Sometimes after a gig or it could have been organised on a free weekend, (not many). They were amazing times of friendship that we will never forget.



Who could ever forget the saying, meet you at 'Hasto for a Tasteo'. See picture enclosed of one of the old houses where a party or 2 occurred. 2 Kurrajong Street Hastings, Victoria.

While speaking of places in Victoria, one very interesting place to visit is Williamstown. Take a trip on the Melbourne River Cruises down the Yarra to Williamstown Docks. See the craft shops, restaurants etc and visit the Maritime Museums. Just fantastic to see the old HMAS Castlemaine tied up along side at one the wharfs. You can visit and have a chat with a few of the ex RAN volunteers looking after tourists and visitors to the ship.

While on board I came across this old photo – Victorian Naval Band 1896, so many look alike! Errol you probably have this one.

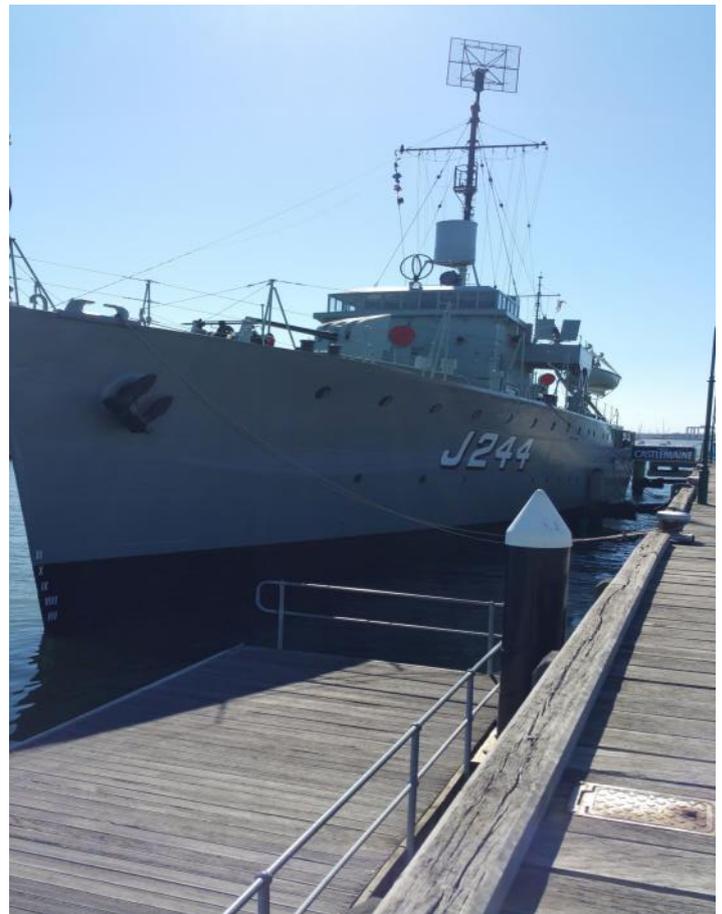


Well to close off, it's getting closer to that exciting time of the year for me and many others. The AFL footy season.

May your team do well -- except for when it plays PORT ADELAIDE!

Cheers,

Doug D



## The Mexicans Cerberus Visit

Firstly, Happy New Year to all members and our readers. The Mexican plan alluded to in the June edition of the newsletter for a return to where we all began finally came to fruition, as our trip down memory lane to the "old" Navy School of Music was arranged and booked for Sunday 10th February. Arriving at the west gate Security office (no more is it just a wire gate for those that haven't been there for quite a long while) the car park overflowed like a ship's heads. After a "minor" set back getting people checked in and through the gates, there were a few convoys heading down to a place so familiar in the lives of most, if not all, of us attending.



Thousands of Bats have populated the trees outside the School. Its that bad now that the Band has been ordered to play under the Covered Parade ground as often as possible to disturb them in the hope that they will move on.

As each group arrived and parked under the row of pine trees and nearby roadway, the local tree residents expressed their utmost dissatisfaction at being disturbed. You might expect that being a Navy base, close to the water, the locals would be dressed in white and grey, love chips and dive bombing your car. However, these were dressed in black and more recently referred to as Dark Knights. The sky around the school became filled with bats screeching their lungs out and like the marsh flies that feasted on our legs at Recruit School parades in summer, these guys were big.



John De Douglas watching over LCDR Jan Gallagher (r'td) making sure she has the right technique in table cleaning before members arrive.

To anyone who has not been back since leaving, time has marched on and things once well known are no longer. The photo of our editor cooking up a BBQ storm was taken where the small shed that housed the cleaning gear and



the side drum practice mirror once stood. If you look beyond, you'll notice the second building (the old sail loft) and other shed are also gone. But on the ground there's

still a hint of the volleyball lines where many a game was played and staff "taught" trainees a thing or two about life.



Yes we had a bigger BBQ than this little guy. Never mix your Chicken with your Beef or you get 'Beefychicken'

As lunch was being prepared, we roamed the main school building perusing artefacts from last century that were part of our lives. Practice cubicles no longer, the percussion room now the museum's workshop and the staff brew room now a store room. The old gunnery school building across the road that was the CPOQ & POQ training rooms in the late 70's and early 80's is a part of the museum.

Walls have gone and the building is filled with photo's, documents, uniforms and many things navy that have been in storage officially and unofficially in old cupboards & sheds.



The old Band Room was the perfect place to have lunch served. In the foreground is Sophie Gwynne and yes that's YOGI Soutar in the back..

Time came for lunch and this was set up in the one large room still in the school building but it is odd how things seemed so much bigger way back then., but we still accommodated the 50 plus guests.



John Lucas and partner Barb catching up with Doug and Christine Antonoff on the Volleyball court.



Middle Left is Bill Post, Kevin Hillier and Ron Bergman enjoying lunch and a conversation with partners .

This room has been used as a band rehearsal room, aural and theory training room (remember the grand piano?) as well as practical examination room for trainees and C/POQ's.



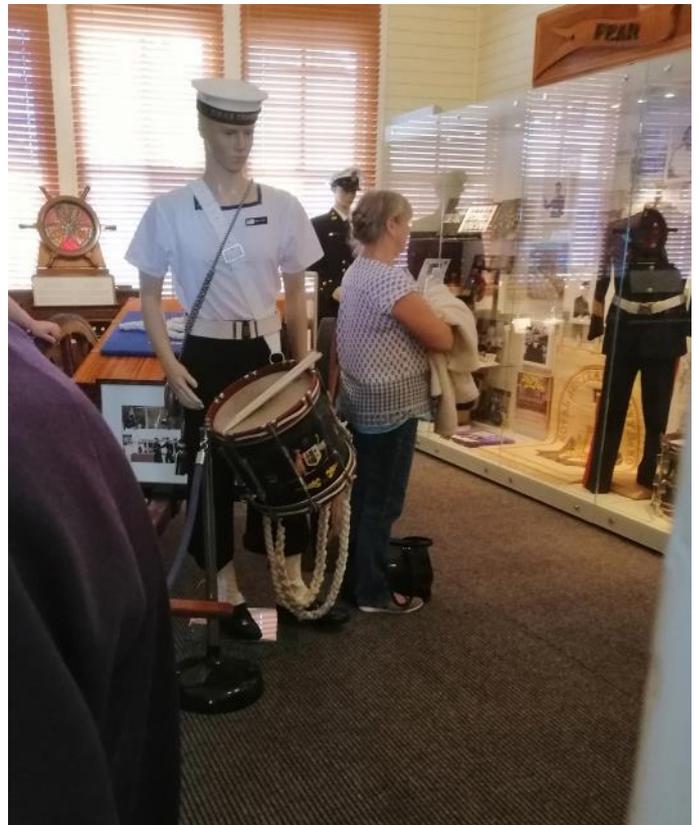
The said Naval Support Sign John Lennon brought down from Queensland to present to the Museum.

One discussion over lunch was which way the band faced when the room was used for rehearsals and apparently, it was all the main points of the compass. On completion, a visitor from Canada (north of the border) John Lennon presented to Errol for the museum the sign that once sat above the entrance to Penguin band's home when they were known as Naval Support Command Band.

The remainder of the afternoon was spent catching up, swapping warries, comparing memories and notes as well as looking over the displays and artefacts from the bygone era that we lived and remember. Any of our interstate members who may be in the area at some time in the future and looking to fill in a few hours (and possibly some blanks in memory), the museum is well worth visiting, if not just to see the evolution of the band but also other branches that are on display.

On a very personal note, I want to thank those who sent messages of condolence on the passing of my brother Barry as they are greatly appreciated. And just last month, it has been a case of deja vu as we lost Lorraine's brother for exactly the same thing - prostate cancer.

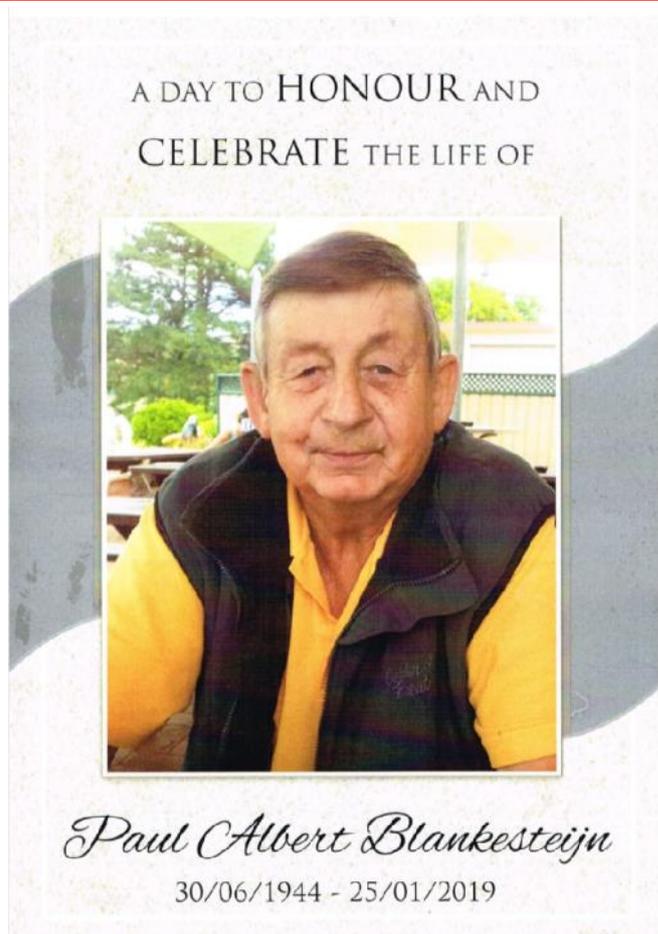
To those that have not had the PSA blood test and are over the age of 50, please do. Don't be put off by the old ad's about the finger going you-know-where as it is not necessary unless cancer is suspected - it is a simple blood test. As was in my case, the blood test detects the possible presence of prostate cancer without the digital exam and lead to further checks that can save your life. If you wait for symptoms, it is too late.



Leywah Lennon watching the Video of all The images collected of the Band.

See you at our next Lunch.

Terry Ekin.



In addition to our association members who attended “Mouse’s” funeral, the current Music Director of the NSW Police Band John Saunders & his partner Michele Stewart attended to pay their respects. Not only was “Mouse” well respected and loved by many ex RAN Band musicians but he was a well respected member of the NSW Police band for some 13 years. From all his friends in the association who were unable to attend “Mouse’s” funeral may he “Rest in Peace”.

John Lennon

Below:

Left to Right. Robert (Bob) Bedwell, Michele Stewart, John Saunders, Shina Wright, Lindsay Mungovan, Martin Blanckesteijn, Barry Lawrence & Clive Smith.





## LEN WESTERN

**Passed away 12th February 2019 aged 92**

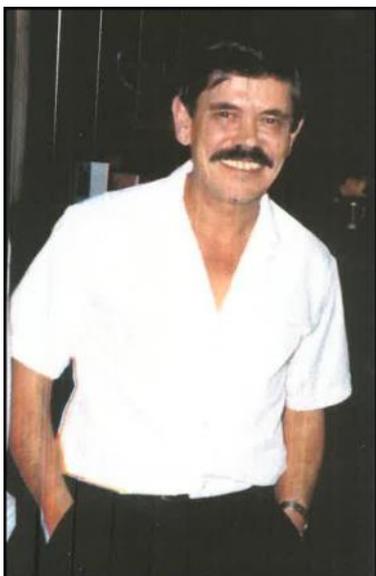
A message from Lens Daughter.

Dear Ralph,

I thought you may be interested in an update on my father, Len Western, whose story was shared in the RAN Band magazine, 2015 Summer/Autumn edition. He was a musician on the Hobart during 1944-1946.

Dad and mum lived at home in Mt Waverley until mid last year when they moved into a retirement home together, celebrating their 63 anniversary in August. On the 12th February this year, after a long life, dad passed away, aged 92 years. His last few months were difficult however he'd still recount stories from his time in the Navy.

Regards,  
Lyn Job



## JESSE RICHARD WATSON

**Passed Away 26th March 2019 aged 78**

Jesse joined the RAN Band on the 8th of March 1956 in Fremantle WA. He reached the rank of PO Musn and Paid off in March 1976

Below is a classic photo of him (Centre) with other members from the Japan Expo



## Peter Norman Francis Arrowsmith

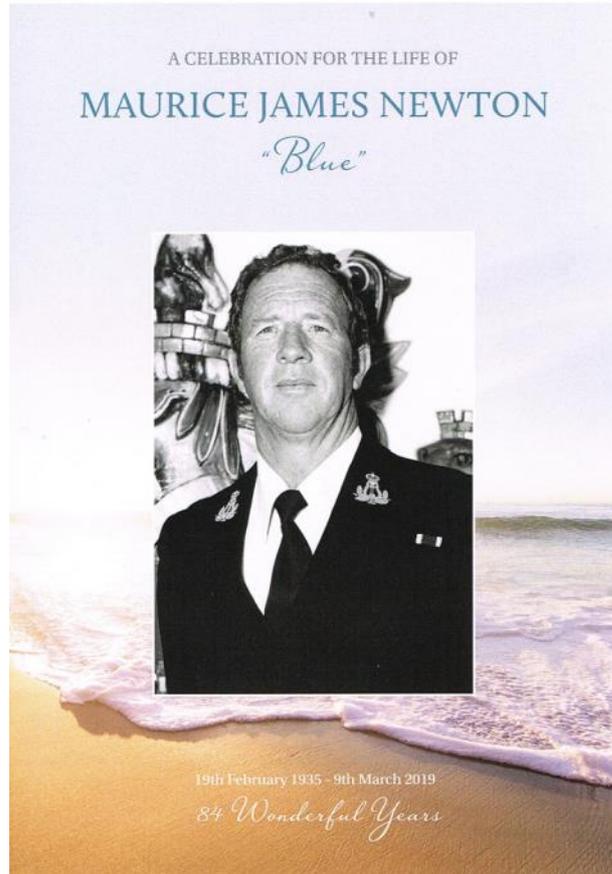
**Passed away on the 21st March 2019**

**Born 17th of May 1946 in Poona, INDIA**

A well respected musician of the 60's and 70's and also especially remembered by many for his talented Piano playing.

RIP

Peter



Words by Rob Bedwell & Lindsay Mungovan.

While it was pleasing to see Navy friends from the past it is always a sad occasion in which these happen., commented Lindsay . Attending Blue's funeral service brought together a number of old shipmates to acknowledge and reminisce on the life of a bonza bloke - a fine musician, jazz player and Chief Band Master. Blue was "the boss" at HMAS Albacross when I was there for my last two years prior to paying off., says Rob. I recall Jean most fondly, not just as Blues' dearest wife of 57 years - Jean was very close to all the band members.

It was great to catch up with those ex bandies who were able to attend - except for the reason it was nice to spend our time at a 'mini reunion.

ROLL call - other than myself - Blue & Gail McNally, John Widdicome, Shina Wright, Lindsay Mungovan, Brian Torrens, Clive Smith, Keith Guinness, John Lennon, Craig Dickman & Brian & Sonya Torrens.

