

# 58TH ANNUAL COMMEMORATION MERCHANT NAVY MEMORIAL & COLUMBARIUM

ROOKWOOD GENERAL CEMETERY

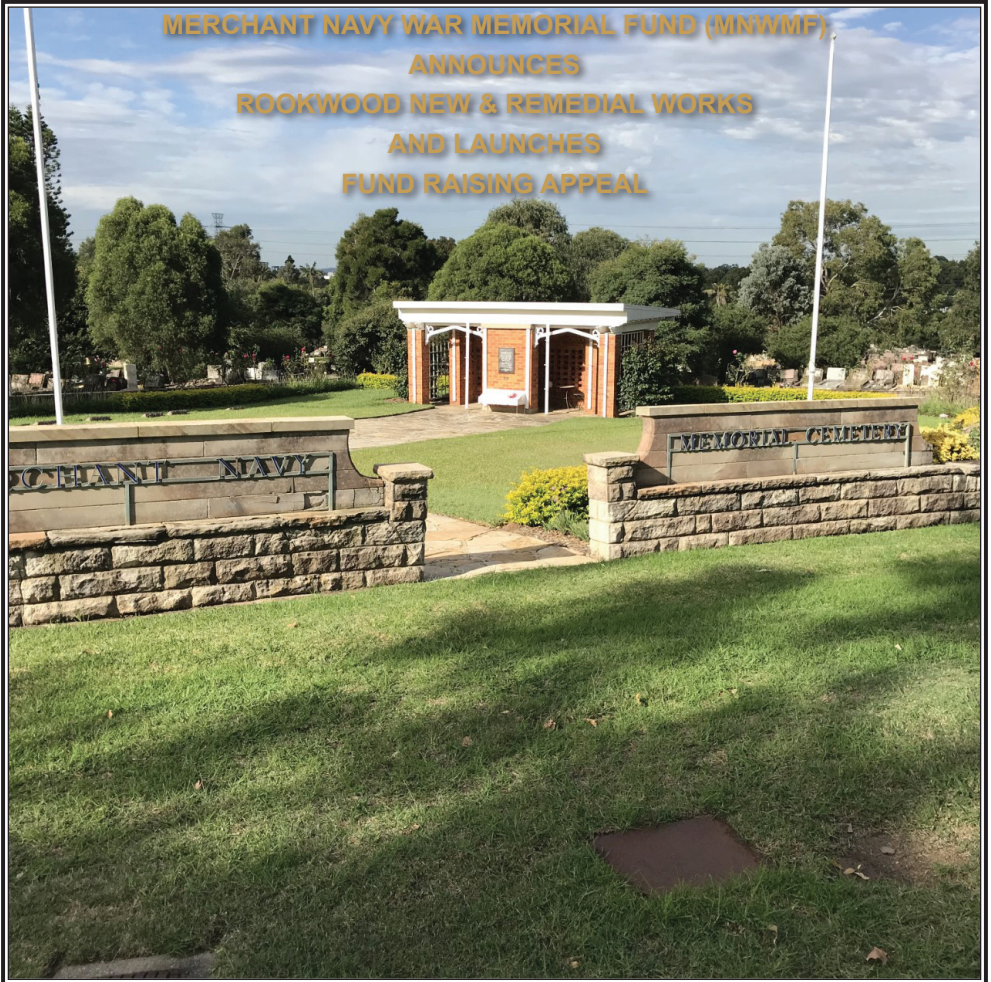
COORDINATED BY

BOARD OF THE MERCHANT NAVY WAR MEMORIAL FUND LTD (MNWMF)

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

ONECROWN GROUP OF CEMETERIES AND ROOKWOOD GENERAL CEMETERY

RESERVE LAND MANAGER (RGC)



Sunday 16th April, 2023  
Within the Merchant Navy  
Memorial Rose Garden

1030 for Commencement at 1100 hours  
Followed by refreshments within the  
Memorial Garden



# Order of Commemoration

Master of Ceremonies *David Field, Chairman*  
*The Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund Ltd (MNWMF)*

- Welcome • Acknowledgement of Country
- Introductions • Opening Remarks

## Officiating Clergy

• *Sister Mary Leahy OAM, Chaplain, Apostleship of the Sea, Sydney & Regional Co-Ordinator Oceania.*  
*Awarded in 2017, by the Holy Father Pope Francis, the Papal Honour of: Croce pro Ecclesia et Pontifice for distinguished services to the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Sydney*

\* *Reverend Tay Un - Principal Senior Chaplain.*

\* *Mr. John Kewa, Lay Chaplain, Mission To Seafarers (MTS) Port Kembla*

## Music Program

### The Bankstown & Yagoona Brass

*Mr. Rae Forrester, Music Director*  
*Accompanied by Mrs. Helen Marks, Secretary*  
*Mrs Finola McMahon leading us in singing.*

## Hymn / Psalm 46: God is our Strength and Refuge

Tune: Dambusters March  
(Composer Eric Coates. 1886-1958)

1. God is our strength and refuge  
our present help in trouble;  
and we therefore will not fear  
though the earth should change!  
Though mountains shake and tremble  
though swirling floods are raging  
God the Lord of Hosts  
is with us ever more.
2. There is a flowing river  
within God's holy city;  
God is in the midst of her -  
she shall not be moved!  
God's help is swiftly given,  
thrones vanish at His presence -  
God the Lord of Hosts  
is with us evermore!
3. Come, see the works of our Maker  
learn of His deeds all powerful;  
wars can cease across the world  
when He shatters the spear!  
Be still and know your Creator,  
uplift Him in the nations -  
God the Lord of Hosts  
is with us evermore!

## Reading: Gospel according to Matthew 8:23-27

### *Jesus Calms the Storm*

*Mrs. Helen Marks*  
*Secretary Bankstown & Yagoona Brass*  
*In recognition of over 20 years partnership with the MNWMF*

## Hymn of His Majesty's Armed Forces Eternal Father, Strong to Save

Words: William Whiting, Winchester, England 1860

Tune: 'Melita' John B. Dykes 1861

1. Eternal Father, strong to save,  
whose arm hath bound the restless wave,  
who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep  
Its own appointed limits keep;  
Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,  
For those in peril on the sea!
2. O Christ! Whose voice the waters heard  
And hushed their raging at Thy Word,  
Who walkest on the foaming deep,  
And calm amidst the storm didst sleep;  
Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,  
For those in peril on the sea!
3. O Holy Spirit! Who didst brood  
Upon the waters dark and rude,  
and bid their angry tumult cease,  
and give, for wild confusion, peace;  
Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,  
For those in peril on the sea!

### PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION AND THANKSGIVING

#### For King and Country And Thanksgiving for The Merchant Navy

*Mr. John Kewa, Lay Chaplain, Mission To Seafarers (MTS) Port Kembla*

#### The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven  
Hallowed be thy name  
Thy Kingdom come  
Thy will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
But deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom  
The power and the glory,  
For ever and ever. Amen

# INTRODUCTION OF GUEST OF HONOUR

*David Field, Chairman*

*The Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund Ltd (MNWMF)*

## **Guest of Honour Delivering the 2023 Merchant Navy Address *Rear Admiral Christopher Smith, AM, CSM, RAN***

**Rear Admiral Christopher Smith, CSM, RAN**, assumed the role of Commander Australian Fleet on 16 December 2022.

Rear Admiral Smith joined the Royal Australian Naval College in 1989. His seagoing appointments have included HMA Ships Stalwart, Parramatta (III), Brunei, Perth (II), Ipswich, Geraldton, Canberra (II), Anzac and Command of HMA Ships Gladstone, Darwin and Canberra (III). His shore appointments have included staff officer to the Chief of Defence Force, Deputy Director of Sailors' Career Management, Director Navy Warfare Professional Requirements, 2015 Force Structure Review team, Commander Surface Force, Director General Littoral and most recently Deputy Chief of Navy.

His operational deployments have included Operation HELPEM FREN in 2003, Operation CATALYST as the Australian Liaison Officer to the US Central Command Forward Headquarters in 2008 and the inaugural LHD operational deployment in Canberra (III) providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in support of Operation FIJI ASSIST 2016.

Rear Admiral Smith completed the Australian Command and Staff Course in 2004 and the US Naval War College in 2013. He holds a Masters of Management in Defence Studies, a Masters in Maritime Studies and a Masters of Arts (International Relations). Admiral Smith was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia at the 2023 Australia Day Awards.



THE MERCHANT NAVY WAR MEMORIAL, KINGS PARK CANBERRA, TAKEN AT THE 56TH ANNUAL COMMEMORATION ON 20TH OCTOBER 2019, FOLLOWING THE OFFICIAL OPENING BY THE HON. LINDA REYNOLDS CSC, MINISTER FOR DEFENCE, OF THE EXTENSIVE NEW & REMEDIAL WORKS, FEATURING..

THE INSTALLATION ON BRONZE PLAQUES  
OF THE NAMES & RESPECTIVE SHIPS OF THE  
862 AUSTRALIAN MERCHANT MARINERS THAT SACRIFICED THEIR LIVES FOR THEIR COUNTRY  
IN WWI (184) & WWII (678)

## Crossing The Bar is an 1889 poem by Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Poet Laureate.

It is considered that Tennyson wrote it as an elegy (*An elegy is a poem of serious reflection, and in English literature usually a lament for the dead*): The narrator uses an extended metaphor to compare death with crossing the “sandbar” between the river of life, with its outgoing “flood”, and the ocean that lies beyond death, the “boundless deep” to which we return.

1. Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea,
2. But such a tide as moving seems asleep,  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home.
3. Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell,  
When I embark;
4. For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crost the bar.



## IN MEMORY OF THOSE WWII MERCHANT NAVY VETERANS WHO HAVE CROSSED THE BAR SINCE THE CANBERRA COMMEMORATION OF 19TH OCTOBER 2019 AND WHO HAD THE HONOUR TO WEAR THE 1939 - 1945 STAR

### Merchant Navy Man

#### A Title Emblazoned in Battle and Honoured in Freedom

##### New South Wales

Arthur Patrick (Paddy) Berry – 26/8/2020 WWII  
Darrell Brown - 28/8/2022 (Chief Engineer BHP)  
Mervyn (Merv) Cardelli – 5/10/2022 WWII (Radar & Comms RN)  
Capt. Ray Cox – 15/10/2022 WWII  
Clarence Dawes 22/0/2021 WWII (MN & US Army Small Ships)  
Phillip Eckford – 13/10/2021 WWII  
Frederick Bradley Finch (Frank) OAM – 6/3/2020 WWII MN & US Army Small Ships  
George Lockyer – WWII - 25/7/2021  
Capt. Michael Mortimer – 11/10/2020 WWII  
Robert Nicholson – 2/7/2021 WWII  
Phil Orchard - 30/9/2021 WWII  
Frank O'Dwyer 9/4/23

John Stewart – June/2021 WWII  
James Thomson – Late/2020 WWII  
Claude Edgar Vanderee - 25/2/2020 WWII  
Ron (Steve) Wylie - 4/2/23

##### Queensland

John Bird – 15/6/2021 WWII (Survivor of sinking of S.S. Fingal, MN & US Army Small Ships)

##### South Australia

Clarence Melville Dawes – 22/8/2021 WWII MN & US Army Small Ships

##### Tasmania

Capt. Norman McMillan -29/7/2021 WWII (founding & Life Member of Master Mariners Association of Tasmania)  
Capt. Gordon Willcock – 18/8/2022 WWII (Founding Member of Master Mariners Association of Tasmania)

## IN MEMORY OF THOSE MEMBERS OF MERCHANT NAVY ORGANISATIONS WHO HAVE CROSSED THE BAR SINCE THE CANBERRA COMMEMORATION OF 19TH OCTOBER 2019

##### New South Wales

Lionel Atchinson - 28/12/2021 (RAN 1/E & Chief Eng's. Howard Smiths)  
Wesley (Wes) Brown - 23/2/20  
David Campbell – 10/2/2021 (BHP Chief Eng.)  
Mathew Carrell - 17/03/2022 (Barrier Reef ex Pilot Master Clutha)  
Michael Clarke - 2/3/2022 (Chief Eng. BHP, Howard Smiths & AOS)  
Capt. Cyril Cocksedge – 4/5/2021  
Kevin Ernest Collinson – 3/3/2020 (BHP Chief Eng.)  
Capt. Paul Cooney – 24/5/2022  
Capt. Snow Ealey – 18/8/2022  
John Hamilton Evans – 28/12/21 (Chief Eng. ANL)  
Capt. Forster – 10/1/2021  
Capt. John Goldsmith - 24/2/2020  
Capt. John Hammond – 6/8/2022  
Capt. Gerard Harvey – 26/5/2020  
Capt. Geoffrey Herbert – 12/1/2021 (BHP)  
Greg Hobson - 11/3/2020 (Elect. Eng. BHP & Chief Eng. Teekay)  
Adrian Hoogvliet – 9/2/2021  
Capt. John Hunter – 1/8/2019  
Kenneth Jackson – 25/6/2021 (Ex BHP Chief Eng.)  
Capt. Van Jarvis – 1/9/2019  
Gary Judge – 21/3/2021 (Chief Eng.)  
John Kovak – 6/9/2021 (Chief Eng. ANL & BHP)  
Albert Lawrence - 15/10/2021 (Chief Eng. Howard Smith & Adsteam)  
Capt. William (Bill) Lloyd - 20/2/2020  
John McLean - 30/12/2021 (Chief Eng. Tidewater, AOS & Teekay)  
Gavin Donal McGregor – 26/1/2022 (Master BHP)  
William (Bill) Mitchell - 24/2/2021 (Chief Eng. BHP & ANL & NSW Tafe)  
John McNaught – 5/6/2020 (Chief Eng.)  
Sean McNaught - 2/9/2022 (Chief Eng. RAN & Teekay)  
Capt. Malcolm Murray – 21/5/2022  
Francis (Frank) Mathews – 10/3/2021  
Cormac O'Connor – 8/9/2019  
Bernie Orbell - 16/1/2021 Elect. Eng. Union Steamship Company)

Tony Panos – 14/2/2022  
Colin Phillipson – 22/11/2021 (RSL Sub-Branch)  
Walter John (Wally) Pritchard - 6/05/2022 (SUA/MUA)  
Keith Ridgeway 15/6/2021  
Raymond Sturt - 17/05/2022 (Ex – Burns Philp)  
Richard St. J. Stephens – 25/3/2021  
John Stewart (Bosun) – 2/5/2021 British MN Falklands Veteran  
John (Jack) Styles - 18/4/2020 (Chief Eng. BHP & McIlwraith McEachern)  
Capt. Peter Sturt - 30/1/2021 (Ex Burns Philp Master & Qld Coast - Torres Strait Pilot)  
Andy Squibb – 10/5/2021 (RSL Sub-Branch)  
Linda Totman – 1/2/2020  
Johannes (John) van Buuren - 31/7/2020 (2/E ANL & Tug Eng. Howard Smiths)  
Bruce Ward – 5/9/2019  
Capt. David Wellington – 4/8/2022  
Robert Young – 21/2/2019

##### Victoria

Stewart Bolles - 9/7/22  
Capt. Martin Spence-Hogbin, 6/11/22 British Merchant Navy  
Capt. Jim Lucas – 1/1/2019  
David Wayne Owen (Chief Engineer & Superintendent BHP)  
Capt. Barry Redmond – 1/4/2020  
Walter Stuart - 10/5/22  
Capt. John Tomlinson - 28/8/22

##### Queensland

Capt. Ken Barnett – 1/10/2019  
John Dunn - 23/4/22  
Capt. Anthony De Vere – 1/6/2020

##### South Australia

Capt. Philip Hammond – 11/3/2021  
Capt. Alan Lydell – 1/9/2019  
Capt. Roy Pearson – 2/3/2021  
Keith Ridgeway – 15/6/2021

##### Western Australia

Capt. Ajay Tandon – 1/2/2020

# ACT OF REMEMBRANCE

## THE ODE OF REMEMBRANCE

**Mr. Don Kennedy OAM, JP**

- Patron & Deputy Coordinator, Merchant Navy Chapter of Forestville RSL
- Veterans Advisor to the Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund Ltd. (MNWMF)

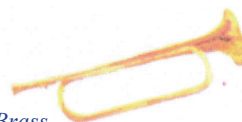
*They have no grave but the cruel sea;  
No flowers lay at their head;  
A rusting hulk is their tombstone, afast on the ocean bed.*

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning;  
We will remember them.*

**All say: We will remember them**

**Mr. Don Kennedy OAM, JP: Lest we forget**

**All say: Lest we forget**



**THE LAST POST - Bugler, David Young, The Bankstown & Yagoona Brass**

*(In military tradition, the Last Post is the bugle call that signifies the end of the day's activities. It is also sounded at military funerals to indicate that the soldier has gone to his final rest and at commemorative services)*

**ONE MINUTE' S SILENCE - a sign of respect and a time for reflection, concluding with 8 bells.** Rung by **Mr. Garry Marks, Treasurer & Librarian, The Bankstown & Yagoona Brass** (Signaling the conclusion of the one minute's silence, 8 Bells will toll which is recognised on board ships as 'the end of watch' but is also a way of saying, a Sailors or Merchant Mariners own watch is over...a nautical euphemism for "finished". The MNWMF thanks the Bankstown City Band for arranging the 8 Bells).

**ROUSE - Bugler, David Young, The Bankstown & Yagoona Brass**

*(After the one minute's silence and 8 bells, flags are raised from half mast to the masthead as the Rouse is sounded. Today it is associated with the Last Post at all military funerals, and at services of dedication and remembrance).*

*Flag Attendants - Miss Rebecca Muscat & Miss Annette Espenes, Members of The Bankstown & Yagoona Brass*

## LAYING OF WREATHS

*Introductions by: David Field, Chairman & Capt. Ted van Bronswijk, Director, The Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund, (MNWMF).*

*Co-Ordination of Wreaths to be laid & Wreath Bearers: Stephen Westfield & Dan Crumlin, Directors The Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund (MNWMF), & Stan Moriarty, Secretary, MNWMF.*

*And with the valued assistance of Wreath Bearers, Garry Marks, Stan Moriarty & The Bankstown & Yagoona Brass.*

## BLESSING OF NEW MEMORIAL PLAQUES

WWII Merchant Navy Veterans

To be installed within the Columbarium



### FINAL PRAYER AND BENEDICTION

*Rev. Tay Un. Head of Mission to Seafarers (MTS) Sydney*

### CLOSING COMMENTS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*David Field, Chairman Navy War Memorial Fund*

The Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund Ltd (MNWMF)

[www.mnwmf.com.au](http://www.mnwmf.com.au)

### The Australian National Anthem

Australians all let us rejoice  
For we are one and free;  
We've golden soil and wealth for toil;  
Our home is girt by sea;  
Our land abounds in nature's gifts  
Of beauty rich and rare;  
In history's page, let every stage  
Advance Australia Fair.  
In joyful strains then let us sing  
Advance Australia Fair.

---

PLEASE JOIN FOR REFRESHMENTS WITHIN THE MEMORIAL GARDEN

HOSTED BY THE ONECROWN GROUP OF CEMETERIES

AND

ROOKWOOD GENERAL CEMETERY RESERVE LAND MANAGER (RGC)

# THE MERCHANT NAVY WAR MEMORIAL FUND LTD

## Vision Statement

To ensure that the Australian merchant Navy *“A title emblazoned in battle and honour in freedom”* is recognised as an important part of Australian Maritime History and Social Culture.

## Primary Objective

Honouring the memory of Australian Merchant Navy Mariners who gave their lives in the service of their country in World Wars I and II and giving thanks for those that were able to return to their families.

## WHAT WE DO “MAKING A DIFFERENCE”

Our aim in all that we undertake is to **“MAKE A DIFFERENCE”** and are guided by the following **SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES**

- **Accepting the responsibility of our generation** to ensure the greater recognition of the vital role undertaken by the Australian Merchant Navy in WWI and WWII.
- Identifying and partnering with other organisations that can assist our efforts to advance the cause of the greater recognition of The Merchant Navy.
- Ensuring ongoing viability and vitality of the Annual Commemorations at Rookwood NSW (*April*) and the National Merchant Navy War Memorial, Canberra, ACT (October) by further developing the partnership with the Rookwood General Cemetery (RGC) and the National Capital Authority (NCA) and encouraging increased participation, especially among younger generations.
- Supporting where possible other Merchant Navy War Memorials throughout Australia.
- Enhance the close partnership developed with the **Australian Maritime College (AMC)**, through the **“Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund Scholarship”** and identifying potential areas of part and/or full-time sea going opportunities for AMC Cadets.
- Prudent management of the MNWMF Investment Portfolio, in partnership with our external Financial Advisor, to ensure that the Fund can meet the cost of its activities and maintain the value of the portfolio in real terms.
- Pursuing opportunities for Federal and State Grants, Corporate Sponsorship, Bequests and Donations to offset costs and assist to fund new initiatives.
- **An ongoing three (3) year “Strategic Plan”** that documents policies and procedures of key activities that can be followed and further developed by those who follow.
- Working with the various Merchant Navy Organisations, throughout Australia, in the achievement of our joint objectives.
- **Encouragement of the next generation**, to take up our and our predecessors’ passion and commitment to ensure that future Australian Merchant Navy recognition is as secure in the future as in the past and the present. We remain highly committed to continuing to work in what we believe is the best interests of our cherished Merchant Navy Veterans and the wider Australian Merchant Navy Community.



## STRATEGIC PLAN 2023–2025

The MNWMF has several important major Annual Projects, including:

- **The April Commemoration at the Memorial and Columbarium, Rookwood Sydney**, in partnership with the Rookwood General Trust (RGT)
- **The October Commemoration at the National Merchant Navy War Memorial, King's Park, Canberra**, in partnership with the National Capital Authority (NCA)
- **Partnership with the Australian Maritime College (AMC) in Launceston**, through our funding of SIX ANNUAL MNWMF SCHOLARSHIPS and assisting to identify potential seagoing career opportunities for AMC Cadets. Since inception 55 scholarships totaling 139,500 have been awarded.

**Our rolling three-year Strategic Plan, covers additional Major and Smaller Projects, that we feel can further assist to achieve this important objective.**

### MAJOR NEWER PROJECTS 2023 - 2025

(i) **DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF WWI AND WWII PLAQUES AT ROOKWOOD MERCHANT NAVY MEMORIAL**

*(as the MNWMF commissioned in 2019, at The Merchant Navy War Memorial, King's Park, Canberra)*



First Concept Draft, from our Architect Mr. James Andrews, Daryl Jackson Alastair Swayn, Canberra. James designed the Major New & Remedial Works, to our National Merchant Navy War Memorial, Canberra that was officially opened, by the Hon. Linda Reynolds, CSC Minister for Defence, on 20 October 2019

- (ii) EQUAL RECOGNITION OF THE MERCHANT NAVY FLAG ON NATIONAL FLAG DAY – 3RD SEPTEMBER ANNUALLY, WHICH IS ALSO MERCHANT NAVY DAY.
- (iii) ADDITIONAL RECOGNITION OF THE ROLE OF THE MERCHANT NAVY WITHIN THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL (AWM)
- (iv) CAMPAIGN FOR APPROVAL OF MERCHANT NAVY EMBLEM ON EXISTING WAR MEMORIALS IN AUSTRALIA
- (v) SUPPORT THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL (AWM) **“PLACES OF PRIDE”** LAUNCHED BY AWM IN NOVEMBER 2018 TO RECORD ALL MEMORIALS THROUGHOUT AUSTRALIA ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER



- (vi) WORKING WITH MERCHANT NAVY ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SCHOOLS PROGRAM COVERING THE HISTORY OF THE AUSTRALIAN MERCHANT NAVY

## NEWER SMALLER PROJECTS 2023 - 2025

- (i) ESTABLISH THE SHIPPING COMPANY NAMES AND LOGOS TO MATCH THE SHIPS ON THE WWI AND WWII PLAQUES AND CONSIDER HAVING AN ADDITIONAL PLAQUE MADE FOR THE CANBERRA AND ROOKWOOD MN MEMORIALS
- (ii) SUPPORT THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL (AWM) PROJECT **“HONOUR OUR FALLEN”** WHERE THE PURPOSE IS TO ENSURE A FLAG IS ERECTED EACH ANZAC DAY FROM 2018 ON EVERY GRAVE OR MEMORIAL PLAQUE IN AUSTRALIA, TO HONOUR THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED THEIR COUNTRY
- (iii) ESTABLISH A PROTOCOL WITH AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL THAT ON NATIONAL FLAG DAY/MERCHANT NAVY DAY (3 SEPT ANNUALLY) THAT:
  - (A) Merchant Navy flag be flown with the Australian National flag above the War Memorial; and
  - (B) Merchant Navy representative be among those laying wreaths on that evening
- (IV) RECOGNITION OF ANZAC DAY 25TH APRIL AT ROOKWOOD AND CANBERRA MERCHANT NAVY MEMORIALS – FLAGS FLYING AND POPPIES ON OUR WWI & WWII PLAQUES
- (V) MERCHANT NAVY RECOGNITION AT UPGRADED HYDE PARK, SYDNEY, WAR MEMORIAL



**Front Row:** \* Captain Ted van Bronswijk, Director MNWMF, and Federal & NSW Master, The Company of Master Mariners of Australia \* Mr Laurie Watts, President, Australian Light Horse Association \* Dr. Adrian Bryant, Veterinary Surgeon  
**Back Row:** \* Sergeant Major Roy Mientjes, Trooper Bruce Smith, Trooper AnnMarie Lawson & Junior Trooper Justine Lawson



### SEEKING APPROVAL OF MERCHANT NAVY EMBLEM ON EXISTING WAR MEMORIALS

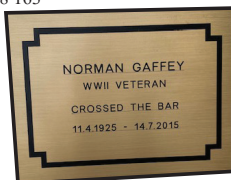
One of our newer projects, was unveiled in a very moving ceremony, at St. Andrews Village Memorial Bravery Garden, in Ballina NSW on Saturday 15th October, 2022. Some 80 representatives of the various Services, Local Dignitaries & Elderly Residents of the Village (many on their beds), as well as a large representation, of the Ballina community.

**WWII MERCHANT NAVY VETERANS INDIVIDUAL MEMORIAL PLAQUES**  
**At Merchant Navy Memorial & Columbarium**  
**Rookwood General Cemetery**

Pic shows one side of the Columbarium, at the The Merchant Navy Memorial & Columbarium at Rookwood, Sydney and an example of the newer plaques, made for the MNWMF, by our Plaque Contractor, Phoenix Foundry.

**The process, for families wishing to have a Plaque made is:**

- \* An email or phone call to discuss to:  
Mr. Stan Moriarty: [secretary@mnwmf.com.au](mailto:secretary@mnwmf.com.au) 0418 488 163
- \* MNWMF orders Plaque - (13.5cm x 10cm)
- \* Cost to Families, is \$272 (incl. GST)
- \* MNWMF arranges with Rookwood General General Trust, to have the Plaque installed
- \* MNWMF discusses with Families, arrangements they would like to make, to visit the Memorial Site.



**HOW CAN YOU ASSIST US**  
**TO PLAN AND DELIVER MEANINGFUL PROJECTS “THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE” IN THE PRESENT AND FUTURE RECOGNITION OF THE AUSTRALIAN MERCHANT NAVY**

Our ability to cover annual costs, fund major and smaller projects and specific grants to other Merchant Navy associated organisations, requires prudent financial management.

**The MNWMF board recognises that each generation of office bearers, have a responsibility to do all they can to ensure the greater recognition and promotion of the vital role played by the Australian merchant Navy in WWI & WWII & in all the years since.**

Ideas, suggestions, recommendations on areas related to the greater recognition of the Australian Merchant Navy, in war & peace.

**DONATIONS, REQUESTS, SPONSORSHIPS OF PROJECTS**

**Donations may be directed to:**

The Secretary, Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund Ltd (MNWMF)  
PO Box 3058, Rosemeadow NSW 2560

**OR by EFT to:**

Account Name: **MNWMF Project Development Fund**  
BSB: 032 197 Account No.: 477 684 Reference: Your name

**Please Note:** if paying by EFT please forward an email with your name, address, phone & organisation (*if applicable*) to [secretary@mnwmf.com.au](mailto:secretary@mnwmf.com.au)

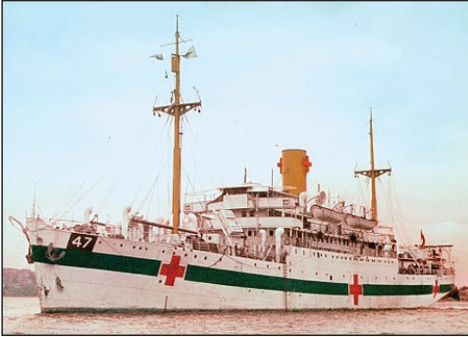
A receipt will be forwarded for all donations received.

If you would like to discuss how you can assist, please make contact with David Field,  
[chairman@mnwmf.com.au](mailto:chairman@mnwmf.com.au) 0414 900 393

Sean Barrett, Deputy Chairman, [s.s.barrett@bigpond.com](mailto:s.s.barrett@bigpond.com) 0407 490 516

The MNWMF is currently pursuing an application for registration as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR)

## 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SINKING OF THE 2/3 AUSTRALIAN HOSPITAL SHIP CENTAUR ON THE 14<sup>TH</sup> OF MAY 1943



In WWII, the 2/3 Australian Hospital Ship Centaur was registered as Hospital Ship No 47 and notified as such to the enemy. She travelled under the Red Cross, correctly marked as a hospital ship, the hull painted white with a green band around, displaying the number 47 and prominent Red Crosses on the hull, funnel and stern. At night she was brightly illuminated with flood lights.

On 14 May 1943 Centaur was en route from Sydney to New Guinea via Cairns when she was sunk by a Japanese submarine 32 nautical miles East of Moreton Island, near Brisbane.

Of the 332 people on board, 268 died, while only 64 survived.

As MV Centaur prior to conversion to a hospital ship, she was operated by the Blue Funnel Line as a cargo-passenger ship off the West Australian Coast up to Singapore.

In November 1941 she rescued survivors of the German Raider HSK Kormoran that had just sunk HMAS Sydney.

Centaur was converted into a hospital ship with the aim of ferrying patients between Port Moresby and various ports down to Sydney. Her conversion began in January 1943 and was completed two months later.

Now the 2/3rd AHS Centaur had a fully equipped operating theatre and dental surgery and could carry 252 patients in beds in wards constructed in the previous livestock holds.

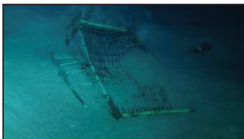
Centaur kept her 74 Merchant Navy crew, but her 64 medical staff were all members of the Australian Army. The men were from the Australian Army Medical Corps including doctors, dentists and radiographers while the women were nursing sisters from the Australian Army Nursing Service. There was also a Red Cross Representative on board and at the time of sinking, a Torres Strait pilot.

Centaur completed two voyages with patients including wounded Japanese.

These were dangerous times off the east coast of Australia. Between May 1942 and May 1943 it is documented that some 24 Merchant vessels had been sunk by enemy action with much loss of life.

In mid-morning of the 12th May 1943, Centaur left from Sydney to sail north.

Shortly after 4 am on 14 May, while most on board were asleep, a torpedo struck Centaur's port side, hitting the oil fuel tank which ignited in a massive explosion. The bridge superstructure collapsed, and the funnel crashed onto the deck. Everything was covered with burning oil and a fire quickly raged across the ship and in the water. Sea water rushed in through the gaping hole in her side.



Many of those onboard not killed in the explosion or fire, were trapped as the ship started to go down bow first. In just three minutes Centaur was gone.

The survivors were at sea for a day and half, many with severe injuries and burns, before they were sighted by a RAAF Avro Anson crew while escorting ships sailing from

Brisbane and then picked up by the USS Mugford also on escort duty.

The only surviving nursing sister was Sister Nell Savage. Although she and others were badly injured, they gave what help they could to their fellow survivors. Sister Savage was awarded the George Medal for her efforts.

The sinking of an unarmed hospital ship near Brisbane by an enemy submarine was a shock to the nation and brought the war close to home in the minds of the public.

In 2009 the members of the 2/3 AHS Centaur Association worked hard to get a search for Centaur, the exact position of which was unknown. The work was rewarded with a successful search funded by the Federal and Queensland Governments and managed by David Mearns. The Association designed a plaque which now lies on the deck of Centaur, 2000 metres below the surface.

In the centre of the plaque is a DVD bearing the names of those on board and messages from relatives and friends

The loss of those on Centaur was felt directly by thousands of families and friends. Eighty years later many have passed on, but those who remain still feel the pain of lost fathers, uncles, aunts, relatives and friends, all killed on a mission of mercy.



**Lest we Forget**