

# MERCHANT NAVY NEWS

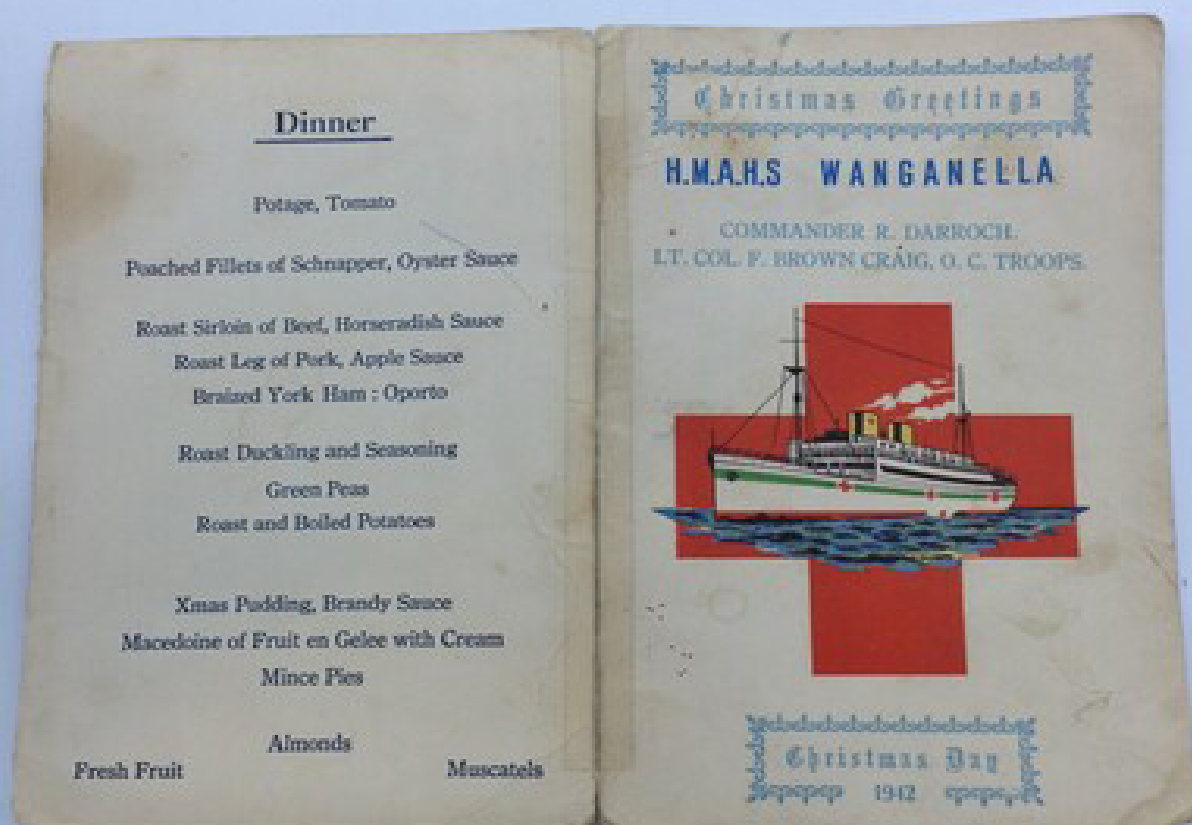
Newsletter of the Merchant Navy Association and the  
Merchant Navy RSL Sub-Branch NSW

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TO FOSTER THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE SEA

## Huddart Parker Ltd - War Service



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*Seasons Greetings to All*

## Huddart Parker Ltd - War Service

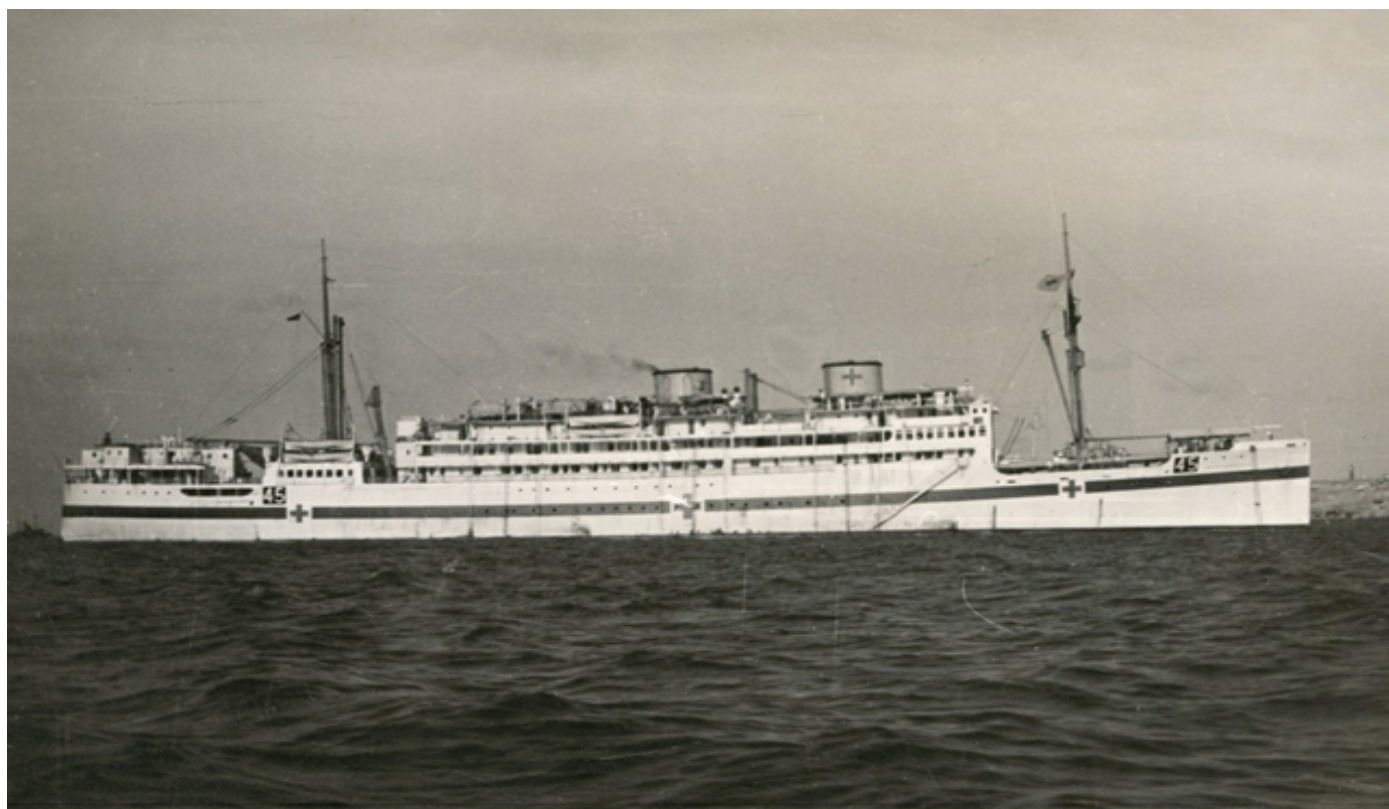


In September 1946, there moved through Sydney Heads a sleek, black passenger liner. Her white upper-works and buff funnels glistened clean and fresh, and altogether she presented a picture of grace and efficiency. Old-timers on the waterfront recognised her at once as M.V. "Wanganella," of the Huddart Parker Line, a vessel that, prior to the war, achieved great popularity in the Trans-Tasman Service and carried thousands of happy tourists in cruises to the New Zealand Sounds and Pacific Isles.

"Demobbed" and refitted, she resumed her place in the Merchant Service, and had the distinction of being the first British liner to enter the Trans-Pacific service after the cessation of hostilities. The first trip was from Sydney to Vancouver, via Auckland, Suva and Honolulu.

On her next voyage – her first in the Trans-Tasman service since the war, she struck Barretts Reef at the entrance to Wellington Harbour with disastrous results.

A long period entailed in repair work and a great loss to commerce, at a period when the vessel was most urgently needed, occasioned grave concern for the Company. On her ultimate return to the Australian-New Zealand travel, her successful operation was proof of the high regard in which she was held by the travelling public.



## **Huddart Parker Ltd - War Service**

For nearly five years the ship served as an Australian Hospital Ship, and in place of the luxurious lounges and passenger accommodation, operating theatres, wards and surgeries occupied her decks. Happy holiday-seeking cruise passengers were replaced by pain-wracked men from the Western Desert, from Kokoda and Buna, from the Mediterranean and the Pacific naval units, and aviators from the skies of many battle fronts.

On May 19th, 1941, “Wanganella” was taken over in Melbourne, and her conversion to a hospital ship began immediately.

The stately Tudor Lounge on the Promenade Deck became an operating theatre, equipped with the most modern appliances.

Adjoining rooms housed X-ray and other scientific devices, with the dental surgery on the Shelter Deck.

On the lower decks long wards, with tiered beds, looked cool and clean with their soft pastel green walls and shaded lights.

The whole ship was painted white, with the conventional broad green band around her hull, broken at intervals for large red crosses, illuminated at night.

On July 21st, 1941, the crew signed Articles and she left for Sydney on July 31st. Her first trip was to Singapore, via Melbourne and Fremantle, when she carried a Hospital unit, 2/13th A.G.H. Arriving at Singapore on September 13th, she disembarked the Hospital Unit and returned to Sydney.

Her second trip was to Suez, where she embarked wounded men from the Middle East for Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. It was during this trip that the first enemy activity was experienced. While the “Wanganella” was in Port Tewfik a bombing raid occurred, and although bombs fell nearby, no damage was sustained to the ship. The liner “Georgic” which had been hit in a previous raid was burning fiercely in the harbour.

Two more trips to the Middle East followed, and then in May, 1942 – Australian wounded from New Guinea were taken aboard at Port Moresby for Sydney. Wounded for New Zealand was the next objective, these being loaded at Port Tewfik for Wellington, N.Z. On her return to Sydney from this trip “Wanganella” proceeded to Townsville and embarked wounded Americans, who were brought to the American Hospital at Melbourne (now Melbourne General Hospital).

With two battlefronts to serve, trips were arranged to the Middle East and New Guinea alternately. Port Tewfik, Port Moresby, and Milne Bay were frequent destinations, whilst New Zealand was visited as required on the return from the Mediterranean.

### **THE BOMBAY EXPLOSION**

Trip No 13 proved to be the most sensational of “Wanganella’s” service history. She left



## Huddart Parker Ltd - War Service

Sydney late in March 1944, and called at Fremantle, on route to Bombay. While lying at Bombay on April 14th, 1944, the ship was shaken by an explosion which occurred with disastrous results. A vessel loaded with cotton, and carrying a considerable quantity of explosives, caught fire and two terrific explosions followed.

Just after 4 p.m. several of the ships officers were standing on the upper deck when their attention was drawn to a fire in the dock, less than two miles from "Wanganella." They agreed that it was a ship afire and were watching the blaze. Suddenly there was a shattering explosion. "Wanganella" shuddered as the blast struck her, and the watchers saw a huge column of flame, smoke and debris leap hundreds of feet into the air. Within a few minutes the whole area was covered with a thick fog. This was composed of smoke, dust and burnt cotton ash. Ships and buildings over a wide area were wrecked by the blast and fire quickly spread through the city. At one time an area of three miles square was ablaze. Twenty ships were damaged – some were lying across the wharves with funnels torn and bent, and masts and gear a hopeless tangle of twisted steel. One vessel was lifted bodily by the blast and deposited across the pier. "Wanganella" was less than two miles from the scene of the explosion, and suffered no harm, although those on board were badly shaken.

Gruesome scenes were witnessed on the waterfront, where dead and injured were everywhere amid the wreckage of the buildings, ships and vehicles. All hospitals were soon filled, and arrangements were made for "Wanganella" to assist.



Photograph. "The Times of India."

Bombay Docks, April 14, 1944.

From 6 p.m. wounded began to arrive and they were being taken aboard all night. The Surgical Staff operated almost without a break for 36 hours, and the ship remained in port for a week. For days bodies were to be seen floating in the harbour, and it is estimated that the casualties exceeded three thousand. Emergency hospitals were arranged, and after "Wanganella" had discharged her patients she proceeded on her way to Taranto, Italy. Here were embarked New Zealand wounded for Wellington and Lyttelton. The efficiency and might of the Allied air offensive were evident at Taranto, which had been smashed completely by our bombers.

## Huddart Parker Ltd - War Service

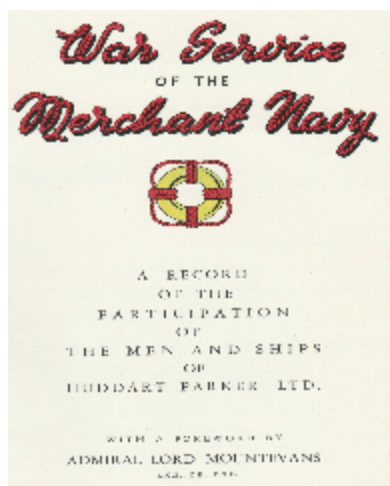
After discharging her wounded in New Zealand, “Wanganella” again returned to Taranto. Just before reaching Colombo she passed through the wreckage of a ship sunk the night before by an enemy submarine – this proved to be the “Tanda”. No survivors were sighted, these having already being picked up. The voyage was continued via Aden, Suez and Port Tewfik to Taranto, where New Zealand wounded were again embarked. On the return trip a call was made at Colombo, where injured survivors of the “Tanda” were taken aboard. Good fortune attended “Wanganella” on her visit to Colombo. She left the port two days before the Japanese air raid, in which the cruiser alongside which she had been moored was sunk.

After returning to Sydney from New Zealand a trip was made to Darwin, to embark a Hospital Unit, and then Torakina and Jacquinot, Bougainville, were visited. At the time the Allies held only a small perimeter, and the enemy were uncomfortably close.

As the Japanese were pushed further back in the Pacific, “Wanganella” touched at new ports. Based at a time on Morotai, she visited Tarakan, Brunei Bay and Labuan, and was one of the first ships into Balikpapan after the harbour was cleared. At Morotai she saw the invasion fleets assembling, and with the collapse of the enemy, picked up P.O.W. and internees at Labuan and Kuching. At the latter port she embarked P.O.W. and internees who had been imprisoned in the Sinchang Barracks. The condition of these unfortunate people was pitiable, and eloquent of the brutalities of a barbaric enemy. The hearts of the whole ship’s company were touched by their plight, and everything possible was done to help them. They were rested a week before being bought to Sydney, via Lae.

Three more trips to Morotai, Labuan and Lae followed, then her war service was over. “Wanganella” came to Melbourne for a refit. Her mission ended, the ship regained her normal appearance, but to those who served in her, memories still recall incidents of her service. There was a day when an Australian destroyer wirelessed for help. A member of the crew had developed appendicitis. Through thick weather and rising seas the ship hurried to the rendezvous. The destroyer was sighted and the ships drew together. Across the intervening seas a boat hurried to the destroyer, the patient was transferred. He quickly recovered after a successful operation.

During her war service “Wanganella” travelled 251,611 miles, and carried 13,383 passengers. The only reminder of her service will be in the memories of the men and women who served in her and the patients who occupied her wards.



# **EULOGY – CAPTAIN MICHAEL MORTIMER**

## **St Jude's Anglican Church, Randwick - 20 October, 2020**

Thank you and good morning.

I'd first like to acknowledge that we are here today on the land of the Gadigal and Bidjigal peoples who traditionally occupied the Sydney coast. I'd also like to acknowledge any aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people attending today, either in person or online, and pay my respects to elders past and present.

I came to realise some years ago that funerals are often: - a commemoration of a tragic event such as a life cut short or an unexpected passing; or, they can be - a celebration of a life well lived.

I'm pleased that this service is to celebrate a long life, and well lived. I've known and been a friend of Michael's for over thirty five years and most of his time in Australia. Of course, no doubt Michael would have been able to provide the specific month and year, and possibly even the date, when we first introduced ourselves through the community here at St Jude's, Randwick.

Michael was born in Surrey, England, the youngest of two children, moving to Devon around the age of five, and then around the age of thirteen on to the Bournemouth/Poole area until leaving for Australia in 1983.

I couldn't help but notice from his school report for the spring term of 1943 that he was absent for 30% of the term, but was never marked as a late arrival. Timeliness was a trait that he closely followed for the rest of his life.

He attended the Southampton Nautical College during 1943/44 and in May '44 signed his indentures with the Royal Mail Lines, a company which in one form or another, he continued with until retiring in 1982. His father had actually worked in a shore based clerical capacity with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company until management and financial malfeasance caused its liquidation following an investigation by the UK government during 1930. Royal Mail Lines was formed in 1932 out of the asset remains of the earlier company. Perhaps an early example of a private company "too big to fail". His training at Southampton of course, coincided with the enormous military build-up in southern England in preparation for the D-Day invasions which commenced on 6 June, 1944.

Instead, in the same month, Michael embarked on his first overseas voyage in a naval convoy across the Atlantic to New York to obtain supplies and equipment for delivery back to England. A confronting and challenging task for a teenager on his first voyage, though by no means unique at the time. His second voyage after returning to England took him to a range of countries including South Africa, along the east coast of Africa, ports in India, Fremantle and Sri Lanka over a period of 9 months during 1944 and '45, during which both the European and Asian theatres of WWII reached their completion.

Over the years he quickly advanced his marine qualifications through stages of senior cadet, 2nd mate, 4th and 3rd officer, and in 1950 was appointed 1st mate. He found time between voyages and study, to marry Betty (who he appears to have first met around 1939 – but that's another story) on 11 November 1950, which of course is also Armistice Day.

Over the years he and Betty had 8 children. Judging from various telegrams, he was absent for most, but not all, of the births. In 1954, he obtained his Certificate of Competency as a 'Master of a Foreign Going Steamship'. He rightly and proudly maintained the title of 'Captain' for the rest of his life. His appointments to various vessels took him all over the world, but most voyages focused primarily around the Caribbean and South America in cargo vessels, or combined passenger and cargo vessels. Of course, such dedication and

commitment to a career comes at a cost, mainly borne by his wife and children.

Unfortunately, in 1980, Betty passed away from cancer.

In 1982 he took some long service leave and caught up with a lady whom he had previously met whilst she was teaching English in Buenos Aires. They were married in February 1982, in this very church, before returning to England. The Rev. Roy Lovitt was the Rector of St Jude's at the time, himself a career Naval Chaplain.

Later in 1982, during yet another period of turmoil in the shipping industry, Michael retired, and he and Gay returned to Australia, arriving in January 1984 to reside in Coogee.

In 2001, he moved to one of the townhouses newly built at the rear of the St Jude's precinct fronting the avenue.

Michael easily settled into life in Australia, and with his customary enthusiasm contributed significantly across a range of community organisations. these included, but were by no means limited to: - the Merchant Navy Association and the Merchant Navy RSL Sub-branch - local Legion and Returned Services Clubs, as well as the Combined Services Club in the Sydney CBD where, purely by coincidence, I'm also a long term member - the Clovelly Bowling Club – Probus - as a warden and rector's warden of St Jude's

As well as providing services to local aged care facilities, particularly with his mate, Noel Bransby

Michael was always an active member of any organisation with which he was associated.

In 1987 he became an Australian Citizen and again, purely by coincidence and as much to my own surprise, attended the very same citizenship ceremony which Veralene, who will shortly read Psalm 23, was also attending, forging a friendship and involvement with our family which continued for the rest of his life. Michael subsequently often participated at such ceremonies as a community representative.

He was persistent over many years in working to gain official and equal recognition with enlisted service personnel for the contribution of the Merchant Navy during times of war. Just 12 months ago, he was an official guest at the opening by the Minister for Defence, Senator the Honourable Linda Reynolds, of additional works at the national merchant navy war memorial in Canberra which officially recognised the large number of Australian Merchant Mariners who died during the first and second world wars.

Perhaps too often, Michael and I bored a lunch or dinner table with our mutual discussions of the specifications, lifting capacities etc of cargo vessels, or about ship management, operations and chartering, even before we commenced reminiscences of various ports throughout the world. however Gay, almost never, interrupted these discussions and even sometimes encouraged us, as she well understood how important Michael's maritime career and experiences were to him. Sadly, Gay passed away also from cancer, in 1998.

For decades he took upon himself to make by hand the hundreds of candles to be used to light the carols by candlelight service held each year at St Jude's. He was a strong advocate of members of the parish undertaking tasks themselves in order to establish that sense of community and commitment for which St Jude's stood and represented. As rector's warden and parish nominator, he was instrumental in an assiduous search for the appropriate replacement rector to the Rev. Roy Lovitt.

When the Rev. Greg Job took up his appointment, along with the other wardens, Michael spent great care and time to ensure that Greg fully understood the nature and character of the parish, and it's role and status within the Randwick community. No doubt a carryover from the long experience of handing over vessels to another ship's Master for the next voyage.



Until recent years, he would always ensure that the bunting for the annual parish fair was erected in good time, and always that it was removed the same day (regardless of the weather). Flag etiquette required this, and his ship's Master experience obviously was key to maintaining these standards.

During retirement, he obtained qualifications in such areas as oxyacetylene and electric arc welding and woodwork, as well as undertaking tapestry works, examples of which remain in the old council chambers within the St Jude's precinct.

His wonderful copperplate writing on parish signage and records over many years was outstanding, but also belied repeated comments in his school reports that, for example, he "can do intelligent work but his handwriting is deplorable".

He was a man of many talents and skills. I recall even last year, sitting in with Michael during an assessment for home care assistance, and the assessor had her list of questions, including whether Michael had any outside interests. After mentioning one or two, the assessor was ready to move on to the next question, but Michael protested that he hadn't finished yet, and then proceeded to offer a long list of activities, as well as trying to see a movie each week, regularly seeing live musicals, travelling to Lake Macquarie every second weekend to visit Margaret, regular travel within Australia, and so on. At the end of this, the assessor was compelled to comment that Michael seemed to have more of a social life than she did - even if she was less than half his age!



Michael of course was rigorous in his records and planning. He'll be interred in the columbarium in the St Jude's cemetery in due course. The wording which Michael has requested for the niche plaque includes two references which may require some explanation.

Firstly, the words 'Per Mare Ubique'. This was the Latin motto for the Royal Mail Lines, and it translates to 'everywhere by sea'. Michael's

loyalty to his lifetime employer and his maritime career is to be remembered forever.

Secondly, the words 'Crossed the Bar' will also be inscribed. This is a traditional maritime reference to the transition from a temporary life inshore and the crossing of a sand bar (representing the transition from life to death) and into the wider oceans of the future, with the hope of assistance from life's enduring 'pilot'. The phrase was widely adopted by mariners a long time ago from a poem written by Alfred, Lord Tennyson in 1889. Shortly, Tony White will recite the poem for us.

Captain Mortimer, you have left a legacy across the world, of civility, courtesy, and gentlemanly manners, and of getting the job done with the minimum of fuss.

Michael, it has been a pleasure and privilege to have known you.  
Safe travels friend.

Andrew Pointing  
20 October 2020  
Clovelly, NSW Australia



# MERCHANT NAVY RSL SUB-BRANCH

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

I would like to express my very best wishes to all, service members, associate members and affiliate members of the MN Sub-branch and to their families.

This edition of Merchant Navy News will be the last one for 2020 so I sincerely hope you all have a pleasant, healthy and safe Christmas and New Year.

As everyone knows, this past year, 2020 has been most unusual as a result of the dreadful virus which arrived in our country (most probably from overseas airline passengers) and has inflicted havoc for so many people, especially the elderly and infirm.

As I write, we are told that our governments, federal and state, have managed to curb the outbreak so perhaps the worst is behind us. Many of our members are elderly, so it is wise to take care and follow the sensible instructions issued by the medical experts.

On a personal note, my wife Wynne and I celebrated our 62nd wedding anniversary in mid-November so as I had long been interested in the RSL owned 'Hyde Park Inn' which is located in Elizabeth Street Sydney I decided to make a booking there for a few nights.

The name properly describes the place because it is located just across the road from Hyde Park with expansive views of the park and the Sydney War memorial. It has not been called a hotel because it does not have a dining room. That may deter some people, but the place is much like a motel in that free parking is available in their underground carpark and a good 'continental' breakfast is supplied for each guest.

Right next door to the Inn in Elizabeth Street is a very nice restaurant where full meals are available..

I found the accommodation while being motel style with a small kitchenette was excellent, and at a very reasonable price. Free parking is available in their underground carpark. All RSL members and family can enjoy a discounted price.

I urge those who may wish to spend a few nights in the centre of the city to contact the office by calling (02) 9264 6001. (see page six in the RSL NSW 2021 diary.)

On other matters you will appreciate that we have been unable to have our usual quarterly meetings this year but our enterprising and most-efficient secretary Merrill Barker made a great success of the usual service we have on Merchant Navy Day, September 3rd at Mosman in Sydney. It was no mean feat because at that time all outdoor meetings had a maximum restriction of fifteen people. The Mayor of Mosman, our Patron, as usual attended, later remarking on the way how everything was arranged and how the half-hour service was so well conducted. We are fortunate to have Merrill, an affiliate member, as our secretary on our committee.

Most of you would have heard that RSL NSW decided to conduct a service in Martin Place on Saturday 15th August. This service was to celebrate the day the Second World War ended on 15th August 1945, just 75 years prior. It was made clear that attendance at the service was restricted to a selected group of World War two veterans. Members of the public were not to be permitted to attend so were restricted entry to the enclosed security area.

Personally, I am proud of the fact that I have, as president of the Merchant Navy Sub-branch over many years, been able to establish a good relationship with the staff at RSL NSW. Their plan was to select a total of six WW2 veterans, one from the Navy, one from the

# MERCHANT NAVY RSL SUB-BRANCH

Army, one from the Air Force and two elderly ladies who I assumed were either nurses or AWAS as guests at the service. I was there representing the 'fourth service', the Merchant Navy.

Several weeks prior I had a phone call from a lady at RSL NSW who was arranging the service. She told me the State Governor would be attending and would deliver the address. When discussing who would be the guests she said "Don, you are number one on my list". I have been instructed about that." This could be considered how the Merchant Navy Sub-branch is now recognised by the senior staff at State Branch. Our three senior committee members have also made strong efforts in that regard. Merrill is also a member of the Martin Place Anzac Day Dawn service committee.

Aware as I was that no other person was to attend the service I was also pleased at the decision, made at my request, that our affiliate member Sister Mary Leahy OAM could join me at the service. I had told the RSL staff that Sister Mary was an RSL member and it was her birthday that day. She had accepted my invitation to a birthday lunch in the city, something I tried to do each year. They then made sure a specially marked chair next to me was allocated to Mary.

At the conclusion of the service the Governor remained in the tented area, moving to all six veterans, speaking to each of us in turn. I took the opportunity of introducing her to Sister Mary explaining why she was with me and about her birthday. The Governor was kind enough to remove the mask she was wearing and join Mary and me with a photo.



The annual Merchant Navy Service at Norah Head organised by Member for Swansea, Ms Yasmin Catley will be held this year. For nineteen years Vice President Bernie O'Brien, who lived nearby, attended this service representing the Merchant Navy. As Bernie had 'crossed the bar' several years ago I have made sure I attend each year and lay a wreath. Almost always Merrill Barker and Bob Harding also attend. The three of us will be there this year on Saturday, 5th December at 11am.

In the next issue of MN News, I plan to insert an article about 'a ship'. Like all veterans who went to sea during the war we have memories of our ships and likely, one special ship. Next issue.' My ship.

Secretary Merrill will be posting out 'renewal' forms to our members mid December.

Very best wishes to all of you.

Don Kennedy OAM  
President.



The Holy Rood Church  
Southampton U.K. –  
apparently the first  
church bombed in WW2.  
It has now been turned  
into a Merchant Navy  
Memorial. Photo kindly  
sent in by MNA member  
Margaret Coen.



Merchant Navy  
Association Secretary  
Elizabeth Sandeman-  
Gay presents donation  
cheques from the  
association to Rev. Tay  
(Mission to Seafarers)  
and Sister Mary Leahy (   
Apostleship of the Sea)  
at a CMMA meeting in  
Sydney.

## **THOSE WHO HAVE CROSSED THE BAR**

**Capt. MICHAEL MORTIMER 11/10/20 WWII**

**THEY SAIL FOREVERMORE UNDER THE RED ENSIGN**



# RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

## Allen J Seabrook – A Seafaring History - Merchant Navy, World War 2

(Allen was born in 1925, lives in Brisbane and is still going strong!)



### 1941-1942

My seafaring career commenced in December 1941 when I signed up as an apprentice seaman with the *Athel Line* - a subsidiary of *United Molasses Ltd.*

*Athel Line* operated a fleet of tankers, specially constructed for the carriage of molasses. Molasses being such a dead weight cargo, only alternate tanks were used, thus alleviating undue strain on the hull structure.

Prior to signing up with *Athel Line*, I had attended the *Sir John Cass Nautical School* in Jewry Street, London, for nine months. The school was part of the Technical Institute and where budding mates and masters attended for tuition prior to sitting for a certificate of competence. During my attendance at the school, there were no special classes for cadets (as we were referred to) and so attended lectures designed for those aspiring to obtain a 2nd Mates Certificate. This really proved useful both academically and theoretically. However, towards the end of my term at the school, the repetition of lectures was creating a lack of interest - especially with one of the lecturers. He had what I came to regard as an aggravating habit of concluding every statement with, 'You see?' so often that I soon found myself scoring the number of times he said it per lecture rather than concentrating on the lecture itself!

In January of 1942 I was sent to Liverpool to join my first ship, the *Athel Princess*. Although built in 1929 and adorned in drab war-time grey, the tanker was well furbished and the accommodation for apprentices quite comfortable.



## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

There were three other apprentices, although two were still on leave and I was soon advised I was the junior and shown to the appropriate cabin. I was yet to meet my cabin mate. I did note, however, that the sole difference between the senior and junior's cabin was an additional porthole.

The first mate obviously took me to be a greenhorn as the first job I was given was to clear snow off the bridge deck and polish the brass work. At the time it was still snowing heavily, and the ship was not expected to sail for several days. Greenhorn or not - I thought it wise to comply with my orders at that time.

After a week or so in port, we finally joined a North Atlantic convoy, destined for Halifax, then another convoy to New York and yet another to Cuba to receive a full cargo of molasses. Here we loaded at Matanzas and Havana.

On subsequent voyages, other Cuban ports were visited, including Guantanamo Bay - a large US Naval base and convoy forming port on the island of Cuba.

The homeward voyage followed a similar pattern to the outbound except for a stopover at Fort Lauderdale, a port 20 miles north of Miami. At Fort Lauderdale, some of the cargo of molasses was discharged to lighten the vessel to the WNA (Winter North Atlantic) mark on the Plimsoll line.

During 1942 I made three similar trips on the *Athel Princess* to Cuba and during my apprenticeship, completed eleven West Indies voyages.

My recollections of my first year at sea are somewhat vague. I'm aware of frequent submarine attacks which took place throughout the year without significant success to the enemy. We also experienced severe and quite alarming Atlantic storms - on such occasions I would have even more admiration and gratitude for the personnel serving on the Naval escorts.

During one particularly severe storm, the port side bridge wing, lifeboat and davit were extensively damaged. The apprentices' accommodation was immediately below the boat deck and also suffered damage.

I recall the problems with the nighttime station-keeping on North Atlantic convoys. We experienced a few close shaves from being side swiped, but not as hazardous as encountering the odd ship running through the convoy - usually an American or Greek ship. I wondered at how a ship given a course to steer could end up almost 90° off course - but happen it did! It was not surprising at daylight to see that at least one ship in the convoy had suffered damage overnight from a run-away ship.

Two events of my first year at sea remain fixed in my mind. During one outward-bound trip, and being on day work rather than watch keeping, I was given the task of cleaning out a domestic freshwater tank on the poop-deck. On this particular day it was also decided to have gunnery practice.

It wasn't too often that the antiquated 1917 vintage 4" gun, mounted at the stern was fired. Whether by design or accident, I was not advised of the pending gunnery drill - I suspect it may have been by design, since I was supposed to be part of the gun crew.

The outcome was that the gun was fired whilst I was in the midst of cleaning the inside of the tank. The noise of the gun detonation within the tank was, to say the least, alarming and deafening. Fortunately, only one shell was fired. Clambering out of the tank, which was quite close to the gun platform, I noticed the gun was tilted at an unusual angle and the gun crew looking more startled than I was! The gun breach had blown open and the mounting damaged. The blast also carried away the timber blackout screen around the galley and

## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

engine room doors. Fortunately, no one suffered any lasting damage, although the gunnery drill was quickly aborted.

The second event took place while entering the Mersey under pilotage. I happened to be on the bridge on telegraph duty, when the captain, who was a fitness fanatic, decided to show his prowess to the pilot.

Like all ships, we had the usual array of wooden fire buckets housed in a deck bracket, each side of the wheelhouse. To be precise, six buckets were secured each side of the wheelhouse. The underside of each bucket had a recess.

Captain Martin boasted to the pilot that he could lift and hold a fire bucket full of water at shoulder height and arm straight. This was not an exercise I had previously known him to perform - he normally showed his skills on an awning spar.

He proceeded to demonstrate his strength - but when he lifted the bucket, he saw two or three packets of American cigarettes. It was subsequently found that all twelve buckets had cigarettes secreted in them!

Captain Martin was not amused, and he never did get around to demonstrating his skills. Naturally, the apprentices were deemed guilty of the offence, but to be candid, I never discovered who had planted the cigarettes.

At least the pilot had a good sense of humour. Unfortunately, the captain, who was considered an exemplary gentleman, did not take kindly to the attempt to cheat Customs - especially as he regarded the cigarettes were planted in his domain!



## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

### 1943-1944

During January 1943 the *Athel Princess*, after discharging her cargo of molasses at Liverpool, went into dry dock for general maintenance and repairs. During the refit I was given my first spell of leave. On rejoining the ship in February, I noted it had been enhanced with 'refueling at sea' equipment. It was quite a simple device by which an oil pipeline was trailed out from the stern with floats attached to be picked up by the vessel to be refuelled - or so it appeared. After loading one tank with fuel oil and having received convoy instructions, we proceeded to the mouth of the Mersey to form up on February 13th. As it happened, the convoy proceeded no further that day - whether this was due to superstition or fear of enemy action remained a mystery.

At that time, it was common knowledge that the convoy would proceed onto a different route to cross the North Atlantic in an attempt to elude or minimize risk of submarine attacks. Rather than steaming north-westwards toward Iceland, then down to Nova Scotia, the convoy was routed south to the Moroccan coast before heading due west to the West Indies.

The first week passed without incident - the weather, a decided improvement to that experienced on the northern route. It appeared that this was the route preferred - especially when destined for the West Indies.

On the seventh day out from Liverpool, we had the opportunity to try out our new refuelling apparatus. After a few teething problems we ultimately refuelled four of the escorts that day. This, it appeared, was to be the last of any future refuelling as just before dawn the following morning the *Athel Princess* was hit with two accurately placed torpedoes. One, right amidships (the largest of eleven tank compartments) and the second in the engine room.

I was off watch at that time, sleeping in the top bunk, however the force of the explosion landed me onto the deck, tangled up with the steam radiator which had become detached from the bulkhead. My cabin mate was on watch, so I had the cabin to myself. In the dark, I managed to locate my emergency dilly-bag and headed for the boat deck above the apprentices' accommodation.

The ship remained on a reasonably steady keel and soon it was noticed there was no sign of the convoy. I subsequently heard that we were a few miles astern of the convoy at the time of the attack.

The fuel feed pump had broken down - this was not an unusual breakdown during the fourteen months I'd spent on the ship, though generally quickly rectified. The twin diesels gave next to no trouble but without a fuel supply are useless.

Orders to abandon ship were given and the two port side lifeboats lowered. The starboard side boats were damaged in the attack. Fortunately, the sea was reasonably calm, and the two boats launched and loaded without too much difficulty, despite the injured and hampered with a lack of light - as yet the sun remained below the horizon.

It was known that one off-duty engineer was dead, and all remaining off-duty engineers suffered some injury as their accommodation was directly above the engine room. The most serious injury was sustained by one of the naval gunners, who though on watch, was sitting on a toilet in the stern and immediately above where the torpedo exploded in the engine room. He was fortunate his mate had the foresight to look for him. However, it proved an unfortunate time to answer the call of nature! Amazingly, none of the engine room crew on watch sustained injury.

We hadn't been in the boats long when one of the convoy escorts returned to assess the situation and advised we would be picked up shortly. Ultimately an American destroyer

## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

escort - the *USS Hilary P. Jones* returned and took onboard our entire crew. The *Athel Princess* remained afloat and it was decided that the master and chief engineer would return to the ship, presumably to determine whether it was possible to salvage and at least destroy or collect ship's papers and convoy manuals etc. They returned after a brief inspection having decided salvage was not on.

The destroyer returned to convoy duty while our crew was made as comfortable as conditions allowed. The junior engineers (sparks and apprentices) shared the PO quarters and were well looked after.

The *Athel Princess* was the only fatality that night, though on the following night further attacks were made on the convoy and three ships were sunk. The *Hillary P. Jones* was a hive of activity that evening, even attempting to ram a U-boat.

During the next seven days, while continuing to escort the convoy towards the West Indies, other attacks were made, but no further losses were sustained. It appeared that the southern route was a success and certainly the time spent aboard the destroyer gave a good insight into escort duties.

Finally, the crew from the *Athel Princess* was put to shore in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Here the Puerto Rico Chapter of the American Red Cross took the crew under its wings. We were housed at various hotels around the city and issued some clothing (more suited to the Arctic than the tropics) but the thought was there! They also issued the officers with an invitation to the USA club's casino, where we were well received.

For some of the crew it was their first voyage back at sea after a previous sinking and in fact some members had recently experienced two recent losses and their decline in health was very apparent. The week or so spent in San Juan lifted our spirits however, only to be lowered when we boarded an American troop ship. This ship (pre-war) was doubtless a first-class passenger vessel. As a troopship, and even though it carried nothing like a full complement of troops on this voyage, life aboard was crammed, cold and impersonal. Most of the day seemed to be spent in food queues. Fortunately, the voyage to Baltimore was short.

We spent about another week in Baltimore - a city or port I'd not previously visited. Yet again the hotel was first class, and we were also issued with more suitable clothing and more importantly, a few dollars! The only lasting recollection I have of Baltimore is of one area of the city that boasted a seemingly endless number of theatres, featuring non-stop strip shows and bawdy burlesque, seemingly to cater for all tastes!

Our next move was by rail to New York, where on arrival we were advised that one of the company's ships was being repaired after sustaining and surviving a torpedo attack. The *Empire Viscount*, as it was renamed, was expected to be ready for service in one week.

The crew was billeted in a very central hotel and as I'd made friends on a previous visit I was looking forward to a few days in the Big Apple. I was also well aware of how beneficial a visit to the New York USO clubs could be!

Generally, the clubs were visited by top celebrity artists and I recall on one such visit during the war years being introduced to Lena Horne. At the conclusion of her appearance she invited me and two other apprentices back to her apartment for drinks and supper - a most charming and generous lady.

On 'Fools Day' our crew was directed to the *Empire Viscount* to 'sign on'. The ship was identical to the *Athel Princess*, so for me at least it was almost like being back home, even without a few personal possessions.

During the following days, the ship underwent shake-down trials and was restored. Some



## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

faults were found, especially in the engine room. Once it was considered sea-worthy, we berthed at an oil terminal to load a full cargo of crude oil. We then followed what had become the usual pattern - join up with a small convoy bound for Halifax, then form up into a major UK bound convoy. I for one felt more apprehensive than I had on previous voyages – especially now that I was sitting on a cargo of oil rather than molasses, even if it was only crude oil.

As was the norm, the convoy was attacked and some losses sustained, but it was now generally considered the escorts were better equipped to deal with U-boat attacks.

The *Empire Viscount* duly arrived unscathed in Liverpool and once the cargo was discharged, I was signed off and sent home on leave. This was the last I was to see of the *Viscount* and I don't recall whether she survived the war. I believe that only three of the original pre-war fleet of some thirty *Athel Line Ships* did survive.

After a long spell of leave, almost two months, I was appointed to the *Empire Flint* - a new oil tanker, assigned by the Ministry of War Transport to the Athel Line.

I was joined by two of my fellow apprentices from the *Athel Princess*. The senior apprentice, who had earlier enlisted in the R.N.R. received his call up whilst we were on leave. His replacement had, earlier in the year, survived some twenty odd days in a lifeboat in the Indian Ocean.

The *Empire Flint* was similar to most war-time built tankers and a decided down-grade from the Athel ships. The basic fittings and comfort not surprisingly below what we had become accustomed to. A single screw steam reciprocating engine, rather than twin diesel, meant there was a significant reduction in engineers - none of whom had served on the *Athel Princess*, but there was a similar increase in firemen. Also, the ship was not built for the carriage of bulk molasses. This meant it was oil cargo or nothing!

I was to serve on the *Empire Flint* until mid-November 1944, during which period a few noteworthy events occurred which I still recall.

The *Empire Flint* suffered quite severely from critical engine speed - or revolution vibration, as was detected on the first Atlantic crossing. The critical speed was noted to occur at ten knots - the designated speed of the convoy.

However, after steaming at the critical speed for a few minutes, the vibration throughout the ship became so severe it felt as though the ship would break its back. The noise emanating from the hull and whipping of the masts and jumper stay was quite alarming.

On arrival in Halifax, we were told by the crew from other ships in the convoy, that they observed and heard the ship whipping, but this could have been pure bar room talk. In order to minimise this problem, the convoy commodore allowed us to form our own column towards the centre of the convoy, enabling us to steam up and down within the convoy thus relieving the time spent at critical speed.

On return to the UK, a new propeller was fitted, but it made only a slight reduction in vibration. Following the two North Atlantic crossings, the *Empire Flint* was ordered to the West Coast of Africa - an area in which we were to remain until recalled to the UK in preparation for the D-Day landings.

The time spent on the West Coast (four and a half months in all) was enlightening. During this period, the *Flint* was engaged in shuttling oil to numerous ports from Freetown to Lagos and back. Usually, we spent sufficient time on the coast to step ashore at least once in the port visited. It was quite an experience. I concluded that the West Indies was really up market compared to the West Coast!

## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

Generally, while operating around the coast, we joined up in small convoys. If not, we would have an escort as U-boat attacks remained very much a danger in this area. At one port, which I believe was Accra on the Gold Coast (as it was then named), the ship's berth was a small floating pontoon, which appeared to be at least a mile off the coast and very exposed. An escort remained with us throughout the discharging operation, which was via a submerged pipeline to the mainland.

In May 1944, we received orders to return to Liverpool. At that time one of the more senior (age-wise) D.E.M.S. gunners was suffering mental decline. He sought medical attention and visited a naval doctor who thought it was OK for him to return home with us, but to be kept under observation.

We had only been at sea a few days when the gunner's mental condition worsened. The master decided he should be confined to a spare cabin amidships and kept under close observation. The task was mainly confined to the apprentices. On the third morning of his confinement I opened the cabin door to give him his breakfast, only to find him lying on the deck in a pool of blood.

On examination I found he had inflicted numerous stab wounds to himself with two souvenir African knives. At that time, he was still alive and a frantic call was made for the doctor aboard an escort ship. The doctor boarded the ship via a Breeches Buoy - my first experience with such equipment. Unfortunately, the gunner passed away within minutes of the doctor's arrival and subsequently I experienced my first burial at sea.

An enquiry as to how the gunner had gotten the knives into the cabin during his confinement was held aboard ship. The knives were known to belong to the gunner, and he was allowed visitors during confinement, but no one admitted to anything - naturally.

On return to Liverpool in mid-May, the ship was immediately beset with dockworkers, busily working through the entire length of the ship. I signed off articles one day and the following day, the 23rd May, was signed on special articles, referred to as the "Liberation of Europe" and received an extra one pound a week payment.

In a matter of days, the ship's fighting power was enhanced by the addition of a twelve-pounder mounted above the forecastle, two 40mm Bofors on the foredeck, plus additional twin 20mm Oerlikons on the bridge and poop decks. Temporary accommodation was provided for additional D.E.M.S. gunners.

On departure from Merseyside, the *Flint* was carrying twenty-six gunners, including a young Army Lieutenant in charge of the contingent of gunners. The normal complement was seven gunners. The ship was also fitted out to serve as a fleet oiler. A more conventional system than had been fitted to the *Athel Princess* - an over-the-side system and intended for the transfer of oil whilst in harbour.

While all this activity was in progress, shore leave was very much restricted, so naturally most of the crew were becoming edgy and perhaps psyching themselves up for the big day. On conclusion of the dockyard work, the ship was stocked up with victuals and ammunition we were awaiting orders and as yet the oil tanks remained empty. On June 4th we received orders to proceed to Swansea to load up with a full cargo of fuel oil. We were then ordered to anchor off Swansea in The Mumbles, where we remained for at least a week, much to the crew's agitation. The gunners were however allowed limited gunnery practice - this subsequently proved to be the only occasion the additional fighting power was fired.

Ultimately, limited shore leave was granted, which helped ease the tension - if not the frustration or impatience.

## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS



Allen taking bearings

During mid-June, we received orders to proceed to Weymouth. The harbour there was chock-a-block with a wide array of shipping at anchor, and it was a case of weaving a passage through the ships to locate a reasonably safe anchorage within the harbour.

The *Empire Flint* had barely entered the harbour before a naval vessel signalled a request for fuel. Once an anchorage was located, we notified the vessel we were ready to transfer oil. We had no sooner commenced to pump fuel when a decrepit looking tanker, flying a White Ensign, began flashing a signal lamp at us. The outcome of the message was that the *Empire Flint* was merely an auxiliary fleet oiler and we had no right to refuel vessels in Weymouth - at least not without permission - and such is life.

We were to remain at anchor in Weymouth for several days and during such time avoided any further refuelling as requested. Shore leave was granted, but the township was swarming with troops and Merchant Seamen - at least around the waterfront - so little joy was found there. The pubs, when open, were completely crammed so that it was a battle to reach the bar and then there were insufficient glasses to go around. At best, it worked out one glass between four drinkers, which would hopefully be a pint, rather than a half-pint.

On obtaining a full glass of beer or cider - no real choice - it was 'skol' and 'bottoms-up'. With luck, one could obtain four to five pints of beverage a session and all consumed 'bottoms-up' having the desired effect.

During July, orders were received to proceed to Cherbourg, where the harbour was a hive of activity and the ravages of war very apparent. For the first time during this particular campaign, the *Flint* was treated with a degree of urgency and appreciation. Most of the cargo of oil was transferred ashore by lighters - the remainder to refuelling vessels. The process of discharging into lighters was rather slow, so we spent several days there. The crew was not allowed ashore, but from the seeming devastation and chaos, no one was too concerned.

## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

From Cherbourg, we returned to Swansea, where we again loaded a full cargo of fuel oil. The panic in operations now eased and the majority of the excess D.E.M.S. gunners were discharged from the *Flint*. During the period spent on operational articles, the *Flint* made two further trips to Cherbourg, otherwise August and September were occupied in a confusion of serving little purpose.

On October 2nd, the crew was paid off the 'special articles', only to be signed on the 'normal articles' the following day. I didn't feel that the *Flint* had achieved too much during the four plus months of operational duty. Obviously by October the 'powers that be' had evidently decided that the UK had become acutely short of oil supplies. On the day of resigning articles, the *Flint*, along with several other oil tankers, was despatched, post haste, to the USA.

We loaded at one of the numerous refineries along the Delaware River and returned immediately to Merseyside - the entire voyage taking less than six weeks, which for that era was considered efficient.

I was to sign off the *Empire Flint* at the conclusion of this voyage and immediately transferred to the *Athel Duke* on the 15th November. It was reminiscent of old times boarding this vessel, after a break of some 18 months.

### 1944-1945

It was common knowledge before sailing that it was to be another trip to Cuba for a load of molasses. As usual, the convoy formed off the Mersey to be joined by other ships from the East Coast and proceeded down the Irish Sea and then westward to Halifax. The crossing was comparatively uneventful with no losses, though the weather could have been kinder.

At Halifax, it was the usual procedure of anchoring in the bay and waiting until a convoy and escorts were formed in readiness for the trip down the East Coast and onto the West Indies. Again, this proved uneventful and molasses was loaded at Nuevitas and Havana, Cuba.

On forming up in a north bound convoy we proceeded to New York where we were to discharge some of the cargo to lighten the vessel for the mandatory winter North Atlantic crossing and take on provisions.

We arrived in New York during the festive season and since a berth was not available, we dropped anchor in the Hudson River awaiting orders. In doing so was a disappointment for the crew who were anxious to go ashore for some Christmas spirit. Launch services were available to take crews ashore but were quite costly and none was prepared to spend their limited funds on such a service.

I was on duty on anchor watch until midnight and became aware early in the evening something mysterious was afoot with the crew's movement. Late in the evening I was offered a drink of rum which tasted unusually potent. On enquiry I was told that some of the crew had produced a brew of Bacardi rum, orange juice and fortified antifreeze - pure ethanol. The antifreeze was kept aboard for the emergency diesel generator and kept in two, five gallon drums secured in the bosun's locker.

The original brew was possibly not too dangerous, but as was subsequently learnt some of the imbibers had consumed neat antifreeze whilst the next brew was being prepared. I advised my relief that drinking was going on but didn't appear to be creating problems.



## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

The following morning the ship was unusually quiet when the pilot arrived to take it to its berth. The majority of the deck crew could not be raised. The carpenter had locked himself in his cabin in the fo'cs'le (forecastle) and was subsequently found dead. One of the rather elderly A.B.'s was also discovered dead in his bunk, while the bosun was too drunk to perform his duties.

With the few seamen fit for duties, together with the deck officers, few apprentices and limited engine room staff, the anchor was raised, and we proceeded to berth. There was no seaman fit to take the helm, and in port this task was generally undertaken by a specialist helmsman. Since I was the senior apprentice I had to take the helm and not being accustomed to the task didn't steer the ship to either the pilot or the master's liking, but we didn't strike any obstacles and I had improved by the time we berthed!

Once secured alongside, an inquisition as to what had happened overnight was held. Several crew members were sent to hospital for treatment, together with what members admitted to drinking the brew. Those that weren't prepared to admit to consuming it spent a few worrying days hoping they'd suffer no ill-effects. One young strapping Irish A.B. was to die in hospital while the bosun was finally located up town and almost sightless.

The New York daily papers headlines were blazon with news of the *Athel Duke's* fatal cocktail. Hardly the notoriety the ship sought!

Following several days delay due to the evening of indiscretion and in obtaining crew replacements we headed north to Halifax to re-join a homeward bound convoy. We arrived back at Merseyside late January 1945 and I signed off the *Duke* for a much-needed spell of leave. By this time, I had accrued sufficient sea-time to sit for my 2nd Mates Certificate and ultimately re-enrolled at the *St. John Cass Nautical School* in London for further tuition. I stayed at my parent's home in Bexley, Kent some ten miles south of London, from where I commuted daily once I'd commenced my tuition.

V-2 rockets were still being launched towards London until some time during March when the Russians captured the launching area in Northern Germany. These rockets were a most frightening weapon, the damage caused was extreme. However, the most alarming aspect was experiencing the blast before the arrival of the rocket was heard. I came to the conclusion that being at sea at that time was less frightening than living in the vicinity of London. One such misguided rocket landed within a few hundred yards of our house, but fortunately in a more open area with most of the damage sustained to a power pylon.

By late April I decided I was ready to sit for my 2nd Mates Certificate. The examination rooms were at the Board of Trade Building or Ministry of War Transport as it was renamed during the war years.

I submitted my application to take the examination commencing Monday 7th May. All candidates were told as peace with Germany was imminent, we must continue with the exams on the day peace was declared and could take the following day off. As it transpired, peace was declared on the 8th so there we were sitting in the examination room with a huge racket going on outside. The rooms were in Whitehall and close to the Cenotaph war memorial. The crowd noise worsened as the day wore on making concentration most difficult. After sitting through two days of written exams I was pleased to get home and to contemplate how I would spend the evening and following day. My father had enlisted in the R.A.F. early in 1940, and on V.E. Day was stationed in Cairo, leaving just my mother and self at home. After spending most of the evening at a local pub with friends I was rather the worse for wear the following day. During the morning I was coaxed into heading to the local

## RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

horse-riding school to experience the joys and discomforts of horse riding, at which I was an utter novice. Following another night at the pub I didn't feel too bright head or tail the next morning! Fortunately, I had just a half day of written exams to complete that afternoon. The orals and signals exams were scheduled for the next day.

Once I was issued with my 2nd Mates Certificate I informed the shipping company that I was ready to return to sea. Ultimately, I was instructed to proceed to Belfast to join a tanker assigned to the Athel Line, the *Scottish Musician*. The vessel was at Belfast for a much needed overhaul - it was rather ancient having been launched in 1927 and certainly not up to the standard of the Athel tankers but had at least survived the war and the accommodation was quite comfortable. I signed on the articles as a 3rd Mate on the 1st June and spent a few days in Belfast completing the overhaul before sailing to Greenock to load fuel destined for Germany. Towards mid-June we headed for Germany via the Hebrides, Portland Firth and North Sea to Cuxhaven and Wilhelmshaven to discharge our much-awaited cargo of fuel oil. Over the following three months there were to be several such trips, the only difference was to load fuel at Grangemouth on the east coast of Scotland cutting down on the turnaround time.

The devastation at these German ports from the years of allied bombing was horrific - very few buildings standing in the dock's area while the waterway was cluttered with wreckage. Buildings still standing were severely damaged and occupied with the homeless.

As the waterway was progressively cleared of wreckage, we were able to progress upstream the Weser River to Bremerhaven, a large city port to where we had previously discharged fuel. Here the damage was even more extensive.

There was little to go ashore for at these ports. However, at Bremerhaven, a German officer's club had survived the carnage virtually undamaged. The club had been commandeered by the Americans and was offering free beer, served by Germans. I was amazed to see some of the G I's becoming drunk on beer that was as weak as dishwater and tasted little better! As the evening wore on some became highly intoxicated and argumentative, with a few drawing their sidearms and firing shots into the air. At this juncture I thought it would be discretionary to vacate the club.

The majority of Germans that I met when ashore would offer a variety of goods for cigarettes. Currency had little or no value but for cigarettes - watches, cameras, jewellery, lighters, binoculars etc were readily available. Generally, the offerings were not new but in A 1 condition. Over time I acquired a camera, binocular, wristwatch plus a few other trinkets. To this day I have kept the binocular although now in rather poor condition.

Through August, apart from the German ports, we discharged fuel in Holland and Denmark. As luck would have it the *Scottish Musician* was discharging fuel in Copenhagen on V.J. Day, the 15th August. The celebrations here would not have compared to V.E. Day in London, but still a joyous occasion. I was off duty that evening and perchance was invited to the officer's club where I partied on, drinking schnapps, devouring food and endeavouring to charm some of the ladies present. I didn't appear to have too much success in this regard but still had a most enjoyable evening.

While walking back to the ship it began raining heavily and so I took shelter in a shop doorway entry where I was to nod off and misplace my uniform cap. The following morning an engineer from the ship happened to call into the shop where I'd left it and was asked by an assistant whether it belonged to anyone from our ship. Unfortunately, I hadn't mentioned the loss to anyone at the time, so never recovered the cap as we sailed that afternoon. I wasn't overly

# RECOGNISING OUR WWII VETERANS

concerned with the loss, as I'd bought the cap in New York after being torpedoed so it was an American and not a genuine British uniform cap.

We continued to supply fuel through September and I signed off the *Musician* at Greenock 29th September for a spell of leave.

I was to spend the next eight years serving on a variety of cargo ships until finally moving to Australia and settling down where I worked for the Water Board in Brisbane, Queensland.

20-23  
uboat.net


## Athelprincess

British Motor tanker



Photo Courtesy of Library of Contemporary History, Stuttgart

<https://devoranwarmemorial.wordpress.com/tag/athel-princess/>

<b>Name</b>	<b>Athelprincess</b>		
<b>Type:</b>	Motor tanker		
<b>Tonnage</b>	8,882 tons		
<b>Completed</b>	1929 - William Hamilton & Co Ltd, Port Glasgow		
<b>Owner</b>	United Molasses Co Ltd, London		
<b>Homeport</b>	Liverpool		
<b>Date of attack</b>	23 Feb 1943	<b>Nationality:</b>	 British
<b>Fate</b>	Sunk by <u>U-522 (Herbert Schneider)</u>		
<b>Position</b>	32° 02'N, 24° 38'W - Grid DG 6239		
<b>Complement</b>	51 (1 dead and 50 survivors).		



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