



T.S. VINDICATRIX ASSOCIATION NSW-ACT

A part of the world wide Vindi family



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Issue no. 67

Yet though her splendour may have ceased to be she played her sovereign part in making me.-*John Masefield*



The 37,000 ton chemical tanker "Furevik has an escort on her passage through the Straits of Gibraltar, August 2008.

Nice to know they are still there and strutting their stuff!

**THE NINTH ANNUAL COMBINED
AUSTRALIA –NEW ZEALAND
2009 VINDICATRIX DOWNUNDER REUNION
IS BEING HOSTED THIS YEAR BY
THE QUEENSLAND VINDICATRIX ASSOCIATION**

**FRIDAY NOVEMBER 6 – SUNDAY NOVEMBER 8
VENUE; POWERBOAT CLUB
GOLDEN BEACH, CALOUNDRA, SUNSHINE COAST**

**Inside more details and a loose leaf Reunion Application
Form.**

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VALE THE FEBRUARY PICNIC DAY

And

Talk about Fair weather sailors! I asks ya, see a bit of rain running down the porthole and they don't venture out on deck.

What happened to the spirit of adventure that got you out of hearth and home to the Vindi and to the wide wide world, I asks ya.

What happened to that true British Grit that built a great empire?

"Sorry I can't discover Australia today it's raining". Capt Cook was heard to say.

And don't you know that it is compulsory for rain to fall on all Englishmen's picnics - that's what put the great in Great Britain.

Fair weather sailors - I asks Ya.



Enjoying the lovely sunny day it turned out to be.
L-R Bill & Jacqui King, me, Amanda & Len Britton

Seriously though, the February picnic has often suffered from February's unstable, wild & wet weather and this year was certainly no exception, it was wet & wild with a capital **W**.

In fact it was a bit of a disaster all round, starting on New Years Eve when a mob broke into the Scout facility at Tumbi and had a party and a bonfire, for the bonfire they burnt six big tables, a dozen or so benches, the metal chairs they just smashed to pieces. They even burnt the cross that was in the Bush Chapel and followed this by graffiti-ing the whole place.

Sunday morning didn't start too well either, Bill, Jacqui & I arrived early and the gates were still locked, being the thorough gentleman he is, Bill backed his car off the track so as not to block it and promptly got bogged down in the soft earth, we wandered about in the wet scratching our head for a while, then decided to wait until Len Britton arrived with the keys for the gate and his 4 wheel drive.

Len said "I'll just give you a shove and you'll get out easy" he pushed at the back of the car, Bill revved up and the spinning wheel covered Len in mud from head to toe, ruining his nice new Vindi shirt.

Len, very cool, said "I'll get the towing gear"

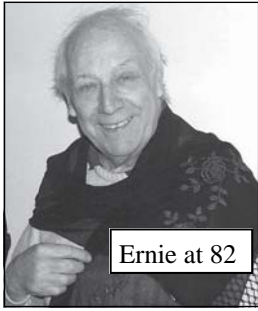
He did his good deed for the day by towing us out, I had some spare Vindi polo shirts with me (hoping to sell some to the crowd) so I promptly gave him one with compliments from the branch for sterling services rendered.

Another drama was Ron & Marion Casey's epic bush journey.

Leaving Wyong they decided to use their Satellite navigator to guide them to Tumbi rather than Amanda's mud map. The sat/nav led them over mountains down valleys along dirt tracks all wet and muddy that tested their big 4wheel drive and Ron's driving to the limit. They managed to get a mobile phone call to us about 1015 reporting that they were up a muddy creek in the hills somewhere north west of Newcastle. They weren't actually lost as their Sat/nav was giving them their Latitude & Longitude but they weren't quite sure where on the earth's surface that reading actually referred to.

I thought of alerting the emergency services but opened a beer instead.

The upshot of all this is that we now have an item on the agenda for our next meeting
"Decide on an alternative function or date in place of the February picnic".



Ernie at 82

OBITUARY

Ernest Alfred Bourne 01/08/1926-21/01/2009

You may have noticed in the media recently the passing of the well known actor and comedian Ernie Bourne. Ernie was a Vindi Boy of 1941/2 Vintage, telling someone of his time at sea he said "I joined to meet girls but spent all my time peeling potatoes"

I was briefly in touch with him, when I was given the address of a theatre in Melbourne where Ernie was appearing about 1996 by another Melbourne Vindi boy who was writing to me about his time as a Jap POW, I can't recall his name now and haven't been able to find his letters to date. Anyhow I wrote to Ernie and he sent me a 'Theatre' postcard back saying briefly 'interesting and thanks.

By David Knox SMH January 21- Vale: Ernie Bourne Character actor, best known as 'Fester Fumble' in the ABC children's show Adventure Island, has died, aged 82. Bourne was an all-round performer appearing in television, stage and film.

Television audiences saw him appear in Blue Heelers, Thunderstone, and Good Guys, Bad Guys. He played the ongoing role of Mervin Pringle in Prisoner and played the role of Rob Lewis in Neighbours. His CV includes a string of classic Australian shows including Homicide, Matlock Police, Division 4, Cash & Company, Bluey, Cop Shop and Carson's Law.

In 1967 Mr Bourne appeared in the first ever sitcom produced by ATV0 Melbourne, Hey You as conman claiming to be an ex-army sergeant.

His film credits included Gallipoli, Quigley Down Under, The True Story of Eskimo Nell, The Picture Show Man, Squizzy Taylor and Libido.

He also appeared in many stage musicals, playing Mordichai in Fiddler On The Roof opposite Topol. And he created the role of Maurice in the Australian production of Disney's Beauty And The Beast and the role of Sir Jasper Tring in Me And My Girl. He has also had roles in the musicals They're Playing Our Song, Mame, Mack And Mabel and Anything Goes. He also played the role of Sancho Panza in Man Of La Mancha and was highly acclaimed for his performance as Nicely Johnson in Guys And Dolls.

Mr Bourne appeared in many plays and performed with both the Melbourne & Sydney Theatre Companies and at St Martins Theatre in Melbourne. He was nominated for an Erik Award for his performance in the Tom Stoppard play, Enter A Free Man.

Daughter Sally Bourne, who was Australia's original Annie in the 1970's hit stage musical, follows in her father's showbiz footsteps, currently appearing in Shane Warne: The Musical.

From Wikipidea - Bourne was born in Dorset, One of eight children, to a timber cutter father and a mother who was a nurse. Raised in Yeovil where his mother ran a boarding house following the early death of his father. Leaving school and home at the age of 14, Bourne worked in a cafe before joining the British Merchant Navy during World War II, where he became interested in acting after appearing in a pantomime.

He emigrated to Australia in 1952, initially settling in Geelong and later moving to Melbourne.

In the 1960s, he was loved (and booed) as a series of pantomime-style villains on Australian television such as Sir Jasper Crookley (in Magic Circle Club), and multiple similar baddies in Adventure Island including Sir Cedric Sneak, Captain Crook, Chummy Chums and Miser Meanie's sidekick Fester Fumble.

In the 1980s he played prison chef Mervin Pringle in Prisoner and garage mechanic Rob Lewis in Neighbours. He also appeared in many TV adverts.

Always a comedian, shortly before he died in hospital a nurse asked if she could get him anything for the pain he chuckled "how about \$10,000"

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Claire (nee Smith); two daughters, Sally and Elise; four grandchildren and two sisters.



Sir Jasper Crook-



Mordichai in
Fiddler on the Roof



Homicide 1975



Division 4

Suzan Johnson who appeared with him in Man of La Mancha where he sang 'Impossible Dream' Said at his funeral 'What a gorgeous funny old bugger he was'

A finer epitaph you couldn't wish for. I wish now I had taken the trouble to keep in touch with him. Ed.

HENRY WILLIAM GARDENER

Born November 12 1923 - Died 21 January 1943 - Vindi boy 1941

A couple of issues ago I ran an item sent to me by Jim Gardner about his first trip to sea on the 'Wearpool' in 1943, I titled the page 'Master of Understatement' as he had managed to condense a wonderful story into one third of a page.

In his letter to me he mentioned that his brother had been killed at sea in 1943, I wrote back to Jim to ask if he could give me some details for a story about his brother. His reply was another epic of understatement but the half page gives enough detail to relate this amazing story about his brother, who I don't know how to phrase it, really drew the short straw for his path to glory.

On leaving the Vindi, Henry (know to all as Harry) joined the "SS Zafaaran" a coastal passenger ship belonging to General Steam Navigation company which had just been taken up as a rescue ship, Harry served on the ship for most of it's two year life as a rescue ship on the North Atlantic convoys.

On the 24 June 1942 she along with her sister ship the "Zamalek" de-

parted Londonderry with three corvettes and two Ack Ack ships the Palomares & Pozarica converted MN ships, (ex MacAndrews or Elders & Fyffes?) for Hvalfjordur, Iceland where 36 Merchant ships along with a massive UK & US escort force were assembling for the now infamous convoy PQ17. The assembled ships sailed on June 29 to join the contingent coming direct from the USA



Henry W. Gardener
Photo taken just before
the Vindi in 1941



MV Zafaaran

1567 tons, built 1921, in rescue service from 23 March 1941, sailed with 26 convoys, rescued 220 survivors, sunk by aircraft with loss of one crewman during the battle of Convoy PQ-17 on 5 July 1942.

Zamalek 1565 tons, built 1921, in rescue service from 26 February 1941, sailed with 68 convoys, including Convoy PQ-17 and Convoy SC-130, rescued 665 survivors.



Above - ships assembling in Hvalfjordur – foreground – destroyer HMS Icarus & Russian tanker 'Azerbaijan'
Below the convoy at sea

The story of PQ17 is well known so I won't try and retell all of it here. U-boats began probing the convoy defences soon after sailing but they were repelled until July 4 when combined attacks resulted in the first MN casualties when the US Liberty ships 'William Hooper' & Christopher Newport' and the UK ship the "Navarino" were torpedoed & sunk by Heinkel 111 torpedo bombers.

The US website www.armed-guard.com were I gleaned some of this info from describes the next day;

The slaughter had begun about 8:30 a.m. on July 5. Soon the Arctic airwaves were filled with frantic distress signals from stricken ships. A British freighter, Empire Byron, was among the first victims, going down after being torpedoed by a U-boat. Next to go was an American ship, Carlton.

Then a flight of nine dive bombers concentrated on Daniel Morgan and the freighter Washington, while U-boats accounted for another American vessel, Honomu. Before semidarkness mercifully put an end to the massacre, PQ-17 also lost Bolton Castle, Paulus Potter,

Earlston, Pankraft, River Afton, Aldersdale, **Zaafaran**, Fairfield City and Peter Kerr.



"Christopher Newport" sinking



"William Hooper" her first & only voyage



Navarino



HMS La Malouine that sailed from Londonderry with the Zaafaran

The story of Henry William Gardener– continued

The "Zaafaran" was part of the close escort screen according to what I have read; The paragraph below is talking about the air attacks on July 5 shortly before "Zaafaran was hit;

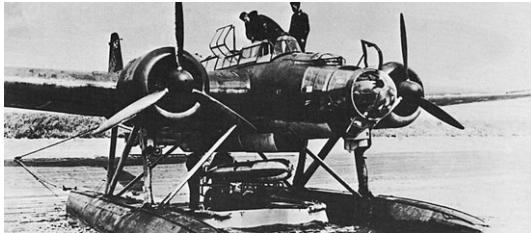
They were in fact a Blohm und Voss float planes and two Heinkel He115 torpedo bombers. One of the bombers was later shot down whilst attacking the convoy. David Irving, in his book The Destruction of Convoy PQ17, conjectures that it was the rescue ship Zaafaraan which shot the 'plane down. That Jack Bowman on the corvette la Mouline assumed it was La Malouine is understandable. Zaafaraan and La Malouine were adjacent to one another in the convoy screen. Both would undoubtedly have been firing at the 'plane for all they were worth! After this bomber was downed the second He115, incredibly, landed on the

sea to rescue the crew, whilst under heavy fire from the approaching escorts.

They escaped safely!

Left a Hienkel 115 torpedo bomber

Right a Blohm & Voss BV138 float plane



I haven't yet found a descrip-

tion of the 'Zaafaran's' sinking, the closest I have is this, from the HMS Halycon website

Following the order to scatter, Britomart and Halycon joined by Zamalek and Pozarica headed towards Novaya Zemlya.

Salamander steamed east with Zaafaran, Ocean Freedom and Aldersdale. Later that afternoon this group was attacked by four Ju88's. Aldersdale, whose cargo included aviation spirit, was hit by a stick of bombs and Salamander went close to evacuate the crew. Zaafaran was then hit by bombs.

On seeing this from miles astern her sister ship, Zamalek, headed towards her to pick up survivors, taking Britomart as anti-submarine protection. All but one of Zaafaran's crew and passengers were picked up.

Zamalek, Ocean Freedom and Britomart now proceeded after Palomares and Halycon while astern of them, Salamander, having abandoned her attempts to finish off Aldersdale, strove to catch up.

Little-known incidents illustrate the merchant ships' dramatic struggle for survival in the Arctic. During the height of the attacks on July 5, the armed trawler Ayrshire made a desperate move. Serving as escort for Silver Sword, Ironclad and Troubadour, she led them in a mad dash directly into the ice barrier. Once anchored, the ships' crews hurriedly painted their superstructures white to camouflage the vessels. Then, moving slowly along the ice edge and skirting the eastern extremes of the Barents Sea, the four ships eventually made port.

Another incident involved the men of the naval armed guard (*US equivalent of our DEMS gunners*) serving aboard the Liberty ship 'Washington', who actually chose to make the last leg of their trip to the Soviet Union in open lifeboats. The 'Washington' was carrying more than 600 tons of high explosives when she came under dive-bomber attack on July 5. Several hits had set the deck cargo ablaze, and with the flames raging out of control, the order to abandon ship was given.

The gun crews loaded into two lifeboats and pulled away from the fiery wreck as fast as they could. When another ship tried to save them, the survivors repeatedly waved off all rescue attempts. They reasoned that they would simply be leaving one target for another and voted to remain adrift. It was their hope that once in the lifeboats they would be ignored by the attacking Germans. Within hours, just as anticipated, they witnessed the sinking of their would-be rescuers. Rigging sails and rowing in shifts, they reached the Soviet Union after 10 freezing days.

When the Russian tanker 'Azerbaijan' was torpedoed and set ablaze, some of the crew abandoned ship, only to have the Russian women gunners on board turn their guns on the lifeboats forcing them back on-board to fight the fires and save the ship. When the ship finally arrived in Archangel those who had abandoned ship were arrested and marched away to an unknown fate.

Finally some 10 days after the scatter signal the remnants of PQ17 were shepherded into Archangel, making a grand total of 11 merchant ships and over 1300 survivors, some badly injured others badly frost bitten, who subsequently lost their limbs in Russian hospitals, many without anesthetics.

Following the sinking of the 'Zaafaran', Harry, with the other survivors was carried onto Russia, on his return to UK and survivors leave he reported back for duty.

The story of Henry William Gardener– continued



And joined the rescue Ship “ St Sunniva”, an inter island ferry belonging to the North of Scotland & Orkney & Shetland Steam Navigation Co. Built 1931, 1368 tons, 252'x35'x15 draft, a somewhat small, narrow of beam, Characteristics that may well have contributed to her fate.

From a book on rescue ships is this extract;

The loss of the ‘Zaafaran’ was especially unfortunate as she was one of the the three oil-burning ships in the rescue Fleet and it was not until the end of September 1942 that a replacement was found for her. This was the ‘SS St Sunniva’. She was on the

small side displacing only 1368 tons, but by virtue of the service for which she was built she had ample passenger accommodation amidships and a large dining room saloon aft capable of sitting 200 people, both factors in her favour as a rescue ship. She was sent to Hull, where the work of conversion was carried out; this included additional water & bunker stowage to enable her to make Atlantic crossings.

It was most appropriate that Captain McGowan DSC, one of the most experienced Rescue Ship masters should be appointed to command her, and he took with him many of the officers & men who had served under him in the Zaafaran. On the way from Hull to the Clyde at the end of December he expressed himself well satisfied in the way that his new command had stood up to the very heavy weather encountered off the north of Scotland.



The winter of 1942/3 was an exceptionally bitter and stormy one in the North Atlantic. And on the 3rd January 1943 Capt. McGowan took the ‘St Sunniva’ to sea on her first voyage as a rescue ship, escorting a convoy bound for Halifax. It is known that very heavy weather was encountered during this passage, but the rescue ship must have survived this, since she was sighted off Sable Island, one hundred & sixty miles east of Halifax on the 23rd January. What happened to her after that can only be surmised.

The fact that ships in the same convoy reached Halifax on January 22nd coated in ice varying from three to ten feet thick suggests that the ‘St Sunniva’ may have been similarly affected and that she capsized as a result of the extra weight on her upperworks. No radio message was received to provide a clue as to the cause of her loss with all hands, an exceptionally cruel blow in view of the devoted service rendered by her

master and crew, who had been instrumental in saving 220 lives in their former ship the ‘Zaafaran’.

Amongst those lost was the Chief Radio Officer Mr C. Wolf, whose resource and initiative had been of such great value in North Russia.

Harry Gardener left St Michaels Anglican church school in Camden Town when he was 14, along with schoolmates Edward William Fosbrook (Vindi 1941, R297098) and Arthur Bangs (Vindi 1941).

Arthur Bangs like Harry lost his life at sea in the sinking of the “SS Empire Tiger”

Harry started work as an assistant in a Jewelers/Pawnbrokers establishment, he tried to join the Royal Navy but found he was colour blind, so he turned to the merchant Navy.

James Gardener who was 2 classes behind his brother at the same school is still in regular touch with Harry’s old schoolmate Ted Fosbrook, who is a member of a UK Vindi branch.

Quite a story that the school should have produced 4 Vindi boys in such a short time.



The “Empire Tiger” built as the “Orcus” in 1924 lost with all hands in a fierce storm while in a convoy to from Canada to England.

Harry’s & Jim’s mother had died in 1937 their father an ex Royal Horse Artillery soldier was father & mother to the family. He received a letter from the admiralty notifying him that Harry was presumed lost at sea on the 8th Feb 1943, Jim was due to go to the Vindi on Feb15, just 7 days later.

Jim said to his Dad “I don’t have to go I’m only 17 and a volunteer” his Dad looked into his eyes and said

“Son you go, no harm will ever come to you”

These words stayed with Jim and gave him a great feeling of comfort.

But what his Dad’s thoughts really were I shudder to think, especially as he had lost 4 brothers in the first World War.

My thanks David Bell-Lennon for help with this story.

Out and about

The first Vindi Outing of the year was to meet & greet visiting UK Vindi couple Brian & Marie Bowsher. The gang L to R– Cathy & Alex Dilworth– Peter Bearman– Mick Wilkinson– Mick’s lady-Len & Amanda Britton-Bill & Jacqui King-Brian & Marie Bowsher-Linda Bearman all met up at Circular Quay for a lovely trip on the ferry to Manly and lunch at the Manly 16’ Sailing Club. From the look of the photos it looks as though Sydney Town turned on one of its beautiful sparkling days for the occasion. It was a “reet good day out” according to all reports received.



It was a “reet good day out” according to all reports received.

Our next venture again started at Circular Quay last Sunday for a visit to Garden Island and the Naval Heritage Centre there.

Again it was one of those perfect days, even the trains to & from Kiama ran to the exact second!! The heritage Centre was very interesting with some thousands of exhibits from the R.A.N.’s history to view. The centre also has a lovely café with sweeping harbour views, bit of a shame that it didn’t have any food other than cakes and snack bars and just one girl running the place, although she coped very well, we just had to wait a bit. Those Coffee machines slow everything down. Of course, I was OK food-wise, as my stomach has a very short memory I went prepared with two pork pies & chicken sandwiches. From the top of the old Navy signal station, (from where, when I first started working on the harbour in 1969 one could see the big lamp flashing Morse code messages around the harbour) which is on top of the hill (quite a climb) there are 360 degree views of Sydney that make it really worth the climb. A disappointment for me was that the gardens that once were a blaze of colour all around the island are now untended and rather sad looking.



photo left -Bill (Knobbly knees) King– Terry Hales– Peter - Bearman– John Mears– Don Jenkins– Peter Hand. Missing from this photo; Is the lovely Leah, Peter Hand’s partner.



The sharp end!



Kapitan Von Bearman



View thru the periscope

Ron Lutman's Bell



Maureen & I visited Ron (Left) at his Frankston (Melbourne) home in 2005, a couple of months later, shortly before he died suddenly from a heart attack he sent me this bell that was mounted onto an Anchor shaped bracket, his letter said something like; " I have had this bell for years meaning to **DO** something with it but I don't think I will ever get around to it now, so I am sending it to you in the hope you can **DO** something with it.

The bell spent the next 4 years sat in it's box in my office (bedroom), I often took it down of the shelf to think about it but that's as far as I got, until this February's Vindi picnic when I had the bright Idea that I would pass it on to Ron Casey of woodworking fame. I took it to the picnic but missed Ron there due to the bad weather, so I posted it to him.

Grass doesn't grow under Ron Casey's feet for just two weeks later I got a letter from him saying that he had put his thinking

socks on (that's were his brains are) and decided on a Wall plaque with the Vindi's dates, along with the letter came some photos of the BELL (right)

Mounted onto beautifully finished piece of Australian Red Cedar, Ron tried buying some letters from Bunnings for the Vindi dates but it didn't look right so he commissioned a local lady artist who specializes in such work to create the plates and I think all will agree they look just 'Right'

Any Vindi visiting Forster are welcome to call in for a cuppa and a viewing

And we are going to have tarpaulin muster to buy Ron a shirt.



Contaminated ship arrives in UK for dismantling

Those of you not suffering from memory loss like me may remember about a year ago the story I did about the French Aircraft carrier that was being hawked around India and Asia looking for someone to demolish it.

Well it just turned up in England to be demolished there.

LONDON 10 Feb 2009 (AP) — A decommissioned French aircraft carrier containing a large quantity of asbestos traveled from France to Britain on Sunday, where it will be stripped for recycling despite an environmental controversy.

The ship docked near Hartlepool, in northeast England. The Clemenceau was originally set to be dismantled in India, but revelations that it was contained a large quantity of asbestos sparked protests by environmental groups there and in France, forcing the French government to search the world to find someone to demolish it safely.

The recycling company doing the work estimates 200 jobs will be created, but environmentalists say that is not worth the potential risks.

The re-cycling company recently lost the opportunity to demolish several US warships when environmentalist's caused the UK govt. to rescind the permission it had given.

The aircraft carrier was launched in 1957. It sailed over 1 million nautical miles before being withdrawn from active service in 1997.



You may also recall - the ship, the '**Cosco Busan**' (China Overseas Shipping Co, the national flag carrier for China) that hit the Golden Gate Bridge in thick fog in April 2007, causing a rumpus and all the politicians to jump onto the Green bandwagon, similar to the recent Oil spill QLD.

Recently enquiry findings have been handed down; The US Coastguard (the authority in charge) found the Pilot negligent, the Captain negligent for not adequately monitoring the Pilot & both of them negligent for not communicating properly.

A later case in the high court laid the blame squarely on the **US Coastguard !**

Because they had failed to monitor the health of the Pilot who carried a US coastguard's pilot license.

The pilot suffered from chronic sleep Apnoea, unable to sleep properly for years, when on duty he took pills to keep him awake.

On the Cosco Bussan' Pilotage the court said he was mentally unable to cope with the amount of radar plotting required in the thick fog





Norman Warden Owen: DSM, shipwright and diver

I recently came across this obituary from the Times

As ship's carpenter of the Blue Funnel Line's SS Deucalion in the Mediterranean in the summer of 1942, Norman Warden Owen was decorated for the part he played in helping to get the stricken tanker Ohio and her precious cargo of fuel oil, paraffin and aviation spirit through to Malta in one of the war's most celebrated convoy actions. The arrival of the Ohio in Grand Harbour on the night of August 15, intact though in a sinking condition, saved the day for Malta, which was running short of fuel of all sorts. It enabled the island fortress's aircraft and warships to strike back at Axis forces that had seemed to be winning the battle for domination of the Mediterranean and the struggle to supply Axis forces in North Africa.

Only a few days beforehand, from the deck of Deucalion, a shaken Warden Owen had witnessed the violent death throes of the aircraft carrier Eagle, which at noon on August 11 was hit by four torpedoes and sank within six minutes, though fortunately 900 of her company of 1,150 were rescued. Barely 24 hours later, Deucalion was to share a like fate. She was attacked first by Italian aircraft in the morning of August 12, and succumbed later the same day to the bombs of two Ju88s.

Picked out of the water by the destroyer Bramham, Owen volunteered to join magazine

parties handling ammunition up to the destroyer's guns. It was a terrifying experience, as he later admitted, with the warship under constant air attack and in the knowledge that if the ship was set on fire or holed below the waterline the magazines would be closed down and flooded with the ammunition parties inside them.

When volunteers were called for to go aboard the 'Ohio' to try to stanch the flow of water into her hull, Owen was grateful, as he thought, to escape from the hell of his magazine duties aboard the destroyer. But as soon as he and other volunteers had come aboard her, another bomb struck, penetrating the engine room and starting a fire, which threatened her high-octane cargo. A further attack by a Ju87 Stuka wrecked her steering gear.

As a trained "chippy", Owen had to stem the rush of seawater into the tanker through a gaping rent in her hull and was also responsible for making sure that the steel wire ropes lashing her to the destroyers did not part. The towing hawsers also had to be kept under constant surveillance.

Finally, after a painful progress, Ohio was brought safely to harbour, her main deck awash, and her precious cargo was pumped ashore. Warden Owen and six of his shipwright colleagues were each awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for the part they had played in keeping her afloat under enemy attack.



Deucalion bombed

Norman Warden Owen was born in Holyhead, Anglesey, in 1917, the son of a caterer in mail ships on the Holyhead-Kingstown (Dún Laoghaire) route. After an apprenticeship at the Holyhead marine yard he went as a shipwright to Cammell Laird in Birkenhead from where he went to sea as a carpenter in general cargo ships.

He remained with Blue Funnel line until the 1950s when he went back to Holyhead to work on an RNLI project to build a slipway and lifeboat station. Training as a diver, he was subsequently employed by British Railways as its maintenance

diver at Holyhead.

As such he nearly lost his life during the demolition of a pier. A 100-ton crane was being used to extract its remaining piles from the seabed and on one descent to attach wires he got two fingers of his right hand caught between a lifting wire and a pile, with oxygen running short and no chance of cutting or releasing the wire Warden Owen pulled out his sheath knife with his left hand and cut through the trapped fingers to release himself. Then he collected his remaining tools and slowly surfaced, accompanied by a rising cloud of his own blood.

For this he was awarded the Daily Herald's Order of Industrial Heroism. This decoration, instituted by the socialist newspaper in 1923, was known as the "Workers' VC".

This accident put paid to his diving career, and he continued thereafter to work as a handyman. He was also a keen weekend sailor for the Holyhead and Trearddur Bay sailing clubs and continued to race well into his eighties. He is survived by his wife Gwladys, and by a daughter and two sons, one of whom is a master mariner, the other an Olympic yachtsman.

Norman Warden Owen, DSM, shipwright and diver, born on May 17, 1917. He died on August 16, 2008, aged 91

THE GIRLS WHO BUILT THE LIBERTY SHIPS & most other things



“Rosie the Riveter” is the name of a fictional character who came to symbolize the millions of real women who filled America’s factories, munitions plants, and shipyards during World War II. In later years, Rosie also became an iconic American image in the fight to broaden women’s civil rights.

After the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941 and the full involvement of the U.S. in World War II, the male work force was depleted for the military service. This came precisely at a time when America’s need for factory and munitions output soared. The government, with the help of advertising agencies, mounted extensive campaigns to encourage women to join the work force. Magazines and posters played a key role in the effort to recruit women for the wartime workforce.

The image above left by artist Norman Rockwell, appeared on the cover of the May 29th, 1943 edition of The Saturday Evening Post. The Post was then one of the nation’s most popular magazines, with a circulation of about 3 million copies each week.

In addition to Rockwell’s Rosie, however, another image would become the more commonly known “Rosie the Riveter” image.

Marilyn Monroe, before she became a Hollywood star, appeared on the cover of ‘Yank’ magazine while working in a Burbank airplane factory, August 1945. One of the “Rosies” during the WWII years was none other than Marilyn Monroe – well before she became “Marilyn the Hollywood star,” however. The August 2, 1945 issue of Yank magazine contained an article about women contributing to the war effort at home. The magazine’s cover for that issue included a photo of a woman holding a propeller blade at a factory work bench. The woman’s name was Norma Jean Dougherty, as Marilyn was then married to Merchant Marine seaman James Dougherty. The photo was taken at the assembly line of the Radio Plane munitions factory in Burbank, California. Monroe and Dougherty had married in Los Angeles in June 1942. In 1943, after Dougherty joined the U.S. Merchant Marine and was then sent overseas in 1944, Monroe started work at the Radioplane plant, where she was “discovered.” She then moved out of her mother-in-law’s home, stopped writing to her husband, and filed for divorce in Las Vegas, which was granted in September 1946. James Dougherty, meanwhile, returned from the war, married a new wife in 1947, and joined the Los Angeles Police Department. In 1950, he was one of the police officers who held back the crowd at the premiere of Monroe’s movie, *The Asphalt Jungle*.

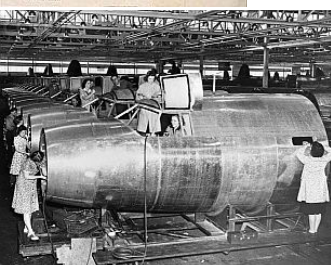


Marilyn “Rosie” Monroe



Rockwell’s original poster was originally raffled off to raise war money, some raffle prize, in 2000, it was sold to an anonymous collector for \$2 million. By 2002, that collector decided to sell. In the meantime, Rockwell’s Rosie had been part of an all Norman Rockwell exhibition entitled “Norman Rockwell: Pictures for the American People,” which had run at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York from November 1999-February 2002. In 2002, Rockwell’s Rosie was sold at Sotheby’s for US\$4.95 million.

The photo bottom right shows the Rosie the Riveter Memorial looking out toward Richmond Marina & San Francisco Bay beyond. This site was formerly Kaiser Shipyard No. 2. where one of WWII’s amazing engineering feats took place – with women workers playing a key role. For it was here that Kaiser shipbuilding devised mass-assembly techniques to more quickly produce the vessels that were needed in the war. The memorial,



which includes a sculpture of part of a ship’s hull under construction, evokes the ship building that went on there, with a granite walkway that stretches the length of a Liberty ship the to the water’s edge.

The granite walkway includes etched words from women workers, “image ladders” with photographs and memorabilia.

On the overlook platform at the memorial, is this quote:

“You must tell your children,



The Merchant Navy Fraternal Luncheon
NSW Parliament House Thursday 23rd. of April

This Ex Red Ensign event is being organized this year by Ken Ryder (MN Association)
Meet inside Parliament house at 1130 for 1200
The cost is \$60 per person and includes drinks.
Bookings to Ken Ryder at 59 Christopher St, Baulkham Hills, 2153. Tel 9639 8631

Anzac Day March

Meet at 0830 in King St just around the corner from where we used to assemble in Castlereagh St
The MN Group will be immediately behind the RAN contingent **and will march off at 0910**
At the conclusion of the march we will disperse at Hyde Park and head off to the Masonic Club in Castlereagh St. for drinks and nibbles and a pipe band in full regalia.
You don't have to be a veteran or have seen active service, just being ex MN is sufficient to take part in the march. For those who haven't been before I can assure you it is a wonderful experience, ring Bill King for more info or to let him know you are going to be there. 9476 3251 or 0412 155 022

Newcastle Get-Together Weekend, May 15/16/17

Stockton Beach caravan park, drive there or public transport from the Newcastle Railway station then ferry to Stockton beach. Telephone 02 4928 1393
Friday; evening BBQ in park, Saturday. -Newcastle sights-dinner in club-Sunday BBQ lunch in park

Merchant Navy Day

September 3rd 2009 11am start

Last years MN day the first one officially recognised in Australia was something of a fizzer here in Sydney the only ceremony being indoors at the Sydney Seafarers Mission.
This year Ken Ryder is organising a public event at the Alan Border oval in Mosman Park so that we can show the Red Ensign and what it stood for to the people of Sydney.
Hopefully getting it onto the TV and the daily press. More details nearer the time.

Old salts honour their merchant navy training ship Vindicatrix



STACEY WOOD - The Dominion Post | Monday, 02 March 2009

Vindi Boys, from left, John Oswick, Bill Wilson and Trevor Castleton at the plaque unveiling on Wellington's waterfront.

The "forgotten service" has been remembered in Wellington with the unveiling of a memorial dedicated to the merchant navy training ship Vindicatrix.

More than 70,000 cadets undertook 12-week training courses on the British ship between 1939 and 1966.

During World War II, merchant navy ships and seamen were requisitioned for supply convoys, escorted by navy ships through waters infested with U-boats. Bill Wilson, the eldest local "Vindi Boy", unveiled the memorial plaque at yesterday's service on the Wellington waterfront. Though so many trained on the ship, its history had not been widely celebrated until the past few years, when several reunions had taken place.

"The stories are just now starting to come out - the merchant navy was not recognised [by the RSA] for a long time." Wellington Returned and Services Association patron Ian Hunter acknowledged the sailors' contribution. "The merchant navy is known as the fourth service and sometimes, sadly, the forgotten service." Though merchant navy ships had little firepower and were not intended for combat, they faced real risks during wartime. Mr Wilson trained on the Vindicatrix in 1942. "The U-boats used to wait for us - the navy escort could try to detect them, using depth charges," he said. "It was tough - a lot of Vindi Boys lost their lives, and I'll always remember them."

The Vindicatrix was at Sharpness, western England, while in use as a training school and scrapped in Newport, Wales, in 1966. During yesterday's ceremony the Cook Strait ferry Bluebridge swung by close to where the unveiling took place and sounded its horn in recognition.

The plaque, "To all the Vindi Boys", was funded by donations from two members of the Vindicatrix Association who did not want to be identified.

The international code signal flying on the mast from the Cook strait ferry 'Wahine' that sank entering Wellington Harbour is the 'Arranmores' International code number NFJV. Ed.

Well done the Central branch NZ.

Note; I think our branch is just about the only Vindi branch world wide that HASN'T done something like this!! Ed.

TS Vindicatrix Association Inc. NSW/ACT

Branch business

The Annual General meeting was held AT 11AM on March 14 2009 at the Pymont Bridge Hotel

Present

: Peter Bearman, Terry Hales, Bill King, John Mears,
Mike Siegle, Mick Wilkinson, Len Britton
Richard Brown Eric Wright

Apologies from Kevin Bedford.

The Secretary, Bill King, gave a brief summary of activities during the last year. The various events included: the Annual MN service at Rookwood, ANZAC Day march, Gordon Solomon Memorial service, MNA meeting at Roseville, Seafarers service at Mission to Seamen, Christmas Party, Lunch with Brian & Marie Bowsher at Manly and Picnic at Tumby scout camp.

The President, Terry Hales, gave a brief outline of the Reunion that was held in Christchurch, New Zealand. The Treasurer, Mick Wilkinson, tabled the 'Annual Financial Report' to 28 Feb 2009. This showed a balance of \$6561.00. The membership stood at 84 Vindi lads and 4 Associate members.

In accordance of the rules of incorporation the old committee was discharged and all positions declared Vacant. A new committee was then elected. (details below)

Being no other business the meeting closed at 1118am

The AGM was followed by the Bi- monthly general branch meeting.

Some changes made by the meeting;

General meetings now to be quarterly not bi-monthly.

Our NSW/ACT branch newsletters to be reduced from 6 to 5 issues per year.

(To reduce the work and the chore of travelling for those concerned- we are all getting older)

The meetings will be held on the second Saturday of the month in March (AGM), June, September and the final for the year would be in December at a date, which didn't clash with the Christmas party.

Some items of General Business that were discussed

Houseboat on the Hawksbury—Tentative date October 2009

Len has obtained information and costing for a 2 night weekend on the Hawkesbury in October. The cost would be about \$150 per head with a maximum of 10 persons per house boat.

Picnic Venue for February 2010

Len has suggested that we have a weekend Get-Together in mid February, staying at the Blue Bay Caravan Park. (Central Coast) Len will investigate this further and report to the committee at the next meeting.

Christmas Party/ General Meeting Venue

The venue for this year's Christmas party was discussed and it was agreed that the Pymont Bridge Hotel was unsuitable for future events. **Result**-Investigating suitable venues for the annual Christmas party

Calendar Items for 2009 to date

5 April-Annual MN Memorial service at Rookwood commences 11 am. No booking just turn up

23 April-MN lunch at Parliament House 11.30 a.m.

25 April Anzac March - Assemble King St at 8.40 a.m.

May 15/16/17 Vindi Get-Together Weekend in Newcastle; Stockton Caravan park

Saturday night Dinner/Sunday Lunch or Picnic, Contact Terry Hales for details.

Saturday June 13 Quarterly branch meeting City of Sydney RSL, George St.

3 Sept -Merchant Navy Day – Mosman War Memorial Cenotaph at Mosman Park

October? Fri/Sat House boat Cruise

Sept 12 Quarterly Branch meeting City oi Sydney RSL George St.

December Christmas party Venue TBA

For more details on any of the above or anything Vindi related please contact one of the Committee members listed below.

2009-2010 Committee

President– Mike Siegle, Tel 02 9647 1149

Vice president– Len Britton Tel 02 4333 7225

Secretary- Bill King Tel 02 9476 3251

Treasurer- Mick Wilkinson Tel 02 99053161

Committee Members: Peter Bearman Tel 02 9311 2782 Richard Brown Tel 02 4392 2464

John Mears –02 4325 3353 Terry Hales 02 4237 5736

Anything you want to know?

Give us a call -We don't know much, but will Pontificate on anything endlessly.

In these days of political correctness; What do you shout if you see a woman fall over the side?