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EDITORIAL:

The issue of Members not getting their copy of In Depth continues to be a problem and we are still looking at a way ahead. The policy is that Members with access to a computer will not receive hard copy. Letters explaining this have been sent to all Members that we do not have an email address for. If you know someone that does not have computer access please contact me.

If you read this online but don't receive email from us it means we do not have your contact details, please contact us so that we can keep you current with activities in the submarine community.

DISCLAIMER:

The opinions expressed in "In Depth" are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Editor, the National and State Committees of SAA or the RAN.

From the President

SUBCON and the Association's AGM were a great success and the organisation that went behind it all is to be commended. Organising a Meeting is hard enough, but to organise four days can be a nightmare. BZ to Fred and his team.

Planning for Coffs Harbour next year is underway and a web site should be available in August. The NSW Branch have come up with a great design for the logo, very imaginative.

The Welfare Fund was called upon to assist a WA Member last month and I was pleased to see that it could help out. Chad Hardy, who has Multiple Sclerosis, required assistance to purchase a special needs vehicle. Again, well done to all concerned. Remember, if you know a Member that needs assistance contact your local branch with the details.

Our efforts to gain more recognition in the veteran community is starting to have results and I have received several invitations to lay wreaths and for the Association to be represented at Meetings. It is sometimes difficult for members of your Executive to attend these meetings and I am putting out a call for volunteers to become the Associations representatives. If you are retired, have the spare time, live in Sydney or Canberra and would like to become involved please contact the secretary for more information.


This is the season for Branch AGMs and I note that, with minor changes, the status quo remains. I encourage all Members to consider the future of the Association and get involved, give the stalwarts that form your Executives an opportunity to hand over the reins to others. Many stay in their positions much longer than they would have liked, but volunteers are few and far between. Start thinking about next year.

Till next time.....



Secretary's Report

It has been a busy month again, trying to find Members that have moved and not given us their new details, chasing up overdue subscriptions, updating Member's details into the database and working on the Constitution. But I have retained my sanity and sense of humour.

The response from Members to my letters and email requesting updated details has been very successful and I am starting to realise how much history we have in our ranks. We have many heroes amongst us and I will be discussing this with the SAA Historian, Peter Smith, to see how much of this history is captured. 

I am disappointed at the slow response of some Members in paying their annual subscriptions. At the beginning of July nearly 10% of the membership had not paid, they were due by the 31st of May. The additional burden placed on the Treasurer and I to chase up the \$10 subscription is considerable. Reminders have been sent to all that are late, please pay as soon as possible or advise us that you no longer want to remain a Member so that you can be removed from our membership list and save us further time wasting effort.

The list of elderly and sick Members continues to grow and I urge you all to try and make regular contact with them. If you live in an area and you would like to know if there is someone in the area that is old and may appreciate a visit contact me and I will provide a list.

Those that have computer access may have noticed that we now have a password protected 'Members Only Area'. It is still under development and contains a list of Members.

Remember, I am here to help, feel free to contact me at all times.

Yours,

ETERNAL PATROL

The following members of the submarine community passed away since the March edition of In Depth.

Ex CPONPSM Alan Henry

Alan Henry died on Saturday 16th May, he was 54 years of age. Although no longer an active member of the SAA, Al was a much respected ex-submariner and former employee of

Former CO of HMAS Platypus (LCDR) Sandy Coulson wrote "I was very sad to hear of the death of Al Henry. Al was my CPOCOX when I was XO at Plats and I could not speak highly enough of him both as a senior sailor and as a man. It is a great loss to the submarine community- I still have a small gift he brought back for me from Japan when

We had some fun together- the most memorable incident being when my PL was short a pair of handcuffs. Al went to some sleazy dive in George St and bought a replacement pair after all the Reg office staff and myself chipped in a few dollars each. He had to go to the back door of this place after he asked for the handcuffs. He was a thorough gentleman and a great support to me as a female XO in an era when female XOs were a rarity to say the least. His favourite expression to me after sorting something out when I inquired what he had done was always - Ma'am you wouldn't want to know'.



Max Shean, who died on June 15th aged 90, was the Patron of the WA Branch of the Association.

Max married Mary Golding in 1944. She survives him with their two daughters.

Max was one of the small band of young men who, in the face of extraordinary peril, carried the sea war into enemy harbours; for his own exploits, Max received a DSO and Bar.



RADM Davyd Thomas, RAN, Deputy Chief Of Navy attended representing the Chief of Navy. Captain SM (CAPT Brett Sampson) the Commanding Officer HMAS Stirling (CAPT Brett Dowsing) and CAPT Tim Brown all took part in the service.

The service was MC'd by Peter Horobin and conducted by Chaplain Duncan Besci, RAN in front of a chapel filled to overflowing. His Excellency, The Governor of Western Australia, Dr Ken Michael was also in attendance.

Submariners gathered as one in the funeral procession which made its way to the Chapel to the beat of a muffled drum. A funeral firing party lead the procession and serving submariners lined the avenue leading to the chapel. Prior to the

committal of the casket three volleys were fired and after the Naval Ode was delivered by Jack McRoberts, President of WA Legacy, the Last Post and Reveille was sounded.



Max Shean's funeral 2009

Queensland Branch member Shaun Haggerty passed away peacefully in a Gold Coast Hospital on the 20th June from a liver complaint. Shaun was 53.

Shaun served on HMAS ONSLOW (3 times), HMAS OVENS and HMAS FARNCOMB.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Gaye and his family. The submarine community was well represented at the funeral, with old mates from NSW, SA and the ACT joining local members.



It is with regret that I have to pass on the sad news of the passing away of Mrs Lilly Lewis wife and loving mother to our Shipmate Jerry Lewis and daughter Emma. Lilly lost the long fought out battle against cancer in May. Lilly will be sadly missed by all that knew her and loved her.

The following are doing it tough at the moment. A phone call in times of need is always welcome and better than an Aspirin. Contact details can be obtained from Norm Williams (secretary@submarinesaustralia.com) or on 0419 863 558

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <i>Bob Hibberd</i> | <i>Jim Redwood</i> | <i>Terry Lewis</i> |
| <i>Graeme Porzucek</i> | <i>Bob Bobilak</i> | <i>Malcolm Campbell</i> |
| <i>Claude Roberts</i> | <i>Eric Armstrong</i> | <i>Merv Kidd</i> |
| <i>Mike Barnes</i> | <i>Ray Sylvester</i> | <i>Ken 'Biff' Mills</i> |
| <i>Ian Appleby</i> | <i>Stuart Prigmore</i> | <i>Stanley Moss</i> |

A few days before his proctologic exam, a one eyed man accidentally swallowed his glass eye. He was worried for a while, but there were no ill effects, so he forgot about it. Once he was in the doctor's office, the man followed instructions, undressed, and bent over. The first thing the proctologist saw when he looked up the man's arse was that eye staring right back at him. "You know, " said the doctor, "you really have to learn to trust me."

BUDDIES OF THE MONTH

Name: **CPORSSM Don Parsons** (aka Titch)

Wife: Kathryn

DOB: 3 June 1947

Served on: HMS Sealion, HMAS Oxley, HMAS Ovens, HMAS Onslow and HMAS Otama

Lives at: Chirnside Park, Victoria 3116

Don's comments: Served 17 and a half years in boats, now feeding the hungry hoards in Victoria.



Name: **LSMTP3SM Terry Parsons** (aka Titch)

DOB: 9 December 1959

Served on: HMAS Onslow and HMAS Orion

Lives in: Coffs Harbour, NSW 2450

Terry's comments: Life was really great on boats. Someone said to me that I talk as though I was on them yesterday even though that was a hundred years ago.

**WELCOME ABOARD**

The following new members have signed on with the SAA since the May edition of In Depth.

Kevin 'Jack' Warner, ex POETPSM. Rockingham WA 6168. Served on HMAS Otway, HMAS Ovens and HMAS Oxley.

John 'Oby' O'Beirne, ex POCKSM. Kallangur Qld 4503. Served on HMS Alaric, HMAS Onslow and HMAS Ovens.

LCDR Stuart Lumsden RAN (Rtd). Eleebana NSW 2282. served on HMAS Otway, HMAS Oxley, HMAS Ovens, HMAS Otama and HMAS Onslow.

Wayne 'Bill' Whelan ex WOETSSM. Ebenezer NSW 2756. Served on HMS Oracle, HMAS Otway, HMAS Oxley, HMAS Ovens and HMAS Onslow.

Ian Haw, ex POUCSM. Cleveland Qld 4163. Served on HMAS Otway, HMAS Oxley, HMAS Orion and HMAS Onslow.

David Beauchamp, ex LSETCSM. Riverview NSW 2066. Served on HMAS Otway, HMAS Ovens and HMAS Onslow.

Phillip 'Max' Walker, ex LSROSM. Warner Qld 4500. Served on HMAS Otway, HMAS Oxley, HMAS Ovens, HMAS Orion and HMAS Onslow.

Greg Doodson, ex LSMTP3SM. Kyogle, NSW 2474 Served on HMAS Onslow, HMAS Orion, HMAS Ovens

LCDR Riano Gargiulo RAN (Rtd). Garran ACT 2605. Served on HMAS Otama, HMAS Orion, HMAS Onslow and HMAS Oxley.

Join the SAA—Deep down you know it makes sense

FROM THE PENSIONS AND WELFARE COORDINATOR

Let me start by saying well done WA and all who sail in her, an excellent SUBCON one that can only enhance future SUBCON.

I have so far heard from four of you that are, or maybe, suffering disabilities related to the Onslow incident. I reaffirm Onslow was not the only submarine to experience such an event. You are not a doctor or psychiatrist, and therefore you cannot decide if your condition is related to your submarine service or not, neither can I, but I know someone who can, and that is the difference.

I have received a number of emails just to touch base and say g'day, with a closing remark, I will be in touch shortly and talk about my condition. Well mate I'm ready when you are.

I had a pleasant surprise recently travelling about teaching pension officers, and on this occasion was in the Ballina Hotel to find the owner is one Murray McConochie (Black Mac) and a very pleasant evening was had by all.

As we approach the time of State AGM's secretaries might like to give me an update of your state pension officers, they don't normally change but it can happen. All to do with Norms favourite subject communication.

For all pension officers I have only heard from two of you in the last 12 months, which means you are very good at what you do and, you have not recruited any other pension officers or you would have told me. Wouldn't you?

Training and Information Program (TIP) is a national Concept with the DVA to train Pension and Welfare officers. TIP also trains Advocates to level 4 (representation at the AAT). The SAA is well represented in comparison to other ESO's.

The SAA in each State/Territory can apply to be a representative ESO within the TIP Group for that state. The SAA is represented in NSW by the Naval Association post our affiliation.

Any application should be addressed to the TIP Chair of your state, you can find them on the DVA web site under Ex Service organisations.

A lot of claims are being rejected because of missing or improper information being relied on. Volunteer pension officers are there to assist you with your claim, use them and maybe your claim can be accepted at the primary level.

If you would like information on any subject pick up the phone.

Max Hardy
National Pensions and Welfare Coordinator

Email: welfare@submarinesaustralia.com



A full list of the Association's Pensions and Welfare Officers is at http://submarinesaustralia.com/contact_dva.htm or call Max for details.

NSW BRANCH NEWS

Dear Members and non members,
I have resigned as the secretary of the SAA NSW Branch
The new Committee is:
President: **Geoff Anderson**
Vice President: **Kevin Hayton**
Secretary: **Ken Norris**
Treasurer: **Wally Whitfield**
General Committee: **Rick Steltenpool, Ray McMinn and Paul Fogarty**

To those of you that helped me over the last 2.5 years, thanks. To those of you that called and gave me a hard time, ahhh thanks. To those that have not helped and not joined but still called and asked for my help and gave me a hard time, hmmm thanks.

The minutes from the AGM are now available. Please note that the amount of NSW members at the meetings (16 out of 350) is not real flash, so can you make an effort over the next twelve months to get to one of the six meetings.
Ken Williams, Outgoing Secretary-02 9874 0840

The SUBCON 2010 web page is under construction and it can be viewed at www.submarinesaustralia.com/subcon. Coffs is shaping up to be a big weekend and one hell of a run. See you there!

Ken Norris
Secretary SAA (NSW)

**QUEENSLAND BRANCH NEWS**

The AGM and Dinner Dance at Kedron Wavell RSL is rapidly approaching (1st August 2009 at 1900) and it should be another successful get together of the Queensland submarine community. The Master of Ceremonies for the night is Billy Clayton who will be wearing his "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer Horns" so a great night is assured.

The Dinner Dance is followed by our AGM (2nd August 2009 at 1000). All Committee positions will be declared vacant and John Head will supervise the election of the new office bearers. On completion the new President will take "The Chair" thank all present, close the AGM and open the first General Meeting of the new Committee. It is hoped that all proceedings will be completed by 1130 when we can be joined by our partners for a little "Social Intercourse".

Phone me for all the details or if you need accommodation or any special dietary requirements.

Rob Woolrych
Secretary SAA Qld Inc

Details of future SAA Events are available on the last page of this newsletter, please support your Committees and try and attend at least one meeting/function a year.

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WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BRANCH NEWS

Twenty members and a large number of spouses and partners turned up and enjoyed a tot and BBQ on completion of the AGM held on the 15th June.

The President, Secretary and Treasurer were re-appointed
President: **Fred Lawrence**
Vice President: **Darren Thompson**
Secretary: **Paul Meakin**
Treasurer: **John Rana**
Committee: **Sid Czabotar, Perry Holland and Peter Horobin**
Welfare Officer : **Buster Keating**

We all had the opportunity to admire Chad Hardy's new Van which was provided for with the assistance of the SAA Welfare Fund. The Van gives Chad a deal more mobility and more importantly independence than his previous arrangement and takes a considerable strain off his Mum. We should all feel proud that our Association can provide such positive support to our members.

The committee remains committed to providing a variety of social functions for the members to enjoy as well as the more formal Remembrance Day type activities.

The post SUBCON 2009 Report is available and the President at the AGM made special mention of Sid Czabotar and John Rana for their efforts and also those of the Ladies on

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the SUBCON Committee for their hard work that made SUBCON 2009 such a success. I will also say that the membership of the WA Branch played their part also in supporting the whole activity with a very good percentage of our members participating in all events.

Our next activity will be to squirrel our way round the WWII Tunnels (just like turning in in the After Ends) at Leighton Battery on the Stirling Highway, meeting for a tour of the tunnels at 1200 Sunday 16th August at the Car Park (Bring cash \$7 adults \$2 Kids) Tour every 30 mins last 1 hour. Afterwards intend to lunch at the Orient Hotel in Freo and then move on the Afternoon Jazz Session at the Navy Club Freo. Come along and boogy.

Paul Meakin
Secretary SAA WA Branch Inc

BUDDIES IN BOATS..... AND THE SAA WELFARE FUND

Just after Easter, our web master received a disturbing email from a member experiencing difficulty and Norm dutifully passed the email to the WA Branch. Events were set in train to try to determine what difficulties the member, Chad Hardy was experiencing.

Chad had been an ABUCSM and he contracted Multiple Sclerosis at some time and this debilitating illness slowly became more difficult to manage. He had to give up his home and move into his mother's house and as his MS grew worse, getting around became more and more difficult. Kay, Chad's mother became his carer and managing Chad as a well proportioned adult was becoming a real hardship.

This was more than a financial problem - a real cry for help and after further contact with Chad we found that he was trying to purchase a wheelchair capable Toyota van from South Australia at a cost considerably less than one could be sourced in WA. On the premise that the WA Lotteries Commission was going to provide some funding, the WA Executive committee resolved that we should approach the SAA Welfare Fund for funding to finalise the transaction. I am pleased to report that the Welfare Fund Trustees action was swift and sure, with the Fund providing \$3200, and \$800 being provided by the WA Branch.

Unfortunately the bid for Lotteries Commission funds failed but Chad's mother, Kay, came up trumps as all Mums do and with our assistance the van was purchased. It arrived in WA over the SUBCON weekend, but Chad could not get access to it until it had passed inspection and was relicensed. However, the fact it had happened and Chad felt a need to belong to the Association saw him and his mother join us for lunch at the Fremantle Gaol.

Chad and Kay attended the WA branch AGM on Sunday 5th July and proudly showed us the new wheels. At the end of the AGM Chad thanked us for the assistance we had given him and was pleased to announce that he could now become a more active member and would attend future

events.

There are other issues to be addressed and Chad knows that he has access to good support through our Welfare Officer John Keating or any other member if he needs a hand. \$10 a year is all it takes to be a member - small bikkies for the peace of mind it may help bring if you need assistance. So if you know someone who isn't a member - tell them this story.

More importantly - if you can help, the SAA Welfare fund will be very happy to accept your donation, however big or small.

Fred Lawrence
President, SAA WA Branch Inc
0419930914

ARE YOU FINANCIAL? SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2009-2010 ARE OVERDUE!



THE ASSOCIATION AND HMAS PLATYPUS

Dear members and interested parties,

I have had a busy week getting the minutes out from last weeks AGM and getting up to speed on Platypus. I have had conversations with both David Grant and Chris Skinner regarding our direction and what was resolved at our AGM.

For those that are not members of the SAA NSW Branch this is what was proposed and resolved at the AGM regarding Platypus.

Proposal from the floor to form a committee with the specific objective to achieve the goals of the SAA NSW Branch with regards to Platypus. These goals are as follows.

- Consistent representation on the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust committee.
- A memorial dedicated to all Australian Submariners who lost their lives in the service of their country
- A room for the storage of branch records, SAA history and to hold our meetings
- An area to display submarine memorabilia

Volunteers for the committee were Ken Williams, Geoff Anderson and David Sandquest. Chris Skinner is to be informed of the above and Ken Williams is to work closely with Chris Skinner.

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It was agreed that the Branch write a letter outlining how we would like the memorial that has been proposed and paid for by David Grant to be expanded to include all Australian submariners lost in the service of their country.

It was noted in an email from Chris Skinner to Nick Hollo at the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust (SHFT) that Facilities for display and interpretation of the Submarine Collections from RAN Heritage Centre would be in consultation with the WA Maritime Museum which has been proposed for the primary site of the Australian Submarine Museum.

I believe that Lloyd Blake can expand on the WA Maritime Museum proposal. But as I understand it the memorabilia and collection of Australian Submarine artefacts could be housed in the West with artefacts being loaned for display purposes to venues such as a historical display at Platypus. A working document on this may be in existence, but I do not have specific details so if anyone could send me a copy that would be good.

David Grant is in agreement that the memorial can be to all Australian Submariners who lost their lives in the service of their country. Even a memorial to all those who served in Australian submarines, please correct me if I am wrong David. The anchor is still on Spec Island with the chain all ready to go.

Chris said we should be very clear on what we want. I thought the memorial would be good at the old divers workshop against the cliff face. The Admin building and the RANTME admin building are both headed for demolition at this stage. I will be attending the next meeting of the SHFT at Platypus next Tuesday representing Chris Skinner. Appointments to the committee are made in March each year and our aim is for the SAA to be invited next year to join the committee.

Finally it will be in our interest to write to Mr Peter Garrett outlining our view and claims to the site and how they link to other sites of importance before the end of the year. This is going to be a long process over many years so we need to have a profile that is visible, professional and realistic to achieve our goals.

I look forward to your input and feedback when you get the opportunity.

Ken Williams
1 McMullin Avenue, Carlingford NSW 2118
02 98740840

[Anyone with any thoughts are encouraged to contact Ken, this is a great opportunity for the SAA.](#)

Did You Know?

The first successful submarine was built in the 1620s by a Dutch inventor, Cornelius van Drebbel. It had a wooden frame covered with greased leather and was rowed with the help of 12 oars.

DEFENCE NEWS

India to launch indigenous nuke submarine in July

In what will mark a quantum leap for India's shipbuilding capabilities, the launch of the country's first indigenously designed and built nuclear-powered attack submarine is scheduled for late July but it could be a while before the vessel is commissioned, an official said.

The submarine will be commissioned in the Indian Navy as INS Arihant, which translates as "destroyer of enemies", after extensive outfitting and sea trial. It is the first of three such vessels to be constructed in the country. Hitherto, submarines have been constructed here under licence from their foreign designers.

The Indian Navy will also get a Russian-built Akula class nuclear submarine, to be commissioned as INS Chakra, by the year-end. Currently undergoing sea-trials, the delivery date for the Russian submarine was pushed back following an accident on board. The navy will use the submarine to train its crew in handling nuclear-powered vessels.

Russia eyes submarine exports

There is a major potential for exports of Russian submarines, the Russian military export company Rosoboroneksport maintains. The company believes Russia could export up to 40 submarines by 2015.

Information distributed by Rosoboroneksport ahead of the upcoming International Maritime Defence Show indicates that the arms exporter believes Russia can export as many as 30-40 submarines by year 2015, RIA Novosti reports.

-Analysis of the foreign market shows that 30-40 Russian-produced newer-type submarines could be sold by 2015, the Rosoboroneksport writes. It is first of all the vessels Project 636 and the "Amur-1650" which are suited for sales, the company believes.

Trident submarine deal delayed

The design contract for a new generation of Trident nuclear missile submarines, due to have been signed in September, has been put off, government officials revealed last night.

The decision marks a U-turn by ministers, who have insisted there could be no delay in the timetable. They have now agreed that any contract to design and build new Trident submarines will be delayed until an international conference reviewing the non-proliferation treaty in New York next year.

Pressure is growing for the government to abandon its plans to replace the existing Trident system, which could cost well over £70bn and would be redundant in the view of many military analysts.

There is also opposition to a new Trident system among defence chiefs faced with increasing pressure on their budget. The "profile of expenditure" on a new system will now be delayed until 2010. However, officials insisted last night that

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ministers had not changed their minds about replacing the existing system with nuclear missile submarines, as outlined in 2006.

Officials revealed the decision to postpone the "initial gate" design contract as the Cabinet Office published *The Road to 2010*, described as "a phased approach that will enable progress on non-proliferation and multilateral disarmament".

SUBMARINE HISTORY

1909-Submarine Sinks Off Norfolk Coast

Submarine C 11, of the Portsmouth flotilla, was sunk on Wednesday night [July 14, 1909] off the Norfolk coast in a collision with a merchant steamer, the *Eddystone*, with the loss of thirteen lives. The submarine was attached to a flotilla that consisted of nine submarines, three torpedo boats and the parent ship, the cruiser *Bonaventure*. The flotilla left Grimsby on Wednesday for Lowestoft, and was in a line off Haisborough lightship when the merchant steamer crossed the line and crashed into the C 11, which sank in fifteen fathoms.

Two men are out just fishing quietly and drinking beer. Quietly, so as not to scare the fish, Bob says, 'I think I'm gonna divorce my wife. She hasn't spoken to me in over 2 months.' Charles continues slowly sipping his beer then thoughtfully says, 'You better think it over, Bob. Women like that are hard to find.'

OBITUARY - LCDR MAX SHEAN DSO* RANVR (RTD)

Lieutenant-Commander Max Shean RAN (Rtd) DSO and Bar, who died on June 15th aged 90, was the Patron of the WA Branch of the Association.

Max married Mary Golding in 1944. She survives him with their two daughters.

Max was one of the small band of young men who, in the face of extraordinary peril, carried the sea war into enemy harbours; in the process they won a total of 68 awards for bravery, including four VCs; for his own exploits, Max received a DSO and Bar.

In September 1942 Max volunteered for special and hazardous service without knowing what this meant. After only 10 days' training, some of the volunteers dropped out; Max thought that this took a lot of courage, while for him it seemed easier to stand at the back and hope that no one noticed his fear. When he learned soon afterwards that he was to become a diver in a secret, 51ft, four-man submarine known as an X-craft, his knees began to shake. But with his combination of engineering skills and seamanship, it turned out to be a task for which he was well-suited.

As an X-craft diver, Max had to practise getting in and out of his submarine dived through a small wet-and-dry chamber, shutting himself off from the rest of the crew before flooding the compartment and opening an external hatch. Max practised cutting underwater nets in Scottish lochs,

which were always cold and black. There were accidents and deaths during training, but Max and his fellow Australians always felt sure that they could beat the odds.

His first mission was Operation Source, the attack by a flotilla of X-craft on the German battleship *Tirpitz* in north Norway in September 1943. The X-craft were manned by passage crews and towed there by parent submarines, while attack crews, including Max's, prepared themselves in the towing vessels.

Disaster struck, however, when Max's X-9, behind *Syrtis*, broke her tow and the passage crew was lost. The towrope became tangled round *Syrtis*'s port propeller, and Max, whose diving suit was in X-9, plunged over the side into the freezing waters. Wearing overalls weighted with steel bars in the pockets, Max repeatedly duck-dived until he could free the tangled rope. Knowing that, if attacked from the air, *Syrtis* would dive and abandon him on the surface, Max was more frightened than he had ever been; and when he was hauled on board, the submarine's commanding officer rewarded him with a brusque "Well done!"

One of the lessons of Operation Source was the potential for confusion during multiple attacks; so on Operation Guidance, in April 1944, Max, now in command of X-24, was towed by *Sceptre* to Bergen, Norway, to make a solo attack on a large floating dock.

Max successfully penetrated the fjords to reach the harbour, but faulty intelligence caused him to lay X-24's explosive charges under a 7,800-ton German merchant ship, *Barenfels*, instead of the floating dock. Otherwise it was a model attack, and 24 hours later, sick and suffering from headaches caused by the stale air in the boat, Max and his crew rendezvoused at sea with *Sceptre*. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Order for his great courage, skill and determination in a most hazardous enterprise.

Following D-Day, Max's flotilla was deployed to the Far East in command of an improved craft, XE-4. When Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Ocean Areas, and an experienced submariner, saw his first XE-craft he declared it was a "suicide craft" which had no place in the Allies' order of battle. But when orders came from Washington to cut two underwater telegraph cables off Japanese-occupied Saigon, he found that the British midget submarines were the only force capable of achieving this.

The aim of Operation Sabre was to force the Japanese to use wireless communications which could be intercepted and deciphered. Max designed new grapnels to hook the cables, which ERA Vernon "Ginger" Coles made, and set off under tow from Queensland. En route to Indo-China, Max nearly drowned. XE-4 was running on the surface, with the hatches closed to prevent the boat flooding, when Max was swept away by a wave; but after "swimming the fastest strokes of my life" he grabbed the rudder and hauled himself along the jumping wire and climbed on board again.

Undeterred, with only underwater dead reckoning updated

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by occasional sightings of Cap St Jacques lighthouse, Max expertly navigated XE-4 into the shallow mouth of the Me-kong river where, on July 31 1945, he began a submarine trawl for the cables. After ploughing the seabed for hours, XE-4 was, at 12.05, suddenly brought to a halt: it had snagged the first cable, and 13 minutes later the diver, fellow-Australian Sub-Lieutenant Ken Briggs, returned with a short length as proof that it had been cut. Resuming his trawl at 13.26, Max found the second cable, much deeper than the first, and Sub-Lieutenant Adam Bergius made three attempts to cut it.

Max could only wait until an exhausted Bergius emerged triumphantly from the airlock brandishing a length of cable.

Shortly after midnight, Max rendezvoused with the submarine Spearhead and was towed in triumph to Subic Bay, in the Philippines. He was awarded a Bar to his DSO and the US Bronze Star for his gallantry, perseverance and outstanding skill. Coles, who was in Max's crew in X-24 and in XE-4, was awarded a DSM and a mention in despatches.

Maxwell Max was born on July 6 1918 in Perth and the young Max spent his youth "messaging about in tin boats on the river". He was studying Engineering at the University of Western Australia when he heard news of Dunkirk. Although strongly advised to finish his studies, he was determined to join the Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve.

The RN needed skilled anti-submarine warfare officers for the Battle of the Atlantic, and eventually one fifth of all ASWOs were trained at HMAS Rushcutter in Sydney, where Max was sent in late 1940. By the summer of 1941 he was in his first ship, the corvette Bluebell, which he described as "like your first girlfriend, she goes into your heart. I served 14 months in Bluebell, she kept me afloat and gave me three meals a day, made me seasick and she sank a U-boat."

Bluebell was part of the 37th Escort Group escorting convoys between Britain and Gibraltar, and Max took part in some of the bitterest fighting of the Battle of the Atlantic. His skill as an ASWO and proficiency in using his ASDIC (sonar) earned him the nickname "King Ping".

At the end of 1941 Bluebell took part in the desperate defence of convoy OG77, which was attacked by a wolf pack; but five U-boats were sunk. On the night of December 11/12 Max heard the high-pitched whine of torpedoes three times through his headset and warned his captain to turn Bluebell, and at midnight he dropped two patterns of depth charges. Max's postwar research in British and German archives convinced him that he had sunk U-208.

While training in X-craft on the Isle of Bute, Max travelled to Aberfeldy, Perthshire, to seek his Scottish ancestors. There he was warned that the village shop's pretty assistant was "spoken for". Nevertheless, romance blossomed, and despite wartime security Max even smuggled her into the builder's yard, where she broke a bottle of Australian cham-

pagne on the bows of Max's boat, XE-4, and gave it its unofficial name, Exciter.

After the war Max finished his degree and worked for the City of Perth Electricity and Gas Department, and the State Electricity Commission until his retirement in 1978.

In 1979 he celebrated the 150th anniversary of the settlement of Western Australia by winning the open division of the Parmelia Yacht Race from Plymouth to Fremantle. His yacht, Bluebell, is today moored at Fremantle Sailing Club. In May 2005 Max and his wife joined the Department of Veterans' Affairs VE-Day mission to Europe.

Max's logical approach to problems and his interest in engineering shine through his modest wartime biography, *Corvette and Submarine* (1992). Once one of his daughter's boyfriends remarked that he ran his household like a battleship, which Max took as a great compliment.

A Naval Funeral was held at Karrakatta Cemetery on Monday 22 June.

Editors note: Sub-Lieutenant Ken Briggs DSC RANVR (Rtd) mentioned above is now 86 and living in Rochedale, Queensland. Ken, a SAA Member, turned 86 in May. In 2003 Ken, who also served on X24, was nominated by the SAA to represent Australia, the RAN and the Association in The Government's commemorative mission to London in November 2003 for the dedication of the Australian War Memorial.

Also selected to attend were two NSW Members, LCDR Donald Wilson DSC RANVR, who served in HMS P31, HMS Untiring and commanded HMS Voracious and Sub Lieutenant Robert Walder RANR, who served in HMS Unbending, HMS Taku and HMS Tireless

DVA were looking for only 30 former World War Two Australian service personnel in proportion to the number of the servicemen i.e. Navy, Army and RAAF who served in Britain and who were medically fit to travel by air and who could stand the rigors of media and travel required in the Mission. The guidelines requirement restricted all but eight of our wartime members who could qualify for the Mission. either in the North Sea or in the North Atlantic in the RN as skimmers. All six then volunteered for submarines.

Out of more than 240 nominations 3 of the six members nominated by the Association were selected.

SLOPS VAN

The following are just some of the items that are available from the Slops Van. Items can be ordered online, by calling 0419 863 558 or by sending an order to: PO Box 63, Bauple 4650.

Beret with SAA Logo only \$25
 Cap with SAA Logo only \$17.50
 Pin on blazer badge with SAA Logo only \$30
 SM Squadron tie only \$27.50



WWW:http://www.upperiscope.com.au/slops_van.html

COOMBE'S DITTY BOX

After an exercise in the North Atlantic with submarines of the US Navy we headed for Canada and berthed at Halifax in Nova Scotia. We were billeted at HMCS Stadacona and all managed to find Joe Comeau's Tavern, conveniently located across the road from the base entrance. The regulars at the tavern challenged us to a game of soccer, in the belief that all Brits could play the game. We gleefully took up the challenge although we had no actual team nor strip, and not many of the guys had actually played in a team match since school! The PTI's at Stadacona loaned us a strip and we sorted out who would play in what position for the team, even though some of us, like me, had never even played soccer before.

The captain of the team was a fore-ender named Smoky, and he figured that, as I was accustomed to playing Australian football where I could use my hands, I should be the goalie. Naturally everyone on our team wanted to be a striker so I was left down one end of the field and all the others were up the other end.

Thankfully the team from the tavern were drinkers rather than soccer players and after fifteen minutes of running around in headless chook mode both teams were totally exhausted, and the score remained nil-all! The referee, a Canadian submariner, could see the two teams were utterly spent and decided to enact a mercy rule and call a halt. Howls of protest erupted from both camps as to the result as a lot of beer was riding on the outcome of the game, and it was decided to hold a penalty shoot-out.

Smoky took the shot for our team and, although he lost his footing and mis-kicked the ball, the opposition goalie collided with the post in his attempt to spoil, and the ball gracefully rolled into the net. Now it was my turn to defend and, as the Canadian striker positioned himself for his shot, Smoky's words echoed in my mind. **KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BALL!**

The Canuck swung his boot into the ball and, true to the captain's instructions, I kept my eye on the ball as it arced towards the goal and collected me right between the eyes! It was a wet ball and stung like hell, and I was catapulted into the back of the net but the ball rolled back out into the field of play. I lay on my back in the wet grass and faintly heard the team chanting "AUS! AUS! AUS!"

It took almost a week for the pattern of the ball to disappear from my face, but I never again had to buy a drink at Joe Comeau's Tavern!

Garry Coombe OAM

An older man approached an attractive younger woman at a shopping mall. 'Excuse me; I can't seem to find my wife. Can you talk to me for a couple of minutes?'

The woman, feeling a bit of compassion for the old fellow, said, 'Of course, sir. Do you know where your wife might be?'

'I have no idea, but every time I talk to a woman with tits like yours, she appears out of nowhere.'

12 WOMEN IN USN SUBMARINE QUALIFIED

Lt. Cmdr. Marilisa Elrod has a rare distinction: as a doctor and undersea medical officer, she has become submarine qualified in a service that excludes women as crewmembers. Elrod says it would take effort and changes but believes women can successfully serve on submarines.

A sailor once asked Lt. Cmdr. Marilisa Elrod where she got the twin dolphins sewn below the U.S. Navy lettering on her uniform. She could understand the sailor's confusion — he had probably never seen the insignia on a woman before. "I said I borrowed them from my husband ... just to tease him," said Elrod, a doctor and undersea medical officer based in Hawaii.

Then she explained how she studied for more than a year and passed her qualification test aboard the USS Key West before earning the distinction of being a submarine-qualified sailor.

To a submariner, those dolphins mean that the sailor wearing them knows enough about every function of the boat to save it in an emergency.

Elrod is one of 12 submarine-qualified women in the Navy, officials said. As a medical officer, she has had the opportunity to ride on several vessels. However, crews stationed aboard submarines remain all male in the U.S. Navy.

Australia, Canada, Spain and Norway all allow women to serve on submarines, though their deployments tend to be shorter than those aboard U.S. nuclear-powered subs.

If women were allowed to serve permanently aboard subs, they would need designated spaces that aren't available on today's boats, said Submarine Group Seven spokesman Lt. Cmdr. Greg Kuntz.

"It's the space and the design itself that makes it very difficult at this time, but it's not that we aren't constantly re-viewing [the idea]," Kuntz said. "The big question we continually ask ourselves is, 'How could we make this work?'"

Studies on retrofitting existing submarines to accommodate female berthing have shown that doing so would be prohibitively expensive, Kuntz said.

Submarines are already packed tightly with equipment; the few spaces that aren't, like the chief petty officer's lounge, aren't likely to be given away to enlisted sailors of any gender, Kuntz said.

Submarine medics would also need to keep women's health issues in mind; for example, abdominal pain can be harder to diagnose in women, Elrod said.

"There are definitely some things that would need to be worked out and some instructions would need to be written, medically speaking," she said.

Other than the logistics, the biggest change would have to occur among attitudes. A large group of men in their 20s and 30s, living in very close quarters, tend to produce a lot of off-colour humor.

EVENTS CALENDAR

1 st August 2009	QLD	Social	Dinner Dance at Kedron Wavell RSL. Contact Rob Woolrych 07 5442 1991 for more information.
2 nd August 2009 1030	QLD	Annual General Meeting	Venue: Kedron Wavell RSL. Contact Rob Woolrych 07 5442 1991 for more information.
9 th August 2009 1100	ACT	AGM and Social	The ACT Branch will hold its AGM on Sunday 09 August 2009 at the Canberra Services Club, commencing at 1100, BBQ to follow.
16 th August	WA	Social	1200 Tour of Leighton Battery WWII Tunnels, 1300 Lunch ORIENT Hotel 1600-1900 Jazz at the Navy Club. Contact Paul Meakin for details.
16 th August 2009	TAS	AGM and Social	AGM and Restaurant night at Ross. If you would like more information call our Social Co-ordinator, Mike Crellin on 0407 663 649.
23 rd August 2009	VIC	VP Day	Venue ESU. Contact John (Boot) Hatfield 0408 051 085 for more information.
29 th August 2009	NQ	General Meeting	Venue in Townsville TBC. Contact Garth Schmidt for more information.
20 th September 2009	VIC	General Meeting	Social meeting at ESU. Noon onwards. BBQ. Contact John (Boot) Hatfield 0408 051 085 for more information.
20 th September 2009 1130	NSW	General Meeting	City of Sydney RSL 565 George Street SYDNEY

START PLANNING NOW!!!

SM Friendly Coffs Harbour

11th - 14th June 2010

A gathering of the Australian submarine community



STOP PRESS: The following news has been received just prior to putting this issue to bed.

VP Day is one of two special events on our calendar, the other being Anzac Day. It bears special significance to the submarine force for the events that happened in the Pacific during WWII and the submarine losses in that theatre of war. It is our one occasion to honour the memory of the submariners who paid the supreme sacrifice defending our shores, please make an effort to attend.

It was also decided at the meeting to present the HMS Unsparing WWII Jolly Roger presented to us by Lt 'Jack' Straw, ex TO of Unsparing, to the Holbrook Submarine Museum during the weekend of 17-18 October. Transport has been organised, a 30-seater bus and spaces are filling fast. Cost will be \$25 return fare, per head, for financial Victoria members (those who have paid their \$15 for our Christmas raffle). This promises to be a good run ashore and a weekend to look forward to. A copy of the Jolly Roger is being made and will be held by the Victoria Branch.

Seating is available to other Victorian members but the cost to them will be \$80 return fare. Arrangements have been made at Holbrook for accommodation but this is at members

cost. A price has been agreed and negotiated by the motel and Victoria branch at a very reasonable rate - if interested, contact me.

Every effort is made by your committee to ensure that funds raised are utilised fully and returned to the members, it is sad that unfortunately support from members out there is not everything one would hope for. Out of a membership of 112 here in Victoria, we have a regular attendance of 16-20 members at the monthly meeting. Make an effort to attend a meeting and your input will be appreciated.

The committee is also working on SUBCON 2011 and SAA AGM, which will be held here in Victoria, volunteers, assistance, sponsorship is always very much appreciated.

Remember it is YOUR Association, run by us (your ship-mates) for you. Become involved and make our efforts worthwhile.

Secretary
0408 051 085

Eternal Patrol—LCDR Don Wilson DSC RANVR (Rtd)

It is with great sadness I have to report the death of Don Wilson on the 22nd of July at Mona Vale. He was 92, probably the oldest member of the Submarines Association and certainly its most senior and best-liked.

He served in HM/SMs P31, Untiring and Commanded Voracious. He was the last of the three RAN officers who commanded submarines in WWII.

There will be a Memorial Service at St Michael and All Angels Anglican Church, Foamcrest Avenue, Newport at 1100 on Wednesday, 29th July.