



Honorary Memorial Co-ordinator
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HMAS YARRA II NATIONAL MEMORIAL

**70th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SINKING OF THE HMAS YARRA 11
4.3.1942 – 4.3.2012**

MEMORIAL SERVICE 2012 – Melways Ref: Map 56 B4

20th January 2012

Hello to all loyal and supportive friends of HMAS YARRA II National Memorial and belated New Year wishes to everyone. This last six months has been extremely busy with lots of preparation work going into this years' 70th Anniversary and I am sure that none of you will be disappointed. For anyone who has been unable to attend the last few services, it would be wonderful if you can possibly get here for this one as it is hard to believe that 70 years to the day has passed. We are blessed to have Chaplain Ted Brooker from N.S.W. down to conduct our service of worship this year and he holds this event very close to his heart. Some of you may not know but his father was killed in that final action that the Yarra went through and I feel honoured by his attendance. The service will commence at 1100 hours 4.3.12.

I am extremely pleased to be able to inform everyone that we will have in attendance this year approximately thirty members of the crew of the HMAS Yarra IV under the direction of their new skipper LCDR Bradley J. Vizard, who assumed Command of MHC Crew four (HMAS Yarra) on the 10th December 2010. Born and raised on Sydney's North Shore and joined the Navy in 1986. He has had a lot to do with Mine Warfare and Clearance diving, had Commanding roles on various ships and was on active duty overseas. LC Vizard also volunteered as reservist to fill the Officer-In-Charge Mine Warfare School while the incumbent was serving in Afghanistan. He was taking a short break from the Navy and pursued external Business Development opportunities with MAICD, (Member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors). His wife and family reside at Warriewood on Sydney's Northern Beaches.

We have been extremely fortunate in that LC Vizard has been given permission to allow twenty or so people on board ship for a jaunt around Port Phillip Bay and for these lucky ones to also have lunch whilst out. As you will all realise I will have to do another ballot to draw out the lucky recipients for this occasion and they will be notified by phone prior to Saturday the 3rd March with all the details. The Yarra IV will leave port at around 1100 hours on the Saturday and return at approximately 1500 hours. Anyone who wants to be considered must ring me as soon as possible to be able to go into the draw.

There will also be a reception held for all dignitaries, special guests and loyal supporters to be held at the Williamstown RSL Club located at 128 Ferguson Street, Williamstown. This should commence between 1330 hours and 1400 hours and light refreshments will be served.

Just to bring everyone up to date I would like to let you know that when the Navy marked its 109th Birthday there were Historic changes made to Battle Honours effective from the 1st March 2010. Even though we are now in 2012 I hope you still realise that these battle honours are highly prized by ships, squadrons and establishments across the RAN. They serve as a constant reminder of the Navy's past achievements. The review also identified prior anomalies where some ships had not received due recognition for their activities and the full revised list was approved by the Governor General last year.

Battle Honours Recognition of all serving Yarra ships is as follows:-

YARRA :- Rabaul 1914. Adriatic 1917-18, Libya 1941, East Indies 1942, Malaysia 1964-66

How wonderful is this? The Chief of Navy at the time VADM Russell Crane AO, CSM, RAN said "In a time of very high operational tempo the navy team, which includes civilian and commercial partners, continues to achieve and sustain the high standards set by those who went before us."

This also brings me to another reminder that when we march on ANZAC day in Melbourne, those who have seen the updated banner will notice that all four HMAS Yarra ships are represented with pride on the banner. We desperately need more participants to join in the march and I would implore you to get in touch with Mr. Garry Taylor on 03 97271840, for more details. If we do not get the support, unfortunately we may have to drop out of the parade altogether. I personally think this would be a great shame if we do have to for obvious reasons. The parade goes from Flinders & Swanston Sts to the Shrine and the march starts at 9.00am.

Once again our friends of the Rotary Club of Williamstown will be present with the sausage sizzle and believe me that is not the only support they render. Constantly throughout the year prior to our service they work tirelessly helping me out with a lot of things by organising many requests I throw their way and they are the ones who set up everything ready for each service. Please acknowledge their efforts on the day.

Mrs. Meena Walsh will have coffee and tea at the ready in the little pavilion at the site. Every year she puts in and volunteers for this job and does a wonderful service for all who like that hot cuppa. She even provides lollies for the children and of course those adults who cannot resist them as well. Thankyou Meena.

The Melbourne Port Authority and the Hobson's Bay City Council are still going ahead with the beautification plans for right along the foreshore to the Docklands and yes, the path that we have been trying to get has been included but I am still not sure when it will actually be erected. The plans that I have seen are awesome and although there will be a lot of work to do, it will look fantastic and be very functional when completed.

Finally, due to health reasons, I have to ask if there is anyone at all out there who may be interested in coming on to the committee and taking on some active roles to please let me know. Too much hard work since Angus Walsh started this wonderful memorial has been carried on for years to allow the memorial services to slide away.

I am looking forward to rekindling friendships and seeing everyone again this March and in the meantime I hope everyone keeps well and safe.

Sincerely

Christine Hirschfield

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