

FHSM NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2021



HISTORICAL ARTICLES



ARTEFACTS
AND INFORMATION



FROM THE GALLERY BOATS, PEOPLE AND PLACES



THIS EDITION

SPECIAL PROJECTS UPDATE

Paint Boat Day 2021

NEW MEMBERS

MEMBERS STORIES.
Graham 'Spida' Webb

MY FIRST BOAT
Ian Taber

ALSO, IN THIS EDITION

Free AE2 Webinar offer

AE 2 remembered.

Bunts Boat

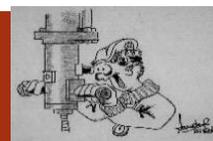
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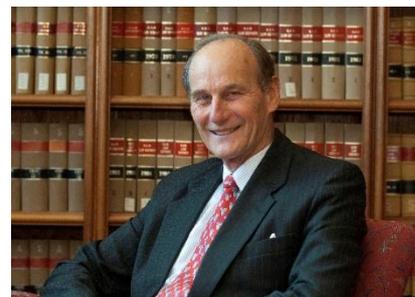
MEMBERS UPDATE



PRESIDENTS REPORT

Vale. Gundula Holbrook

We received the sad news in early January that Gundula Holbrook, the widow of Lt Cdr Holbrook VC had passed away at the grand old age of 106 at her home in Austria. Gundula was a great supporter of the Museum and the town named after her husband. We mourn her passing but remember her with fondness for her generosity and interest in the museum.



Welcome 2021 - As we say goodbye to 2020 and greet the new year, I thought I would mention some of the museum's major projects for this year and thank the many volunteers who are making them possible. (i) In relation to the AE2 Replica renovation project, we hope this, and the supporting exhibition will be ready for an Anzac week opening on 25th April. Members will recall that this replica was initially the constructed model on which the divers practiced before they went to the Sea of Marmora to dive on the AE2 itself. The team has been busy raising funds and working with Cathy Mann and Roger Cooper on the internal material for the AE2 replica whilst the preparations for the relocation of the replica to its new permanent site have gone ahead; (ii) Also the team been working with new Committee member Dr Roger Neill on a supplement to honour the expeditions that found and surveyed AE2 in the Marmora; (iii) in relation to the internal upgrades within the museum, the team will continue with work on the Torpedo room and the Control room as well as finishing the items in the other areas; and (iv) there are plans to run some webinars this year and the details of the first one can be found later in this newsletter. We hope you can join us for the webinar session throughout the year.

Members should have in mind that the SAA annual meeting SUBCON 2021 is to be held in Holbrook in October which should be a great event and a major boost for the museum. Finally, thanks to lots of people for the work they are doing; Cathy Mann as Honorary Curator, the FHSM team, Honorary life member Roger Cooper for all his work on the AE2 replica, the new committee member Geoff Rose who is working with Graham (Jumper) Collins to take over the honorary treasurer's accounts and, as well but certainly not least, the team of volunteers who painted Otway. Thanks to all for your good work during 2020 and let us hope that 2021 is a good year for all and for the Museum.

Regards,
Michael White
President

VALE GUNDULA HOLBROOK – A VERY SPECIAL LADY

We received the sad news in early January that Gundula Holbrook, the widow of Lt Cdr Holbrook VC had passed away at the grand old age of 106 at her home in Austria. She was born in Austria in 1915 and married Norman in 1952. The couple lived in England until his death on the 3rd of July 1976 a few days short



of his 88th birthday. At some time after that, Gundula returned to Austria, and was the village's oldest resident.

Norman and Gundula first visited Holbrook, in 1956, and their last visit together was in 1975. In 1982 Gundula presented Norman's Victoria Cross and other WW1 medals to the town.



Her incredible generosity to the town of Holbrook, was the impetus behind the HMAS OTWAY casing and the Submarine Museum happening in Germanton Park. Gundula last visited in 1997, when a dedication ceremony/freedom of entry was held after HMAS OTWAY was installed in the park.





*Gundula always remembered the town and the
Museum always received a Christmas card.*

*We will always remember you Gundula,
thank you for your generosity and care.*

THE JIM REDWOOD ROOM RENOVATION COMPLETE.



Before re carpeting

A picture paints a thousand words.

The upgrade to Jim Redwood room is now complete. The new carpet was installed on Wednesday 10th February. It’s like walking into a different room, with the carpet setting off the art plinths and walls perfectly says Curator Cathy Mann. A local carpet business arrived at 7:30 and had laid all the tiles, helped with re-locating the plinths and finished by 12:30. Thank you SIA for the funding and Carpet Call for their assistance.



The new look room is amazing!

OTWAY GETS A LICK OF PAINT

The Painting long weekend was a great success, with many willing volunteers to wield brushes out in the 40 plus heat every day. OTWAY looks amazing now, and as soon as we organize a cherry picker, I have more willing crew to take on the painting of the fin. The event attracted local TV and news crews.



*Adrian Jallands and Alan Dangerfield-
More paint less pose please!*

Andrew from Dulux who donated the paint has been sent photos and a copy of the photos in the Border Mail, along with an invitation to attend April 25th ceremonies. After a tiring 4 days of 40 plus degrees heat, relaxing with a BBQ was in order and down came the pouring rain.

Some of the ‘Paint Ship Crew’ - L-R John Whitehouse, Lindsay Frost, Keith Bateman, Ned Kelly, Morris Jepperson, James Arnold, Cathy Mann, Titch Turner, Mark Sprigg, Robert Hendrie. Thanks to Gary Redman for taking the pictures.



AE 2 Replica- More paint will be applied to AE2 replica inside and out, just as soon as she has made her move to the new plinth and become an extension of the Museum. This is needed to allow a good surface for Roger Cooper to install the E class submarine photos, and to allow the public to see her at her best when we open the area up for viewing.



AE2 replica - Holbrook

Combined Services - Plans are afoot to combine a service for Gundula Holbrook with the re-opening of the AE2 Replica and exhibition and other ceremonies to occur on ANZAC Day. According to Curator Cathy Mann, “We expect to have a good attendance in town, and we are currently coordinating times to allow our Mayor and other dignitaries to attend. Newspaper and television have been alerted to the event”.

Merchandising - Book sales have been slow due in part to the lock downs and lack of traffic through Holbrook. Online sales have continued to generate extra funds for the museum. Clothing sales have been disappointing due to the supplier experiencing some stock difficulties prior to Christmas making them unable to fulfill the orders. However, the trader has apologised and confirmed that all pre-Christmas orders are underway and will be completed soon. We also apologise for any inconvenience our members have suffered.

Development and Project Team – Sandy reports he is progressing with his tapestry projects. The **AE 2** team has been working with Dr Neill on a book covering the expeditions to the AE2 (see article). Roger Cooper has had a look at the inside of the AE2 replica and has made some notes on the paint condition relative to his installing the large prints. Hume Shire Council (HSC) has started planning for the plinth and ramps which we believe will be ready in March.

Sound Bite -The new sound systems and sound bite for the control room has been delivered and installed to the satisfaction of the Curator.

The Mosaic Project is still in limbo due to time constraints at present. We hope to reinvigorate this digitizing and cataloguing project over the next 6 months.

NAVAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA PILOT TOUR OF HMAS PLATYPUS DEEMED A SUCCESS



The Naval Historical Society of Australia conducted a successful pilot tour of HMAS PLATYPUS in January. Managed by the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust, the Society hopes to conduct more guided tours throughout the year. The tours cover the torpedo factory (RANTE), and the gas works site as well as Platypus which as many of you know was the home for Australia’s submarine squadron for many years.

A major theme of the tours are the lives of the people who worked there. It’s a great opportunity to take the kids and grandkids to learn about the proud history of Australia’s submarine squadron and the people who work there. The next tour was on the 17th of Feb and focused on the 1942 Japanese Midget Submarine attack on Sydney Harbour.



**Welcome
New Members**

**Cdr Tony Vine
Darryl Neild
Peter Hurford
PO Steven Rowell**

DONATIONS - We welcome donations and support in financial as well as in kind. If you would like to donate money or an artefact, pictures, or other submarine related material, please contact either: FHSM secretary, Thor Lund, tlund@bigpond.net.au. Or for artefacts and pictures The Curator, Cathy Mann cathy.mann@iinet.net.au

LIFE AT SEA SERIES – GRAHAM (SPIDA) WEBB

I left the Otway on her way home in Port Elizabeth South Africa with suspected Mumps after the boat was diverted from its trip to Durban from Simonstown. On departing the boat at Port Elizabeth, other than the clothes on my back and sandals, I had only a small bag of toiletries, an extra shirt, and a pair of shoes. So, once I am over the illness, I am transported to the British Consulates residence until flights can be arranged to Durban. but the Port Elizabeth floods put a stop to that.



Nobody could imagine going to bed on Saturday night 31 August 1968, what they would wake up to the next morning. So, when the citizens of Port Elizabeth awoke to some light rain, just after 7 am, they thought it was the perfect day to roll over, snuggle up and have a good Sunday morning snooze. The fact that most of the population remained indoors, was one of the main reasons for the relatively low number of fatalities, for a disaster of this proportion.

At just before 8 am, the heavens opened, like a storm of Biblical proportions. In just over 4 hours, between 0740 and 1200, a total of 352 mm of rain was measured at the Port Elizabeth Airport. Coming from a seven-kid family in Cairns, and most definitely “working class”, it was a no brainer that my ‘upper class skill set was going to be put to the test. Failure came quickly. At breakfast with my new ‘family’, the salubrious table setting was, I thought, only reserved for royalty, the centre piece of which, a silver tray, laden fried eggs, and bacon. Offering courtesy, Mr Richards nodded for me to commence. I fearfully took the tongs and proceeded nervously towards the bacon - snared two pieces in one grab. Only one made it to the plate. The other landed halfway on the rock hard starched white tablecloth leaving a six-inch grease stain!

Their 10-year-old snobby kid sniggered with delight at my misfortune. And was scolded by Mrs Richards. But there was worse to come. Next was the egg. It could have been nerves, but why, why did I put the BIG FORK under the egg instead of the BIG SPOON has kept me awake at night for years. Little snobby let out a yelp as the yolk dripped all the way back to my plate. In two minutes, I turned a formal breakfast in to a car wreck. Did I say worse was to come? It could have been a change of diet, or the medication that Malnutrition Mal (Coxn Meakins) was injecting into my system while I was ill on board, but the gastro consequences were not only dire, but on numerous occasions unexpected. “Skid marks’ are often used to describe an unfortunate personal occurrence. Mine were of Port Elizabeth flood proportions!

After two nights I had to discard the idea of wearing underpants altogether. But where to discard them? This place was super immaculate and there was nowhere to hide the damn things So, I rolled them up into a ball and poked up into the toe of my left shoe. Hoping no one would see or smell them I stowed them under my bed. After three days (still in the same clothes) Mrs Richards approached me with an “offer”. Would I like to “be with my own people”

as in Australians? I might have been born at night, but not last night. I took the offer to be an ORDER! Soon I was on a plane to JoBerg (Johannasberg).

I was picked up at the airport and transported by black Buick to the residence of John Forsyth, Aussie Ambassador. “That you Webby”. I heard a voice call out “get in here and have a Fosters”. The next thing he did was arrange for \$100 credit at clothes shop and I was driven there to replace my kit. It wasn’t until departure day to fly to Perth when I realised, I had no shoes. Well not with me. They were under the bed still! I Flew across the Indian, joining Otway in Fremantle and it was not until we arrived in Adelaide that a parcel arrived addressed to me. Perhaps a belated 20th year birthday present, two months late. No, it was my shoes, and in a separate plastic bag my undies with a rubber band so they could not escape! There was a note attached with one word....
YOURS??



Graham lives in Cairns in the far north of Qld. He has had a background in finance after leaving the Navy.

MY FIRST BOAT



IAN TABER



My first boat was HMS "Ocelot" which had been in commission for about a year. I joined her in Scotland at Faslane in January 1965. After I qualified for my Dolphins (3 months) I was asked if I could stay on board and of course I said yes. I was initially 2nd outside ERA and was later OERA, which was very pleasing to me. I spent 18 months on board which included two trips to the Barents Sea, followed by a week in Oslo, Norway the first time. The second finished up with a trip to Stockholm in Sweden. There were trips (and exercises) to Gibraltar, Northern Ireland and one to Newcastle in England, all very

enjoyable. There were several other Aussies on board whose names escape me now. I have not heard where they finished up, but we all had good training and I’m sure they did well.

During my time Ocelot had 3 different C.O’s. They were all good skippers. However, we did have a couple of incidents. We ran aground one time going into Londonderry and had to wait for high tide. The captain at the time said he would not go above Lt Cdr, because of it but he finished up a Captain.

I first joined "Otway" (nu ship) in June 1966 but that deserves another story – ‘My first Australian boat’.

AE2 THE SILENT ANZAC

In the lead up to the reopening of the new AE2 Replica and exhibit we felt it worthwhile putting together a little background on the AE2 and her exploits. In later editions we will cover more details of the replica, its origins and acquisition by HSM. However, we feel it's important to capture some of the background of the submarine and her exploits to start with.



His Majesty's Australian Submarine AE2 - was launched in the yard of Vickers Ltd at Barrow-in-Furness, England on 18 June 1913 by Mr. WH

Wharton. She commissioned at Portsmouth on 28 February 1914 under the command of Lieutenant Commander Henry Hugh Gordon Dacre Stoker, RN. Her crew of 35 comprised officers and ratings from both the Royal Navy and Royal Australian Navy and she was the second of two E Class submarines built for the fledgling Royal Australian Navy. Accompanied by her sister submarine *AE1*, (Lieutenant Commander Thomas Besant, RN), the two vessels sailed from England for Australia on 2 March 1914. The voyage was undertaken in three phases. The first phase took place under the escort of the Royal Navy cruiser HMS *Eclipse* which remained with the submarines until they reached Colombo.

Deployed to the Aegean -In February 1915 *AE2* joined a Royal Navy squadron based on the island of Tenedos in the Aegean Sea. From there she operated in support of the unfolding Dardanelles campaign.

Prior to 25 April 1915, *AE2*'s part in operations was minimal, but that changed when Vice Admiral de Robeck, Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C), Eastern Mediterranean Fleet, approved plans presented to him by Stoker to attempt to force a passage through the 35 mile long, heavily fortified Dardanelles Strait and enter the Sea of Marmora (also spelt Marmara). If this could be achieved, enemy shipping transiting between the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles could be prevented from reinforcing and resupplying Turkish troops on the Gallipoli peninsula.

Dangerous Task -All previous attempts by Allied submarines to pass through the strait had failed due to an effective sea denial operation mounted by the enemy. Minefields fixed and mobile gun batteries, searchlight surveillance and patrolling Turkish warships, coupled with natural navigational hazards, had made the Dardanelles seemingly impenetrable. The C-in-C remarked:

if Stoker and his crew were successful there would be 'no calculating the result it will cause, and it may well be that you will have done more to finish the war than any other act accomplished'.

First Attempt - On the morning of 24 April the attempt began, however, the mission was soon abandoned when one of the submarine's forward hydroplanes failed, necessitating *AE2* returning to Tenedos to effect repairs. With repairs complete, and with a heightened sense of tension among her crew, *AE2* set off to try again the following day. Lieutenant Commander Stoker having proceeded from the anchorage off Tenedos, lay at the entrance off the Dardanelles until moonset and at about 2:30am on 25th April entered the straits at 8 knots. His passage and exploits from then on are legend among submarine veterans and historians alike.

Dangerous Passage - AE2's passage through the straits was perilous, searchlights continually swept the strait, but they avoided detection continuing unmolested until 4:30am when gun batteries opened fire from the northern shore. They immediately dived, beginning an underwater passage through the minefields. Mooring wires tethering the mines continually scraped along AE2's sides for the next half hour.

At 6:00am AE2 was within two miles of the Narrows at Chanak, submerged at periscope depth with the sea flat and calm. Forts on both sides of the Narrows sighted them and soon opened heavy fire. Undaunted, Stoker was determined to attack what he thought to be a small cruiser of the Peik e Shetrek type. At a range of 300-400 yards, he fired the bow torpedo, the torpedo was heard to hit as Stoker made his escape only to come under fire from Fort Anatoli Medjidieh, after the boat slid up on a bank to a depth of 10 feet and exposed a considerable portion of the conning tower above water.

For some minutes, shells fell on all sides until efforts to refloat her succeeded. According to Stoker's notes, shortly afterwards AE2 again rose to periscope depth he established their position as approaching Nagara Point. On all sides he was surrounded by pursuit craft and each time he showed AE2's periscope the pursuing destroyers turned to ram. Consequently, to shake off the enemy, he bottomed the submarine on the Asiatic shore to await developments.

AE2 continued to harass and disturb the enemy by its presence and near hits from its torpedoes. Stoker also carried out a deception maneuver by doubling back to the straits and showing his periscope to persuade the enemy that a second submarine had entered the area.

AFTER 5 DAYS OF CONTINUOUS ACTION AND CONSIDERABLE RISK AE2'S MISSION WAS TO COME TO AN END. ARRIVING AT A PLANNED RENDEZVOUS WITH HMS E14 (LIEUTENANT COMMANDER EC BOYLE, RN) THE SECOND ALLIED SUBMARINE TO SUCCESSFULLY PASS THROUGH THE DARDANELLES AT 10:00AM ON 30 APRIL, STOKER SIGHTED A TORPEDO BOAT APPROACHING AT HIGH SPEED.

Whilst diving to avoid the torpedo boat; he sighted smoke in Artaki Bay, so he steered south to investigate. About 10:30 according to Stoker the boat's nose suddenly rose and broke surface about 1 mile from a Torpedo boat. Stoker blew water forward but could not get the boat to dive.

Lt Cdr Stoker takes up the story.

"The Torpedo boats gunfire got very close, and a ship from Artaki bay, a gunboat was also firing. I flooded a forward tank and boat suddenly took big inclination down by the bow and dived rapidly. AE2 was only fitted with 100-foot depth gauges. This depth was quickly reached and passed. I went full speed astern and commenced to blow main ballast. After some interval, the boat came back to 100ft depth, so I re-flooded and went ahead, but the boat broke surface stern first."

"Within a few seconds the engine room was hit and holed in three places. Owing to the great inclination down by the bow, it was impossible to see the Torpedo boat through the periscope and I considered that any attempt to ram would be useless. I therefore blew main ballast and ordered all hands-on deck. Assisted by Lieutenant Haggard, I then opened the tanks to flood and went on deck. The boat sank in a few minutes in about 55 fathoms, in approximate position 4 degrees north of Kara Burnu Point at 10:45am. All hands were picked up by the torpedo boat and no lives lost."

Not the end of AE 2 - that is not the end of the AE2 story. The crew were interned in a prisoner of war camp for many years and some did not make it home. The memory of AE2 and her exploits was not forgotten and became an inspiration for some to find her and to discover her mysteries.

AE 2 - BUNTS BOAT.

Sometimes the ghosts of the past come to whisper in our ear, begging to be discovered and remembered. Sometimes the ghosts lie dormant at the bottom of foreign oceans, largely forgotten and tended only by the marine life that has made their home among the debris.

Often the ghost's stories are so compelling that we are driven to action. The abandoned hulk of the AE2 whispered in the ears of a few determined souls when they read of the exploits and hardships of the crew. Known as the silent Anzac, the Australian Submarine AE2 commanded by Lt Cdr Dacre Stoker played a significant though under-appreciated role in the Gallipoli campaign. However, for many years the gallant actions of Stoker and his crew were overshadowed by the landings on the Gallipoli Peninsula by the Anzac forces.

In more recent times the understanding of AE2's role and the heroism of her crew has been better understood thanks to the expeditions mounted to find, honor and preserve what is surely one of the last remaining significant artefacts of the Gallipoli Campaign.



*The bow of AE2 photographed in 1998
(Image copyright Mark Spencer)*



Bunt guarding the hatch.

In a special lead up to the opening of the new AE2 Replica exhibit at the Museum, FHSM has been privileged to have gained the insights of some of those who were involved in the expeditions to AE2.

Written by Dr Roger

Neill, chief scientist on two of the expeditions, his work is a compelling read for anyone interested in Australia's submarine heritage. We are sure you will enjoy Roger's observations and the findings from the expeditions, some of which may not be known to many of you. In case you are wondering who Bunt is, this is the name of a conger eel which guards the main hatch of AE2 in her final resting place. But how did he or she get that name? Just one of the interesting things you will read about in the soon to be published book on the expeditions.



REGISTRATION FOR FREE AE 2 EXPEDITION WEBINAR

A FREE WEBINAR ON THE EXPEDITIONS TO DISCOVER THE RESTING PLACE OF AE2 WILL BE HELD ON 20TH MARCH 3.00PM

CHAired BY DR MICHAEL WHITE, THE PANEL WILL BE DR ROGER NEILL, THE CHIEF SCIENTIST ON 2 OF THE EXPEDITIONS AND DR MARK SPENCER THE DIVER ON THE FIRST EXPEDITIONS.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INCLUDED ON THE INVITE LIST, PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO:
Thor Lund tlund@bigpond.net.au

we will send you the sign-in details
closer to time.

THE FRIENDS OF THE RN SUBMARINE MUSEUM – Zoom Webinar

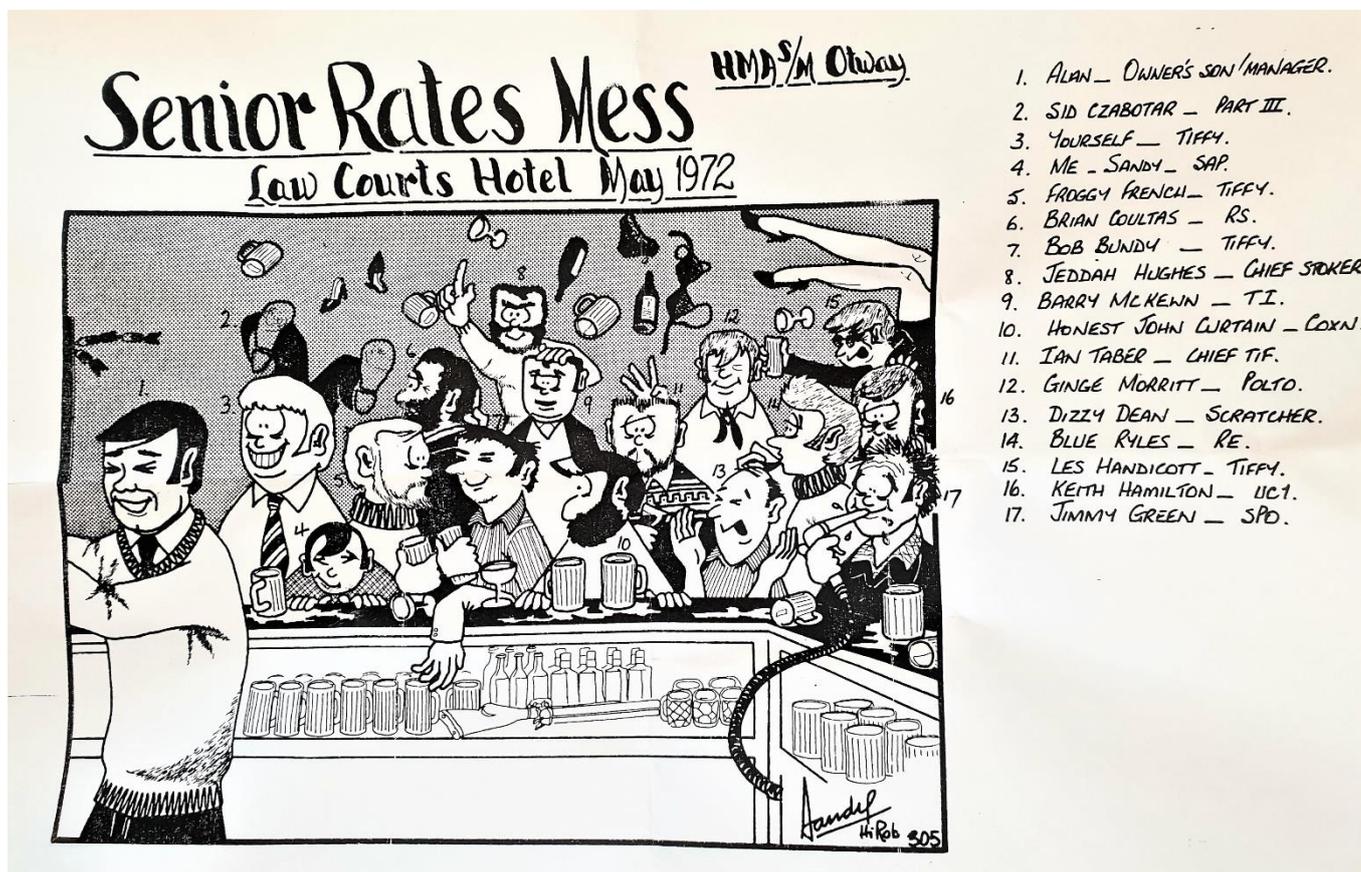
Friday 12 March at 1800 to listen to Jonty Powis talk about Conqueror's Falkland War Patrol and attack on the Belgrano. Jonty was then Conqueror's Navigator.

The talk is a fundraiser for the [Friends](#) and [The Submariner Memorial Appeal](#).

Tickets are available via our [website](#) or [here](#).



Graphic memories – Thanks Sandy



REMEMBER - FREE WEBINAR – FINDING AE2

Members and interested individuals are invited to join a free online webinar on Saturday 20 March 2021 at 1500 discussing the expeditions to find the resting place of the AE2 in the Sea of Marmara in Turkey.

FHSM MEMBERSHIP FORM



Annual membership of the friends of Holbrook Submarine Museum is \$10:
3years \$25.

Renewals AUGUST each year

OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION - is to assist Holbrook Submarine Museum and its Curator(s) with funding and Assistance to ensure the artefacts and photographic records are maintained and displays developed. FHSM supports the strategic plan of the Museum and its interface with the Submarine Institute of Australia (SIA) national objective of a Virtual National Submarine Museum as well as the activities of the Submarine Association of Australia (SAA).

AS A MEMBER -You will receive a regular email newsletter with updates on activities at the Museum and any special events and deals on submarine merchandise. You will also receive an adult pass to the museum. We look forward to welcoming you to Friends of Holbrook Submarine Museum.

APPLICATION - Please accept my application for:

1 year \$10 or 3 years \$25 membership of FHSM.

I agree to abide by the rules of the association and to support its purpose and objectives. Note: copies of the Association rules are available by email.

Signed Date

Title

Given Names.....

Surname.....

Email address.....

Phone number(s)..... Mob

Street and No

Suburb or Town

State PostcodeCountry.....

MAIL OR EMAIL YOUR APPLICATION TO:

The Membership Officer, FHSM
Graham (Jumper) Collins
6 Croziers Rd
Jaspers Brush, NSW 2535
Email, weonawei@bigpond.com

Send all monies to: FHSM.
Bendigo Bank – BSB – 633-000.
Account No – 170008056.
Be sure to put your name in the reference section.

