Serving Australia with pride

NAVY NEWS

Volume 63, No. 11, June 25, 2020

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NEWS

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HMAS Stuart departs Fleet Base East for a period of force integrated training. She is one of seven ships to be deployed for various tasks and training. Photo: ABIS Benjamin Robets

Ships deploy to test their mettle

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SEVEN SET SAIL
All systems go as seven ships sail
SEVEN warships sailed from Navy’s Fleet Base East and Fleet Base West in the space of two days in mid-June to test upgraded systems and exercise as part of a maritime task group.

HMA Ships Canberra, Hobart and Stuart departed Fleet Base East while HMA Ships Anzac, Arunta, Ballarat and Sirius left Fleet Base West.

Anzac is undertaking sea qualification trials after her mid-life upgrade and Ballarat headed to the east coast for unit readiness training. The remaining ships are sailing in company for a period of force integrated training off Australia’s east coast and in northern waters.

The training is essential for maritime task group operations. Commander Surface Force CDRE Stephen Hughes said the ships would test their systems and conduct training in areas such as ship handling, damage control, emergency drills and task group warfare.

“This year has tested us in ways we would not have expected 12 months ago, but by putting multiple ships and more than 1300 Navy people to sea from both sides of the country, we are demonstrating we’re seaworthy, adaptive and operationally ready,” CDRE Hughes said.

“Some of these ships will deploy as a task group for Exercise Rimpac 2020 off Hawaii, incorporating high-end tactical exercises and working with partner nations.”

He said Anzac would reach an important milestone as she completed the integration of new systems and capabilities during the trials period.

Acting CO Ballarat LCDR Michael Forsythe said the ship’s company was looking forward to returning to sea for high-end training and work-ups for the crew.

“We’ve spent the year so far in the west conducting mariner skills evaluations and sea qualification trials so to sail out for some even more complex training to test us is welcome,” LCDR Forsythe said.

“Getting back to sea for longer periods, putting Ballarat though her paces and continuously refining our training is the best way for us to stay ready to fight and win at sea ahead of our next deployment.”

LEUT Ryan Zerbe
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Excellence from ship to shore

AMONG the 24 Navy recipients of Queen’s Birthday Honours were people working in fields as varied as patrol boat systems, force protection and medicine.

POMT Jonathan Booth was awarded a Conspicuous Service Medal for his meritorious devotion to duty in Navy technical and leadership positions at sea and ashore.

He was recognised for his work on improvements to Cape-class patrol boat technical documentation and the renewal of the shore power system at HMAS Creswell.

POMT Booth said he was grateful to his workplace and family for supporting him in his work.

WO Raymond Beasy, already a Member of the Order of Australia and Conspicuous Service Medal recipient, was awarded a Conspicuous Service Cross for outstanding devotion to duty in the field of Navy gunnery and force protection training.

WO Beasy is responsible for the training and certification of the Navy’s boarding capability and contributed to successful maritime interdiction for Operations Resolve and Maniou. “This achievement is significant to me as it acknowledges the outstanding support from my family and the boarding teams I have trained,” WO Beasy said.

Commander Joint Health and Surgeon General of the ADF RADM Sarah Sharkey was among the 41 per cent of recipients who are women.

RADM Sharkey was appointed an Order of Australia for exceptional service to the ADF in the management of health care.

CAPT Paul Johnson - For outstanding achievement as CO HMAS Ballarat on Operation Manitou from November 2018 to June 2019.

CMTR Casey Scully-O'Shea - For outstanding achievement in Defence Force Recruiting.

Conspicuous Service Medal (CSM)

PO Jonathon Booth - For meritorious devotion to duty in technical and leadership positions at sea and ashore.

LCDR Amy Butlers - For meritorious achievement in the field of Navy meteorological and oceanographic operational support.

CPO Noel Christoffel - For meritorious achievement in whole ship leadership and performance of duty as a senior sailor in HMAS Harman from January 2017 to June 2019.

LCDR Robert Eglen - For meritorious devotion to duty in the field of marine engineering during the retirement of the Adelaide-class frigates and introduction of the Hobart-class destroyers.

CMTR Patricia Kemp - For meritorious achievement in the field of Navy health services.

CPO Nicole Palmer - For meritorious achievement in the field of minor war vessel communications and information systems.

LS Patrick Reimer - For meritorious achievement of duty in the field of Navy information and communications technology.

CMTR David Rendell - For meritorious achievement in the field of information technology specifically the implementation of robotic process automation.

LCDR Siobhan Sturdy - For meritorious achievement as the Marine Engineering Officer in HMAS Sheean.

LS Imogen Vincent - For meritorious achievement as the Boatswains Mate Assistant Workgroup Manager at the Directorate of Naval Workforce Management.
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Rising to the challenge

LEUT Elliott Bannan

TASK Group Afghanistan's medical contingent at the coalition medical facility at Kabul’s Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) is at the front line of efforts to mitigate and contain the spread of COVID-19.

CAPT Lucinda Stephenson said the 12 Australian medical staff and the combat first aid (CFA) personnel supporting them have been confronted with new and challenging tasks. “As the reality of the pandemic became clear we were required to raise an entire ward capability, which had not been maintained permanently for a number of years,” CAPT Stephenson said.

“The CFAs from the task group’s force protection platoon received additional training in the screening and management of potential COVID cases to assist us if there was an outbreak or a patient required clinical care.”

ADF personnel at other locations in Kabul, including Qargha and Resolute Support Headquarters, have established COVID-19 protocols that have proved vital to preserving the health and safety of deployed personnel.

Supporting the hospital's US-led epidemiological response is RAAF Scientific Officer FLGOFF Kathryn Stauthon. FLGOFF Stauthon is testing potential COVID-19 carriers using the Australian-supplied diagnostic platforms BioFire Torch and Cepheid GeneXpert.

“We’ve run more than 200 tests on the Australian platforms since the beginning of April,” FLGOFF Stauthon said.

“These efforts have contributed to successfully mitigating the disease on the base.

“The CFAs complement the testing with direct support in the daily management of the quarantine zone.”

Support includes moving suspected cases to the hospital for testing and positive patients to the quarantine zone for isolation.

Daily welfare and vital sign checks are conducted on isolated patients. The success of the testing and isolation program has enabled coalition advisers on the base to continue their train, advise and assist mission remotely.

Technology assists in virus prevention

POCTS Cameron Ure

FOLLOWING direction to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, LSCTS Nicholas Martin, from Navy Information Warfare (NIW) Branch, decided to put his skills towards helping others.

After seeing a Facebook post of a Canadian boy scout using a 3D printer to produce ‘ear guards’ for medical staff, LS Martin decided to print and produce his.

Since starting, LS Martin has manufactured more than 200 ear guards, helping relieve the pain associated with constantly wearing surgical masks.

The guards have been distributed to hospitals and pharmacies in Canberra, Newcastle and Perth.

Interest has been received from hospitals in the United States.

LS Martin saw the opportunity to put his hobby to good use and jumped at the chance.

“I’m hoping to be able to contribute in any way,” he said.

“If it helps those that are on the front line in this national fight against COVID-19, then I’m happy to assist.”

Nicole Ritchie, from Newcastle’s Mater Hospital, said what LS Martin did made a big difference to the emergency department.

“We love the ear savers and the staff are grateful for LS Martin’s contributions,” Ms Ritchie said.

NIW Branch Executive Director CAPT Marcus Butler commended LS Martin’s initiative.

“This was a great example of RAN personnel doing their bit to help out the community during these unique circumstances,” CAPT Butler said.
HMAS Toowoomba is returning home to Australia after completing a six-month deployment to the Middle East region.

Toowoomba has concluded her assignment to JTF633 as part of Operation Manitou, conducting counter-terrorism and maritime security operations, operating in the waters stretching from the Southern Arabian Gulf to the Gulf of Aden.

The ship made a significant intercept during the deployment, netting more than 3000 kg of illegal narcotics. Commander JTF633 MAJGEN Susan Coyle recognised Toowoomba’s outstanding performance during trying times amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The ship’s company in Toowoomba have executed their duties to the highest standard in support of the Combined Maritime Forces and as the inaugural Australian ship in support of the International Maritime Security Construct,” MAJGEN Coyle said.

“They have earned a joyful reunion with their families and friends, and I thank them for their service.”

CO Toowoomba CMDR Dylan Phillips said he was proud of his crew’s achievements and looked forward to returning home in the coming weeks.

“We have enhanced our relationships in the region, as well as having an impact on terrorist funding lines through the interception and disposal of illegal drugs,” CMDR Phillips said.

“Toowoomba intercepted an illegal shipment of hashish and heroin hidden inside a suspect vessel on March 19.”

“Our crew worked tirelessly throughout the day and well into the night to search the vessel before seizing and destroying more than three tonnes of drugs.”

“Toowoomba’s contribution to the Combined Maritime Forces and International Maritime Security Construct has been highly successful due to our ship’s capability and the commitment of our highly trained crew over a sustained period on operations.”

“I could not be prouder of everyone’s effort.” Toowoomba travelled more than 27,450 nautical miles and visited numerous ports, before COVID-19 impacted the region.

Toowoomba’s efforts supported the safe passage of more than 180 International Maritime Security Construct-flagged merchant vessels by providing overwatch of their transits through the Southern Arabian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz and Gulf of Oman.
It’s exceptional work

LSIS Kylie Jagiello

IT COULDN’T be more timely that 2020 is the dedicated International Year of the Nurse and Midwife by the World Health Organisation.

Nurses have recently shown their versatility as frontline clinicians, adapting to changing environments. This has never been more evident than this year, according to Navy nurse educator LCDR Thomas Miller.

The year started with Navy dispatching a number of full-time and reserve nurses in response to Bushfire Assist.

“They were deployed over many positions including specialty roles ashore and at sea, including specialist clinical positions and medical planning positions,” LCDR Miller said.

“Nurses showed their exceptional value as local liaison team leaders and military representatives pushed ashore to provide support and care to communities.”

Navy, as part of a wider ADF effort, deployed nursing officers to support state health agencies’ contact tracing as well as providing frontline clinical care alongside civilian nurses in response to COVID-19.

“Working as part of the greater health team as force enablers, nurses are always available to provide treatment and care to individuals, no matter the circumstance,” LCDR Miller said.

Military nurses have served since before federation. During WWI, more than 3000 Australian nurses volunteered for active service.

“Nurses currently deploy both on land and sea operations, ranging from Middle East providing clinical care and managing health facilities, to conducting operations on ships coordinating and providing care at sea,” LCDR Miller said.

“Nurses also educate; enhancing the overall medical effort in addition to that of the wider force to ensure mission success.”

“Navy nursing is a specialist clinical workforce that is constantly expanding and enhancing the RAN health effect to ensure we can fight and win at sea.”

Trauma nurse driven to give back

Sgt Max Bree

THE days of white-clad, female nurses changing bedpans and sheets are long gone, as their modern descendants come face-to-face with the frontline horrors of war.

Trauma Nurse LCDR Anthony Russell joined for,” he said.

“I’ve seen a lot of trauma in Australia, what I’d call Western trauma, but I had never seen the extent of war-like trauma.”

Following an insider attack near Bagram, LCDR Russell and medical staff were dressed in body armour ready to secure the hospital with personal weapons when Afghan bases were locked down.

“I was prepared for that as best I could, but it was just about being exposed to it and managing the patients,” he said.

“It’s different when you’re in an emergency department managing patients with a sidearm on.”

At sea, trauma nurses mainly work on LHDs, augmenting on-board medical staff.

“When you’re at sea there’s no additional support, you can’t have other health clinicians fly in. You have to be confident and competent in your skills across different areas to manage patients,” LCDR Russell said.

While men make up about 11 per cent of civilian nurses, about 50 per cent of nurses in the Navy are male.

“For a lot of male nurses, we tend to go towards highly clinical, critical areas,” he said.

“I’ve been given the opportunity to go towards highly clinical, critical areas,” he said.

“I came from a family that never had the opportunity to go to uni, both my parents never finished high school,” he said.

“I’ve been given the opportunity to have tertiary-level education, this was my opportunity to give back.”

“I also felt I had a unique set of skills that the Navy wouldn’t be able to organically grow.”

LCDR Thomas Miller

Embarked Nursing Officer in HMAS Adelaide provides medical assistance to a local from the town of Towamba, NSW, during Operation Bushfire Assist.

Photo: ABIS Thomas Sawtell

“It’s different when you’re in an emergency department managing patients with a sidearm on.”

– LCDR Anthony Russell

Trauma nurse
The Year of the Nurse and Midwife highlights the extraordinary work they do to care for personnel and civilians in times of need.

**HEALING HANDS**

“A lot of what we do as nurses can be hard and emotionally taxing. Midwifery is a joyful, positive environment to work in.

— Nursing Officer CMDR Paula Evans

Nurse says caring for others is ‘a privilege’

CAPT Thalita Malan, left, and LCDR Patricia Kemp assist F16T-1 Crystal Ibrahim in preparing to aero medical evacuate a patient from Kelat, Afghanistan.

Photo: SGT Sebastian Beurich

Nursing Practitioners LCDR Patricia Kemp and LCDR Roneel Chandra conduct aeromedical casualty evacuation drills on board HMAS Canberra during Exercise Ocean Explore, in 2019.

Photo ABIS Kieren Whiteley

Nursing Officer CMDR Paula Evans (then LEUT) reviews a medical case as part of她的 clinical, management, nursing and midwifery experience aboard HMAS Canberra during Indo-Pacific Endeavour in 2018.

Photo: LSIS Nina Fogliani

**SOG Sebastian Beurich**

NEXT time you’re prescribed medicinal drugs at your local chemist, it may not be a choice writing the script, it could be a ‘nurse practitioner’.

These nurses can diagnose and offer treatment, prescribe medications, order pathology and radiology tests.

One of Navy’s four nurse practitioners, CMDR Patricia Kemp, said choosing a career path like hers has been “incredible to see how far we’ve come in 40 years”.

“Nurse practitioners have been serving in HMAS Canberra’s medical facilities since about 1965, so they’re very familiar with that model of care and those responsibilities,” she said.

“I’ve had an eclectic career and the US have had nurse practitioners since about 1965, so they’re very familiar with that model of care and those responsibilities,” she said.

During her career, CMDR Kemp has been a clinician, researcher and military officer.

“Many professions can say they have had those opportunities,” she said.

As part of her highlights this year, CMDR Kemp was working alongside HMAS Canberra to provide a ‘virtual’ mental health facility to the ship’s Operation Resolute deployment.

“Most of my professional scope, which I find very independent now,” she said.

**CPL Julia Whitwell**

RECALLING a ‘fast-tracing’ drive across mountainous terrain to remote parts of Bahawalpur, Pakistan, in 2011, was one of the most memorable experiences as a Navy medic.

“They were isolated, difficult-to-get-to places. I got to visit with the local midwife,” she said.

“A lot of what we do as nurses can be hard, and emotionally taxing. Midwifery is a joyful, positive environment to work in.”

— Nursing Officer CMDR Paula Evans

Nursing Practitioners LCDR Patricia Kemp and LCDR Roneel Chandra conduct aeromedical casualty evacuation drills on board HMAS Canberra during Exercise Ocean Explore, in 2019.

Photo: SGT Sebastian Beurich

“From pregnant women and mothers, through to children and the elderly, our work is relevant in every phase of a person’s life.”

— CMDR Paula Evans

In 2018, when she was deployed on Pacific Partnership, her mission was to work with coalition navies to provide medical assistance.

“From pregnant women and mothers, through to children and the elderly, our work is relevant in every phase of a person’s life,” she said.

“From the philosophy and health paradigm of my professional scope, which I find very independent now.”

— CMDR Paula Evans

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“Most of my professional scope, which I find very independent now,” she said.

“I’ve had an eclectic career and the US have had nurse practitioners since about 1965, so they’re very familiar with that model of care and those responsibilities,” she said.

“I hope it stimulates increased recognition of advanced nursing skills and scope of practice across the services,” she said.

The University of Queensland is one of 300 multi-national health experts deployed on the US Navy’s Pacific Partnership 2018 when the ship visited and conducted training as part of her Navy career, which started 36 years ago after CMDR Evans completed a post-graduate qualification in midwifery, before transferring back to the permanent service in 2012.

“I had been working in intensive care and critical care environments at the time,” CMDR Evans said.

“My dream was to work for the Royal Flying Doctor Service for the rest of my career, and that dream is no more. I now have a wonderful midwifery and spiritual care experience to do.

When her career tracked to the Navy again instead, CMDR Evans’ midwifery skills were highly valued on the ship’s Operation Resolute deployment.

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When the RAN Band first pitched the idea of an “In This Together” Reconciliation Week video, its members had no idea just how collaborative the project would become.

The stylised video project features Indigenous and non-Indigenous Navy members passing the ochre to demonstrate the significance of ochre to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Navy members.

The backdrop to the “Pass the Ochre” video is the Navy Band’s performance of the Ben Lee song Ochre’ video is the Navy Band’s Navy Band in October 1996 after studying music education at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

Throughout his career, LEUT Hobson has achieved much of what a Navy musician can. I am excited to learn new skills as Navy takes on new assets and capabilities.

As a senior sailor I have been able to lead teams on various tasks, as well as a range of domestic tasks all over the country.”

During his career, LEUT Hobson deployed a number of times in HMAS Toora, on operational deployments to the Solomon Islands, Timor Leste and multiple trips to the Middle East region. LEUT Hobson’s last performance with the band was during the Edinburgh Military Tattoo in Sydney last year as the drum major of the ADF’s combined band.

He was promoted to lieutenant maritime logistics officer earlier this month and was fondly farewelled by his band members.

LEUT Hobson said he was ready for a career change.

“I have thought of doing more with my Navy career for a number of years,” LEUT Hobson said.

“I have achieved and experienced much of what a Navy musician can. I am excited to learn new skills as Navy takes on new assets and capabilities.”

Playing a new tune

LS Jonathan Rendell

When LEUT Daniel Hobson joined the Navy he had no idea that 23 years later he would be changing track in his career from senior musician to maritime logistics officer.

LEUT Hobson joined the Navy Band in October 1996 after studying music education at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music.

“At recruiting I discovered I could not only pass the ochre but also have a hand in the recording session. The ochre and the recording studio were previously only used occasionally,” LEUT Hobson said.

After initial training, LEUT Hobson posted to Navy Band Sydney, where he stayed from seaman through to petty officer musician.

Throughout his career, LEUT Hobson progressed with his last position at the Directorate of Music as the band operations officer.

LEUT Hobson after his promotion ceremony. Photo: PTE Olivia Cameron

“Initially I was a performer on clarinets and bar sax and then I developed skills in audio engineering,” LEUT Hobson said.

“Passing the ochre and having a hand in the recording project has been one of the highlights of my career,” LEUT Hobson said.

Hobson progressed with his last position at the Directorate of Music and capabilities.

Navy’s commitment to reconciliation,” she said. Navy’s newly appointed full-time Indigenous Adviser LCDR Sam Sheppard said from a personal standpoint the project had provided another opportunity to paint up his daughters with ochre and help make them more comfortable with embracing their culture.

“I believe this is a challenge for many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in modern society and my hope is that this project can start those conversations within their workplaces about how much their culture is an integral part of who they are,” LCDR Sheppard said.

Harmonious collaboration

The Navy Band virtually united for Reconciliation Week, LEUT Geoff Long and LS Jonathan Rendell report.

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THE Sea Power Centre’s Naval History Section informs every rate from junior sailor to CO, evening giving “CN a voice”, according to its director.

It has been responsible for cataloguing Navy’s history since its formation in Melbourne in 1943.

Director John Perryman said it was set up to collect naval operational records and accounts during WWII.

“For the RAN, it was very much a world war – there was hardly a sea or an ocean on the planet where there wasn’t a RAN ship deployed at some point,” Mr Perryman said.

“That collection work culminated in the 1957 publication of two official history volumes covering the contribution of the RAN in WWII.

“The history section continued to operate afterwards, chiefly to continue the good work they had put in train – capturing, preserving and promoting Navy’s history.”

The small section of five people has a wide reach and counts CN as its chief customer.

It monitors contemporary operations, collecting records to inform the history of tomorrow.

“I like to think we help to give CN a voice by furnishing him with accurate historical advice on those occasions that warrant it,” Mr Perryman said.

“If we can help others to understand what Navy’s been involved in throughout history, they’re going to be better informed when making important decisions that may affect the future.

“If one doesn’t understand the history, customs and traditions of an organisation such as the Navy, Army of Air Force, then it’s akin to joining an organisation without fully appreciating its business.”

This extended to all in the profession of arms, Mr Perryman said.

“Australia has a very good understanding of Gallipoli and the Anzac legend but there are many other important aspects of history as well so we try to increase people’s understanding of what was achieved as a result of their sacrifice to join the armed forces,” he said.

“Most people want to know that the potential future they gave up to serve in the Navy made, or is making, a difference.”

The section responds to inquiries from ministers, the public and even royal commissions, and supports visiting academics, authors and researchers.

As the guardian of the Navy’s collective memory, the section has a digitisation program and routinely adds information to the Naval History website.

Its latest product, episode three of a documentary covering the Navy’s involvement in maritime security operations from the end of WWII to its withdrawal from Vietnam, is due for release soon.

“My career in the Navy was the best apprenticeship I could have had for this role,” Mr Perryman said.

“That experience has gifted me the ability to relate to all ranks and rates.

“Underpinning that was a love of naval history instilled in me by my parents, both of whom served in the Royal Navy.

“I grew up in a Navy environment, so it was natural I gravitated towards it.”

Much of the section’s work can be viewed at navy.gov.au/history.
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New badge designs a hit with team

**LEUT Jessica Craig**

A TRIAL rate badge for maritime personnel sailors will be tested across Navy from mid-June as part of the continuing development of the new workgroup.

Since March, the sailors formally known as maritime logistics personnel (ML-P) have been integrated into the maritime personnel community (MPC) and become collectively known as maritime personnel (MPERS) sailors.

Head of Profession MPCR Workgroups CAPT Sue Cunningham said it was important MPERS sailors could be clearly identified as members of the specialist personnel management workforce, which is responsible for the management and development of Navy personnel.

“A rate badge is important to instil a sense of identity in a given community,” CAPT Cunningham said.

“The maritime personnel badge is a unique and symbolic design that has people at the centre of the badge, specifically because the maritime personnel community is responsible for delivering a personnel capability.”

After research and consultation, a trial has been approved for the MPERS rate badge, as well as a maritime human resources officer (MHRO) charge qualification badge, after MHROs were also added to the MPC.

MPERS Workgroup Manager WO Jay Stevenson said the badge designs had so far been well received by MPERS sailors and the members of the community.

“The response from the MPERS sailors has been very encouraging,” WO Stevenson said.

“These senior and junior sailors will soon receive their trial rate badge, a DPNU name bar and a card which explains our community’s mission and vision, and the symbolism of the badge.”

The badge symbology will be particularly important to the MPC members, who were involved in the design.

The MPERS insignia – a team of people wreath – was created by LSPO Kim-Jade Martin to symbolise victory and strength, and encapsulates the MPC focus on people.

“I came up with the design concept utilising the original human resource officer primary qualification badge, which reflected an oak leaf wreath symbolising strength and achievement,” LS Martin said.

“It would then encompass the three personnel figures, which is symbolic of our people-centred capability through a personnel workforce and customer service role.”

“In my opinion, the MPERS insignia is a great reflection of the MPC as it directly reflects our focus on personnel, capability and support to command.”

To start the three-month trial, DCN RADM Mark Hammond presented LCDR Michelle Barker with her trial badges and CAPT Cunningham presented LEUT Jessica Craig with her trial MHRO charge qualification badges.

**LEUT Dave Devlin**

**GIFTS that save lives**

**EVERYDAY across Australia someone, somewhere, needs the vital gift of blood.**

During National Blood Donor Week, June 14-20, Australian Red Cross Lifeblood celebrated everyone who helped make the gift of blood possible in Australia.

In the past 12 months, more than half a million Australians donated about 1.5 million times, including 6,623 donations that can be attributed to Navy personnel.

Australian Red Cross Lifeblood is calling for 10,000 new donors to prevent a shortage of whole blood and other blood products, such as plasma and platelets.

Sarah Lacey is part of the Regional Partnerships Team with the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood in Victoria and said donating blood was safe, despite the current global pandemic.

“People who are healthy and well and meet our existing donation criteria, and are at least 28 days past any COVID like symptoms, are capable of donating,” Mrs Lacey said.

“The Australian Government is encouraging people who have recovered from COVID-19 to consider donating plasma to assist with the search for possible future treatment options.

“Without the enthusiasm and dedication of lifeblood champions, like the team from Cerberus, we simply couldn’t achieve the donation numbers like this together.”

National Blood Donor Week is separate from the annual Defence Blood Challenge that occurs from September to December each year.

It is also an opportunity to raise awareness of the work of the Australian Red Cross Lifeblood and to reflect on the generosity of Australia’s blood donors.

This year Red Cross Lifeblood asked blood recipients, donors and anyone who has been touched by blood donation to share their stories.

These stories can be viewed at donateblood.com.au/donor-week
A golden read on history
BOOK REVIEW

Wings of Gold
Authors: Trevor Rieck, Dr Jack McCaffrie and Jed Hart
Publisher: Big Sky Publishing and Sea Power Centre
RRP: $35
Reviewer: SGT Dave Morley

IT IS said you shouldn’t judge a book by its cover, but in this case, you can’t go wrong.

Three former RAN aviators put their heads together and came up with a very readable book concerning the experiences of those who trained with the US Navy, in America, during the Vietnam War era.

The authors managed to track down many of their “wing men” and carried out in-depth interviews with them, resulting in myriad stories on their involvement in the program.

The book not only records many anecdotes of the Australian efforts in coming to grips with American training methods, but also the US culture they experienced when farmed out to welcoming host families at weekends.

The highpoint of training for many of the fixed-wing pilots was their first aircraft carrier landing, followed by their award of the coveted US Navy Gold Wings.

Surprisingly, on their return to Australia, many of the aviators were told, despite their superior training, they now had to learn to do things “the Australian way”, which for a time dampened their enthusiasm.

The book is well-illustrated with dozens of black and white and colour photos, detailed maps, sketches and aerial photos.

It will definitely hold the reader’s interest from start to finish and is an ideal read for anyone with an interest in lesser-known aspects of Australia’s naval history.

To get a copy of the book, contact the Sea Power Centre at: seapower.centre@defence.gov.au

Keeping their memories alive

Last Post ceremonies continue online, CPL Julia Whitwell reports.

CLAIMED during the throes of war in 1953, PTE Edward George Hazel – a Waka Waka man – was buried, but not forgotten, in Busan, South Korea.

Sharing his story, to be webcast by the Australian War Memorial (AWM), is ABCIS Kayleigh Fletcher, currently deployed to the Middle East region aboard HMAS Toowoomba.

“Just knowing a little bit about his life, his family, and the tragic way he died – it’s confronting,” she said.

“Every time I read his story, toward the end I get super sad and start tearing up. I hope it doesn’t happen when I record my reading.”

AB Fletcher’s reading of PTE Hazel’s story will be featured in one of the virtual Last Post Ceremonies held during the AWM’s COVID19 closure.

During June, eight deployed and 20 Canberra-based ADF members are being broadcast reading stories of the fallen.

“Warrant Officer Ceremonial ADF, WOBL Nikolai Rofe, said the virtual Last Post Ceremonies ensured the 102,800 Australian servicemen and women lost to war could still be honoured.

“It’s a humbling experience to carry on the tradition,” WO Rofe said.

“They give their life for us and our freedoms, I hope he’d be proud of us.”

The virtual Last Post Ceremonies will continue throughout June until the AWM opens to the public, at limited capacity, on July 1.

Last Post ceremonies can be streamed live at: awm.gov.au/commemoration/last-post-ceremony/live-stream

WO Boatswain Niklaus Rofe records a virtual Last Post Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial.

Photo: CPL Julia Whitwell

Last Post ceremonies continue online, CPL Julia Whitwell reports.
For the love of fitness

LEUT Geoff Long

WITH gyms closed across the country, including at Navy establishments, the PTIs at HMAS Kuttabul have addressed a groundswell of demand for alternative exercise options, including self-guided workouts and small outdoor classes that observe current government guidelines.

“Most personnel are reporting an average of fitness improvements, with some reporting an average 1-2 minute improvement in their running times over 2.4km. In the 18 Sport Support Unit-South East, as well as the introduction of small outdoor classes that observe current social distancing guidelines, has allowed a lot of personnel to maintain their physical fitness while social distancing has been in force. This has in turn maintained mental health and provided some respite from the rigours of the uncertainty of society. "Their role in wellness and wellbeing cannot be underestimated.”

Another to take up the new training challenges has been Kuttabul CHAP Jon-Paul Barry, who used the online running program and more recently joined the outdoor training sessions.

“Getting outside at least three mornings each week to complete the running program was great for me,” he said.

“It helped me maintain some cardio fitness and improve my 2.4km time, but also gave me an outlet to destress, helped me to stay focused during the day and gave me more motivation to eat well. “It may have been intended as a physical fitness tool, but it maintained my holistic health and wellbeing in ways I couldn’t have imagined.”

Despite the success of the new training programs, LS Spring said he was looking forward to gym facilities reopening.

“Hopefully one of the positives of the current restrictions will be that people realise and appreciate what fantastic facilities we have available at Navy establishments around the country,” LS Spring said.

Forward focused and ready to go

Invincus Games 2021 Team Australia competitor CPO Michelle Beer during the final training camp at the Sydney Academy of Sport and Recreation, Narrabeen, NSW.

SGT Sebastian Beurich

EXTRAORDINARY feats of human ability are often witnessed at the Invictus Games, but spectators are sometimes unaware of the effort behind the scenes.

For CPO Michelle Beer, it’s determination displayed by her fellow competitors that drives her.

“Motivation is the big key for me. I went to one training camp earlier this year, before everything was turned off, and the motivation you get from being around the other team members and the obstacles they’ve had to overcome is huge.”

“Swimming was one of the spots available, but I’ve since found out I take in a bit of water, so thankfully it’s no longer one of my sports,” CPO Beer said.

“Swimming probably helps for the sprints, but I’m hoping gyms open again soon – training is a lot easier in an actual gym.”

Although she missed the opportunity to compete this year, she’s looking forward to “getting on the bike” for next year’s competition.

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“Swimming was one of the spots available, but I’ve since found out I take in a bit of water, so thankful...
Back where he belongs

GROWING up in England, it was near impossible for ABATV Jamie Young not to be consumed by football. His dad and uncle played at a high level and AB Young spent weekends watching the game before starting to play in the under-fives for East Lynn Blues. He hasn’t missed a full season since.

“Moving to Australia in 2008, when I was 16, or going away to do sea time, I’ve still managed to get a couple of games in each season,” AB Young said.

Having missed selection for the Navy team in 2015 because of an ankle injury, he was selected the following year and has captained the team since 2018.

On making the ADF team in 2017, AB Young played in an A League curtain-raiser against an Adelaide Academy team.

“Since moving to Australia I have been lucky to win several grand finals, but I think representing the ADF and lifting the winning trophy in 2017 was a highlight,” AB Young said. “We comfortably won the national tournament in Sydney in hot and arduous conditions.”

Having also played centre-back, left-wing and centre-mid for the Navy, AB Young is most comfortable playing left-back.

Positioned on the side of the centre-back, left-back defends against opposing wingers in the flanks and gives him a combination of defence and attack.

“It was my first position and the position I have played at my highest level,” AB Young said.

“Since moving to Australia I have been lucky to win several grand finals, but I think representing the ADF and lifting the winning trophy in 2017 was a highlight.”

– ABATV Jamie Young
Invictus Games 2021 Team Australia competitor CPO Michelle Beer conducts sprint training during the final camp at the Sydney Academy of Sport and Recreation, Narrabeen NSW, in February.

Photo: CPL Nicole Dorelli