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Vietnam War contact sought

Robyn Raftery writes: I hope you can help me. I'm trying to get in contact with somebody from my late husband's tour of duty in Vietnam. He was in 2 Field Ambulance in Vung Tau and, I think, Nui Dat, in 1966–67. He was Captain John Raftery. I have tried to find someone without any luck. Please if you can help me I would be so grateful. I can be contacted at greenturtle46@hotmail.com St Hilda's School Registered CRICOS Provider No: 00510M

Government publications

Stand To readers are reminded that a wide range of government publications, include departmental annual reports, committee reports, books and other documents can be obtained through your local federal Member of Parliament's office or any of the senators representing your territory or state.



Membership Fees 2008
Membership Fees for 2008 of \$26.50 are due and payable on 1 January 2008.

These can be paid either through your Sub-Branch or direct to the ACT Branch Office at GPO Box 708 Canberra ACT 2601. (A stamped, addressed return envelope would be appreciated). Alternatively, fees may be paid direct by EFT bank transfer to RSL ACT Branch General Account, BSB 082962 Account No 699114545. If paying by bank transfer, please include your name in the payment details.



HMAS ANZAC/TOBRUK ASSOCIATION

John "Rebob" Golotta, President of the Association, would like to invite all personnel who served on the above ships to join the **HMAS ANZAC/TOBRUK ASSOCIATION**. Please make an effort to find all the old shipmates you served with. We need members from Ods to Skippers, with intentions of having a **Reunion 15-18 October 2008 in Adelaide, SA**. All replies re membership or the reunion to be directed to: **Graham Bermingham, Secretary, 6/90 Mt.Pleasant Road, Nunawading, Victoria, 3131. Ph: [03] 9877 6715, Fax: [03] 9877 6715 bermingham1@bigpond.com.au**

Ideal for grandkids

The Young Endeavour Youth Scheme has been awarded a prestigious international award by Sail Training International. Announced at a ceremony in Liverpool, England, it recognises Young Endeavour Youth Scheme innovation and best practice in sail training for young people. Running since 1988, the scheme conducts more than 20 voyages a year for youths aged 16 to 23 on board the tall ship *Young Endeavour*. Participants learn all aspects of sailing a 44-metre square-rigged tall ship, developing leadership and teamwork skills at the same time. *Young Endeavour* is manned entirely by Royal Australian Navy personnel and the scheme has embarked more than 8,500 young people. The not-for-profit organisation is run in partnership with the RAN, all applicants selected by ballot. Applications for a youth crew berth can be entered online at www.youngendeavour.gov.au or by telephoning 1800 020 444

Commodore Harold John Parker Adams, AM, RAN (Retd) 1932–2007

Commodore Harry Adams AM, who has died aged 74, dedicated his life to service: 41 years in the Royal Australian Navy from the age of 13 and, in the 20 years that followed, an amazing array of voluntary service in Canberra.

Harry (only his close family called him Harold) was born in Toorak in 1932 and brought up on a sheep station at Gilgai, Nagambie, central Victoria. Harry lived on the farm until he was seven, when he went to board at Grimwade House at Melbourne Grammar School, where his father had been on the school council. The school evacuated to the country for two years in World War I, and the students spent much of their time building enormous tree huts, roaming the bush and rabbit trapping.

Harry excelled at preparatory school (as he did in everything he undertook): his final report stating that "his prep school record is unsurpassed. He leaves with the greatest esteem of boys and masters".

Although he had won the major scholarship to the senior school, he decided to become a Naval Cadet, along with 15 other 13-year-olds, at Flinders Naval Depot (the shore establishment now known as HMAS Cerberus, which Harry later commanded).

In 1946 his father signed the then customary agreement with the Commonwealth "that the cadet midshipman will adopt the Navy as his profession in life" and Harry faithfully honoured that obligation.

His naval career was a mixture of the traditional and the very modern. In some ways his early training, which was conducted or strongly influenced by the Royal Navy, had changed very little since the 19th century.

When he was commanding officer of the guided missile destroyer HMAS Hobart (he served in 14 ships and also commanded HMAS Duchess), he took his own canteen of silver to sea and his cabin, lined with maritime prints, also had celestial and terrestrial globes

made by John Carey, next to which sat Captain Cook's boots.

In contrast he was a specialist in the cutting-edge area of communications, working closely with the Defence Signals Directorate and Australia's allies. Having had a leading role in the establishment of the Naval Communications Station Harold E Holt in WA in the 1960s, he eventually became the Navy's chief communicator and chairman of the Combined Communications Electronics Board, the military communications-electronics organisation established between Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States, by which naval communications, and thus operations and training, are effected.

He served in Korea, Vietnam and Cyprus and was Task Group Commander in the First Gulf War in 1980 (the Iran-Iraq War).

He was also closely involved in the building of Maritime Headquarters in Sydney. He was made a member in the Order of Australia in 1986 for "service to the Royal Australian Navy, particularly in Joint Communications Electronics".

He worked closely and enthusiastically with the US and Royal Navies, although his early career was impeded when, as a cadet midshipman, he failed to secure his paint pot while painting the yardarm of the foremast on HMS Devonshire and the paint pot fell, narrowly missing his divisional officer's head but covering the latter with white paint.

The divisional officer was not pleased: warm words and a 2nd class pass followed.

His last posts were in Canberra and he and his beloved wife, Marion, bought their farm Melrose Valley just south of the city in 1984. There they spent nine happy and productive years as farmers — winning the ACT Landcare Award — before Marion's tragically early death at the age of 57.

Harry was for many years head of the

ACT Rural Landholders' Association and was instrumental in having most rural leases put on the same 99-year leases as all other land in the ACT.

His interest in naval and defence matters barely diminished with his retirement. He often wrote submissions to parliamentary inquiries and regularly addressed Senate committees. He held senior roles in Legacy, the RSL, the Navy League, the Australian Association of Maritime Affairs (Chairman), the Australian War Memorial Foundation, and the Regular Defence Force Welfare Association (President for many years until his death.)

As a keen club man, he was a member of the Australian Club, the Commonwealth Club, the Barwon Heads Golf Club and Royal Canberra Golf Club.

He presented to the Australian Club the two fine Ferdinand Bauer prints of Sir Joseph Banks's Australian exploration (in memory of his father, also a club member) and made a similar gift to Maritime Headquarters in Sydney.

He delighted in Shakespeare, naval history and maritime policy, biography, wine (he was a member of the Confrerie des Chevaliers du Tastevins — and his famous "mallet" was a cocktail once drunk, never forgotten), the Book of Common Prayer (he chaired the Friends of St John's Church, Reid in Canberra at his death), skiing (he was President of the Naval Ski Association), golf, cricket (he was a 50-year member of the MCG), his many friends and his family. Although he was always serious and highly professional about serious things, he had a great sense of fun.

He was buried in Queanbeyan Cemetery, next to Marion. Among 500 mourners was the Chief of the Defence Force.

He is survived by his children, Sarah Renwick and Charles Adams and grandchildren Angus and Lachlan Renwick.

James Renwick

The ideal gift that will last all year

I would like to make a gift subscription to the named person below of one year's approved membership fees to the RSL ACT Branch including six issues a year of *Stand To*.

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