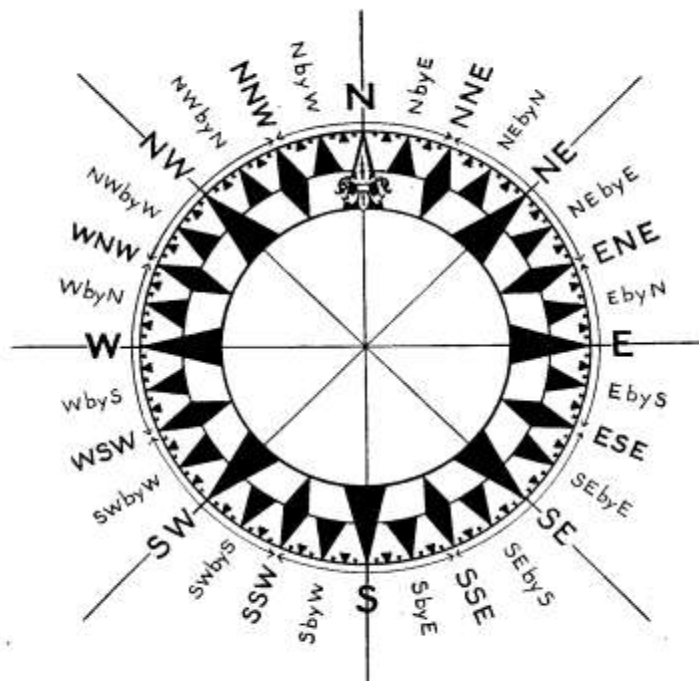




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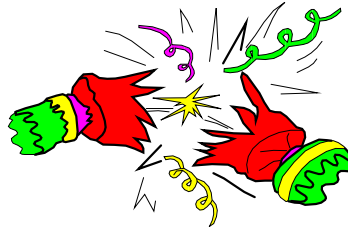
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## Editor's Note

For our next newsletter, it would be greatly appreciated if we could have some articles from our members. As I have mentioned before, this is your newsletter and any story small or large would be of interest to our readers.

We both wish you a Happy Christmas and New Year.

*Mick & Jill*

## Skippers Log

Hello Shipmates,

Season's Greetings from Anne & myself.

It has been an eventful year for all of us I am sure, but what we can always depend on is the friendship we have here in South Australia with our Vindi boys and their mates.

We are a special clan of old friends now and that was very obvious at the weekend when we held our picnic in the park. The old faithfuls were there and as usual we had a load of laughs with lots of stories to share. For those who could not make it due to sickness or other commitments we all missed you.

Mike Day excelled himself with his distribution of carefully put together Christmas cards for us all. Great stuff Mike, you never cease to surprise us.

The next meeting will be at our house, 6 Panter Street, Willaston (85231655) on Sunday the 18th January 2009, leaving the following week, which is the Australia Day weekend, free, as I know many members go away or are with their families. PLEASE LET ANNE KNOW IF YOU WILL BE THERE!!!!!!!!!!!!

We will have a meeting at 11.30.a.m. followed by a BBQ. Please bring salads and we will provide the meat. There will be a raffle of course (by the way our stocks are getting very low, all new stuff needed desperately).

There will be a gold coin book sale, all proceeds going to the Vindi Social Club.

I have been asked by Kim and Gordy to let you know that The 2009 Down Under Reunion will be run by the Queensland Branch at the Power Boat Club, Golden Beach, Caloundra, on the Sunshine Coast on the 6-8th November. More details will be available in the New Year. It would be great if a good number from South Australia could go. The location looks great.

Thankyou to those of you who have sent subs, those that haven't please do so.

May you all have a very special, peaceful Christmas, and for those of you who are sick or having a bad time at the moment please remember you are always in our thoughts.

*Tony.*

## Almoners Desk

We end the year on a sad note, with the passing of our VINDI friend and member Graeme Tetlow. His funeral was attended by fellow members. We extend our condolences to Isobel and family.

It is heartening to report Vern Evans and John Hines are doing very well indeed and we hope to see them at future VINDI meetings and gatherings.

Many thanks to the member's for their interest in purchasing the shopping bags depicting the boat template. A fund raiser and a creative selling exercise for me.

As a senior citizen this is what I have learned...

1. Forget the health food; I need all the preservatives I can get.
2. Growing old is mandatory, growing up is optional.
3. Insanity is my only means of relaxation.
4. You know you are getting older when you stoop to tie your shoe laces and wonder what else you can do while you are down there.

Seasons greetings to everyone and may 2009 be a healthy and happy year.

*Anne Withey,*

## Boat Cruise



After the September meeting a group of us made to the Port Dock, with a quick browse through the market on the way. We were to board the Port River Dolphin for lunch while cruising down the Port River. The weather was kind to us old sailor's and we had a smooth trip.

A little girl was talking to her teacher about whales. The teacher said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small. The little girl stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale. Irritated, the teacher reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible. The little girl said, "When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah". The teacher asked, "What if Jonah went to hell?" The little girl replies, "Then you ask him".

## Picnic in the park



Sunday November 30<sup>th</sup> and the regular crowd met for the annual picnic in the Botanic Park. The weather was perfect, and we were joined for most the time by a kookaburra. It was a joy to see Vern and Eunice once more. Mike Day gave each of us a Christmas card, made with photographs that were taken at various Vindi venues. When we thought we could eat nothing more, Mike came around offering jelly and ice cream which soon disappeared. The Skipper gave us a quiz on old radio program's and Winston and Shirley entertained us with a song.



The Dominion Monarch was built in 1938 by Swan Hunter of Newcastle upon Tyne. She was a passenger/cargo liner, with 385 crew, and 525 passengers, with a maximum speed of 21.5 knots. Gross registered tonnage of 27,155 tons.

The maiden voyage was on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1939 from London to New Zealand. Her final voyage was in November 1962 from Seattle to Osaka in Japan, where she was scrapped. The original owners were Shaw Savill & Albion.



Thought this might be a good addition to the Vindi newsletter. Bill (the Emperor) on his birthday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at the Drum Tower in the ancient city of Xian in China. It certainly raised lots of chuckles from the amused Chinese and tears from one terrified little Chinese girl.

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray: "Take only ONE. God is watching." Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies. A child had written a note, "Take all you want. God is watching the apples."

## A More Ancient Mariner

The following is some of the 'water under the bridge' I spoke of last time. Some of it is sweet, clear and drinkable with pleasure, some a little muddy.

The job I first took ashore in Darley Dale, Derbyshire was very interesting and it afforded me the chance to enter a new career. For the first two weeks I cycled the ten miles there and back each day, as it was summer time the evenings were light and it wasn't too bad, apart from the occasional shower. I finally got full board at the Darley Dale Station Railway Crossing Gatehouse. The gatekeeper was a Reserve Army Officer when War broke out and was in France as a Captain. His wife opened and closed the crossing gates when the trains were passing. I got a hot breakfast at 6.30am and cut lunch for work and a full country style dinner in the evening. I was employed mainly on taking and planting cuttings of Lawson's cypress trees which are ideally suited for hilly and mountain countryside.

Towards the end of October the weather turned wintery and the bus between Matlock (Darley Dale) was sometimes stopped owing to snowdrifts. I continued learning the trade through the winter, mainly in the glasshouses in severe weather. My weekends were spent at home in Buxton and seeing Florrie. In the evenings we would go to the 'flicks' or the Pavilion Gardens roller skating rink. On Sunday's there were orchestral concerts and occasionally Old Time dancing to famous bands such as Victor Sylvester and Henry Hall.

By October 1946 I had had enough of the forestry which paid the lowest of all the agricultural wages, which in themselves were the lowest in the UK, so I applied for a job closer to home. The local labour exchange, after checking my previous experiences, suggested that I might be suitable for an advertised job at a wire rope manufactures in Sheffield as I had knowledge of wire ropes. Sheffield was 27 miles away over the moors but had rail and bus connections with Buxton. The wages offered were a lot more than even the Merchant Navy pay. I gave notice at Forest Nurseries and left a week later. The factory in Sheffield was at Attercliffe, in the poorest area of the city. They were installing a new hi-speed stranding machine, the factory was very old and the existing machines were obsolete, noisy and slow. I was employed in helping the engineers from the company selling the machine in setting it up. The process took over two weeks. The old machines were only about eight feet long and carried six spools of wire suspended in a frame which rotated around a central pipe carrying the heart of a six strand rope. The new machine was over 30 feet long and all the reels of wire (up to ten) were in one line and inside a long cage which rotated around the spools. It worked up to six times as fast as the old system and instead of being powered by overhead pulley and canvas driving belts it was electrically powered. The old hands on the shop floor were not very pleased with this machine, or its operator, because they were on production bonuses and also the new machine had to have all spools completely filled with wire without joins. Their machines were left to take part filled or joined wire because they could stop instantly when reels ran out. My machine had emergency stop buttons along its length and a heavy hand brake at the front end. I had to walk up and down the length of the machine watching for spools becoming empty or wires breaking. If I missed one it took nearly 30 seconds to stop the machine, by which time about two feet of rope was formed. I had to wind back the 30 foot barrel by hand, tightening all the reels again by hand, and then fitting another full spool which weighed over 50lbs. The wire had to be threaded through its holes all the way to the break, where the two ends were brazed together with an electric brazing machine located outside the barrel, then the slack on the new reel was taken up before starting the machine. We made 3 and 7 strand ropes, some had hemp cores. The first one trialed was a 2 inch diameter pit head winding rope for a colliery.

There was a small newsagents shop along the road and I found the address for board and lodging in Attercliffe in the shop window on my first day there. It was only a five minute tram ride and cost £3.00 a week. I think my wages were about £7.00 in a good week. The first weekend I went home by bus, collected clothes etc and my bicycle and returned to Sheffield by train on the Sunday night. About six months later, the landlady took in another young male lodger in the second spare room. The house was in a long row of attached houses, all with toilets in blocks of four across the backyards. One Sunday night I returned from Buxton and found my landlady and the new lodger had got married. She had lost her first husband in the war and the new chap had been in the army. I had had enough of Attercliffe and the chance came of more money in another wire rope factory not far away in Barrall, a better class suburb of Sheffield. I worked on one of the older type stranding machines; they were extremely noisy and threw out oil which had to be poured onto each spool all the time. After a couple of weeks I got full board just outside the factory fence with an elderly retired couple, I was also promoted to the stores department. This was where every coil of wire arriving had to be tested for breaking strength, flexibility and hardness of material. We got steel, copper and brass and occasionally aluminium alloy wire.

In August 1947, I applied for and got a job at the Ferodo Brake Linings factory. This was situated in an old Norman village dated from the time William the Conqueror invaded Britain, called Chapel-en-le-Frith (Church by the woods). It was six miles from Buxton, and Florrie worked in the office. Ferodo works (known locally as Froods) is almost half of the village. I started as a labourer in the main braking room where asbestos material up to 1½ inches thick was impregnated with various resins and baked in ovens 6ft in diameter and 4ft deep. The disinfectant like smell got into ones skin and could be smelt all over the district. A fleet of buses operated between Buxton and Chapel-en-le-Frith, it took about 10 minutes, but many of the workers and office staff cycled there daily. I was transferred to a mechanical machine which impregnated 6ft wide rolls of asbestos cloth and dried them, prior to myself and another operator cutting the long rolls, partially dried, into sheets about 8ft long and hanging them in a large oven to bake. Girls on band-saws cut the baked sheets into whatever size strips were required for various products. I finished up working rotated 12 hour shifts. This gave Florrie and me long weekends every couple of weeks, enabling us to take coach and train tours to Chester, Blackpool or even London.

As I was Assistant Scoutmaster of 1<sup>st</sup> Buxton Troop, and as rationing was still severe in England, (Europe was getting back on its feet) we decided to take ten of the senior scouts to the International Scout Chalet in Kandersteg, Switzerland for ten days. We planned to introduce them to plenty of food, some of which they hadn't had as most of them were only five or six years old when rationing began. We crossed over from Dover to Ostend and used trains through France, Austria, and Germany and into Basle, Switzerland. It took two days, sleeping sitting up in the carriages. At Basle we caught the Alpine railway to Kandersteg and the chalet. A mistake had been made in England by the travel voucher people and we had to pay extra fares in France. As we couldn't get any more money from England the boys decided to pool their pocket money to pay the extra fare. They were sure that they would enjoy the holiday without pocket money. I had been fairly good at French language at school and had kept it up during my Merchant Navy travels, so between myself and the skipper, we finally got money whilst in Kandersteg, which is French/Austrian.

In February 1948, for some reason I never found out, Florrie decided to break with me. Even her mother couldn't discover why. We had been planning to get married in June that year. I was, to put it mildly, upset. Spending so much time together, cycling and travelling around England, it was hard to go anywhere without either seeing Florrie, or reminded of being there with her. She was not going out with another young man, as being a small town everybody knew what others were doing.

Early in 1949 I decided that England was too small for both of us and applied for emigration to Australia. Since my school days I had been corresponding with a girl pen pal from Crookwell, (A sheep farming area) in NSW. She had often suggested that I emigrate with Florrie, we always wrote about our doings and our thoughts of joining the numerous treks by car across the Sahara to East African peanut farms to settle. My pen pal had married and moved to the Sydney suburb of Lidcombe, ten miles from the city. They had a new house built, but only two bedrooms and the kitchen were furnished. The lounge room was bare wooden floors and a piano. It was a wedding present from her mother, who stipulated that it should not go into his dad's house in the next street, whilst waiting for the lounge to be furnished. It came from the family home in Crookwell. They sponsored me and the immigration department noticed my work experience in Forest Nurseries and gave my application the OK. They wanted migrants to work on the re-forestation of the Snowy Rivers project, after all the denuding which had occurred during the building of the dams and tunnels.



My papers arrived at the end of June, offering me a passage in July on *HMT Asturias* if I was prepared to take one of 80 troop type positions in the lower deck. The bunks were three tiered, army steel type, supplied with mattress, sheets and blankets. I've had worse during the war with the old 'donkey's breakfast mattress and pillows. Final instructions arrived mid July to sail on 29<sup>th</sup> July, so I gave Ferodo notice the week before, packed trunks, boxes and crated my bicycle, and sent them off to Southampton. The next few days were spent saying farewell to local people, my relations from Manchester, my mother and Florrie. On the 27<sup>th</sup> July I caught the train to London and spent the night at my young brother's bed-sit in Harrow. The next day I was on the early train from Waterloo, where my brother stood at the end of the platform and waved me off. On arrival at Southampton Docks I claimed my luggage, boarding pass and bedding, and made

my way up the gangway, for my first sea voyage for over three years. Before I left home I told my mother that I would be back in five years, at least for a visit. I did not have to pay the usual £10.00; it was a Government job, so I am not a '£10.00. Pom'.

Our portholes were dead-lighted and screwed down before we let go, so it was all dim electric light below. We were allowed the run of the ship like the other passengers, but at times we weren't welcomed by some people on their promenade deck. I spent a lot of time on deck and taking part in all the activities arranged by a committee voted in by the passengers. I took a lot of photo's, processed them in little daylight tanks I had in my luggage and sold them to the passengers for drink money and chocolate. During the war I met up with Scouts at a number of ports all over the world, and in Port Said and Suez the Port victualling agent's young brother ran the 1<sup>st</sup> Port Said 17 Cairo Cub Pack and I used to help him when I was in port. His brother came aboard regarding stores for the Catering Department and I contacted him as I was out of chemical to fix my film. I went ashore with him, the only passenger to get ashore in Port Said. I had a meal at his parent's house as we had met a few times during the war, and I had even spent a night there on one trip.



HMT Asturias

On arriving in Fremantle it was a very hot day and the first sight of Australia for most, including me. I once signed on *Durban Castle* in Liverpool when she got back from trooping to Sydney, but didn't make it to Sydney, only North African and Italian invasions. The sight of all the tin roofed houses, old style railway carriages with observation platforms each end, wide open brown spaces for miles so affected a lot of the migrant families that they refused to leave the ship on arrival in Sydney. The 100,000<sup>th</sup> migrant was on board us and Mr. Chiffley, the Immigration Minister came aboard to welcome the family. It was a Dutch family of four; a boy and girl were selected. I got in front of all the press photographers and got a photo which was printed in the Melbourne Argus. It is also one of the pictures in Geoff Lunn's book *And The crew Went Too*, the history of the Australian and UK migration scheme.

On arrival in Sydney, I was met by Forestry officials who told me they were not ready for me yet. They said I could spend six months having a look around Australia or get a job whilst waiting for their call. I palled up with an ex Royal Navy AB who sat opposite me at mealtimes, as we were both short of cash we pooled our resources (2/6) and took a train from the wharf in Melbourne up to the city looking for temporary work for the two days we were in port. Washing dishes in hotels or pubs was our aim. We both had working boots rolled up in boiler suits in case we found work requiring that sort of gear. Unfortunately for us it was the first day after a six months coal strike and there was no power or hot water in most places. I remember climbing to the sixth floor of the Polar Maid ice cream factory for an advertised temporary job, as the lifts were not working. The position had gone earlier in the day, and as it was about 2pm we had to start walking back to Port Melbourne.

The stevedores' were hatching the hatch alongside our quarters and after a couple of hours walking from Melbourne I flopped onto my top bunk. The hatch man asked me what we had done ashore, and after hearing that we were looking for work he said a ship tied up ahead of us was loading lamb and raw hides and being pay day there were always men missing shifts after getting drunk. We went along after our 7pm evening meal to enquire about a job. My mate didn't fancy the freezer hatch aft, so took the skins loading on deck forward; I didn't mind the cold hatch. We started at 8pm, usually two gangs of four worked each hatch loading mutton and lamb carcasses, but one of our eight was missing, and one was so drunk he was a nuisance, so we sat him down in a corner and the rest of us handled every sling coming down. Each gang of four would usually take turns on the slings (in effect they got paid for only half working). With six of us unloading and stacking frozen carcasses off the pallets we got more slings down. The shift finished at 8 o'clock in the morning, our breakfast sitting on *Asturias* was the same time, so we ran across the wharf to the lower gangway. Taking off our boiler suits and using the nearest washroom we raced up two decks to the dining room. I smelt of frozen, fatty lamb so got a wide berth from the other passengers. My mate was worse than I was, eight hours of hugging bales of damp hides doesn't do much for one's personal hygiene. We got paid at one 1 o'clock and I think I was paid over fifty pounds. Arriving in Sydney, my friends didn't find me for a while as I was making a few tips (UK cash), helping families ashore

with their luggage and carrying small children down the gangways. My friend Ida, her husband Allen and mother came aboard to see where I had been living; we then sat in one of the lounges for an hour. They had to leave because Allen was on the afternoon shift, where he was the foreman in an enameling factory. Whilst in the lounge they told me that her mother was now OK and had been released from the mental hospital on the Saturday, so she was using the spare bedroom where I was to have gone. They were going to fix up a bed for me in the lounge room, with the piano. I had received a letter from Ida, re-addressed by my mother in Buxton when I boarded *Asturias* in Southampton, explaining that her mother, left alone in Crookwell had a nervous breakdown. She was put in Parramatta hospital, near Lidcombe, but not to let it stop me from emigrating. After clearing my luggage through customs I arranged for the heavy stuff to be transported to Lidcombe during the week. I caught a train from where we were docked at Woolloomaloo to Central Station, then a steam train to Lidcombe. The directions had been given to me, but I found out later that there was a fast electric train from Wynyard underground station; about five minutes walk from the ship.

Allen was just leaving for work as I arrived at 2.30pm. After afternoon tea I asked how far it was to Burwood, which was the address I had been given by the employment department officers who came aboard in Melbourne. It was only two stations back towards Sydney City and took about twenty minutes to get there. As soon as I told him that my last job before leaving England six weeks ago was at Ferodo, he said his mate ran the Ferodo Agency for NSW in Sydney. He telephoned him and was told to send me down the next day. I got a job in the upstairs storeroom, picking and packing electrical automobile parts and various other items. The firm was Westcott - Hazell & Sons and sold auto spares and domestic electrical appliances. After six months the receiving foreman left and I got the job. There were three other young fellows in that department and all had the same idea of England, nearly all covered with houses and little open spaces. We had kept coal for fires and a boiler heated our water for us to bathe in galvanized tubs.

I previously mentioned that I was a member of the Scout Movement, where I met many groups in various parts of the world. The Port Said/Suez victualling agents younger brother was Cubmaster of the local 1<sup>st</sup> Port Said/17 Cairo Pack. I would help him whenever we called at Port Said for a few days. He emigrated to Sydney with his brother and other Rover Scouts from the Cairo area and had formed a Rover Crew in a large store like David Jones, called Anthony Hordens. The store was in the same street as Westcott – Hazell's so I called in to renew my acquaintance. The following evening was their meeting night so I went after work. They were organizing a 'Coming Out' do for 16 year old girls who were daughters of the stores staff, and senior scout officials of Sydney area. It was a group of twelve girls and the organizers were short of a male escort for one girl for the next evenings 'do', so I finished up my fourth day in Australia dancing at a 'Coming Out Ball'. The store had a fully equipped ballroom on the sixth floor which was by various outside bodies for dances and concerts. Just a block further down was 'The Trocadero' ballroom where a number of Big Bands used to perform. It was started as the first ballroom in the Southern Hemisphere, and the resident band leader was Frank Coughlan with his Dixielanders. They would get well known orchestras from America and England like Roy Henderson and Victor Sylvester. I used to go about every two months; it was an eventful period of settling in Australia.

When my Ida's mother bought a flat in a nearby suburb for herself and her son, who had been de-mobbed from the RAAF, I suggested that I move out to find other accommodation, to prevent tongues wagging in the district, as Allen was on night shift from time to time. Ida and Allen had been married about eight months and her first baby was due in November. They asked me to stay until after the baby was born as my board money was a big help in the housekeeping. The spare room was used as a nursery so I continued staying in the lounge, on a single bed and bedding from Allen's dad until November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ida was in a private hospital in Auburn, close to where I worked and I would call in on my way home after work. The baby was born about 4pm and as Allen was at work, I was the first to see her as she came in for Mum's first feed. The baby girl was named Ida after her mother, and Maxine after her uncle Max from the RAAF. I had the privilege of becoming her godfather and have been in close contact all her life, and did the photography at her wedding. I still call in to see her when I visit Sydney.

On the *Asturias* there were a number of Australian Immigration teams returning from their three year stints in Europe, and also officials from the Returned Servicemen League and Australian Legion who were signing up prospective members. I joined the RSL during the voyage and was issued with a badge and a receipt for subs. When I was leaving my sponsors home at Lidcombe, I had one night without accommodation before moving into my new place. After finishing work I went to the RSL HQ in the next street where I was a registered member, to get overnight accommodation. I was refused, owing to me being Merchant Navy. I immediately handed in my badge and card, telling where to put them. I spent the night back in Lidcombe. During the Christmas holiday that year I was invited to join them at their old home in Crookwell, sold to a girl friend of Ida's. It was the house I should have gone to when I applied for immigration. It was a two bedroom

farmhouse on the edge of the showground. I slept in my little hiker's tent outside the backdoor and used to feed the old horse and chickens. There was a swimming pool in town and we spent a couple of days there and visited Ida's uncle who lived about 25 miles away. He had a large chicken and egg business, so I got a bit of experience in the poultry trade too.

After Christmas and New Year, I changed my job in the city for a better paid one in another wire rope factory at Liverpool. I worked shifts, tinning and stranding fine copper wire for electrical work and was travelling by train from my new lodgings at Burwood, about six miles from Sydney. The leader of the Rover Scout Crew asked me if I would take over the Scout Group at Chester Hill, it was about to fold owing to no Scouts available in town. He said he would arrange full board with a friend of his at Chester Hill in a private house. As it was only two stations to Liverpool, the second one being the Cablemakers Australia factory and easy cycling to work, I took over the troop. The job at the wire factory only lasted four months; there were numerous strikes with the electricity and gas supplies. We had a lot of stand-downs because the tinning baths were heated by gas and when it cut off the tin hardened and the wires being drawn through jammed and broke. When gas was OK electricity stopped so we couldn't use the drawing machines.

We built a Scout clubroom with besser blocks with the help from the committee members and locals. The front wall blew down one night before we had time to fix side walls and roof timbers. In all it took a year to build. My time was taken up with meetings, camps and hikes. I played in the Lidcombe soccer team that was run by an ex Derby County player, I cycled to practice every Thursday night, and weekends we would play at different suburbs. We were in the Sydney Metropolitan League and won the championship that first year. The presentation night was held at the *Trocadero Ballroom* in Sydney.

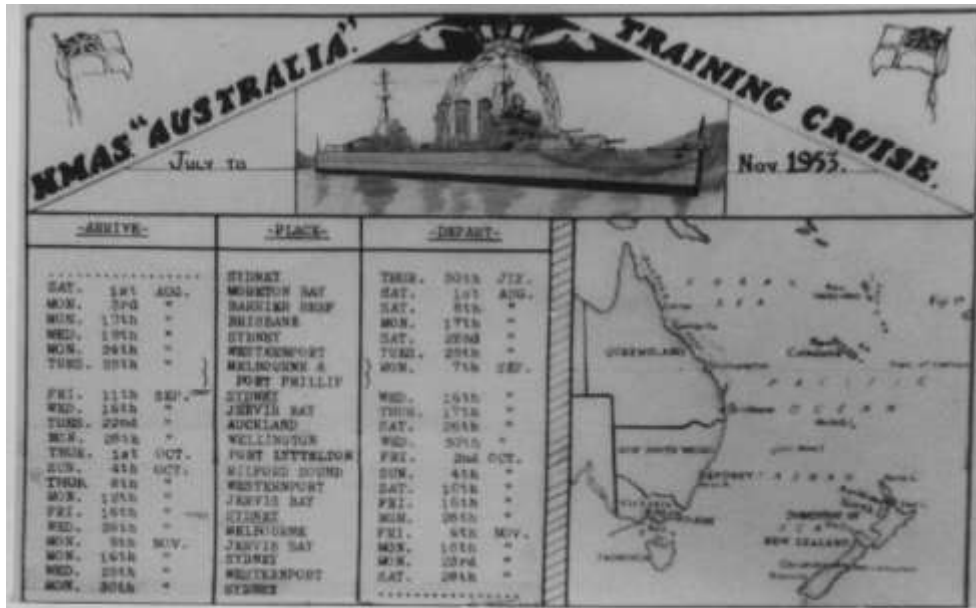
I answered an advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald, for a clerical position with Australian Electrical Industries at Auburn. I started there on May 7<sup>th</sup> 1951 in the production office reconciling stock records, then progressed to job chaser, keeping work in progress to schedule. I played soccer for the production office team during lunch break in winter, in summer I played cricket for AEI. I cycled to work or caught the train from Chester Hill. The main road passed over the railway line at Granville, I was there when the 'Great Granville Train Crash' occurred. Immediately after crossing the bridge I used to take the right turn down to AEI at the Auburn entrance, luckily I was on my bicycle that day and was able to turn off at the street before the collapsed bridge. The train from Chester Hill was on a different line to Sydney and stopped at Lidcome which was the other entrance to AEI factory. I did a course at Granville Technical College in the evenings for my supervision certificate and 1<sup>st</sup> year management; these were paid for by AEI. One day my bicycle was stolen from work, I reported it to the police and it was found two days later a couple of miles away.

With a couple of mates from the drawing office of AEI we started a photographic club, using the Gatehouse as a meeting venue and the darkroom in its kitchen. We held competitions open to all employees, and once a week, during lunch breaks, I used to screen short movies. I had bought a 16mm talkie projector and would borrow films from three of the major film industries in Sydney. There was free hire for major films delivered to Chester Hill station, I collected them from there. I also did film shows at a branch of the Methodist Homes in North Sydney. It was part of the National Children's Homes I went to as a child in 1932. They took children from the UK to learn farming etc. At one stage I had a regular Sunday afternoon screening of a major film, newsreel and cartoon, at a Roman Catholic Church in Merrylands.

The photo club used to get great speakers and judges for our major competitions. One time we had Keith Bourke, head of Kodak Australia and on other occasions Kodak's optical engineers gave a talk.



During the four years I was there I had signed on the RAN Reserve in Sydney as a signalman (communicator) known as a 'TO' or Tactical Communicating Operator. That was one night a week at HMAS *Rushcutter* Depot out of Sydney and I would go straight from work by electric train, have dinner in a café and change into uniform at the depot. After one year I did my training at Garden Island Signal Station on Sydney Harbour. Once a year two weeks sea training on a small boat up the coast, or a minesweeper given to the Reserves by the RAN, or seconded to a destroyer, aircraft carrier or cruiser. HMAS *Wagga* the minesweeper belonging to Reserves went on a cruise one year to The Great Barrier Reef, Heron Island and Noumea. Heron Island was almost barren then and Green Island, close by, had no buildings on it at all. I was lucky to be the only signalman in Sydney Reserves able to get time off work and went on the cruiser HMAS *Australia*, on a farewell tour to New Zealand in September to October 16<sup>th</sup> in 1955. I saw all the tourist places and I had an 8mm movie camera, so I got a lot of film.



I was in the Royal Guard when Queen Elizabeth opened Parliament in Canberra on her first visit. We lived in tents at HMAS *Harmon* - the Wrens barracks in Canberra – and marched into Canberra every day for a week. AEI sent me to London to work for 18 months; I transferred to RNVR and did one night a week on RRS *Discovery*. We were given a minesweeper from RAN, I was on it weekends, and once a year for a fortnight. It was HMAS *Wagga* in 1960, *Ibis* from Dorset to Gibraltar, *Supply* from Gibraltar to Singapore and *Ibis* to Sydney. I finished up as watchman over six minesweepers at HMAS *Waterhen* Depot. I ended my RANR service on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1964.

This a song sent in by Eddie Nicholls – does anyone know the tune?

As I was walking down the street a strange young girl I chanced to meet she said to me how do you do would you like to play with my ring a rang a roo?

She took me home to a modern flat she gave me wine and whiskey too she said come on you're a nice young chap would you like to play with my ring a rang a roo?

Her ring a rang a roo pray what is that it's something like a pussy cat with hair all round and split in two that's why they call it a ring a rang a roo

When she got home her father said you've been and lost you maiden head go pack your bags your cases too and earn your living on your a rang a roo

She hung a note upon the door and then they came by the score from sweet sixteen to seventy two they all came to play with her ring a rang a roo

Now fellas came and fellas went the price has dropped to twenty cents no matter what she tries to do no one else will play with her ring a rang a roo