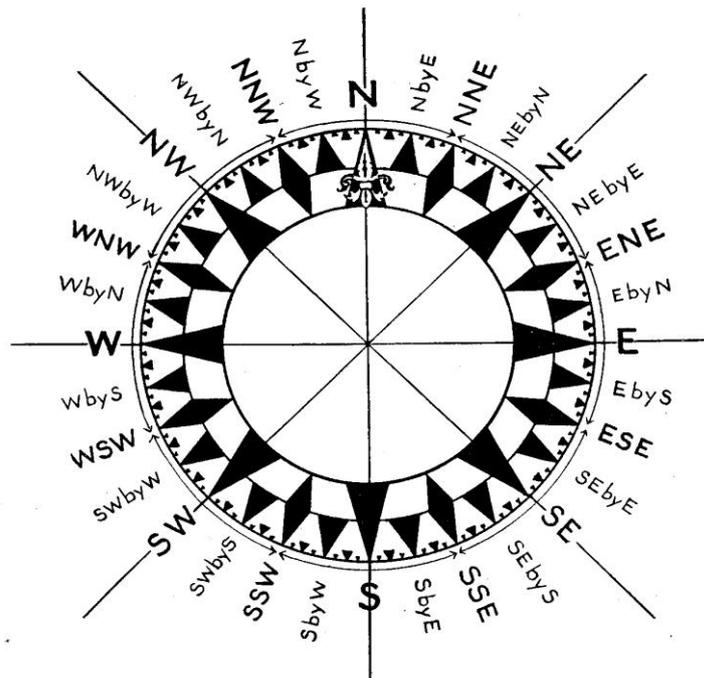




MAY 2016

ISSUE 83



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Editors Note

In the nine years that we have been producing the newsletter we have decided that now is the time for us to pass the reigns to somebody else, this will therefore be our final edition. To those of you who have contributed towards our efforts, we thank you.

Jill & Mick

Next meeting

Sunday 25th May 2016

Skippers Log

G'day fellow Vindi Boys and Girls.

2015/16 has been a good year in spite of the change of venue for our meetings from the Port Dock Hotel to The Boat House. This was suggested by Peter and Barbara and has proved to be very successful. As yet I have heard nothing to the contrary. However please feel free to voice any comments as input is always very welcome.



The Anzac Day March was very successful with a lunch enjoyed by all at The Cathedral Hotel. The weather was perfect. Thank you to all of you who were able to march. We are getting fewer each year of course but we are still a good team to be reckoned with. Some of us were able to look at the outstanding memorial wall after the march which was inspiring to say the least.

May is also the last meeting before our A.G.M. when all offices will become vacant. These offices have been filled by dedicated people over the past twenty years and we have been blessed with their solid efforts.



I want to mention in particular Mick and Jill Surfield who have produced our news letter for the past nine years after taking over from Ken McTeague. They have done a splendid inspiring job. Most times having to rely on their own well researched material as not everyone has been willing to write anything, which is a great shame as everyone has a story to tell. So my thanks to Mick and Jill for a wonderful unenviable job well done. I am sure everyone will agree with me here. Well Done You Two!!!

Re Social Events. How about some suggestions for a day out somewhere in pleasant surroundings where all of us can enjoy each other's company, with easy parking/access to refreshments etc. etc. We are also wanting other ideas for our end of year picnic. The Parklands are getting very difficult for some people to park these days. So please put your thinking caps on and help us out here.

AGM Sunday 31st July at the Boat House

September meeting Sunday 25th at the Boat House

November meeting Sunday 27th (Venue still to be organised).

Finally to all of you who are struggling with ill health and sad times, we are a good bunch of loving people in the Vindi and are always there for you if needed. You only have to call.

My Best Wishes to you all,
Tony.

From the Almoner's desk

On the not well list has been Jan and Winston. Winston had a short spell in the Queen Elizabeth hospital, our thoughts and good wishes are with you.

Always in mind is Les, who now has an extra battle in his fight against his cancer. Even on his down days, Les manages his smile and ever courteous manner, you are always in our thoughts Les.

Great celebrations are in order for Anne and Jack who have marked 67 years married in April, Congratulations to our indomitable duo. Jack will also kick up his heels in July for his 90th birthday, great going Jack, only another 10 years and you will receive a telegram from Her Majesty the Queen. Happy Birthday.

Other birthdays are:

April - I had a wonderful 80th birthday celebrate with family and friends, I am still smiling.

May - Evelyn Mack and Peter Moore celebrate.

June has the biggest list, Roy, Winston, Tony, Shirley Les, John and Barbara.

July - Jack, Eunice and Jan, Happy birthday to you all.



An apology was received from Pat Rothery who was hoping to speak at our last meeting about his war years serving on the Arctic Convoys. Unfortunately Pat has had a spell of health issues of late (he is 95) but hopes to arrange a slot some time soon. Pat was not well enough to march in the Anzac Parade this year but he was there folks, his grand-daughter pushed him in a wheelchair, so he didn't miss out.

Keep smiling everyone

Anne Withey.

Merchant Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary members to now be recognised and supported by the Armed Forces Covenant

Seafarers UK celebrates success after campaigning since 2012.

Seafarers UK, formerly King George's Fund for Sailors and as the charity representing the whole UK maritime community, has long recognised the vital service that personnel of the Merchant Navy and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary have rendered to the United Kingdom in times of strife.

From the convoys of the First and Second World Wars through to post-war campaigns such as Suez, Kuwait and the Falklands, unarmed and often unprotected, they kept the island nation afloat and the Royal Navy supplied when hostile powers tried to starve us into submission. Personnel who had served in all these campaigns were originally recognised as bona fide 'veterans' in an informal agreement with the Ministry of Defence in 2009.

Unfortunately, when the Armed Forces Covenant was issued in 2012, these personnel were unwittingly excluded from the definition of those who should benefit from this otherwise hugely important agreement between the state and those who help to defend it.

Seafarers UK has fought a lengthy - although fortunately bloodless - campaign fully to recognise the Merchant Navy dimension in our overall armoury supported throughout by the Confederation of Service Charities (Cobseo).

Seafarers UK is therefore delighted that the present administration, under the direction of the Minister for Defence Personnel and Veterans, Mark Lancaster MP, has recognised the very real case for recognition and has asked for the following statement to be included in this year's Covenant Annual Report:

'Members of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Merchant Navy deserve recognition for their service to their country

in successive conflicts. All those who have served on a civilian vessel whilst it was supporting HM Armed Forces are recognised as veterans. It is therefore appropriate that this group is recognised and supported by the Armed Forces Covenant. This is a sign of the nation's gratitude.

Commodore Barry Bryant, Director General of Seafarers UK, commented: 'For too long these gallant seafarers have been denied the proper respect and position that they deserve. We must now ensure that they receive the full appreciation and benefit bestowed by this decision, and I pay full tribute to the present Minister and his team for this sensible and decisive judgment'.

Taken from MNA magazine 'Full Ahead' and sent in by Phil Hughes from the UK.

True or False?

When the Normans conquered England, William 1st divided up the country, other than land owned by the Crown, amongst the nobles who had supported his invasion. The common people living on these so called 'manors' were required to provide free labour to the Lord of the Manor in exchange for such privileges as having a cottage and garden, grazing rights on common ground, and the right to collect any firewood from the Lord's forest that they could reach 'by hook or by crook'. As time went on however, people began to barter their services by paying rents. The yeoman farmer developed, and the manor lands were slowly broken up. In order to establish ownership, some unit of measurement was required so during the reign of Queen Elizabeth 1st a statute (Act of Parliament) was introduced which settled that one mile should be 5,280 feet in length. At sea, however, the mile has a more mathematical foundation. The nautical mile is the length of one minute (one sixtieth of one degree) of latitude, but the earth is not a perfect sphere - it's flattened at the Poles. This means that the length of 1 minute will be 6,046 feet at the Equator and 6,108 feet at the Poles, and so in conclusion a mean value of 6,077 feet is actually used for the sea mile. The international nautical mile is a standard fixed length of 1,852 meters.

Nautical Fact Taken from the Daily Programme on the Queen Elizabeth.



Jack Nicholls

Honouring our WW11 Veterans

Dear Veteran

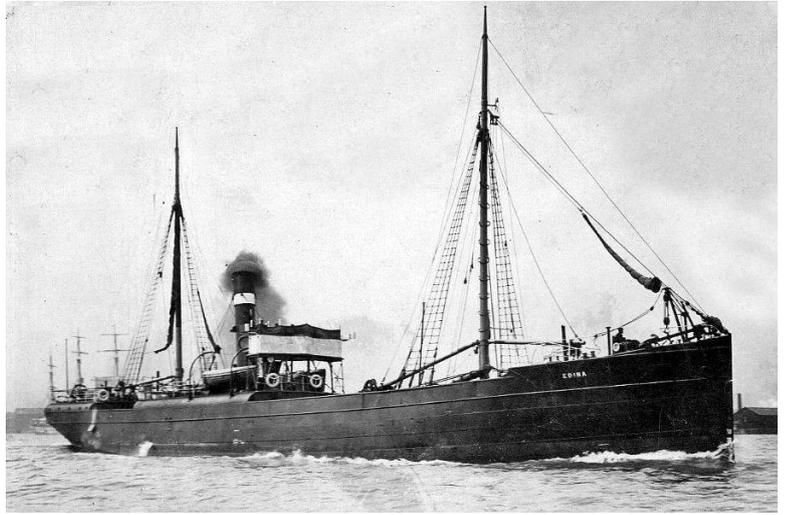
On behalf of the Australian Institute of Professional Photography and the Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL) we wish to sincerely thank you for being part of this significant project to make portraits of Australia's surviving World War 11 veterans. So far in 2015 Australia's professional photographers have photographed over 6,000 WW11 veterans.

Your portrait, along with the portraits of thousands of your fellow WW11 veterans is to be gifted to the RSL and the Australian War Memorial as part of Australia's commemorations of WW11, in this special year recognizing 100 years of the ANZAC spirit and 70 years since the end of WW11. These portraits will also be exhibited as part of a remembrance to honour the service your generation has given to Australians of all ages and backgrounds.

THE EDINA

The *Edina* was one of the longest serving steam vessels anywhere in the world. Built on the Clyde by Barclay, Curle & Co. she was an iron hull single screw steamer of 322 tons with three masts. In 1855 *Edina* was requisitioned by the Admiralty from her owners the Leith, Hull & Hamburg Steam Packet Co. to carry stores and horses to the Black Sea during the Crimean War. After being returned to her owners *Edina* traded around the UK and Mediterranean before being purchased and used as a blockade runner during the American Civil War carrying cotton from the Confederate states in 1861. *Edina* arrived in Melbourne under sail in March 1863 and was purchased by Stephen Henty for use from ports in western Victoria and later carried gold prospectors across the Tasman to New Zealand during the Otago gold rush.

After a refit in 1870, she was used in the coastal trade along the Queensland coast for Howard Smith until returning to Victoria and the Melbourne-Geelong trade in 1880 as a cargo-passenger vessel. In 1899 *Edina* collided with and sank the *Excelsior* in Hobson's Bay, Port Phillip. *Excelsior* was raised seven months later.



A further refit in 1917 altered her appearance with a new mast, funnel, bridge and promenade deck. By 1924 *Edina* had made over 12,000 Melbourne-Geelong passages and carried over one million people on the service. A further collision in July 1931 which sank the tug *Hovell* forced *Edina* onto a mudbank on Port Phillip Bay.

Retiring in 1938 she was the world's oldest working steamer and had sailed over one million km.

She was sold to George Burton, shipbreaker, where she was stripped and her fittings were sold. Victorian Lighterage Pty Ltd bought the hull and converted it into a wool lighter, renaming her *Dina*. She remained in service until 1957.

SS EGYPT

Under the command of Captain A Collyer the P & O Liner *Egypt* sailed from Tilbury on 19th May 1922 heading for Marseilles and eventually Bombay. Onboard were 44 passengers, but in her cargo was a fortune in gold and silver bullion and gold sovereigns.

Turning south into the Bay of Biscay on the 20th May the fog rolled in and Captain Collyer took the precaution of reducing the ships speed and sounding a regular fog whistle. The fog continued throughout the day and it wasn't until the afternoon that the navigator was able to fix landmarks on the French coast. The ship continued on its way and encountered a heavy fog bank. At approximately 7pm a fog signal was heard from another ship and without further warning they were struck port side by the French steamship *Seine*, which, having a strengthened bow for ice breaking sliced into *Egypt's* hull. SOS distress signals were transmitted and picked up by the *Cahiracon* and *RMS Andes*.

The *Egypt* was listing dangerously which made it difficult to launch the lifeboats, chaos broke out amongst the crew but was subdued by some of the ships officers and an army officer who was a passenger. One of the lifeboats being lowered was quickly occupied by some of the crew but these were soon ordered back on deck to help with the evacuation of passengers. In order to save as many people as possible lifeboats, rafts even some deck fittings were set adrift to give survivors something to hold on to as the ship went down. *Egypt* sunk within 20 minutes of being hit. The survivors were eventually picked up by the *Seine* and transported to Brest.

The search for the *Egypt* began in 1923 and by 1928 she had still not been located. Finally Lloyd's of London commissioned the SO.R.I.M.A (Society for Maritime Recovery) to undertake a search for the ship. The *Artiglio* under the command of Giovanni Quaglia located the *Egypt*, she was settled on the seabed with her funnels and masts still standing upright at a depth of 360feet.

The recovery of the gold, silver and coins was put on hold due to bad weather. The *Artiglio* was sent to Quiberon to aid in the dismantling of the American steamer *SS Florence-H* that had sunk in 1917 carrying ammunitions. Presuming that the ammunition would be inactive after 13 years in the water, it was decided to place a mine to part of the wreckage. On detonation the ammunition exploded causing the *Artiglio* to be swept away and destroyed in the explosion. Of the 19 crew 12 were lost including the captain and three divers who would have been used to recover the treasure of the *Egypt*.

A new ship was outfitted and she was called *Nuovo Artiglio* and on board was the 'torretta butoscopica' or

(exploration turret), an invention by one of the lost divers Alberto Gianni. This was a one man atmospheric pressure underwater observation chamber that was lowered by a cable from a ship, and provided with breathing air pumped from the surface and a telephone. By 1935 most of the bullion and coins had been recovered.

SS THISTLEGORM

The *SS Thistlegorm* was a British armed merchant ship built in Sunderland for the Albyn Line and launched in April 1940. She was partly financed by the British government and was classified as an armed freighter, and was armed with a 4.7inch anti-aircraft gun and a heavy calibre machine gun. She was one of four 'Thistle' ships owned by the company at the outbreak of WW11. After her launch she carried out three successful voyages, one to the US, one to Argentina and one to the West Indies. Prior to her sailing on that fateful final voyage repairs were carried out in Glasgow.



Leaving Glasgow on 2nd June 1941, the ship under the command of Captain William Ellis, along with nine naval personnel to man the guns, was bound for Alexandria in Egypt carrying a cargo of equipment for the war effort in the middle east. In her hold were Bedford trucks, armoured vehicles, BSA and Norton motor cycles, Bren guns, and .303 rifles along with cases of ammunition as well as radio equipment, aircraft parts and Wellington boots. Her deck cargo consisted of two steam locomotives and their coal and water tenders for use by the Egyptian railways.

Due to enemy activity in the Mediterranean, the *Thistlegorm* sailed in convoy via Cape Town where she refuelled and was joined by the light cruiser *HMS Carlisle* before heading up the east coast and into the Red Sea. The convoy was unable to continue to Alexandria due to an unrelated collision in the Suez Canal and so anchored at a safe mooring with *HMS Carlisle* where she remained at anchor until her sinking on 6th October 1941.

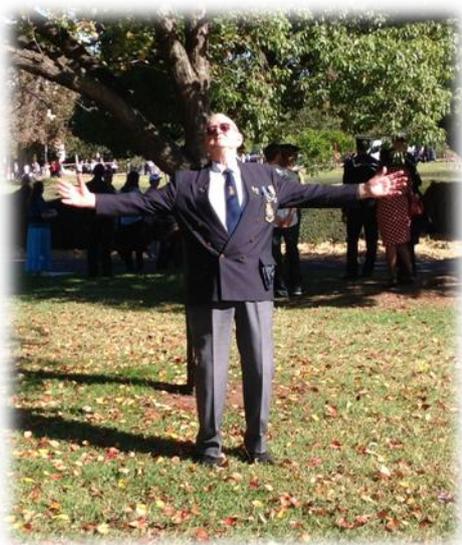
The Germans had dispatched two Heinkel aircraft to find and destroy a suspected troop carrier in the area, but failing to find the target one of the bombers sighted the *Thistlegorm* and dropped two bombs which struck the number 4 hold containing some of the ammunition, which resulted in the sinking of the ship. Four sailors and five members of the naval gun crew were lost, the remaining survivors were rescued by *HMS Carlisle*. Captain Ellis was awarded the OBE for his actions and crewman Angus McLeay was awarded the George Medal and the Lloyd's Medal for Bravery at Sea for saving another crew member.

A majority of the cargo remained on the ship, but the locomotives were blown off to either side of the wreck. Information from local fishermen led Jacques-Yves Cousteau discovering the wreck in the early 1950's, which led to him raising a motor cycle, the captains safe and the ships bell.



In the early 1990's the area was beginning to develop as a diving resort and recreational diving became popular on the *Thistlegorm* laying in 30metres of water. With most of the mid-ships superstructure blown away in the explosion which sank her, this makes it very accessible for divers. The dive boats that rely on the wreck for their livelihood are mooring their boats to weak parts of the wreck and tearing it apart.

ANZAC DAY 2016



SOUTH AUSTRALIA VINDICATRIX BRANCH



SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Founded: 28th July 1996

President: Martyn Grimsell

17 Charlton Drive, Salisbury East, SA, 5109. Phone: 258 6530

Regular meetings: 11 am, at the Port Dock Brewery Hotel
10 Todd Street, Port Adelaide. Last Sunday, odd months.

A.G.M. Last Sunday in July.

Officers 1996/1997.

Secretary/Treas: Jack Nicholls, 25 Stockton Street, Elizabeth, 5112. Ph: 255 2428

Almoner: Les Cook, 22 Shakespeare Way, Para Hills, 5096. Ph: 263 389

P.R.: Ralph Cook 29, Taunton Parade, Christies Beach, 5165. Ph: 384 7657

Date:

Jack Nicholls
25 Stockton Street
Elizabeth SA 5112
Phone: 255 2428

*T.S. Vindicatrix Association
South Australia Branch*

Dear *Member*

On behalf of the President and members of the South Australia Branch of the T.S. Vindicatrix Association, I extend a very warm and fraternal invitation for you to join us at our next meeting on

27th July.

FOR THE A.G.M.

Giving you a chance to share your memories of those days at Sharpness with other Vindi Boys.

Yours fraternally,

Jack

Secretary
*T.S. Vindicatrix Association
South Australia Branch*

Twenty years ago I received the above from Jack Nicholls who was then the secretary and treasurer of the newly formed Vindicatrix Association South Australia Branch. President at the time was Martyn Grimsell who some of you may remember, along with Ralph Cook public relations officer, and someone you will all know and respect was Les Cook taking the position of Almoner. Without these founder members, we would not have become the close knit group that we are today. Thank you to all concerned.

So it's goodnight from him and goodnight from her.

