

WAR AT SEA

THE NAVY IN WWI

EDUCATION RESOURCES



TRIPLE
104.9 



100
YEARS OF
ANZAC
THE SPIRIT LIVES
2014-2018

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This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its arts funding and advisory body.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM TRAVELLING EXHIBITION

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ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

“ This travelling exhibition tells the history of World War I, largely through the personal stories of those who were there. ”

Dr Stephen Gapps MPHA, exhibition curator

This education resource is designed to be used in conjunction with a visit to the Australian National Maritime Museum's travelling exhibition *War at Sea – the Navy in WWI*, which tells the lesser-known story of Australia's Navy in The Great War, including Gallipoli. It is a fascinating account that sheds light on how integral maritime connections were to the war and the major contribution of our Navy personnel.

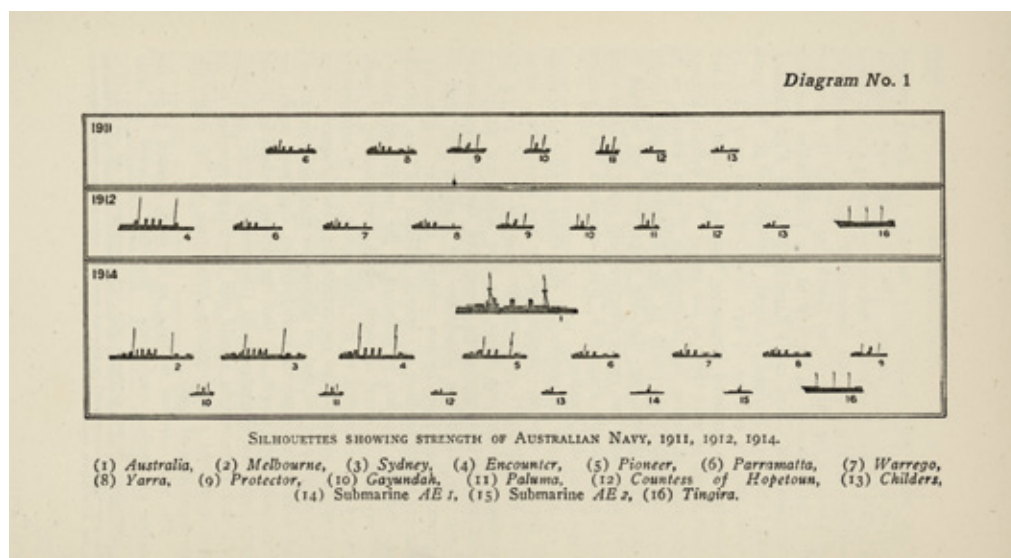
The activities here are mainly aimed at students in Year 9 (Stage 5 in NSW) history studying WWI. Some of the activities are also suitable for senior students studying the world at the beginning of the twentieth century, and also for primary students studying the concept of commemoration and celebration of special days such as ANZAC Day. Teachers are at liberty to alter the activities to suit their classroom needs.

The activities relate to the Australian Curriculum History syllabus through the Key Inquiry Questions, Historical Knowledge and Understanding, Depth Studies and Historical Skills. They also take a cross-curriculum approach by including elements of English, Science, Geography, Civics & Citizenship and Visual Arts. Specific history curriculum links to each theme and further resources are available on the museum's website at www.anmm.gov.au/education

These online resources include primary source documents, interviews with curators and historians, links to interesting websites, digital format resources and an image gallery. Activities marked with an * have direct correlation with some of these resources.

Some of the activities are flagged with the museum's education section email address and it is our hope that teachers will submit some of their students' work and research which we can post on our website as resources themselves. We hope you enjoy the exhibition and look forward to connecting with you through these resources.

The ANMM Education Team



Silhouettes showing strength of Australian Navy 1911, 1912, 1914'

A W Jose Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918.
The Royal Australian Navy Volume IX

Cover image: Australian submarine HMAS AE2 with crew on deck at Portsmouth. ANMM Collection

A BRITISH OUTPOST IN THE PACIFIC

THE CALM BEFORE THE STORM

In the late 19th century, while Britain's Royal Navy patrolled British colonies in the Pacific Ocean, a new colonial power was rising – Germany. In the 1880s, fears of a Russian invasion led the Australian colonies to fund their own navies.

But the British were reluctant to hand over control of the seas around Australia. Even after Federation in 1901, Australia's naval defence was undertaken by the Royal Navy's Australian Squadron. A surge of Australian nationalism and impending war with Germany were to dramatically change this. Germany had established trading posts and 'protectorates' in the north-eastern part of present-day Papua New Guinea in the 1880s and by the early 1900s had colonised the northern Solomon, Mariana and Marshall islands, and Palau and Nauru. Germany's global empire was challenging Britain – and creeping closer to Australia.

“ For a maritime state furnished without a navy, the sea, so far from being a safe frontier is rather a highway for her enemies: but with a navy, it surpasses all other frontiers in strength. ”

Captain William Rooke Creswell, Colonial conference, 1902

The map below shows the extent of British colonies and dominions around the world in pink, and the growing German influence in the south-west Pacific region in orange. From 1848 an Australian Division of the British Royal Navy's East Indies Squadron was established and in 1859 an independent command – the Australia Station – was formed. It was patrolled by the Royal Navy's Australian Squadron until 1911, when it was disbanded and passed to Australia's Commonwealth Naval Forces.

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- The build-up of naval power was a crucial element to imperial expansion in the prelude to WWI. Research which countries were the main players then divide the class into groups that represent each power. Each group contributes to a graphic representation which shows the comparative strength of each navy. Alternatively, create a tactical game that represents the naval build up before WWI.
- What was the Australia Station? Discuss why it was created.
- Write an opinion column for a newspaper on the rise of nationalism in Australia after Federation and the call for Australia to have its own navy. Include the role of Lieutenant William Rooke Creswell in your article.
- Essay topic: How was the build up of naval forces a key element in the lead-up to WWI?
- Create a timeline (graphic or interactive) that shows the circumstances which led to the formation of the Australian Navy
- What are your thoughts on Captain Creswell's opinion on Australia's need for a navy?



■ The Australia Station boundary in 1910 is marked in RED.

Map of the world showing colonial possessions and commercial highways in 1910.
The University of Texas at Austin. From the Cambridge Modern History Atlas, 1912

'EVERYBODY WAS NAVY MAD' THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

In 1901 *The Sydney Morning Herald* pointed out the 'incongruity in the spectacle of some five million Anglo-Australians with an army splendidly equipped, but unable to prevent the burning of a cargo ship in sight of Sydney heads'.

After growing calls for an independent Australian naval force, in 1909 the Imperial Defence Conference recommended that Australia acquire its own fleet, with several modern battleships and submarines to be built in Britain. In 1911 King George V granted the title of Royal Australian Navy (RAN) to the Permanent Commonwealth Naval Forces and the title Royal Australian Naval Reserve (RANR) to the Citizen Naval Forces.

In October 1913, a modern and powerful Australian fleet sailed into Sydney Harbour amid great celebrations. Schoolchildren were given a holiday and a commemorative medal. By 1914 the permanent RAN forces consisted of 3,800 personnel, around a fifth of whom were Royal Navy officers and sailors on loan to Australia during a period of transition. The mainstays of the fleet were the newly built battle cruiser *Australia*, the light cruisers *Sydney* and *Melbourne*, the destroyers *Parramatta*, *Warrego* and *Yarra* and the submarines *AE1* and *AE2*. The Royal Navy cruiser *Encounter*, small cruiser *Pioneer* and the old vessels from the colonial navies *Protector*, *Paluma* and *Gayundah* made up the fleet. The light cruiser *Brisbane* and three destroyers were under construction, and there were several auxiliary ships. Of all the navies in the South-east Asian and Pacific regions at the start of the war the RAN was, as official war historian A W Jose wrote, 'a small but formidable force'.

“ Without a doubt something is going to happen shortly. I was up all night last night decoding & decyphering messages, that came by wireless through several of the big wireless stations, from Whitehall right across the world to this station ... The wireless here has been crackling & crashing every night from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. ... Every available ship will be at sea by midnight tonight, ready to do battle with the best of Germany's navy ... War must come, nothing can stop it ... ”

**Wireless radio operator John Brown,
Williamstown Naval Depot
July 20th 1914**



Heart shaped pin cushion

Keepsakes such as this heart-shaped pin cushion were made by sailors as love tokens for girlfriends and fiancées at home. This example was made by a sailor on HMAS *Sydney* shortly after its commissioning in 1913. ANMM Collection

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- Ten thousand copies of this booklet were produced in the RAN'S first recruitment campaign. Research the population of Australia at the time – what was the percentage of books published against the total population?
- Imagine you are a sailor leaving on one of the new Australian Naval Fleet vessels. Create your own keepsake for someone back at home. Consider who it is and what message you want to convey.
- Create a political cartoon based on the AW Jose quote 'a small but formidable force'. Discuss first what the elements of a political cartoon should be. Scan your work and send them into us for inclusion in our on-line gallery. Email to education@anmm.gov.au
- Search websites such as Australian War Memorial and Trove at the National Library of Australia, plus others, to find sources to support the quote 'everybody was navy mad.'
- Write a letter to the British Government arguing why Australia needed its own navy. Consider what part of the Australian community you would represent?
- What sentiments are being expressed in the song 'The Lads in Navy Blue'? * What insights does this source give you about why men enlisted to fight? Imagine you have been recruited to write another chorus – create some lyrics with your classmates.
- Imagine you were there to witness the new Australian Fleet enter Sydney Harbour in 1913*. Create a souvenir postcard to send to a friend or family interstate and describe the atmosphere. Why do you think school children were given a commemorative medal to mark the occasion?
- Do you consider submarines to be high-tech for the time? Give reasons. *



'How to join the Royal Australian Navy'

Ten thousand copies of this booklet were produced in the RAN's first recruitment campaign in 1912. ANMM Collection

'THIS CAST A GREAT GLOOM OVER US' FIRST CASUALTIES OF THE WAR

The first Australian servicemen to die in World War I were not at Gallipoli in 1915 but in German New Guinea in 1914. Germany's colonies in the Pacific were thinly defended. Australia and New Zealand quickly attacked them after Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914.

Australian warships escorted New Zealand forces in an occupation of German Samoa and an Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (AN&MEF) was hastily organised to conquer German New Guinea. Five hundred experienced naval reservists and ex-sailors were recruited to serve as infantry ashore. The major action against German forces was fought on 11 September at the Battle of Bitia Paka, near Rabaul, New Guinea. In an unexpectedly determined defence, six Australians were killed and five wounded, while one German and about 30 New Guinean 'police soldiers' (militia) were killed.

At Bitia Paka, Able Seaman William G V 'Billy' Williams was the first Australian fatality of the war. In a scene reminiscent of past conflicts, Lieutenant Commander Elwell (RN) was mortally wounded while leading a bayonet charge with his sword drawn. Three days after the Battle of Bitia Paka the submarine *AE1*, on patrol off the coast of Rabaul, disappeared with all 35 hands. To this day, *AE1* has not been found.



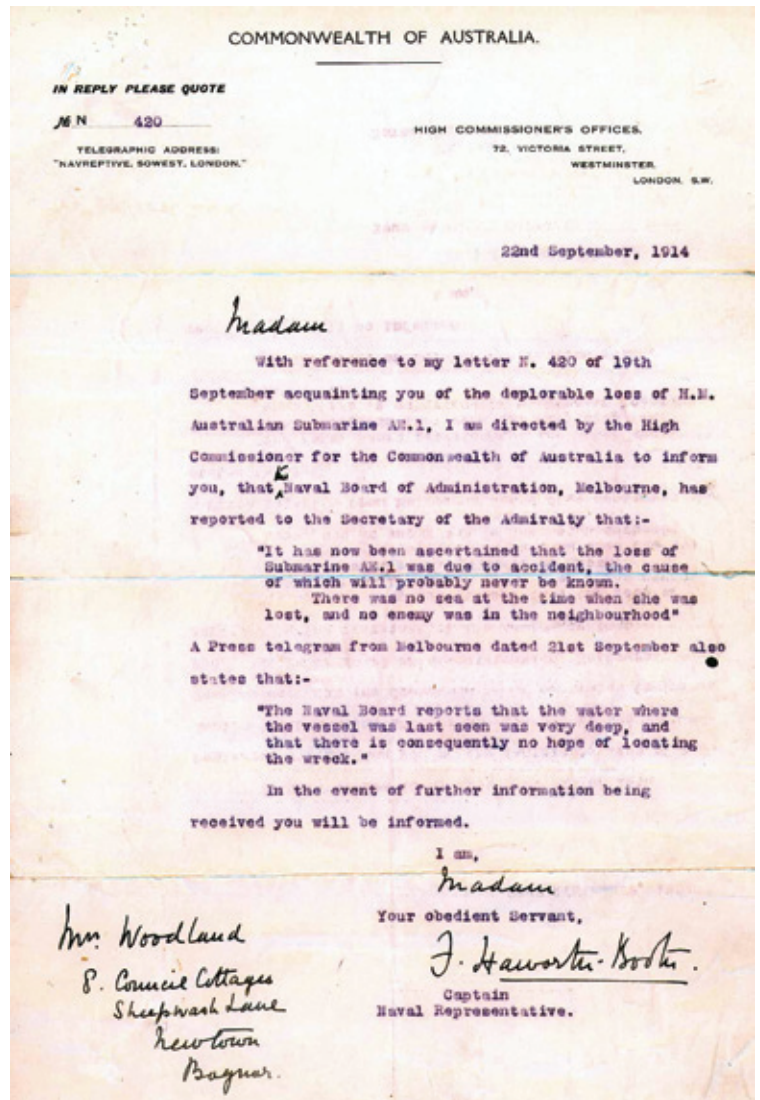
Able Seaman William 'Billy' Williams
First Australian casualty of WWI. Australian War Memorial

“ We commenced patrol duties [from Rabaul] the day after our arrival ... The following day 14th, *AE1* went out on the same duties, but never returned ... Searching did not reveal the slightest trace of anything. This cast a great gloom over us ... ”

John Harrison Wheat, submarine *AE2*, September 1914

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- Research the story of the submarine *AE1*. A good place to start would be the RAN website <http://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-ae1> Be sure to find other sources as well.
- Quick fire response or TED talk – students are given a short amount of time to write a response to ‘Why does the search for *AE1* continue today?’
- Why would some people have trouble believing the Germans were not involved in the sinking of the *AE1*?
- Students to write a series of newspaper headlines focusing on the first conflicts and casualties of the war.
- “In a scene reminiscent of past conflicts, Lieutenant Commander Elwell (RN) was mortally wounded while leading a bayonet charge with his drawn.” What image of war does this conjure up and how does it differ from the type of conflict WWI was to become?
- Research the work of historian and war correspondent Charles Bean. Create a poem, song or historical fiction story about the concept of commemoration or condolence in WWI naval conflicts.
- The Scarlett* medal story is about personal connections to the past. Develop a research topic where students gather primary and secondary sources (such as oral histories, memorabilia, family heirlooms, documents etc) to tell the story of a family connection to WWI (if students don't have a personal family connection, visit the local RSL or other community agency and interview someone who does). Publish the work in whatever form you desire. Send us your stories and we will publish them online. education@anmm.gov.au
- Visit a local WWI memorial and count how many Navy personal are listed. Send your findings to education@anmm.gov.au



Letter from the Naval Representative at the Australian High Commissioner's Offices in London to Mrs Woodland

This letter to Mrs Woodland informed her that the loss of the Australian submarine *AE1* was due to accident and that there was no chance of the vessel being located or raised. ANMM Collection

'THESE KHAKI-CROWDED SHIPS' ESCORTING AND TRANSPORTING TROOPS

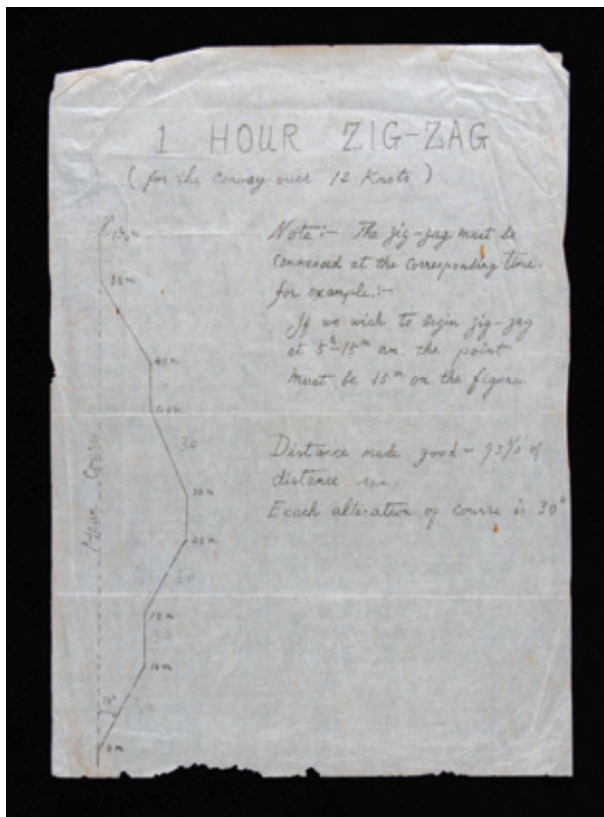
As the war in Europe ground to a stalemate on the Western Front in France, Australia's offer of troops to Britain gathered momentum. On 1 November 1914 the first convoy of troop ships carrying Australian and New Zealand forces and supplies sailed from Albany in Western Australia. Requisitioned merchant vessels were allocated HMAT (His Majesty's Australian Transport) status. While not formally part of the RAN, many saw significant service and assisted in naval operations. The German cruiser *Emden* was raiding Allied shipping in the Indian Ocean and a strong RAN, RN and Japanese force was gathered to escort the first convoy. The voyage across the Indian Ocean and through the Suez Canal to Egypt was for many ANZACs their first sea journey. Experienced sailors stepped in to raise the spirits of seasick soldiers. Female nurses travelled with the convoys and provided medical care during the four-week-long journey.

“ [Of 25 Sisters and Matrons] all took part in nursing, irrespective of rank, for influenza and pneumonia accompanied us, as well as occasional cases of ptomaine poisoning. There were a few surgical operations who did very well and waves of inoculations, all requiring some little attention from Sister. ”

Principal Matron Ellen Julia 'Nellie' Gould, HMAT *Euripides*, October 1914

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- Look at the sources and mind map the logistics and problems the distance between Australia and the warfront would have posed for the Australian military (have you ever been sea sick?).
- Create an identity chart for Matron Elizabeth Mosey who served with the Australian Army hospital during the Gallipoli campaign.
- Research the role of nurses on Red Cross ships and write a series of diary entries from a female nurse's point of view. Beforehand, discuss the types of activities a nurse would be involved in and what you may want to include in your diary entries.
- Class discussion – what are your thoughts on the dinner menu? * Why do you think this type of food was served? What might be served today?
- Research the role of transport and escort ships – why were they crucial to the war effort?



Zigzag convoy plan for the HMAT *Canberra* at Mersina, 1918

Although it increased the duration of the voyage, convoy 'zigzag' movement made it harder for German submarines to target vessels. All the ships changed direction at set times, enabling the convoy to zigzag for long periods without signalling. ANMM Collection

'SHE SHOWED WHITE FLAGS & HAULED DOWN HER ENSIGN' HMAS SYDNEY DEFEATS THE INFAMOUS EMDEN

On 9 November 1914 the RAN was thrown into its first major test of the war at sea. Over the preceding three months the raiding German cruiser *Emden* had defeated two warships, sunk or captured 16 British and one Russian merchant ship and created havoc across the Indian Ocean.

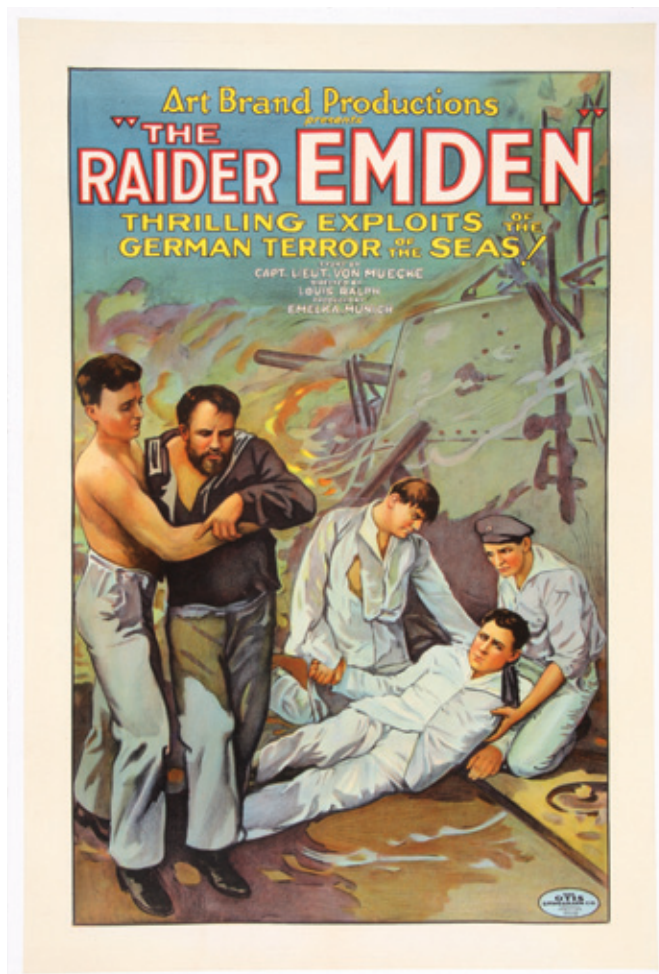
Now, *Emden* had had been sighted off the Cocos and Keeling Islands, northwest of Australia and near the path of the 1st AIF convoy. HMAS *Sydney* was dispatched to engage it in battle, as described in Captain Glossop's report:

"I have the honour to report that whilst on escort duty with the convoy under the charge of Capt. Silver H.M.A.S. Melbourne that at 6.30 A.M. on Monday 9th a wireless message fr. Cocos was heard 'Strange warship at entrance'. I was ordered to raise steam for full speed at 7 A.M. & proceed thither. I then worked up to 20 knots and at 9.15 sighted land ahead & almost immediately the smoke of a ship, which proved to be H.I.G.M.S. Emden coming out towards me at a great rate. At 9.40 fire was opened, she firing the 1st shot, I kept my distance as much as possible to obtain the advantage of my guns. Her fire was very accurate & rapid to begin with but seemed to slacken very quickly, all casualties occurring [sic] in this ship almost immediately. My foremost finder in centre of main control position being dismantled quite early & the after control being just out at about 3rd salvo. First one funnel of hers went, 2nd the foremost, & she was badly on fire aft, then the 2nd funnel lastly 3rd & I saw she was making for the beach on N. Keeling Island where she grounded at 11.20. I gave her 2 more broadsides & left her to pursue [sic] a merchant ship wh. had come up during the action."



Medals commemorating *Emden* survivors.

This medal commemorates the daring escape by Kapitänleutnant Hellmuth von Mücke and his shore party of 52 officers and sailors who were left behind on Direction Island when the *Emden* steamed off to attack *Sydney*. Von Mücke commandeered the schooner *Ayeshato* to begin a six month voyage back to Germany – one of the longest escapes ever recorded. ANMM Collection



Cinema poster for the 1928 USA release of *The Raider Emden*

Louis Ralph's 1926 German film *Our Emden* was released in North America as *The Raider Emden*. It was purchased in Australia sight unseen, but was thought to be unpalatable for Australian audiences and was remade. Footage taken on board HMAS *Sydney* during training exercises was added for Ken Hall's 1928 *Exploits of the Emden*. ANMM Collection

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- Create a timeline or photo story of the battle between HMAS *Sydney* & the *Emden*.
- Class discussion – why do you think this battle was so highly commemorated at the time? Create your own commemorative object and decorate it accordingly in the spirit of the day. Choose a popular culture object from the time such as a piece of clothing, a cushion or plate, or modernise with something like an iPad or phone cover.
- A scarf featuring the words “Australia will be there” was produced at this time. How is this demonstrative of the emerging national sentiment about the war?
- Look at the poster – analyse why the different elements have been presented in this way. Do you think this is an accurate portrayal or would you say it is propaganda? Justify your opinion.
- Research both ships and make a comparative chart. Include elements such as size, speed, firepower, crew and manoeuvrability. What can it tell you?
- How might the movie/poster be different if made by the Germans?
- Why do you think the Germans made commemorative medals for the *Emden* survivors?
- Research what happened to HMAS *Sydney* after this battle.
- Create your own TV current affairs program and film it. Have a panel discussion on why we celebrate a defeat at Gallipoli rather than a ‘glorious’ victory at sea.
- Split the class into two groups – Germans and Australians. Create a series of propaganda posters highlighting the viewpoints of both sides. Display the finished products in your classroom and or send them to us for inclusion on our website education@anmm.gov.au
- Read the quote by Captain Glossop. Why do you think he was so particular in reporting the details of the encounter?

“...the [captured] German Officers on board [Sydney] gave me to understand that the Capt. would never surrender, & therefore though very reluctantly I again fired at her, at 4.30 P.M ceasing at 4.35 as she showed white flags & hauled down her ensign by sending a man aloft. I have given these details very exactly as subsequently I heard they were indignant saying I fired on a white flag”

Captain John Glossop

'A DAY OF DAYS' MYTHOLOGISING VICTORY AND DEFEAT

'Great Jubilation in London', shouted the newspaper boys! *Sydney's* victory over *Emden* saw the Australian navy splashed across news headlines around the world. The celebrations in Australia were palpable, with 'genuine rejoicing in the streets' reported as the 'most stirring since the start of the war'. Australia received 'Empire wide congratulations'. Many Australians believed a great military victory was what the new Australian nation needed to 'enter the world stage'. The Battle of Cocos seemed to have proved this. All manner and fashion of commemorative flags, plaques, paintings and ephemera decorated homes and public places with images of the vessel that was on everyone's lips – HMAS *Sydney*. Meanwhile, Germany found strength in defeat. In honour of the *Emden* single-handed raiding successes and the incredible escape of her stranded shore party, the Kaiser of Germany vowed that another *Emden* would 'rise from the ashes' of the valiant *Emden* I.

“ A day of days, which will be ever memorable for the Australian Navy ... At 8.30am the *Sydney* sent us a wireless; 'The enemy in sight' and immediately engaged her ... Our next official message was 'Enemy beached to avoid sinking' and then came the laconic message 'Emden beached and done for' ”

Chaplain Walter Dexter, HMAS Orvieto, November 1914

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- While Australia commemorated the victory, Germany found strength in their defeat. This is evident in the words 'a new stronger *Emden* will arise.' Divide the class in half and create commemorative objects from the German and Australian perspectives of the HMAS *Sydney* vs *Emden* battle
- Discuss the role of popular culture and commemoration. Students chose one of the commemorative pieces from the *Emden* and write a script for an advertisement that 'sells' one of the pieces, including reasons why people should buy it. Film and edit the advertisement or create a graphic version for a magazine.
- Students discuss why parts of the HMAS *Sydney* were placed as monuments or made into mementos. Write a list of the reasons and compare them with others in the class.*
- Debate as a class– 'That a loss in wartime can be more important than a victory'
- Write a memoir as an adult looking back on this time as a child and write recollections of the concepts of victory and defeat. Swap memoirs with others in the class and discuss the reliability of personal histories as sources.



Eine Neue Starkere Emden Wird Erstehen.

This medallion highlights the significance of the *Emden* in German politics and public memory with the words 'A new, stronger *Emden* will arise'. On the reverse is a portrait of Captain Von Muller. A new light cruiser *Emden* II was launched in 1916 with an Iron Cross – normally awarded to military personnel – permanently fixed to the stem-head.

ANMM Collection

'AND SO THERE WERE LETTERS TO BE WRITTEN' THE HARROWING JOURNEY OF SUBMARINE AE2

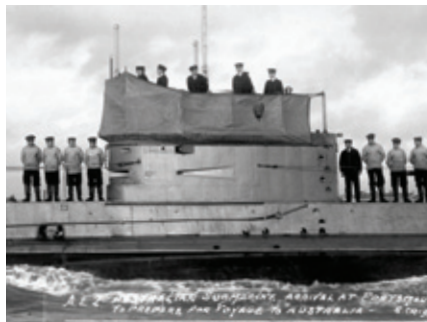
The 25th of April is etched in Australian memory as the first day of the disastrous Gallipoli campaign. Less well known is that about 2.30am that morning, the Australian submarine AE2 was creeping slowly through the dead-calm waters of the Dardanelles, tasked with breaking through the Turkish minefields and forts that had kept a whole Allied fleet from entering. By nightfall, allied forces were clinging to a small patch of the Gallipoli shore in a scene of 'utter chaos' and the commanders were contemplating withdrawal. This had to be done 'at once' to be successful. Just as Allied commander General Hamilton was writing a note to the Australian commander General Birdwood on shore, a message was received that AE2 had made it through the deadly minefields, through the narrows and into the Sea of Marmara where it was ordered to 'run amok.' Commodore Keyes described it as the 'finest feat in submarine history.' Hamilton included some good news in his orders to the ANZACs to 'dig yourselves in and stick it out' – despite the serious nature of the landing situation and 'Australian submarine has got through the Narrows and has torpedoed a gun boat....'

“ Mines are one of the most dreaded things in submarines. It was not pleasant to know that we had to face eighteen rows of them ”

Henry "Harry" Kinder, Stoker Petty Officer Submarine AE2,

“ As we lay at anchor awaiting [the raid] all hands in AE2 knew that the chances were in favour of tomorrow bringing their death. And so there were letters to be written.... ”

Lieutenant Commander Henry Stoker (RN), Submarine AE2, April 1915



Australian submarine HMAS AE2 with crew on deck at Portsmouth.
ANMM Collection

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- Create a pro/con list on the use of submarines during WWI. Consider the changing technology of the era, the mechanical faults of the AE1 and AE2 and the tactical advantages of using submarines. Students create a photo-story of the role of AE2 at Gallipoli and its overall significance using supplied resources and researching their own. Include links to other relevant sites.
- Empathy task – read the diary entries of the crew of AE2. Write a letter detailing the sights, sounds, smells and emotions of your journey up the Dardanelles Strait and through the 18 rows of mines OR record a radio interview with one of the survivor's talking about his time on AE2 and any POW experiences afterwards. The Australian War Memorial website would be a good place to start your research www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/stolenyears/ww1/turkey
- Write a newspaper article detailing the capture of the AE2 from either a Turkish or Australian perspective. Include text, images and a nationalistic sentiment.
- Students research Captain Riza's and Commander Stoker's accounts on the capture of AE2. Create a table showing the similarities and differences of the two accounts. Discuss bias, usefulness and reliability when using primary sources.
- Discuss then write an extended response considering why the military campaigns at Gallipoli are more well-known than the naval campaigns. Support your response with evidence.

FIRST IN AND LAST TO LEAVE

THE RAN BRIDGING TRAIN AT GALLIPOLI

While submarine *AE2* was the first Allied unit 'in' during the Gallipoli campaign, the RAN Bridging Train was the last unit to leave. Considering it was the most decorated RAN unit during the war, with 20 awards for bravery or good service, the role of the RAN Bridging Train (1st RANBT) is not widely known. The unit was formed from RAN reservists and was intended to be a horse-drawn river-bridging engineering section. It ended up supporting the British landings at Suvla Bay to the north of ANZAC cove on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey. On 7 August 1915 the unit was landed under shell fire and directed to build a pontoon pier for supplies to be brought ashore. It became responsible for a range of tasks such as building wharves, repairing equipment and controlling the water supply. The Official War Correspondent Charles Bean visited the RANBT and noted how 'they are scarcely army and scarcely navy.' He recognised their important work in turning beaches into working harbours. After five months labouring under enemy artillery fire and air raids, a small group of RANBT remained to keep a wharf intact until all forces had been evacuated. They were the last Australian troops to leave the Gallipoli Peninsula.

“ Sunday 5th – Howitzer shrapnel coming over this morning Schenke got one in brain. Michaelson & Lewell also wounded. Very cold wind. ”

**Douglas Ballantyne Fraser,
Able Seaman Driver, 1st RANBT,
August-September 1915**

“ Wednesday 11th August – At 7:30M we fell in and erected a trestle and pontoon bridge on Kangaroo Beach. This beach was where the troops...landed last Friday morning and discovering it to be mined – three men getting killed and 8 wounded. And now we bathe and land stored on our bridge... and there are men walking over mines, which will never explode. ”

**Laurie John Smee, Able Seaman
Driver, 1st RANBT, August 1915**



**Douglas Ballantyne Fraser
in RANBT uniform**

Only distinguished as navy by his insignia.
ANMM Collection Gift from Helen Clift

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

- Class/group brainstorm, 'what do you need to make Suvla Bay a working military harbour?' Create a mind map from the brainstorm.
- Read Laurie John Smee's diary entry and use this as a stimulus for a class discussion on the role and importance of the RANBT.
- Students write a diary entry from the point of view of an RANBT member during the last days of the Gallipoli campaign.
- Create a pamphlet or poster to inform the public on the role of the RANBT. Use a mixture of primary and secondary sources.
- Students research the role and significance of the RANBT and use this research to write a report.
- Do you think dioramas are a useful historical tool? Consider the pros and cons.
- Take a class poll (or conduct one using your family and friends) on who knew the Navy was the last of the defence forces to leave Gallipoli.



Diorama

This diorama shows the Royal Australian Bridging Train (RANBT) at work on Kangaroo Beach at Suvla Bay, Gallipoli in August 1915 where they carried a range of tasks that no other Allied unit could or would do. ANMM Collection

'GLOBAL WAR'

PATROLLING AND BLOCKADING ON 'SALT TACK AND BISCUIT'

From East Africa to the Mediterranean Sea, from the Suez Canal to the North Sea, from the Indian Ocean to the North Atlantic – ships of the RAN were certainly well travelled. The duties and experiences of naval personnel during the war were diverse. Some such as John Brown, wireless operator on the destroyer HMAS *Warrego*, complained of constant hard service, poor food and boredom. Others such as Norbert McCrory saw service with the Bridging Train at Suvla Bay, then in the AIF Field Artillery in France, and then on HMAS *Australia* in 1918, where he was selected to take part in the 'Stokers storming party', a raid on the German-held port of Zeebrugge. The light cruiser HMAS *Pioneer* was an outdated Royal Navy vessel given to the RAN in 1913. *Pioneer* came in handy, firstly as a convoy escort across the Indian Ocean and then blockading and patrolling the coastline of German East Africa. During 1915, *Pioneer* steamed 29,434 miles (47,369 km), was at sea for 287 days and burnt 7,496 tons of coal.

“ On the 23rd of Feb. 1918 ... we [HMAS *Australia*] received a wireless asking for volunteers, to the number of eleven men, for special service. We knew little or nothing of what our mission would be. In the navy, you are always under sealed orders. Our jobs came along and the seamen were to learn about trench warfare, bomb throwing and special bayonet drill ... for the landing at the Mole [at the German-held port of Zeebrugge in Belgium]... to capture, if possible the guns and put out of action any other weapons of warfare ... the object of this attack was to prevent the Germans from carrying out their submarine warfare. ”

**Norbert Joseph McCrory, Stoker,
HMAS *Australia* February 1918**

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- Students compare naval recruitment posters* from WWI, WWII and today. Analyse the similarities and differences.
- Students draw onto a map the different routes that the Australian Navy travelled during WWI.
- The first aircraft to take off from a ship was from HMAS *Sydney* 1917. Trace the importance of aircraft and aircraft carriers to future conflicts.
- Research the development of the Zeppelin and judge its usefulness as a tool in wartime.



HMAS *Sydney*'s fight with a Zeppelin in the North Sea
On loan from the Australian War Memorial

‘KEEPING THE NAVY AFLOAT’ SEEDIE BOYS, MERCANTILE MARINES AND ‘DOCKYARD’

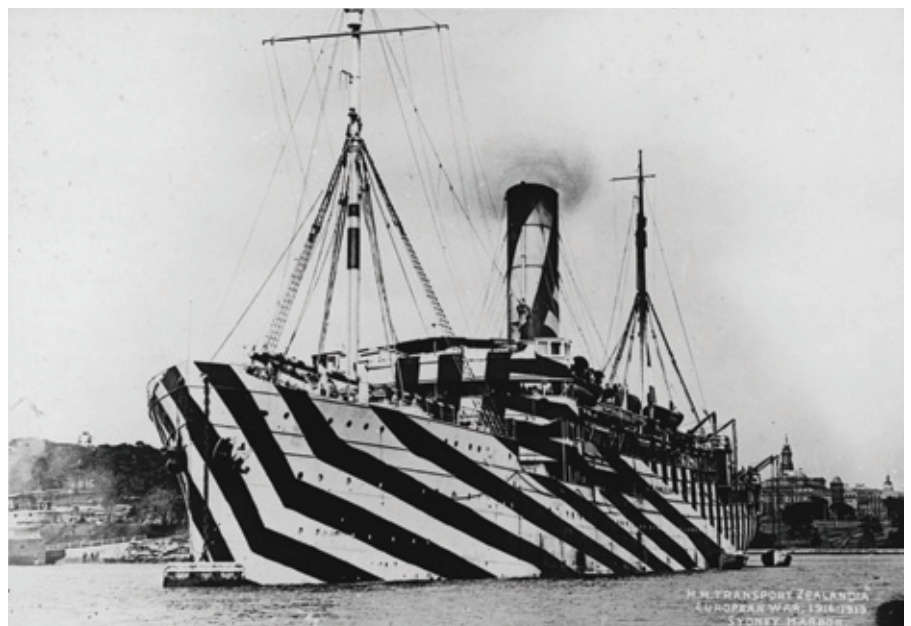
While RAN vessels had been dispersed around the globe, back at home, Garden Island in Sydney Harbour had become the main base for Allied forces in the southern hemisphere – including the British, French and Japanese navies. The island refitted and repaired 79 vessels during the war. By the end of the war Garden Island had a workforce of more than 3,000. At Cockatoo Island, 4,000 workers built vessels for the RAN. They included boiler-makers, blacksmiths, ship painters and dockers, gas fitters and plumbers, electricians, shipwrights, storemen and packers, timber workers and the most numerous – ironworkers. The torpedo-boat destroyers HMAS *Huon*, *Torrens* and *Swan* and the cruisers HMAS *Brisbane* and *Adelaide* and many other smaller craft were built there. Twenty-seven commercial ships were re-fitted as troop transports. There was no formal merchant navy during World War I, but personnel on transports and other vessels requisitioned for the war were recognised with ‘Mercantile Marine’ status.

“ Shortly after we returned off leave, the ship went into No. 1 dry dock at Cockatoo Island. The ship’s bottom was in a disgraceful state, thickly coated with weeds & barnacles. No wonder it was an awful drawback to our speed. We remained in dry dock for about 10 days & then returned to Garden Island. The dockyard mateys worked on us continuously until at last we were ready for sea again ”

**Wireless radio operator John Brown,
HMAS *Warrego*, September 1916**

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- Dockyard workers painted ‘dazzle’ onto the ships for camouflage. Research the science behind camouflage then use the ship template on our website and create your own dazzle.*
- Research Cockatoo Island. Compile a list of the jobs and activities that occurred there which supported the Navy during WWI.
- Consider the military service exemption certificate.* What conclusions can you draw about the role of women in the workforce in 1914?
- Investigate the role of Seedie Boys* at this time.



HMAS *Zealandia*

Dockyard workers were kept busy painting vessels with ‘dazzle’ camouflage. Dazzle was disruptive patterning designed to make it difficult for the enemy to accurately assess a ship’s shape and thus battle potential. This was particularly useful for unarmed or lightly armed transport vessels.
ANMM Collection

'THERE WAS JOY ON BOARD ONCE MORE'

THE END OF THE GREAT WAR

After news of HMAS *Sydney's* victory over *Emden* in November 1914 Australians heard little more of the RAN. Ship movements were kept secret and sailors often referred to the navy as 'the silent service'. The RAN had all but disappeared from the public's view, but in fact had been constantly engaged conducting myriad tasks all around the globe. The end of fighting in World War I on 11 November 1918 did not see the end of service for naval personnel. HMAS ships *Australia*, *Sydney* and *Melbourne* were attached to the North Sea Fleet. They were present at the surrender of the German Fleet and enforced its internment at Scapa Flow, in Orkney, north Scotland, where the Germans scuttled their fleet just before the peace treaty was finally signed on 28 June 1919. German prisoners and internees had to be returned to Germany. Other vessels were assigned troop escort and transport duties and many sailors despaired of when they might finally get back to Australian shores. And the great influenza pandemic that began in January 1918 – and was to kill more people than had died in the war – was hastened and spread by the close quarters and massive troop movements at the end of the war.



Dead man's penny

Bronze memorial plaques, or 'dead man's pennies' as they became known, were issued to the next-of-kin of all British and Commonwealth personnel killed during the war. This dead man's penny was issued to the relatives of Frederick William Woodland of submarine *AE1*. ANMM Collection Gift from Annie H Goldie

“ After taking supplies to Murmansk and refugees back from Russia in September 1919, Captain Brown and his crew just wanted to go home: Well on arrival [in England] three men came on board and told us we were to fit out to carry troops to India, this was a knockout blow to us ... I had made up my mind that I would be sick, very sick indeed just before the boat left – I had not the slightest intention of going to India.

Well that afternoon [I was told] our steamer *Willochra* was to be handed back to her owners. So there was joy on board once more! ”

Captain John Frederick Spring-Brown, HMAT *Willochra*



Peace Bonds

Peace bonds were established to raise funds for the resettlement of returned servicemen. Of 330,770 Australian men who served overseas during the war, almost one in five was killed. Of 267,607 who returned, 150,000 were injured or disabled. ANMM Collection

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- In November 1918 HMA ships *Yarra*, *Torrens* and *Parramatta* were part of an Allied fleet sailing to Constantinople (Istanbul) after the capitulation of Turkey. As they passed through the Dardanelles, the commander of *Parramatta* sought permission to fly an Australian blue ensign in tribute to those killed at Gallipoli. The answer was: 'The Commonwealth blue ensign may be flown at the port yard in honour of Australia's glorious dead'. What do the colours of the Ensign represent? What is the significance of Australia asking and Turkey permitting the RAN to fly the flag? *
- What were peace bonds and why were they needed?
- Why were the bronze memorial plaques nicknamed 'dead man's pennies'?
- Create a piece of persuasive writing or deliver a speech arguing your point of view about ANZAC Day celebrations.
- Discuss the public's perception of the role of the Navy in WWI. * The Navy became known as the 'Silent Arm' during the war. Discuss whether the Navy has been neglected in ANZAC celebrations
- Students investigate the number of Australian casualties during the war and the number of navy casualties and use this data to create a comparative graph or table.

DESCRIPTIONS OF WAR AT SEA

JOURNALS, DIARIES AND SHIPS' LOGS

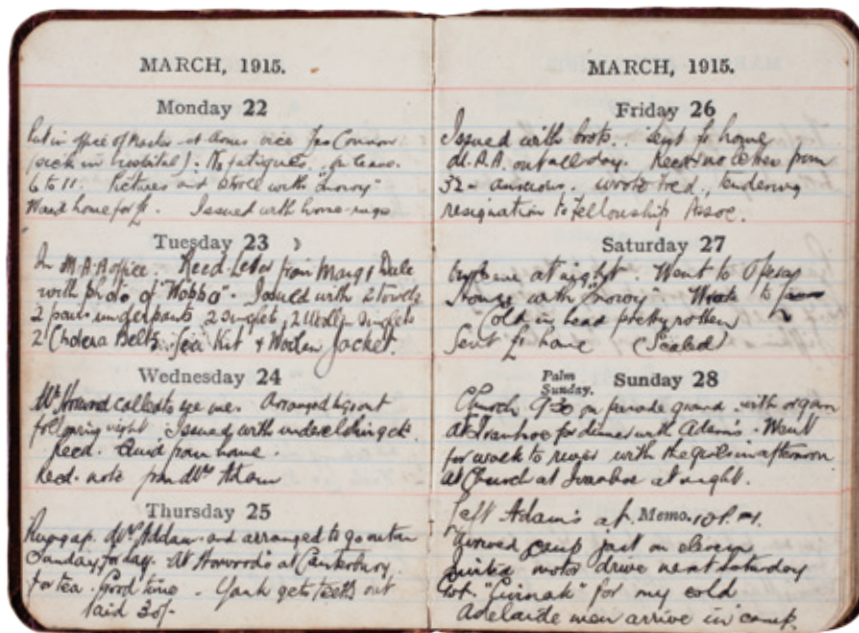
First-hand accounts of the Great War presented in this exhibition reveal the unsung drudgery of patrolling, blockading, escorting and supplying troops around the globe.

They are only occasionally punctuated by moments of danger and fear. These raw personal testimonies to historical events offer us important insights into a period of conflict and trauma that holds great significance for many Australians.



George Leatham Roberts, HMAS Tingira, 1914

George enlisted as a 'Boy 2nd Class' on 12 September 1914 at the age of 15 years. He drowned at Mosman in Sydney a year later. ANMM Collection Transfer from Powerhouse Museum.



Douglas Ballantyne Fraser's diary

Inscribed 'This book is the property of No. 64 A.B. Driver D. Fraser, Leut 15, 1st R.A. Naval Bridging Train, Domain, Melbourne, Vic, Anyone finding, please return.' ANMM Collection Gift from Helen Clift

CLASS ACTIVITIES

- Class discussion, why do you think George Leatham Roberts chose to enlist so young? Do you think the Navy was what he expected?
- Students read the diary entries then create a wordle on the emotions they felt when they were reading it and what caught their attention.
- After reading the diary entries, students write a poem or song lyric about the Navy during WWI OR one of the people whose story they found interesting.
- Students create a table to compare the usefulness of different types of sources including; the ships logs, the photograph of George Roberts, diary entries and Suckling's memoir. They look at the author, audience, origin, context, bias, limitations and reliability for each source. Students then decide which source they believe is most useful and why.
- Students to write a blog entry on the topic 'personal accounts as records → an interpretation of events'
- Students write a quick sentence on a post-it note on what they learned about the Navy in WWI by visiting the exhibition and/or using these resources. Make a display of the notes and allow students time to read each one and discuss them with classmates.

We would like to hear your thoughts – send us some of your notes education@anmm.gov.au