



Junior Recruit Memorial Project Newsletter

Number 12 -June 2009

Welcome to Newsletter Number 12

The old mast is now in the hands of the Naval Cadet Unit TS Perth awaiting a decision on some recycling of the timber. The reunion group are presently considering options for the reuse of the timber. Watch their web site www.jrsreunion.org for updates on their intentions in this regard.

The timber from the old mast presents a unique opportunity to retain a relic from the old establishment, a little piece of its history so to speak. For example in the United States Navy there has been a tradition for many years whereby old crewmembers can be identified as a *“plank owner”*. Originally the term applied to crewmembers that were present when a ship first commissioned, today however the term is sometimes applied to those who served at any stage in a ship. The *“plank owners”* in the traditional sense are entitled to a piece of the ship’s deck planking when it decommissioned.

If we were to stretch our imagination a little a piece of the old mast could be represented in the same light in that it presents as a small piece of ownership to what was an important symbol of the training establishment. The reunion group is currently working through the process of deciding what best to do with the old mast and in the event that pieces of it are made available then we could all see ourselves as *“plank owners”* of HMAS Leeuwin.

Planning Meeting Dedication Ceremony

Planning for the Dedication Ceremony will move to the next level in November at Leeuwin Barracks. The meeting to be convened on Monday 23rd November will involve members the Memorial Committee, the Reunion Committee, representatives of the RAN and Department of Defence as well as other bodies involved with activities associated with the dedication of the JR memorial on 13 July 2010.

The purpose of the meeting is to set out the ceremonial arrangements for the day and consider a range of logistical matters such as the order of service, seating, public access and parking. The forecast is for a significant crowd with high levels of public and media interest expected.

Other matters to be considered in the ensuing days will be the engraving of the granite panels on the memorial, the placement of the bronze sculpture and replanting of the Memorial Garden.

We now have just 12 months to go until the Memorial Dedication Ceremony and whilst that may appear to be some time away there is much to do to ensure that all matters are dealt with in an effective and timely way. To this end meetings are also planned in November with key people in other organisations in WA who will form an integral part of the occasion. These include East Fremantle Council, WA Police (for traffic control) and local ex service organisations involved in the activities.

Creating the “Bronze”

The process of creating the bronze centrepiece for the memorial is underway. The sculptor, Andrew Borg, (pictured) has prepared the image in clay against a hard background to ensure that the 3 dimensional image being created is accurate and according to the size arrangements necessary to form the correct symmetry against the granite panel. The clay slump figure once completed will be transferred to a sand mould before the first casting is made at a local foundry.



Sculptor Andrew Borg at work on the “bronze”

The bronze figure will blend into a bronze oval shaped back plate; configuration will also give proper symmetry to the image of the JR as well as allow a more accurate presentation of the uniform. There will need to be some time and detailed work

applied to the finishing process that will include attention to the finer details of the uniform. This final finishing is undertaken directly into the metal using tools such as chisels, files and all manner of scrapers to achieve the final detailed finish. The processes to complete the final bronze piece will not be finished until November.

Commemorative Medallions

Have you got your Commemorative Medallion yet? Please do not leave it to the last minute, as our ability to continue to supply them may be limited once the project is completed. For family members some consideration of the next birthday is a chance not to be passed up and *don't forget Father's Day in September*. For all the ex JR Fathers and Grandfathers out there here is a chance to pass the order form onto the kids as a subtle hint.

Some Very Early JRTE History- 1961

We need to cast our minds back to the first few days at Leeuwin to put ourselves in this picture. The marking of our kit was a new and sometimes traumatic experience. How traumatic? Well for those who managed to put a name where it was not supposed to go soon incurred the wrath of those supervising the event. How many have still got their name type? I am certain that many have got it hidden away in some drawer along with other memorabilia from this time. Note in the photo how every new JR is standing properly at ease, still dressed in civvies and perhaps not daring to even twitch. Also the old Honour Board up on the wall; does anyone know what happened to this and other "heritage" related items?



Marking Kit January 1961 (2nd intake)

(Photo courtesy of Kev. Connolly)

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“The Ship’s Bell”

We had an email from an ex JR a while back looking for the original HMAS Leeuwin ship’s bell, it seems that the day before the place was decommissioned in 1985 it “**disappeared**”. Given that at the time it was attached to the bulkhead immediately outside the Naval Dockyard Police Office and most probably needed two men to carry it raises even more questions. It is probably hanging over someone’s bar or at worst sold for scrap. If anyone knows where it might be please get in touch, it would be a fitting centrepiece at the 50th Anniversary celebrations and perhaps placed at the JR Memorial on special occasions, suitably polished of course.

Batavia Canon

Those who served at Leeuwin in the mid 60’s will recall the Batavia canon; Navy divers and GPV.958 under the command of LEUT (later CDRE) Hec Donaghue raised this in July-August 1963. The canon was later transferred to HMAS STIRLING where it was located outside NOCWA HQ after negotiation with the owner the WA Maritime Museum. A WA Maritime Museum inspection of the large canon after several years saw it removed for preservation in a special tank after sea air and bore water had taken their toll. Returned on the condition that it remained indoors, the shipwrights made a new gun carriage and the large canon is now located in a games room in the Fleet Amenities Complex at HMAS STIRLING.

(Information courtesy of Vic Jeffrey)

HMAS Cerberus JR’s

I would like to hear from any Cerberus Ex JR who is willing to contribute an article to this newsletter. Whilst there were only two intakes at Cerberus there must be a wealth of information out there that gives an insight into the JR scheme as it applied there.

The JR Memorial Project is representative of all JR’s and contributions from those who were part of that short but important side of the history of JRTE would be very welcome. Any short anecdotes or photos from that time will be of interest to the readers of this newsletter.

4-Inch Gun Turret

(1962 Photo Courtesy of Kev Connolly)

This relic of World War 2 was located at the edge of the parade ground as a display item during the 1960’s but was removed to an unknown location. Does anyone know what ship it came from? If it was relocated as a memorial piece some knowledge of where it went to might be of interest to some.

The relaxed mood of the JR’s in the photo and the absence of white webbing suggest that the photo was probably taken on a Sunday before the Church Parade.



“Future Gunners ??”

Newsletter Distribution

We are endeavouring to give the newsletter the widest possible distribution. If you are a member of an ex JR intake group, ex Service Organisation such as the RSL or Naval Association please pass it on. There were 13,000 Junior Recruits and at this time we estimate that we are only in contact with about 40% of them.

If you have some mates on your email list, pass it on. The more that we have involved the more successful the JR Memorial Project and the 50th Anniversary Reunion will be.



“Yours Aye”

Ken Dobbie

Junior Recruit Memorial Committee

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The Commemorative Medallion Order Form



**Junior Recruit Memorial Fund
50th Anniversary Commemorative Medallion
Order Form**

Please Supply:

Number of Medallions Required @ \$85.00 per unit	\$	
Engraving of Name and Official Number (optional) @ \$10.00 per unit	\$	
Please write below exactly what is to be engraved		
Name & Initials.....		
Official Number.....		
Postage and Handling @ \$7.30	\$	
Total Cost (includes GST @10%) <i>(Payment by cheque or money order should be made to the Junior Recruit Memorial Fund Inc. Do not send cash)</i>	\$	

Your Name	
Home Address	
Postal Address	
Telephone	
Email Address	

**Please remit cheque or money order with the order form to:
Junior Recruit Memorial Fund Inc
75 Lovett St Devonport Tas 7310
Tel 03 64247198 Email ken.dobbie@bigpond.com**



All proceeds from the sale of the medallions will be passed to the Junior Recruit Memorial Fund .

