



HMAS BALLARAT

DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010



IN THIS EDITION:

Doin' it for the Kidz
Ballarat Bertie
Interview with the Pusser
Jack Speak
A Marathon Effort for Ballarat
Top Tips: Defence Community Organisation
Choose Your Rate, Choose Your Fate!
Promotions, Awards, Hatchings & Matchings

A Note from the Editors

As Australians we tend to give relatively freely when we know it's for a good cause. Lately a generosity of spirit seems to have been overcome by many members of the crew, with many worthy charities reaping the benefits.

In the last edition of the Shaft we wrote how we thought that the Boss must be crazy to contemplate competing in his first ever marathon. He was not to be deterred however, and with a flood of support was able to raise over \$3000 on behalf of United Way Ballarat to assist with flood relief in the Ballarat region.

Our very own ABMT McDonald did us proud when he recently participated in the Starlight Children's Foundation of Australia Trek4Kidz (full story page 2).

BALLARAT personnel also assisted in the selling of Legacy badges whilst the ship was docked in Newcastle, and more recently the national launch of the 'Ocober' initiative was held on our flight deck.

All-in-all it has been an outstanding effort by both those participating in and supporting these worth causes.

From the Captain's Chair.....

Welcome to our third instalment of the Eureka Shaft. Your crew has been taking the time to do some work in the community and take some well earned leave as evidenced by the articles in this edition. November has us at sea for the majority of the month and we will have some house guests in the form of our Sea Training Group onboard...ask your loved one who they are! Getting BALLARAT back to sea represents a very significant occasion in the history of the ship. It does however mean that we are not around for most of the month and the reality of life at sea will start to sink back in. For the crew, it is good practice for what will be a busy year in 2011. The other thing that is nearing is the arrival of the jolly bloke in the red suit. If you were wondering, I am talking about Santa! To that end we will be having a **mammoth** Ship's Christmas party on **Saturday 11 December** starting at 13:00pm at the Navy Heritage Centre at Garden Island. There will be a BBQ, drinks, a jumping castle for the little (and some not so little) kids and Santa will make an appearance with **presents** for the children. We are holding it on a Saturday as I have had some requests for functions on weekends in order for interstate supporters to attend. If this is to be a success we **NEED** numbers early. Please email if you can attend and how many of your family will be attending to the Ships Warrant Officer, Warrant Officer Paul Bradley (Paul.Bradley1@fleet.defence.gov.au). Thankyou to those few who volunteered their time for cocktails and conversation. Due to the small numbers and a busy period I have postponed this important meeting which seeks your view on how to better support you. It will happen sometime in the near future. I am also providing a DFA mail out which provides a basic "One stop shop" to supporting your loved one. Please pass it freely and if you know of anyone who needs a mail out, let us know. Thank you for your patience and support as we continue to work towards what is a momentous occasion...getting BALLARAT back! I trust this find you well. A busy month awaits. But for now.....enjoy **your** Eureka Shaft.



HMAS BALLARAT

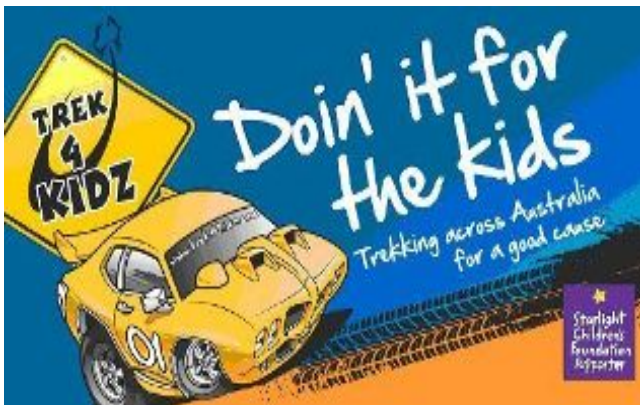
DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010

DOIN' IT FOR THE KIDZ

By ABMT McDonald



Recently I participated in the annual Trek4Kidz, which raises money for the Starlight Children's Foundation of Australia. The event is held over the course of one week, typically in August. It travels through many different parts of Australia, even on dirt tracks and rarely used roads.

In the past 14 years the Trek has visited 90% of all New South Wales towns, as well as venturing into Victoria and Queensland. The Trekkers visit schools and hospitals along the way, handing out show bags and goodies donated by the trekker's sponsors. They also help raise awareness about the fantastic job the Starlight Children's Foundation of Australia do, in brightening up the lives of seriously ill children and their Families. Over 1million dollars has been donated to the Starlight Children's Foundation over the past 14 years.

Trek4Kidz consists of approximately 200 dedicated volunteers from all around Australia. These volunteers raise funds in their local communities through a variety of initiatives in an attempt to "put a little sunshine back into the children's lives".

This year the Trek started off in Merimbula in New South Wales and travelled down to Victoria, stopping off at Lakes Entrance, Phillip Island, Queenscliff, Port Fairy, and Horsham, before finally finishing back in New South Wales at Deniliquin. During the Trek we

stopped at three different schools, Point Lonsdale Primary School (200 children) and Queenscliff Primary School (40children) in Victoria and Penola Primary school (120 children) in South Australia. We also visited the Geelong Hospital Paediatric ward.

So far we have raised over \$85K this year through the generosity of the Trekker's sponsors and public donations.

The aim of the Trek4Kidz is for the participants to:

- raise awareness of the Starlight Children's Foundation,
- raise much needed funds to support Starlight, and
- put smiles on the faces of seriously ill kids.

Every year, there are over 600,000 child admissions to hospitals across Australia and thousands of these children are diagnosed with a serious or terminal illness. That's hundreds and thousands of Australian children who will experience some form of physical pain, not to mention feelings of helplessness, confusion, isolation and boredom.



AB McDonald with Lightning McQueen and a few friends.

Trek4Kidz in partnership with the Starlight Foundation have been committed for the past 14 years to making these challenges a little easier by supporting an array of innovative distractive therapy programs facilitated by

Continued next page...



HMAS BALLARAT

DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010

[Continued from previous page...](#)

the Starlight Children's Foundation.

Through innovative programs Starlight provides multiple touch points that enable these children and their families to connect with the magic of the starlight world:

- Captain Starlight—the human touch;
- Starlight wish granting & escapes—the family experience;
- Starlight TV, Radio & fun Centres—the diversion and entertainment; and
- Starlight Express Rooms & Starlight Express Vans—on location & on the move.

Starlight receives no government funding, relying solely on the dedication and generosity of people like myself and other Trekkers from Trek4Kidz to be able to spread so much happiness.

It makes you feel good when you see the smiles and excitement on the kid's faces when they see us pull up outside their school, and to know that we are making a difference to young kids throughout Australia with the money that we raise and donate to Starlight.

If anyone would like to know more about the Trek4Kidz or to donate check out the website at:

www.trek4kidz.com

Ballarat History: Did you know.....

Ballarat Bertie



2006 release can

Ever wondered about the Ship's mascot 'Ballarat Bertie'? How did a seemingly obscure caricature like Ballarat Bertie become the mascot of one of Australia's most technically advanced warships? Once you delve into the rich history of this beloved Australian icon, you realise that Bertie is more than just a two-dimensional character.

Bertie was first drawn in 1926, and is the depiction of a cellarman holding aloft a pint of his finest Ballarat Bitter Ale. He went on to feature on the famous Ballarat Bitter beer label from 1927 onwards. Bertie was the original mascot of the WWII corvette Ballarat I, and was rediscovered by the crew of Ballarat II during their 2006 Operation Catalyst deployment when they were investigating a suitable mascot.

After being introduced to Bertie by the then ship's company in 2006, Federal MP MHR Catherine King approached the Foster's Group (who owns the rights) about doing a limited release of Ballarat Bitter. Foster's agreed, and as the beer had not been brewed since the 1980s there was considerable interest in this strictly limited revival. With the lion's share of the release going to the crew, it was on for young and old to see who could get their hands on the coveted cans.

There is a phenomenal amount of Bertie merchandise out there, including statues/figurines, signs and of course the always coveted bottles and cans of Ballarat Bitter.

This cheeky little cellarman will not go forgotten so long as there are those who remember the beer, or have served on one of the ships named after the City where this icon of Australian brewing history hails.

Next edition... [The Eureka Challenge and Trophy](#)

Right:
Some
Examples
of
Ballarat
Brewing
Labels
featuring
Bertie





HMAS BALLARAT

DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010



Interview with the Pusser

By ABCSO Ash Speight

In just a few short weeks the Supply Officer will bid us farewell as she leaves us to take up her new life in the "Big Ship". But before the Pusser leaves, we thought it prudent to ask her a few questions...

What is the most memorable moment you have had in your navy career so far?

There would have to be two memorable moments for me; both for different reasons but equal in their ability to stay with me for the rest of my life.

The first was when I was awarded a Systems Command Commendation for the work I had done on the Junior Supply Officer training continuum; I had spent a lot of time and effort on this important change for the future, including weekends, and to be recognised for something that I wanted to do was a wonderful surprise.

The second event happened later that same year with my AFL team, the Hawthorn Hawks, making it to the Grand Final for the first time in 17 years. I know this must seem an odd Navy career moment, but I was able to get a ticket to the final (I missed out on a membership allocated ticket) because CERBERUS was asked to help out by providing volunteers to assist with the movement of equipment during the opening ceremony entertainment. For the lucky volunteers, we were given a ticket to the final as a show of appreciation for our assistance and I was able to see

my boys win! It's just one of the ways Navy has provided for my extra-curricular activities and is always appreciated.

Tell us something about yourself ships company might not know about you.

Although some will know this, during my teenage years I was a DJ for my local Radio Station right up until the day I joined the Navy. Being the youngest member of the staff by a number of years, I was in charge of playing the top 40 hits in my allocated time slot and much to my Supervisor's horror, I decided to play Guns 'n' Roses without getting lyric approval first, I love the band and wanted everyone else to appreciate them as I did. Thankfully I played Welcome to the Jungle and didn't break any broadcasting laws for inappropriate language but as you can imagine, a few people were surprised by my selection and guts to do what I did. Although I'm not on the radio anymore, I still enjoy listening to the Gunners on the odd occasion.

As a young woman joining up as an officer, what was the biggest challenge you faced early on in your career and how did you overcome these challenges?

I come from a close knit family, being Tasmanian born, and I found that being away from that support base initially a challenge. Although my parents raised me to be an independent and self-sufficient woman, moving a stretch of water and two states away was a lot to adjust to and I had to add this to my new adventure of being at the Australian Defence Force Academy, learning how to be an officer and a uni student all at the same time.

My family gave me a lot of support, letters and phone calls galore, but it was a decision to go to Turkey on the Gallipoli Tour in my first semester study break that really got my head on straight. Walking amongst the graves of so many men, younger and older than I was at that stage, sleeping in the same trenches they did and finding a grave of a distant relative gave me the perspective and the reminder of why I had wanted to join the Navy in the first place. I was a different person

Continued next page...



HMAS BALLARAT

DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010

[Continued from previous page...](#)

after that trip, being reminded that every job or decision has a good and bad side and that I need to make the most of every situation; that realisation helped combat my homesickness and has kept me going every-time I leave the wharf or my family behind.

[If you weren't an officer in the RAN what would have been your second choice of career?](#)

As I had applied to the Australian Defence Force Academy to begin my Naval career, I had also applied to attend the University of Tasmania, majoring in Law and Psychology.

I was unsure of what career path I wanted if I didn't get in at the time and felt that covering two areas that I had interest, and the grades in, was the safest option; many would say that my inability to not speak my mind when I have an opinion on something would have made me an interesting Lawyer! Thankfully the world will never know!

[What do you believe is the most important navy value and why?](#)

Integrity is my most important value of all; I believe that you need all of the other values to be able to live a life with integrity and that we should always try to achieve that. I also believe that having Integrity is the hardest value to maintain as admitting you're wrong or that you have done something wrong takes a lot of courage and maturity and it is something that I constantly try to be mindful of.

[You are sadly moving on from Ballarat shortly, what would you say is the thing that you are going to miss the most about the ship?](#)

I will miss the look of determination on a member of ship's company's face when they know that hard work is required to achieve an important goal, no matter how small or large the goal is. Everyone has a down day or week, me included, and that look on an individual's face just lets you know that you're not the only one working towards that goal and it gives you the renewed sense of esprit de corp to push on through.

[Next Edition Who is Tanky?](#)

Jack Speak

Look here Meow!

Why the jury is still out on the expression: 'Not enough room to swing a cat'?

The expression: 'not enough room to swing a cat' is defined as 'an awkwardly small, confined space'. So we have the meaning, but what about the origin? Hopefully none of us have ever known anybody who has ever swung, or would want to swing a 'real' cat.

A popular theory supposes the cat in question to be the 'cat o'nine tails'; a flail-like whip used to punish sailors in the British Navy. An entire ship's company would be expected to assemble on deck to witness floggings. If it was very crowded, the bosun might not have the necessary required room to swing the 'cat o' nine tails' (the whip) and hence the expression.

However the phrase itself dates from at least the 17th century. In Richard Kephale's *Medela Pestilentiae* (1665): "They had not space enough (according to the vulgar saying) to swing a Cat in."

The nature of that citation indicates that the phrase was already in use prior to it being committed to paper. The 'cat o' nine tails' however isn't recorded until 1695 (some 30 years later), in William Congreve's *Love for Love*: "If you should give such language at sea, you'd have a cat-o'-nine-tails laid cross your shoulders."

This disparity in timing casts doubt on the whole cat o'nine tails theory. So if the origin isn't nautical, then what is it?

It is believed by some that the phrase comes from a medieval sport that truly involves felines. Cats would be swung by their tails and flung into the air to provide moving targets for archers.

Due to these discrepancies the actual origin of the saying is still being debated, and may continue to do so for years to come.

[Next Edition.....Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea.](#)



HMAS BALLARAT

DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010

A Marathon Effort for BALLARAT

By ABCIS Melanie Schinkel
(Reporter, Navy Newspaper)

The following is an article soon due to be published in Navy News acknowledging the CO's courageous efforts in completing his recent marathon.



Commanding Officer Guy Blackburn and HMAS BALLARAT

Continuous training, early starts and late finishes, determination, and great support was what it took for our CO to successfully complete his very first marathon in Sydney recently. With the Ballarat crew spurring him on, CMDR Blackburn competed and completed in the Sydney Running Festival's 42.2km marathon from Milsons Point Station to Sydney Opera House on September 18. After what seemed an eternity with the inevitable pain and ultimately near exhaustion he crossed the finish line achieving not only a personal goal, but having raised more than \$3000 for Ballarat's charity, United Way Ballarat; supporting their campaign to help the recent flood victims in Ballarat. CMDR Blackburn said he was ecstatic in achieving his goal of completing the 42km challenge before turning 42 years old whilst being able to support such a worthwhile cause. "This run was dedicated to raising funds to help those affected by the floods in and around Ballarat," CMDR Blackburn said. "I put the challenge to all the Ballarat family that if an old ex-prop can have a go at finishing a marathon, they could put up a bit of coin for those of our community that were in need."

CMDR Blackburn was inspired 10 years ago after seeing first hand the efforts of elite long distance athletes running at the Sydney Olympics and commenced the journey that led to his marathon effort. Why did it take so long? Family, work, and study were really the focus at that point in his life. Just when he thought he was ready, fate, however, got in the way. "Just as I was peaking for training a couple of years ago, an accident shattered my ankle and was told I would never run two kilometres again let, alone any further. Those words challenged me by being told I was limited in what I could achieve. It focussed my commitment to prove that you can do anything if you just set your mind to it; no matter how difficult" He said Ballarat's crew backed him by raising more than \$1800



At the half-way mark

Continued next page...



HMAS BALLARAT

DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010



Tough going at 37km

for United Way Ballarat through shaking the tin at the gangway and digging deep for their city; over \$500 was donated by the ship's CIS department alone! "The rest came from our Ballarat family; the family of the crew, our ex-service supporters and people of the city of Ballarat." "I was constantly buoyed by the Ballarat family support and enthusiasm. The crew, the families and the Ballarat community all helped. "It is obvious that there is a lot of support and pride for us in the wider community. A Marathon is not something that you can do by yourself and the preparation needs a lot of support. It was particularly evident when I turned up to work after a morning run" he said. "Every day I ran to and from work – most days 15km but twice a week I would fit in 18 or 20km – it wasn't easy because you find yourself getting up early and getting home late to fit everything into your day." He described the atmosphere on the day as, electric, with the crowd cheering the name of the runners as they came past circular quay and crossed the finish line at the Opera

House. "My motto for the race was 'Compete to Complete'," he said. "It helped me get through. It was the most physically, mentally and emotionally draining thing I have ever done. At the 36km mark my body screamed at me to stop and give up, but having come so far I knew I needed to keep going." The deal he made was to make the finish line so that the money raised went to United Way Ballarat. "Otherwise it was no deal" he said. "In finishing it was immensely satisfying to know I had achieved a lifelong ambition whilst also helping someone else out that was worse off than I was. We think we have it tough but when you see some of the people out there in your community directly affected by disaster, you realise that you are actually pretty well off and looked after" he said. "I'm not sure if I would do it all again! I overcame obstacles that people said I couldn't. I won't lie, it was really hard. But that shouldn't stop you having a go. Guts, determination and a single minded dedication to the task will overcome adversity and get you through every time. I suppose it's why we joined the Navy in the first place; to be challenged and achieve those things we think we can't".



Made it! Congratulations on a job well done.



HMAS BALLARAT

DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010

Top Tips to Stay on Top ... Defence Community Organisation

DEFENCE COMMUNITY ORGANISATION



DCO supports ADF families in peace and war

So what is the Defence Community Organisation (DCO)?

Defence is dedicated to recognising the very important and valuable role of ADF members and their families in the achievement of the Defence mission. While carrying out their daily tasks, whether here in Australia or deployed overseas on operations, our personnel need to be assured that their families are well cared for and have the support they need.

For this reason Defence has tasked the Defence Community Organisation to support commanders in looking after the welfare of Defence families. We do this by providing a wide range of services that all members and their families can access to help them cope with aspects of the Defence lifestyle which may be new or different to them and may present challenges which they have not previously experienced.

ABOUT THE DEFENCE COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

On behalf of Command, the Defence Community Organisation provides a broad range of individual and program related services to the ADF community - Commanding Officers, uniformed members (including single members) and families. Many of these services aim to support ADF personnel and their families to balance the demands of military service with personal and family commitments. These services and programs are delivered by DCO Area Teams, located on or near major ADF establishments all around Australia.

DCO also provides assistance in the case of accident, illness, hospitalisation, and financial difficulty and in managing casualties and estates at times of bereavement. DCO operates in all locations during normal business hours and in the case of emergencies and crisis can be contacted 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All members of the ADF and their families are entitled to access the DCO.

The Defence Community Organisation works with:

- Navy, Army and Air Force Commanders at all levels
- Defence members and their families
- Defence Chaplains, Padres and Psychologists
- Defence sponsored groups, allied service providers and other agencies at local, state and federal government levels.

DCO Staff

DCO services and programs are delivered through DCO Area Teams in DCO Area Offices located across Australia. These Offices are staffed by:

Next Edition: Defence Special Needs Support Group (DSNSG)

Get your copy of the Shaft online

Accidentally deleted the Shaft from your Inbox? Never fear; you can always download it from the Ship's website:

www.navy.gov.au/HMAS_Ballarot.



HMAS BALLARAT

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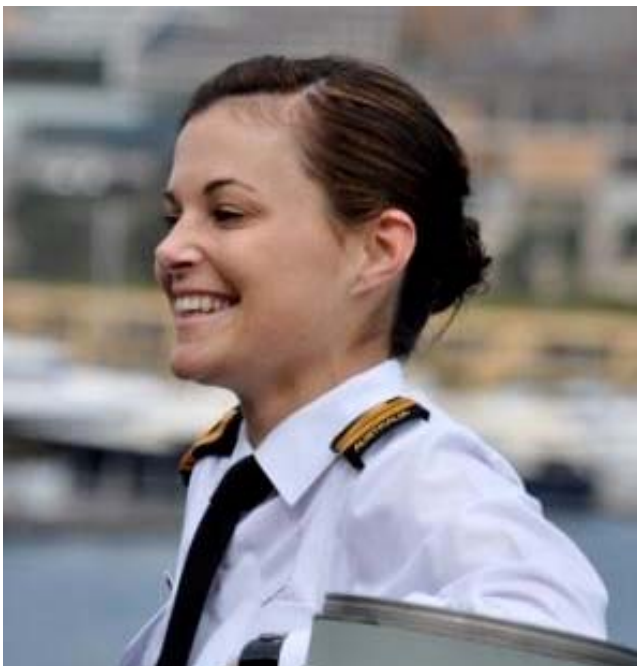
3rd Edition - October 2010

Choose Your Rate, Choose Your Fate!

By LSSTD Lindsay Russell

Welcome back to "Choose Your Rate, Choose Your Fate!" This month we will get to know a little about another three members of Ships Company; an Officer, a Senior Sailor and a Junior Sailor.

Name (Nickname) Amy McMahon (Ames)



Rank and Rate Lieutenant (LEUT)
Years Service 8
Posted Onboard 21 June 2010
Posting History HMAS Cerberus, FHQ Registry, HMA Ships Creswell, Stuart, Gascoyne, Ballarat, Cerberus (Recruit School) and Stuart/Ballarot.
What Your Job Entails Assistant PWO, Seaman Officer, Officer of the Watch (Navigate the ship in single steaming or in company).
Auxiliary Duties I/C Part of Ship – Quarter Deck or Forecastle, Officer of the Day in Harbour.
Hobbies / Interests Gym, Soccer and Sailing.
Likes Sydney Roosters.
Dislikes Snow Skiing.

If you Could Invite Anyone to Dinner... (pick three)
 Ben Harper, Audrey Hepburn and Anthony Minichiello.

You Can Quote Me on That "That which matters most should never give way to that which matters the least"

Name (Nickname) Melcome D'Amico (Dipper)



Rank and Rate Petty Officer Cook (POCK)
Years Service 16
Posted Onboard December 2007
Posting History HMA Ships Cerberus, Platypus, Perth, Cerberus, Stuart, Cerberus, Ballarat, Cerberus, Manoora, and Stuart/Ballarot.
What Your Job Entails Catering Manager and Standing Sea I/C.
Auxiliary Duties Duty PO in Harbour, Watch bill Regulator for Supply and Executive Junior Sailors.
Hobbies / Interests Travelling, Food and Gym.
Likes Good company with good food.
Dislikes Bad expensive food.
If you Could Invite Anyone to Dinner... (pick three)
 Angeline Jollie, Drew Barrymore and Scarlett Johansson.
You Can Quote Me on That "Please Sir may I have some more"



HMAS BALLARAT

DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010

Name (Nickname) Bradley Akhurst (Akers)



Rank and Rate Leading Seaman Electronic Technician (LSET)

Years Service 9

Posted Onboard May 2010

Posting History HMA Ships Cerberus, Kuttabal, Arunta, Parramatta, RANTEWSS, and HMAS Stuart/Ballarat.

What Your Job Entails Maintaining above water sensors, air search radars, and navigation radars.

Auxiliary Duties Test Equipment Co-ordinator, I/C Swimmers Line for Man overboard, Provide training for scheme of competent ET junior sailors.

Hobbies / Interests Soccer and Cricket.

Likes Surfing.

Dislikes Changing nappies when under the weather.

If you Could Invite Anyone to Dinner... (pick three)
My wife Nicole (someone has to cook), Chuck Norris and Steve Waugh.

You Can Quote Me on That "I hate test equipment."

Promotions, Awards, Hatchings and Matchings

Congratulations go out to the following personnel:

- Congratulations to ABMT David Searle on his recent engagement to his partner Amy.
- CPOET D'Elton was recently promoted to Chief Petty Officer at a clear lower deck. Given the opportunity to promote 'one of our own', the Commanding Officer felt it only fitting to invite Chief D'Elton's partner Sunnie come aboard to help present his new rank slides.



- ABMT Leslie was recently promoted from Seaman by the Commanding Officer and Deputy Marine Engineering Officer.



Continued next page...



HMAS BALLARAT

DEFEND THE FLAG



3rd Edition - October 2010

Fond farewells go out to the following personnel:

- CPOET Diver
- POCIS Badger
- POCSS Nicholas
- LSCIS Wise
- LSCSO Suttcliffe
- LSCSO Taylor
- LSMT Compagnoni
- LSMT Webster
- LSSN Williams
- ABCSO Peters
- ABET Sharpe
- ABSN White

Welcome aboard to BALLARAT's new members:

- LSCSO Skelton
- LSMT Downie
- LSMT Seager
- ABET Worth
- ABWTR M^cCormac
- SMNCSO McMillan
- SMNCSOWheatley
- SMNSTD Styles

Seen Onboard this Month

[Life Education Australia](#) launched their national October initiative onboard BALLARAT on Tue 21 Sep. October is a fundraising initiative that encourages people to give up alcohol for the month of October. The money raised goes to Life Education, the organization behind the iconic educational mascot, Healthy Harold. The following are just some of the celebrities onboard for the launch:

- Her Excellency, NSW Governor Marie Bashir;
- Commodore David Letts, (DGNP);
- Federal Member for Berowa, the Hon. Philip Ruddock MP;
- Healthy Harold;
- Billy Birmingham (The 12th Man);
- Mario Fenech (NRL Footy Show); and
- Courtney Tairi (NSW Swifts Netball Team).

[BALLARAT](#) played host to the National Geographic Pirate Patrol launch on Tue Oct 05: Amongst the journalists onboard was Triple M Grill Team host and former Australian leg spinner Stuart MacGill.

Just over 2500 people took advantage of the recent Navy Open Day and visited BALLARAT for Navy Week on Sun 17 Oct. Feedback from the public indicated it was a success, so well done to all personell who were involved.



Congratulations to all members presented with their Afghanistan Campaign Medal by the Commanding Officer for their operational deployment whilst serving onboard HMAS STUART.

“The Eureka Shaft” – Bringing you the news from HMAS BALLARAT and beyond

Website: www.navy.gov.au/HMAS_Ballarot Editor Email: brett.davis@fleet.defence.gov.au