

CN SPEECH**RAN BAND FLAGSHIP CONCERT****10 JULY 2011**

Their Excellencies Ms Quentin Bryce, the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia and Commander in Chief, and Mr Bryce; Her Excellency, the Governor of New South Wales, Honorary Commodore Marie Bashier and Sir Nicholas Shehadie, the member for Mc Kellar Mrs Bronwyn Bishop Chief of Defence Force General David Hurley and Mrs Hurley, distinguished guests, veterans other distinguished guests ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you all for coming tonight to experience what is a very special night for us in the Royal Australian Navy. Allowing for time zones we are pretty close to the exact moment 100 years since King George V gave royal assent to a proposal that we should be known as the Royal Australian Navy and that our vessels should be called 'His Majesty's Australian Ships'.

For a navy that had come into being as a small coastal defence at Federation just ten years before, it was a truly significant step. And since that time, the hundreds and thousands of men and women who have worn this uniform have built a proud reputation, with a century of service in war and peace in every corner of the globe. Tonight's compositions and special

performances tell many of the stories of our proud history, traditions and achievements – the mighty Scrap Iron Flotilla, which served in the Mediterranean with the Royal Navy in the Second World War under Captain Hec Waller, DSO and Bar; the battle of the Coral Sea which we fought with our Allies the United States; our first submarines, and as the son of a very proud former WRAN communicator it is wonderful to see Belle's Broadcast tell that important story.

I think the piece that best captures what we are honouring tonight is LS Hancock's composition "Jack Tar!", which pays tribute, to the service of Australian sailors through the last 100 years. Without our sailors and the way they go about their business we would have Captains without crews, ships without hearts and a Navy without a soul. It is the dedication, courage and humour of these men and women who have made the Royal Australian Navy what it has become today.

Our rich history of course includes the members of the Royal Australian Navy Band, who have served with distinction in every conflict. It would be remiss of me not to mention them tonight, often the public face of the Navy both here at home and around the world, they are an exceptionally hard working and seriously talented group of people. Their performance tonight is a fitting

testament to a century of musical service, and I salute you all for it.

This concert and our centenary come at one of the most challenging and exciting periods of transition in the history of the Royal Australian Navy. In 10 years the fleet will look very different from what it does today with new amphibious ships, air warfare destroyers, a totally new helicopter fleet, new oilers and a class of multi roled offshore combatant vessels entering service.

However, we cannot create the future force without understanding and valuing our past – that is not to say we should be shackled by it – we should not. But, it is where we have come from, and the values and courage of those who have gone before inspire us to succeed into the future.

Before closing I would like to acknowledge the 3500 or so members of the ADF who are protecting our borders, on operations and are unable to join us.

Thank you again for sharing tonight with us to salute one hundred years of the Royal Australian Navy and to mark the start of our second century of service to our nation and its people under that name. we are blessed to enjoy the respect

and trust of the Australian people, something we value greatly and do not take for granted. I can assure you that we will continue to serve with pride as we play our part in the security of this great land.

I hope you enjoy the remainder of tonight's programme.