

# **Royal Australian Navy**

## **Corvettes**



## **Memorials: A Tribute to Those Who Served**

**Compiled By Dave Lardner**

## Introduction

The Corvettes of the Royal Australian Navy were built in Australia and crewed by Australians. These ships served with distinction in all theatres of World War 2.

This compilation of the various Corvette memorials found across Australia, is a tribute to 10,000 sailors who served on them and to the 350 or so who remain. This collection is neither a history nor a chronology of these ships, for there are various publications already available on the subject. But rather, it is collation of the various memorials that exist today in recognition of the service performed by these ships and the crew who manned them during the Second World War. It is also recognised, there are many more memorials to Corvettes than shown here and my apologies if I have inadvertently omitted any as my knowledge is not exhaustive on this subject. Many of the memorials are in the towns of the ships they were named after. There were 60 Corvettes built in Australia including 4 for the Indian Navy. These vessels were also known as *Minesweepers* but are commonly referred to as the Bathurst Class Corvettes. They performed a variety of tasks from escorting convoys, mine sweeping, ferrying troops, shore bombardment of enemy positions, survey uncharted waters amongst a plethora of other duties.

*'In the scale of naval size, Corvettes were pygmies, but they performed like giants.'* (Frank Walker)

Lest We Forget

**Dave Lardner**

Narara NSW

(In memory of George Raymond Lardner – Ex HMAS Bunbury and Ex HMAS Bundaberg)



## Forward

A visit to Adelaide in 2021 and the Corvette Memorial at the seaside town of Glenelg furnished me with the idea to research and produce a booklet compiling known memorials to these World War Two fighting ships of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN).

Subsequent conversations with the late Bill Allen, President of the RAN Corvette Association (NSW), provided the impetus to proceed with the project. His ongoing support and encouragement led to this endeavour being undertaken to assemble and record this important part of our naval history. I similarly thank Bob Devereaux from the Queensland RAN Corvette Association for his unending perseverance to my interminable phone calls and emails to ensure my research remained on an even keel.

Corvettes distinguished themselves 'above the call of duty.' Their crews went in raw but emerged with courage and determination to get the 'job' done. Life aboard a Corvette was far from glamorous, cramped and the ever presence of the enemy was always on one's mind.

Those who served aboard these vessels, didn't learn history. They lived it.

"We should remember our history and where we have come from." (John Dickman RAN, ex HMAS Broome)

This booklet is dedicated to all those who served on these vessels. The various memorials to these Corvettes are a testimony to remember and repay our gratitude and respects.

The author gratefully acknowledges funding from the Commonwealth Government Commemorative Grants Program *Saluting Their Service* which enabled this booklet to be published.



Bill Allen (late) and Dave Lardner. ANZAC Day Sydney 2021.

## Victoria Cross – Teddy Sheean

**Location - Australian War Memorial. Canberra**

The Victoria Cross (VC) is the highest and most prestigious award of the Armed Forces. It is awarded for valor "in the presence of the enemy" to members of the Commonwealth Armed Forces. It may be awarded posthumously as was the case for Ordinary Seaman Edward 'Teddy' Sheean in 2020 from the HMAS Armidale sunk in 1942.



Source: <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/biographies/edward-sheean>



Edward 'Teddy' Sheean Victoria Cross display at Australian War Memorial (AWM)

Source: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/AWM2020.900.1>

## Edward 'Teddy' Sheean Memorial

Location – Ulverstone. Tasmania



Source: <https://vwma.org.au/explore/memorials/6273>

## Edward 'Teddy' Sheean Memorial

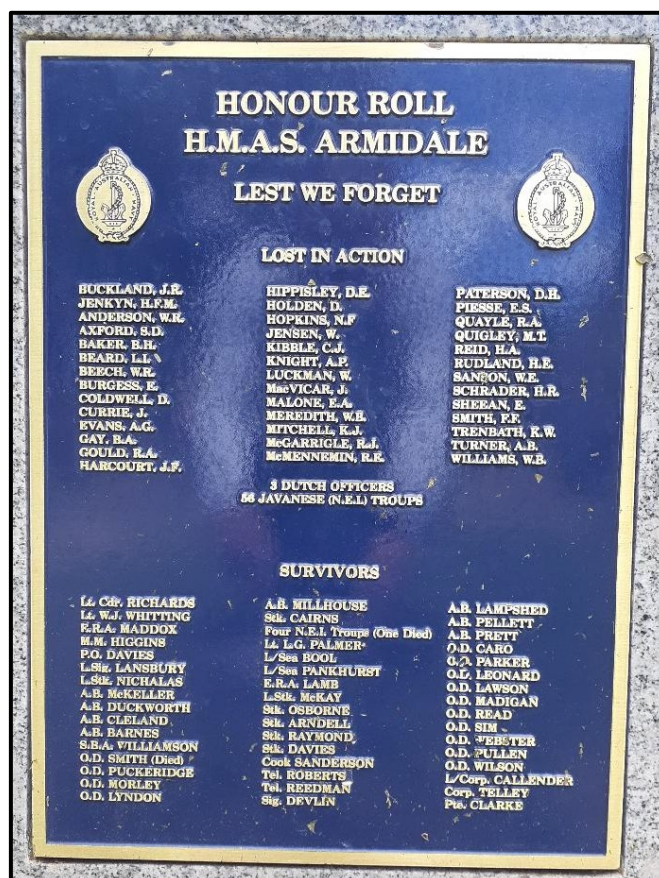
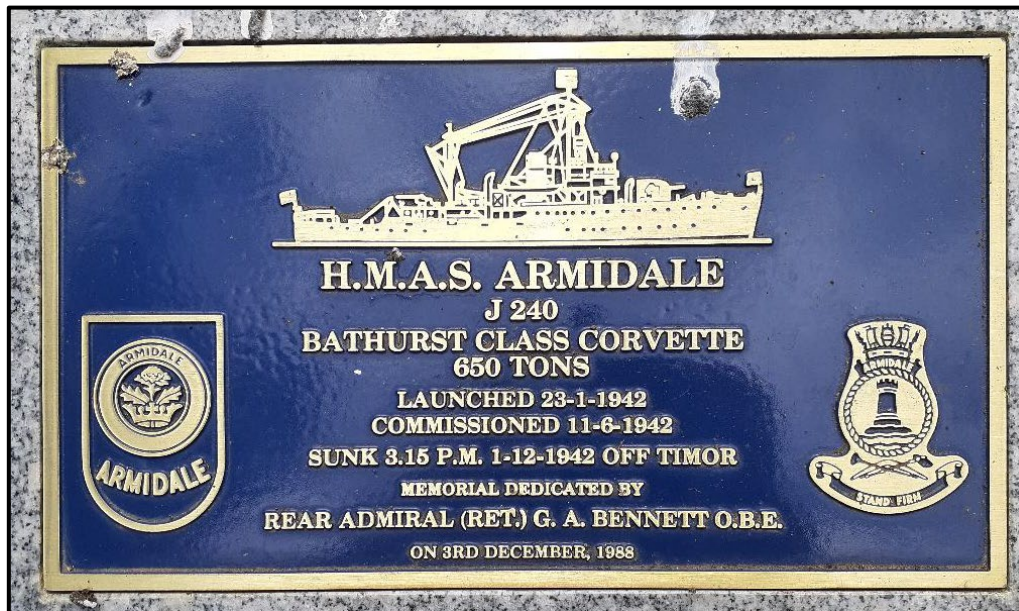
Location – Latrobe. Victoria



Source: <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/people/military/display/70484-seaman-edward-%22teddy%22-sheean-v.c./photo/3>

HMAS Armidale (J 240)

Location - Armidale. NSW



Source: D. Lardner collection

**HMAS Benalla (J 323 and M 323)**

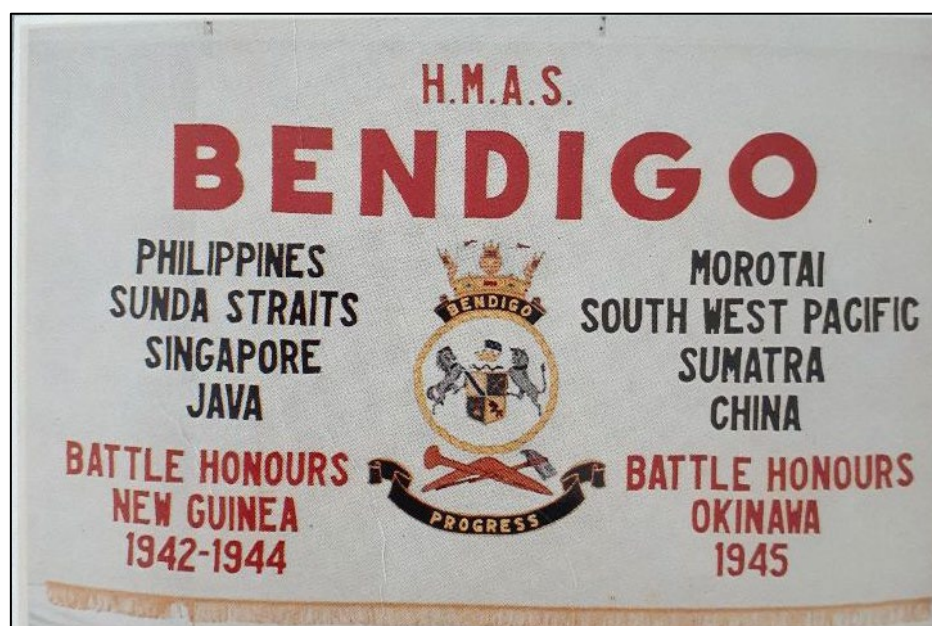
**Location – Birdwood Ave, Shrine Reserve, Melbourne. Victoria**



Source: <https://www.monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/multiple/display/32339-h.m.a.s.-benalla>

**HMAS Bendigo (J 187 and B237)**

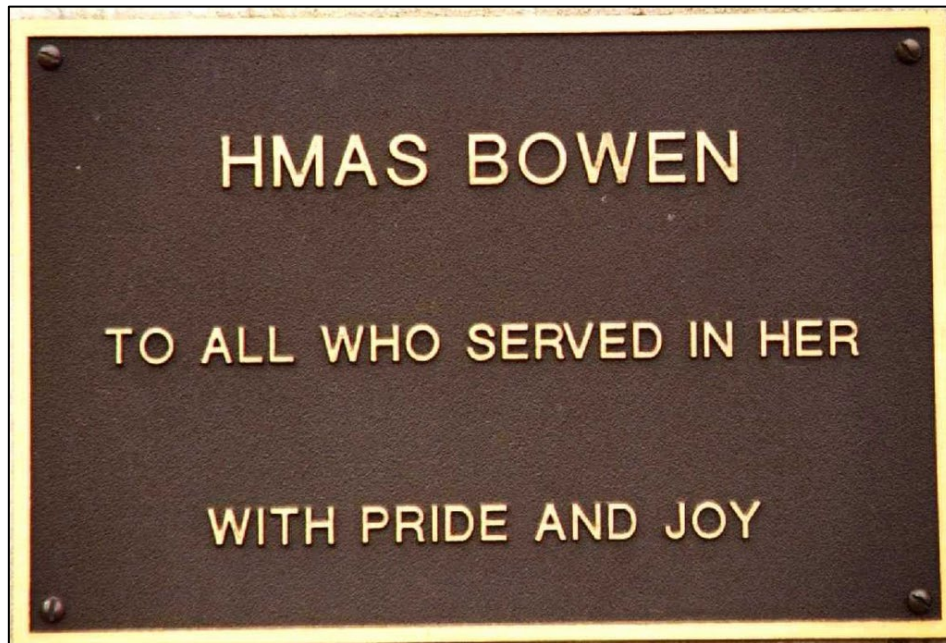
**Location – Unknown**



Source: HMAS Bendigo Corvette

**HMAS Bowen (J 285 and M 285)**

**Location – Walkers Shipyards Memorial, Maryborough. Queensland**



Source: <https://www.qldwarmemorials.com.au/memorial?id=831#memorial-gallery-10>

**HMAS Bunbury (J 241 and M 241)**

**Location – Bunbury City Council. Western Australia**



Source: <https://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-bunbury-i>

**HMAS Bundaberg (J231 and M 231)**

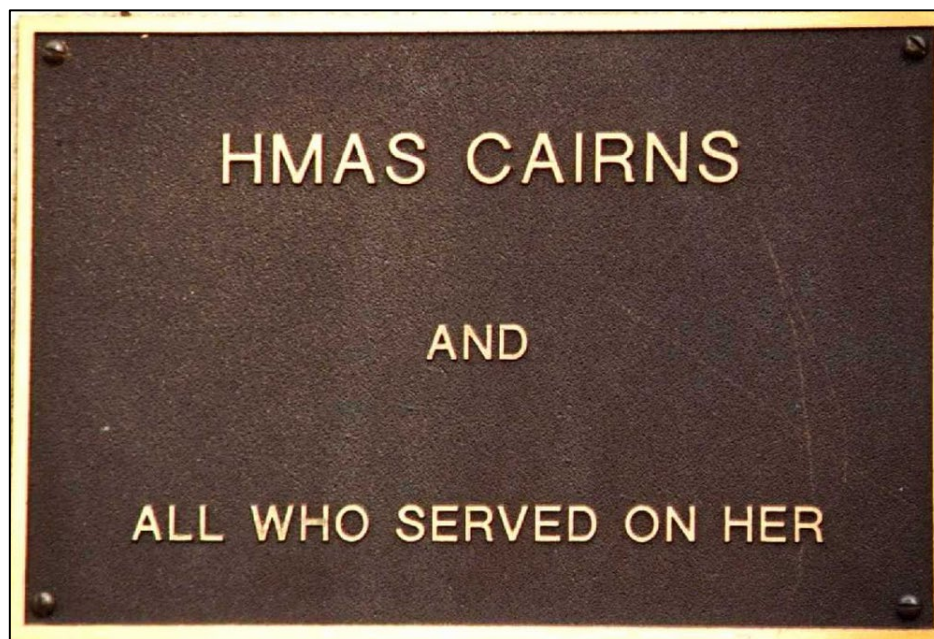
**Location - Australian War Memorial. Canberra. ACT**



Source: D. Lardner collection

**HMAS Cairns (J 183 and B 239)**

**Location - Walkers Shipyards Memorial, Maryborough. Queensland**



Source: <https://www.qldwarmemorials.com.au/memorial?id=831#memorial-gallery-16>



## HMAS Cootamundra (J 316 and M 186)

Location – Cootamundra. NSW



Source: <https://vwma.org.au/explore/memorials/5955>

## HMAS Cowra (J 351 and M 351)

Location – Cowra. NSW



Source: <https://placesofpride.awm.gov.au/memorials/204121>

## HMAS Echuca (J 252 and M 252)

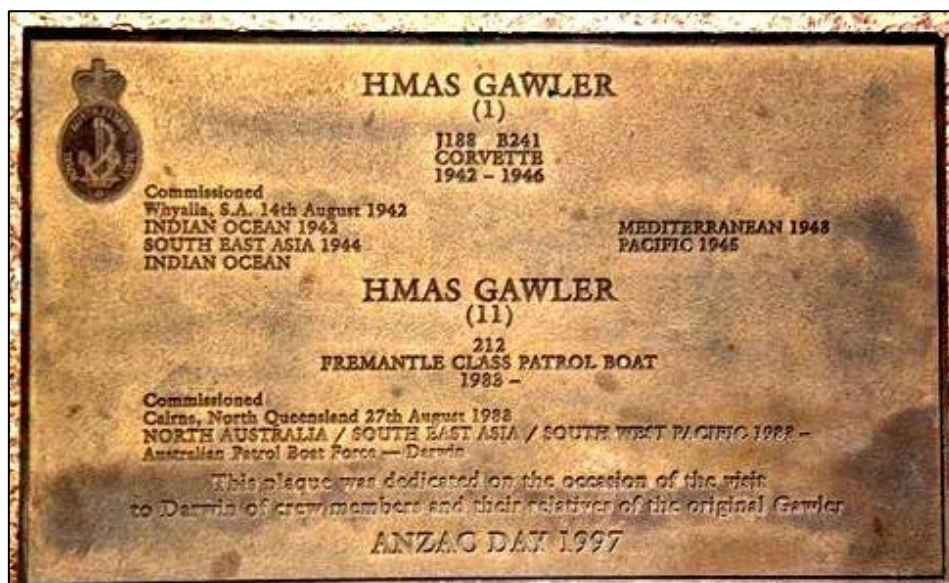
Location – Echuca. Victoria



Source: <https://placesofpride.awm.gov.au/memorials/164211>

## HMAS Gawler (J 188 and B 241)

Location – Darwin. Northern Territory



Source: <https://monumentaaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/multiple/display/80149-h.m.a.s.-gawler>

**HMAS Geelong (J 201)**

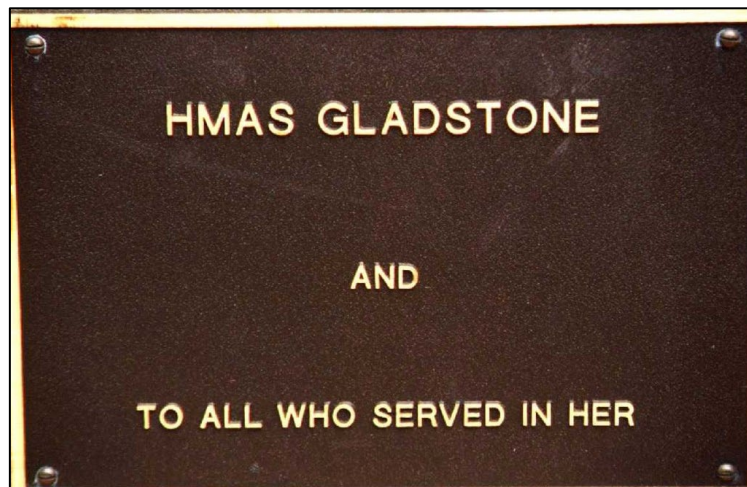
**Location – Shrine Reserve, Melbourne. Victoria**



Source: <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/32342-h.m.a.s.-geelong>

**HMAS Gladstone (J 324 and M 324)**

**Location – Walkers Shipyards Memorial, Maryborough. Queensland**



Source: <https://www.qldwarmemorials.com.au/memorial?id=831>

**HMAS Ipswich (J 186 and B 244)**

**Location – Ipswich Memorial Precinct. Ipswich. Queensland**



Source: <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/95539-h.m.a.s.-ipswich-memorial-precinct>

**HMAS Junee (J 362 and M 362)**

**Location – Clocktower War Memorial. Junee. NSW**



Source: <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/multiple/display/93961-war-memorial-clocktower>

**HMAS Kapunda (J 218 and M 218)**

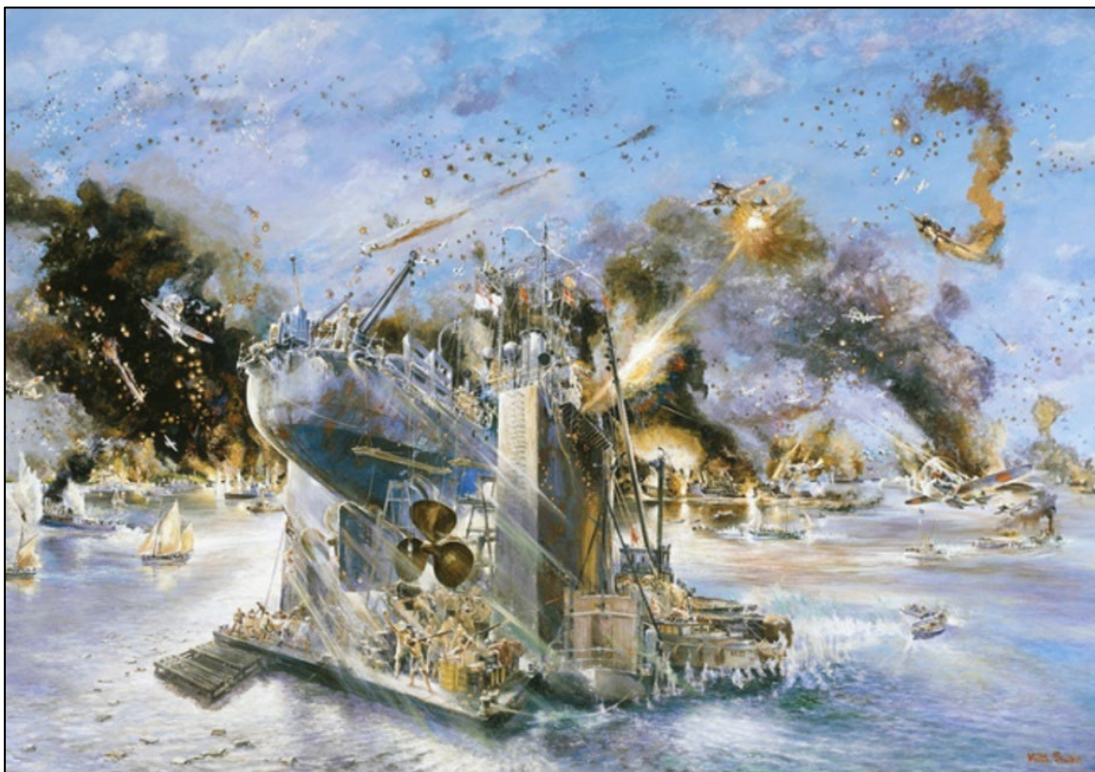
**Location – Australian War Memorial. Canberra. ACT**



Source: [HMAS Kapunda | Royal Australian Navy](#)

**HMAS Katoomba (J 204 and M 204)**

**Location – Australian War Memorial. Canberra. ACT**



Source: [HMAS Katoomba | Royal Australian Navy](#)

**HMAS Kiama (J 353 and M 353)**

**Location – Kiama. NSW**



Source: <https://www.monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/93971-h.m.a.s.-kiama>

**HMAS Launceston (J 179 and B 246)**

**Location – Unknown**

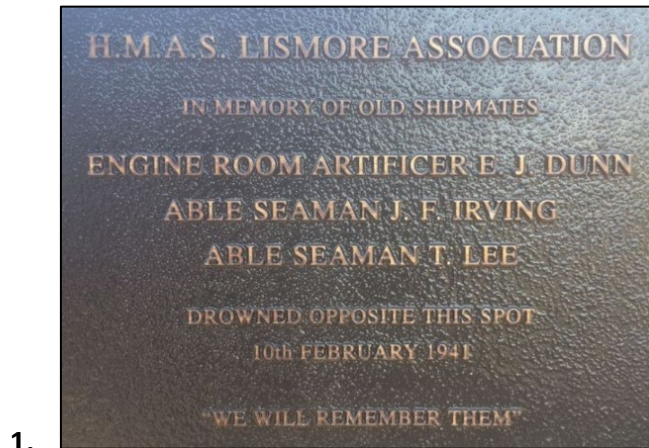


Source: <https://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-launceston-i>

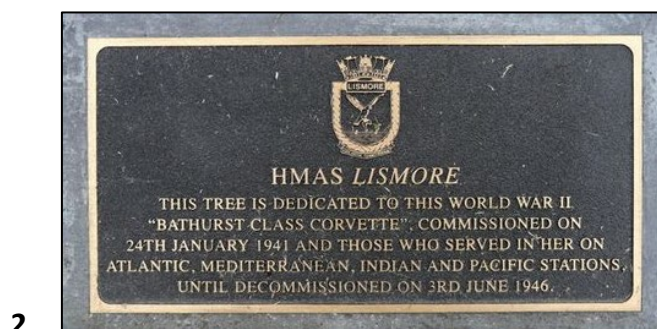
**HMAS Lismore (J 145 and B 247)**

**Location – 1. HMAS Creswell. Jervis Bay. NSW**

**2. Shrine Reserve, Melbourne. Victoria**



Source: <https://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-lismore>



Source: [H.M.A.S. Lismore | Monument Australia](http://H.M.A.S. Lismore | Monument Australia)

**HMAS Lithgow J 206 and M 206)**

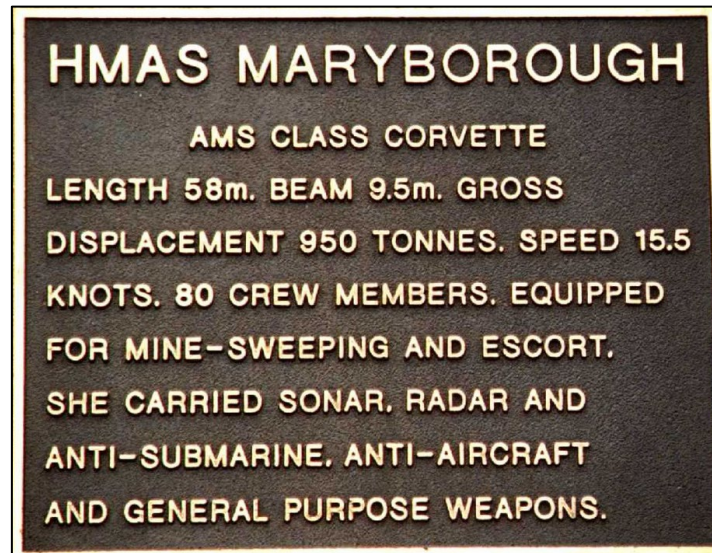
**Location – Australian War Memorial. Canberra. ACT**



Source: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C138982?image=2>

**HMAS Maryborough (J 195 and B 248)**

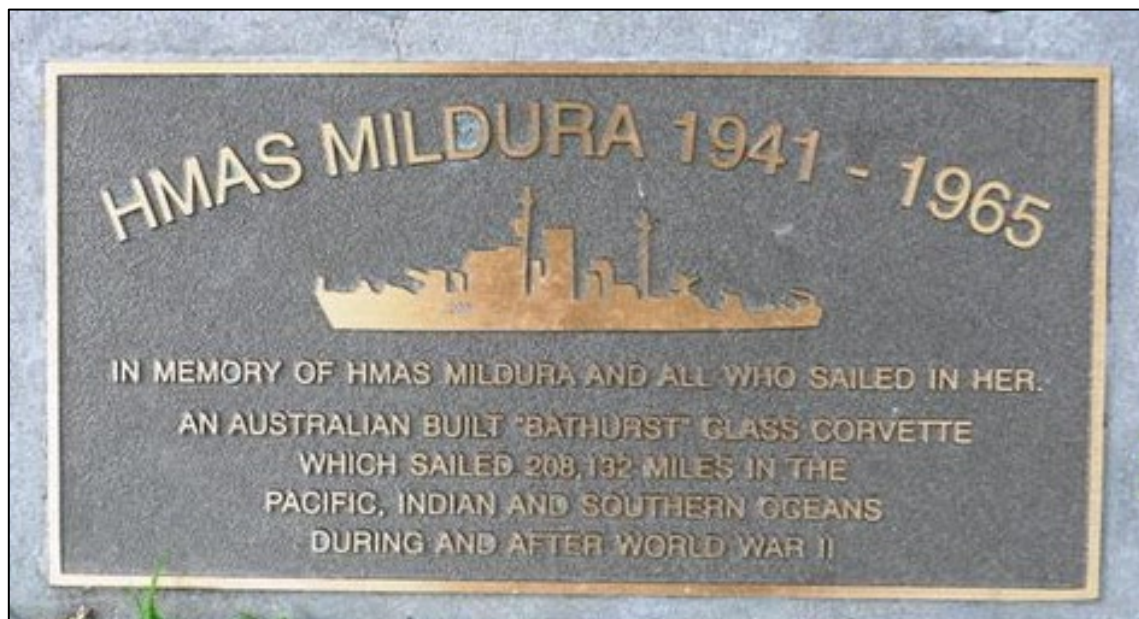
**Location – Maryborough. Queensland**



Source: [Memorial | Queensland War Memorials Register \(qldwarmemorials.com.au\)](http://Memorial | Queensland War Memorials Register (qldwarmemorials.com.au))

**HMAS Mildura (J 207 and M 207)**

**Location – Shrine Reserve, Melbourne. Victoria**



Source: <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/32348-h.m.a.s.-mildura>

**HMAS Parkes (J 361 and M 361)**

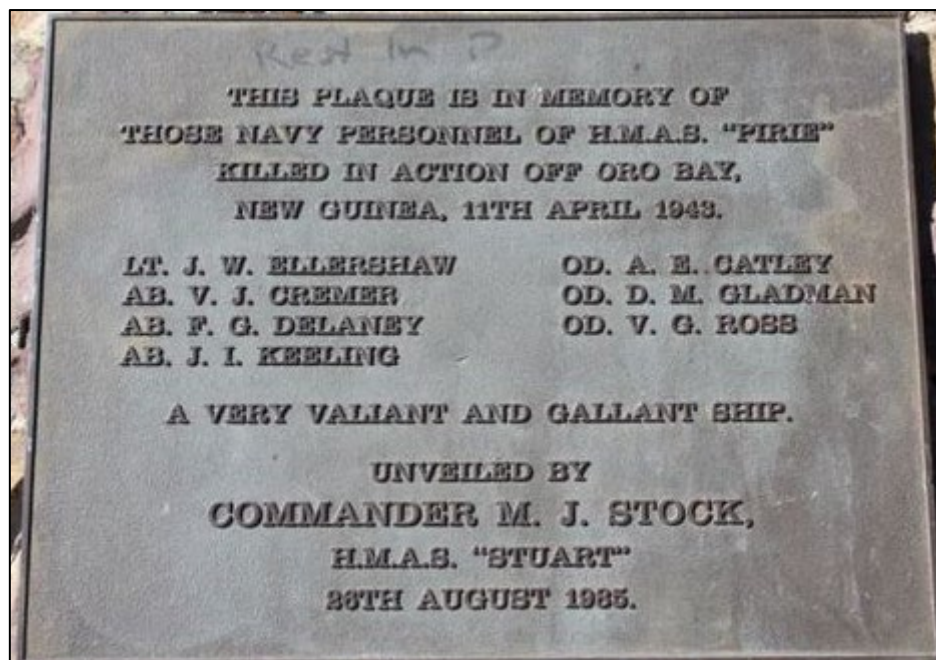
**Location – Parkes. NSW**



Source: <https://historyparkes.org/2019/02/15/hmas-parkes/>

**HMAS Pirie (J 189 and B 249)**

**Location – Memorial Park, Port Pirie. South Australia**



Source: <https://www.monumentaustalia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/96747-h.m.a.s.-pirie>

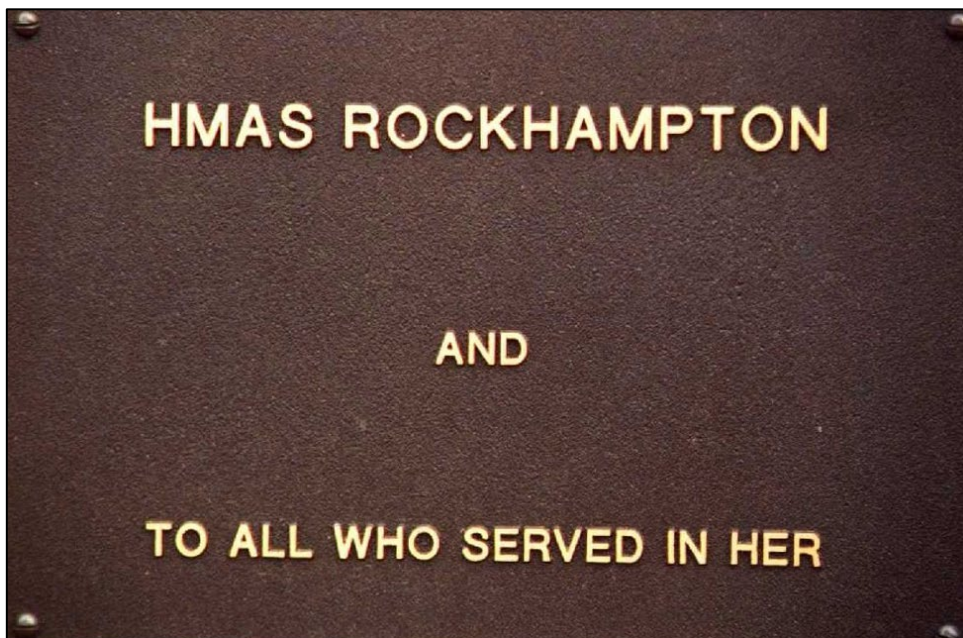
**HMAS Rockhampton (J 203 and M 203)**

**Location - Hornsby RSL Club. NSW**



Source: D. Lardner photo

**Location – Walkers Shipyards Memorial, Maryborough. Queensland**



Source: <https://www.gldwarmemorials.com.au/memorial?id=831>

**HMAS Tamworth (J 181 and B 250)**

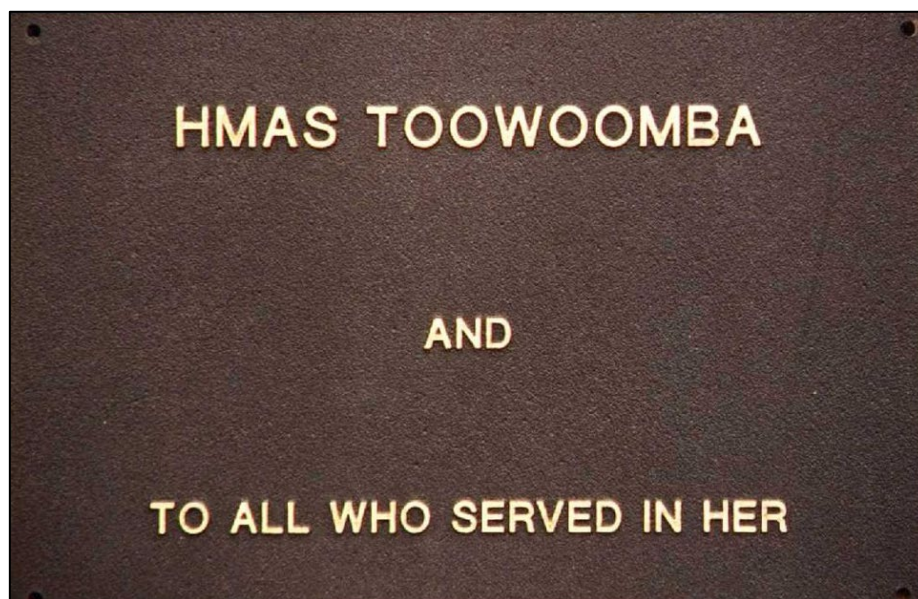
**Location – Bicentennial Park, Tamworth. NSW**



Source: <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/95423-h.m.a.s.-tamworth>

**HMAS Toowoomba (J 157 and B 251)**

**Location – Walkers Shipyards Memorial, Maryborough. Queensland**



Source: <https://www.qldwarmemorials.com.au/memorial?id=831>

**HMAS Wagga (J 315, M 315 and M 183)**

**Location – Wagga Wagga. NSW**



Source: <https://www.tracesofwar.com/sights/8693/Memorial-HMAS-Wagga.htm>

**HMAS Wallaroo (J 222)**

**Location – Soldiers Memorial Arch, Town Hall, Wallaroo. South Australia**



Source: [H.M.A.S. Wallaroo | Monument Australia](https://www.monumentaustralia.com/SA/wallaroo/wallaroo_hmas_wallaroo.htm)

## HMAS Warrnambool (J 202)

Location – Warrnambool RSL. Victoria



Source: <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/multiple/display/96686-h.m.a.s.-warrnambool>

## HMAS Whyalla (J 153 and B 252)

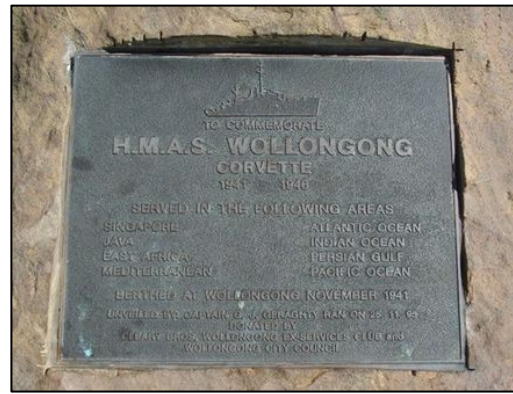
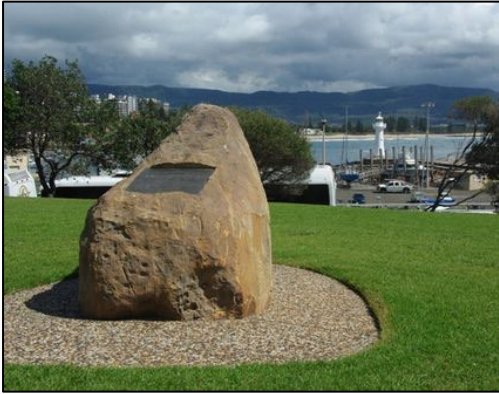
Location – Whyalla. South Australia



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMAS\\_Whyalla\\_\(J153\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMAS_Whyalla_(J153))

## HMAS Wollongong (J 172 and B 253)

Location – Flagstaff Hill Park, Wollongong. NSW



Source: [H.M.A.S. Wollongong | Monument Australia](#)

## Corvette Memorial

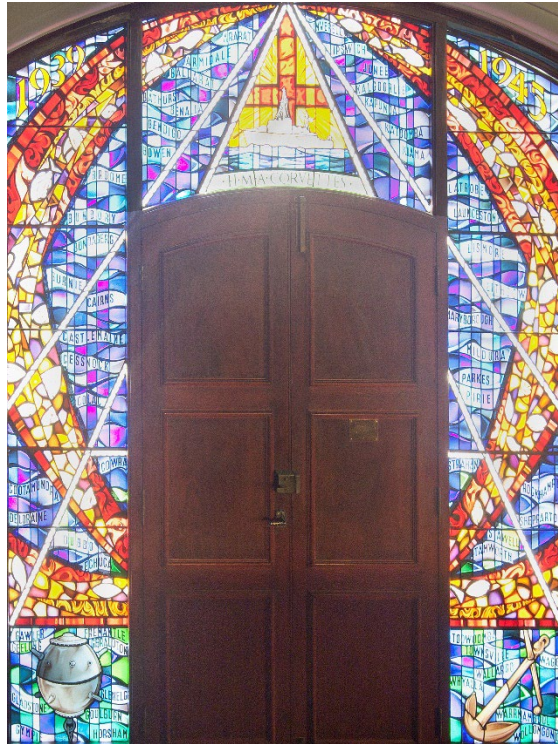
Location – Garden Island – Sydney. NSW



Source: [National Corvette Memorial | Monument Australia](#)

### Plaque Inscription:

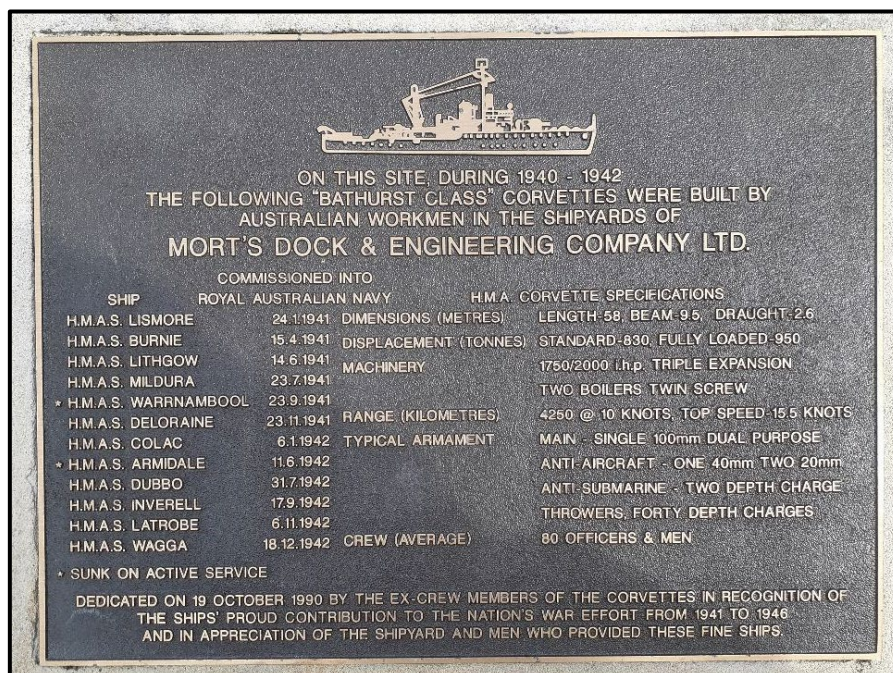
The National Corvette Memorial - This National Corvette Memorial honours the 56 Navy Corvettes of World War Two and the Australian sailors who sailed the seas in them in war and peace. The superstructure symbolises a shipyard with the bow of a Corvette emerging through a wave and thrusting seaward, seeking the element in which it is to serve. In this historic maritime setting, between the sea and a working dockyard, it expresses a sense of naval authority and tradition, the manifestation of the nation's security at sea.



Corvette-stained glass window, Garden Is Naval Chapel. Source: Naval Historical Society

## Mort's Dock and Engineering Company Shipyards

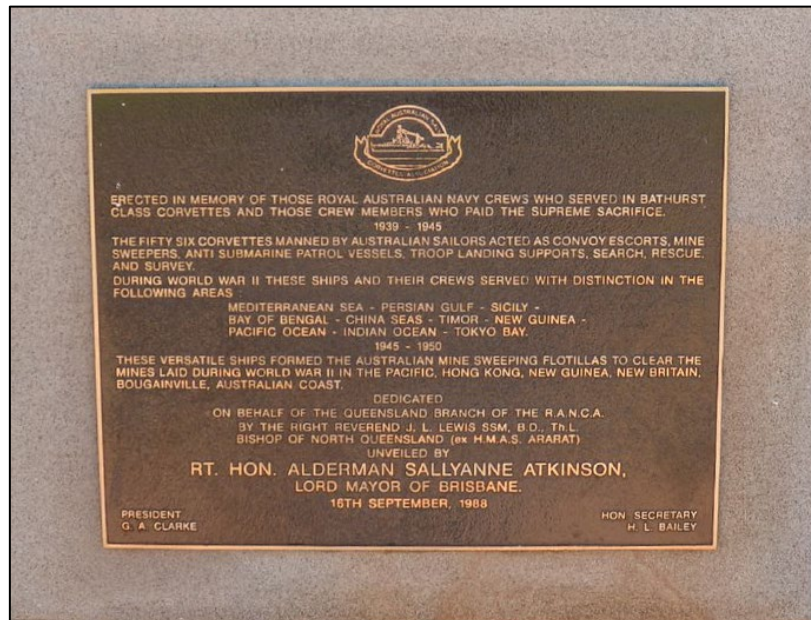
Location - Sydney. NSW



Source: D. Lardner collection

## Corvette Memorial

Location – Brisbane, Queensland



Source: [Newstead House gardens beside the Brisbane River / Memoria... | Flickr](#)



Source: [www.monumentaustralia.org.au](http://www.monumentaustralia.org.au)



Queensland Corvette Association Banner. Photo supplied by Bob Devereaux

## Corvette Memorial

Location – Fremantle. Western Australia



Source:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fremantle\\_War\\_Memorial#/media/File:Royal\\_Australian\\_Navy\\_Corvettes\\_memorial,\\_March\\_2021.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fremantle_War_Memorial#/media/File:Royal_Australian_Navy_Corvettes_memorial,_March_2021.jpg)

## Front Plaque Inscription

Royal Australian Navy Corvettes

In memory of those who served in the 56 Australian built Corvettes during World War II 1939 -1945 and the post war crews who were involved in minesweeping service afloat 1939 – 1945.

Source: <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/search/display/60507-royal-australian-navy-corvettes>

## Corvette Park Memorial

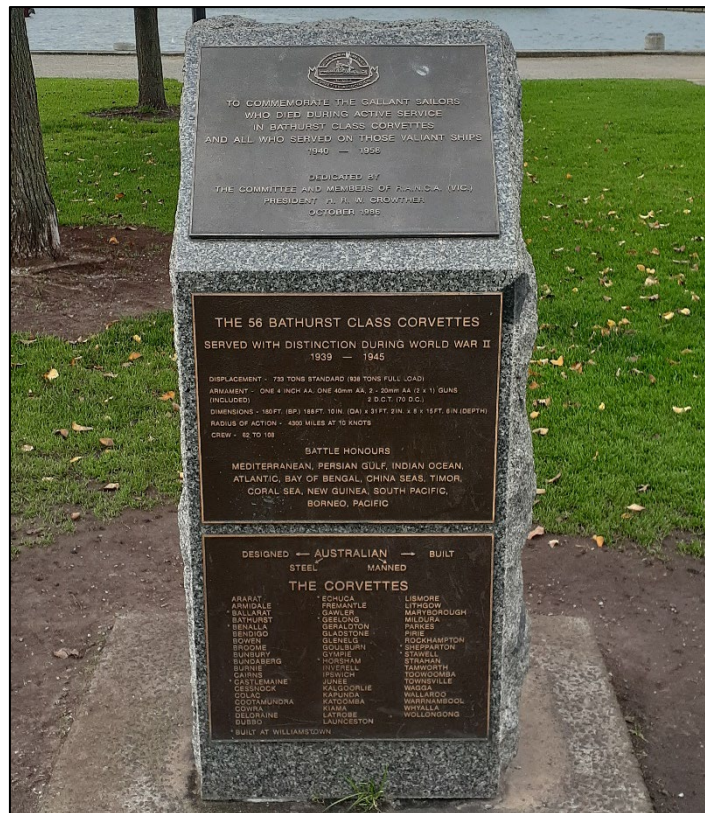
Location: Glenelg (Adelaide). South Australia



Source: D. Lardner collection

## Corvette Memorial

Location – Williamstown. Victoria



Source: D. Lardner collection

## Corvette Memorial

Location – Caloundra. Queensland



Source: <https://www.qldwarmemorials.com.au/memorial?id=370#memorial-gallery>

## Plaque Inscription

ERECTED IN MEMORY OF  
THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY CREWS  
WHO SERVED IN  
THE FIFTY-SIX BATHURST CLASS CORVETTES  
COMMISSIONED DURING WORLD WAR 11  
AND THOSE CREW MEMBERS  
WHO PAID THE SUPREME SACRIFICE  
At the going down of the sun,  
and in the morning  
We will remember them.  
LEST WE FORGET

### Corvette Memorial

Location – Heidelberg. Victoria. Repatriation Hospital. Heidelberg. Victoria



Source: <https://www.monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/96516-royal-australian-navy-corvettes>

## Corvette Ship Display Model

Location - Australian War Memorial. Canberra. ACT



Source: AWM. D. Lardner photo



Crew Cap Tally Bands

Source: AWM. D. Lardner photo

## Corvette Memorial

Location – Australian War Memorial Sculpture Garden. Canberra. ACT

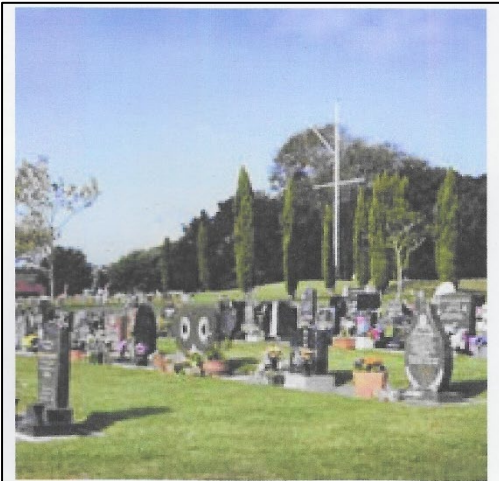


Source: <https://monumentaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/90080-royal-australian-navy-corvettes>

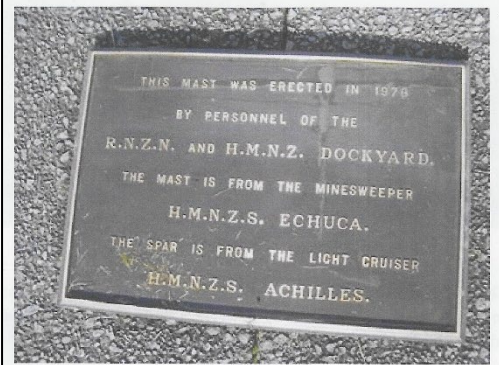
## Corvette Memorials – New Zealand

HMAS Echuca, Kiama, Inverell and Stawell were transferred to the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) and served with them from 1952 to 1967.

### HMAS Echuca

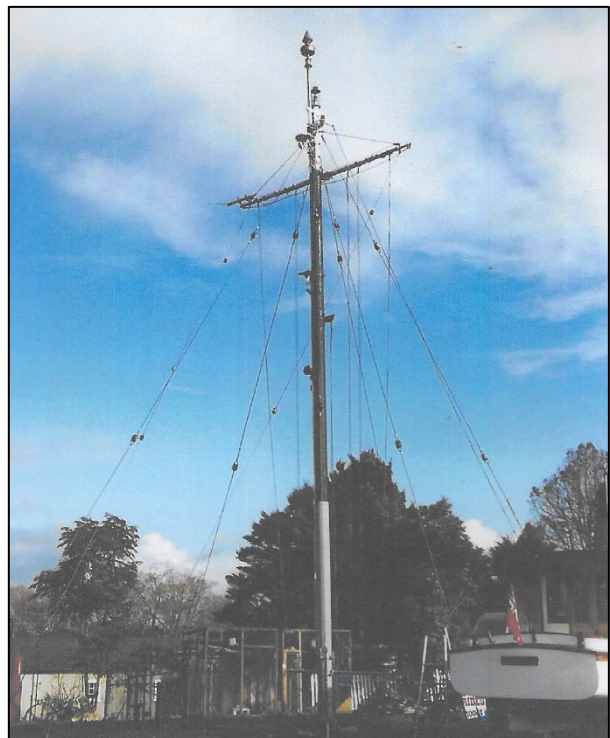


Mast of Echuca



Location – Albany. New Zealand

### HMAS Kiama



Location – Paeroa Historical Maritime Museum. NZ

Source: Kiwi Bathurst Tales by Gerry Wright

## HMAS RAN Corvettes

### Minesweeping Vessels

Ararat	Echuca	Lismore
Armidale	Freemantle	Lithgow
Ballarat	Gawler	Maryborough
Bathurst	Geelong	Mildura
Benalla	Geraldton	Parkes
Bendigo	Gladstone	Pirie
Bowen	Glenelg	Rockhampton
Broome	Goulburn	Shepparton
Bunbury	Gympie	Stawell
Bundaberg	Horsham	Strahan
Burnie	Inverell	Tamworth
Cairns	Ipswich	Toowoomba
Castlemaine	Junee	Townsville
Cessnock	Kalgoorlie	Wagga
Colac	Kapunda	Wallaroo
Cootamundra	Katoomba	Warrnambool
Cowra	Kiama	Whyalla
Deloraine	Latrobe	Wollongong
Dubbo	Launceston	



## References

Corvette – Magazine of the RAN Corvettes Association of NSW (Inc)

The ABC of Royal Australian Corvettes. Able Seaman Libby Pearce. 2019. Royal Australian Navy.

Corvettes – Little Ships for Big Men. Frank Walker.1995. Kingfisher Press.

HMAS Corvette – By Members of Her Ship’s Company

Bathurst Tales – Gerry Wright. Naval Books.

Google Images

Wikipedia

D. Lardner Collection

Bill Allen (Late) – President RAN Corvette Association NSW

Erika Walker – RAN Corvette Association NSW

Monument Australia - <https://monumentaaustralia.org.au/>

Australian War Memorial - <https://www.awm.gov.au/>

Royal Australian Navy (RAN) - <https://www.navy.gov.au>

Bob Devereaux – Queensland RAN Corvette Association

Brian Dunn - Queensland Corvette Association

## Useful Links

RANCA - <https://cecopaint.wixsite.com/ranca-nsw>

Navy - <https://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-ararat-i>

SD Model Makers - <http://sdmodelmakers.blogspot.com/2014/09/22-1100-scale-bathurst-class-corvette.html>

Corvettes - <https://www.tracesofwar.com/articles/4707/Australian-corvettes-of-the-Bathurst-class.htm>

Corvettes: The Links - <http://www.hmasmildura.freesevers.com/corvettes.htm>

Monument Australia - <https://monumentaaustralia.org.au/themes/conflict/ww2/display/102541-royal-australian-navy-corvettes>

Ahoy – Mac’s Web Log - <http://ahoy.tk-jk.net/macslog/LittleworkhorsestheBathur.html>

Nepean Naval and Maritime Museum - <http://www.nepeanaval.org.au/Museum/Corvettes/HMA-Corvettes.html>

Places of Pride – National Register of War Memorial - <https://placesofpride.awm.gov.au/>

