

HMAS *Horsham* – J235/M235



Namesake: City of Horsham, Vic
Builder: HMA Naval Dockyard
Laid down: 26 June 1941
Launched: 16 May 1942
Commissioned: 18 November 1942
Decommissioned: 17 December 1945

Fate:
 Sold for scrap in 1956



Displacement: 650 tons (standard)
 1,025 tons (full war load)
Length: 186 ft (57 m)
Beam: 31 ft (9.4 m)
Draught: 8.5 ft (2.6 m)
Propulsion: triple expansion engine, 2 shafts, 2,000 hp

Speed: 15.5 knots (28.7 km/h;
 17.8 mph)
Complement: 85
Armament: 1 × 4-inch gun
 1 × 12-pounder gun
 1 × 2-pounder gun
 1 twin 0.5-inch gun

HMAS *Horsham* was laid down at Melbourne Harbour Trust, Williamstown, Victoria on 26 June 1941. She was launched on 16 May 1942 by Mrs AD Mackenzie, wife of Chairman of Melbourne Harbour Trust and was the first RAN warship to carry the name of the regional city in the Wimmera region of western Victoria.

HMAS *Horsham* commissioned at Melbourne on 18 November 1942 under the command of Lieutenant William Newby RANR(S).



HMAS Horsham.

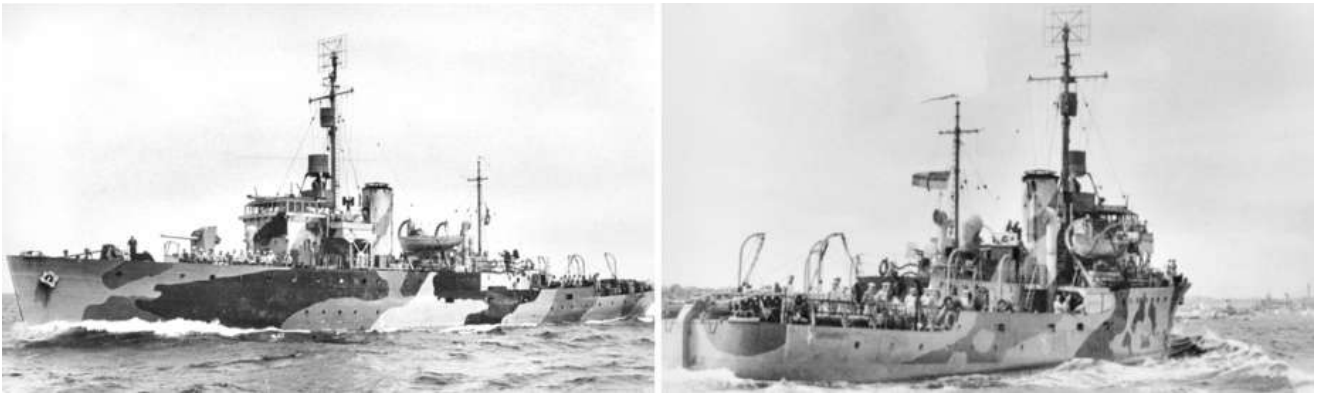
On completion of trials in late 1942 *Horsham* sailed to Western Australia and was assigned to the Fremantle command as an anti-submarine patrol vessel on 1 January 1943. She operated from Fremantle for the next 20 months conducting anti-submarine patrols, training exercises with Allied submarines (that were based at Fremantle) and occasional convoy escort duties along the Western Australian coast as far north as Exmouth and Broome.

In August 1944 she proceeded to Darwin to operate as a survey ship and in November conducted a short patrol in the Timor Sea to inspect Cartier Island. She remained based at Darwin, except for a period refitting at Fremantle during February-April 1945, until the end of hostilities.

Horsham was part of a significant Australian and Dutch naval force that arrived at Kupang, Timor on 11 September 1945 to enforce the surrender of Japanese forces on Timor.



While engaged in anti-submarine duties off Fremantle, the ship's motor boat makes a trip to Fremantle to collect the mail, etc., when opportunity offers. The drawing, by Frank Norton, shows the boat being hoisted inboard on return to Horsham. Escorted by HMAS Dubbo, a convoy of Liberty ships are seen in the distance leaving WA, circa 1943. (AWM ART21085)



HMAS Horsham displaying her distinctive disruptive pattern camouflage paint scheme. Most of the RAN's corvettes adopted a variety of camouflage patterns during the war.



Horsham departed Timor on 14 September 1945 and returned to her surveying duties in the Darwin area. She sailed to Fremantle at the end of November and was decommissioned on 17 December 1945 and placed in the F Reserve Fleet. During her service she had steamed 95,872 miles and was under way for 11,302 hours.

The Daily News (Perth) Wed 19 Aug 1953:

HORSHAM WORK TO RE RESUMED

WORK will be resumed at the south slipway on HMAS *Horsham* from which 80 men were put off on Monday. The job was stopped on instructions from the National Board, Melbourne. Advice has now been received from the board that a major refit of the ship was not to be undertaken, but essential maintenance work was to be done.



Horsham moored alongside one of her sister ships awaiting disposal.

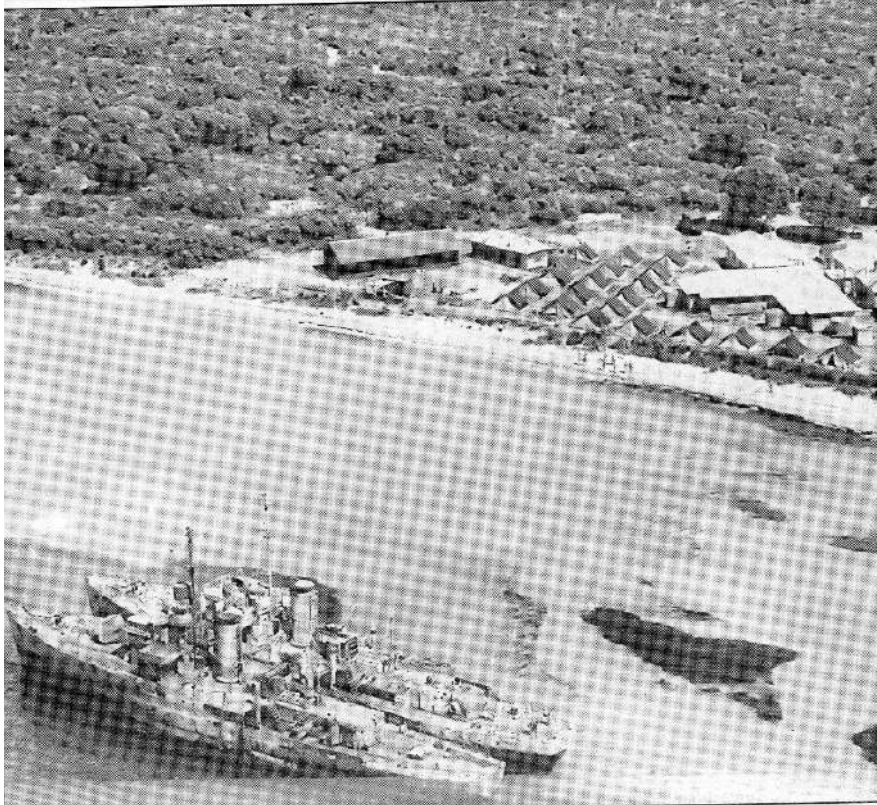
The Daily News (Perth) Fri 1 Apr 1955:

TWO NAVY CORVETTES SNAP MOORINGS IN STRONG WIND

DRIVEN by a strong easterly wind, the RAN corvettes *Horsham* and *Townsville* broke their moorings and drifted ashore at Garden Island today. Both ships are part of the RAN mothball fleet, moored at Careening Bay, Cockburn Sound. They broke their moorings about 9 a.m. They had been about 300 yards offshore with the rest of the corvette fleet. Said the Garden Island postmaster: "The easterly wind was particularly strong last night. At one stage it nearly blew some of the Army tents down".

"The two corvettes were stuck on a sandbank about 50 yards offshore from the settlement shortly after they broke away" he said. A Navy spokesman said that two Navy towboats — one from Garden Island and the other from Fremantle— had begun towing operations before noon. It was not known whether the corvettes were damaged or how hard they were stuck on the bank. A Navy maintenance crew was based at Garden Island to service the mothball fleet regularly.

The postmaster said that corvette moorings were lifted periodically and inspected by a diver after they had been dropped. As far as he knew, all the corvette moorings near the island had been lifted and inspected late last year. The *Horsham* had been moored there about 12 months.



Mothball corvettes HMAS Townsville (nearest shore) and HMAS Horsham hard and fast in shallow water close to the Garden Island army camp



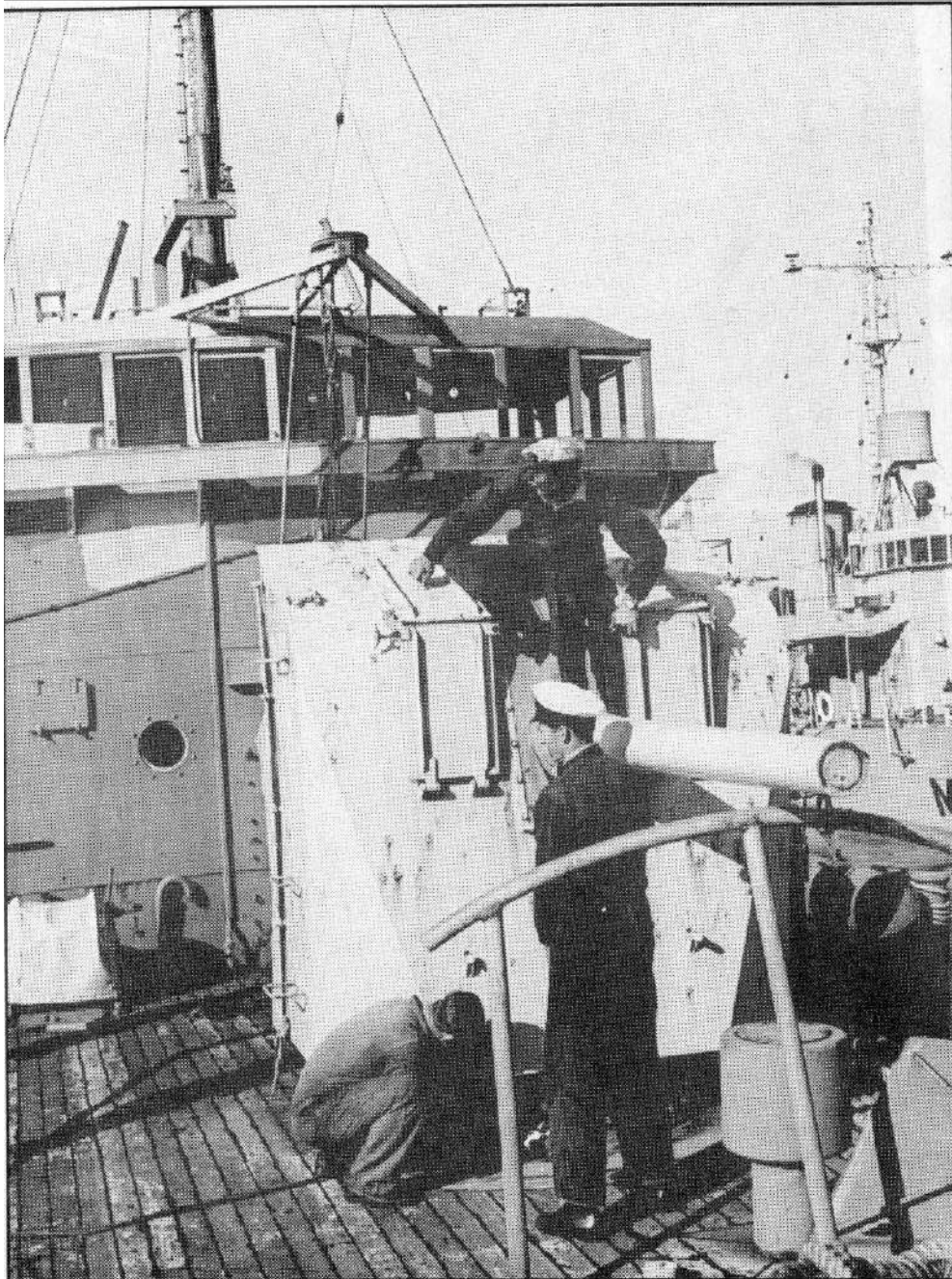
Townsville, foreground, and Horsham are firmly aground side by side on the beach at Garden Island. Neg: Navy 3097.



Horsham, Parkes and Katoomba double banded and ready for sale at Rockingham Naval Jetty. Neg: Navy 8950.



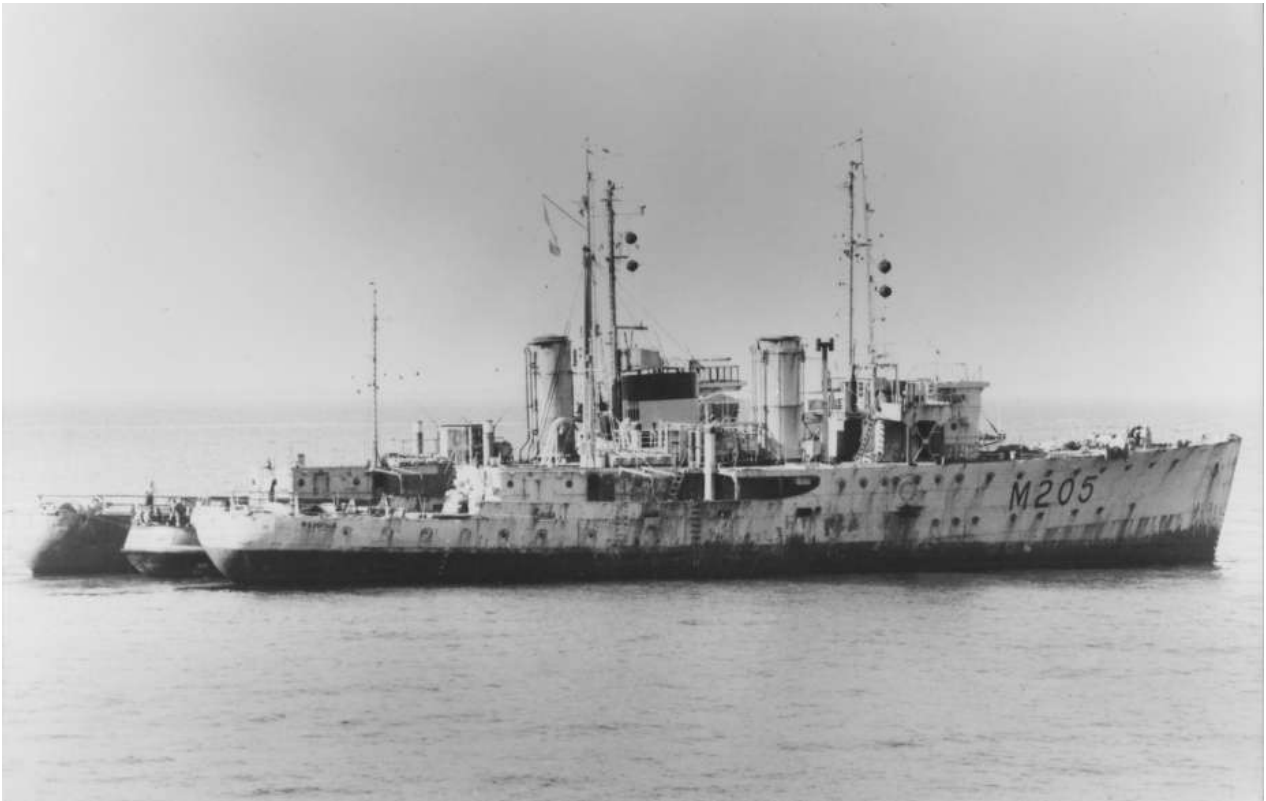
An ammunition locker is offloaded from Horsham as she is stripped of weapons in preparation for sale in June, 1955. Parkes and Katoomba are double banded on far side of jetty. Neg: Navy 8911.



Horsham crew dismantling a four-inch gun with Parkes partially obscured.
Neg Navy 8911.

Horsham was sold as scrap for breaking up to the Hong Kong Delta Shipping Company, Hong Kong, on 8 August 1956. 17 January 1957 Departed Fremantle along with HMAS *Townsville* by the tug *Oostze* for Hong Kong, subsequently broken up.

H.M.A.S. HORSHAM



L to R, Horsham, Tug Oostze centre, and Townsville outboard preparing for towage



Former sailor, Mr John Francis, OAM, rings Horsham's ship's bell at an Anzac Day commemorative service in Horsham, Victoria. The bell is held in perpetuity in Horsham, the city after which the corvette was named.