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The Granville Guardian

Patron Laurie Ferguson M.P. B.Ec.(Syd) M.A.(Syd)

The next general meeting of the Granville Historical Society will be held at 2.00pm on Saturday 23 August 2014
At our Research Centre
62 Railway Parade Granville
and will feature a
PowerPoint Presentation
Australia's Entry to World War 1 "New Guinea"
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Granville Historical Society
"A Place where heritage & culture are valued & celebrated."

Another AGM has come and gone. The Society has had an extremely busy year and accomplished an amazing amount of information-collecting, research, and cataloguing. We wish to thank the committee and the members for their dedication and attention to detail. Members elected to the Committee are: President Barry Bullivant, Vice President Stephanie Humphreys, Secretary Treasurer June Bullivant, together with Arthur Naylor, Susan Russell and Roy Burton who has accepted the task of speaker's convenor.

The society has been well represented at the North Parramatta Precinct, or the Parramatta Female Factory development. The development being managed by Urban Growth is huge; the problem is that there is so much high rise building being put into the space, it is hard to imagine if there will remain a historical precinct for the community to highlight the uniqueness of the site as a tourist destination. The proposed high rise has not yet been designed, as the consultation is still a work in progress.

We had a meeting with one of the History and Arts fellows from Sydney University who is designing the curriculum for 2015. He is interested in putting his students into Outreach, with the view of teaching them the art of research and what the local Historical Societies do. They wish to broaden the students' knowledge and interest in history by developing the skills of research. This might give our industry a new batch of historians who are passionate about Australian heritage items and not tempted to demolish and develop our past. Many an important building has been demolished in the name of progress; the architects past and present do not have the skills to integrate the old with the new. It is easier to demolish and start afresh.

Barry and June Bullivant attended the Our Lady of Lebanon "Feast of the Assumption Day" on Friday last; this was attended by members of the villages who attend the Church on the Hill at Harris Park. The invitation was extended by the Committee who organise the Feast. It was amazing to witness the cultural experience firsthand. The hospitality was wonderful and Barry and June Bullivant attended the Our Lady of Lebanon "Feast of the Assumption Day" we felt like royalty. The food was tasty and plentiful, the music and dancing was an experience already known to us as we had worked and lived with many of the Lebanese families in Granville for over 40 years. We met Susan at the Award Ceremony of Parramatta City Council Grants; she has asked the society if we would present a PowerPoint on Lebanese Immigration to Australia.

Work is continuing on the research for WW1; we are intent on compiling a complete list of all soldiers who served, but our next project is to write the stories of members' ancestors, if you have a soldier who fought in World War 1, we would like you to write a story about your ancestor, and if the family was involved in other wars, we would like to hear about that too. If you feel you are not able to write, if you supply us with the story and a photo if possible we would love to hear from you.

Barry G Bullivant OAM, President 2013-14

**THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN
ACTION IN WORLD WAR 1**

Two weeks after Britain declared war on Germany in August 1914, tens of thousands of people lined Sydney streets to cheer a thousand army volunteers as they marched from Moore Park to Bennelong Point (where the Sydney Opera House is today). The soldiers were members of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force that, along with ships of the Royal Australian Navy, would soon be deployed in a combined operation against German possessions, including a network of communications stations, in the south-west Pacific.

On 6 August, Britain had asked the Australian Government to seize the wireless stations in New Guinea, Nauru, and at Yap in the Caroline Islands, as a matter of urgency, while New Zealand was asked to take similar action against the German installation at Samoa. The Government decided to raise a combined naval and military unit for the operation, the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force (ANMEF), separate from the proposed 20-thousand member European force, the Australian Imperial Force (1st AIF). One thousand men would be recruited in Sydney for a new army infantry battalion. The Navy didn't have to do any recruiting, except to call in 500 reservists to fill its quota. It had a permanent force of 3,800 men, and 11 warships under the command of Rear Admiral Sir George Patey (RN) on the flagship, the battle cruiser *Australia.* The rest of the fleet comprised the cruisers *Sydney, Melbourne, Encounter, Pioneer,* and *Protector*, the destroyers *Parramatta, Warrego* and *Yarra*, and the submarines *AE1* and *AE2*. The Navy was under orders to attack two cruisers and three light cruisers of the German East Asia squadron, commanded by Vice-Admiral Maximilian von Spee, believed to be lurking off New Guinea. German's territorial acquisitions in the late 19th Century included the Samoan island group and the Caroline and Marshall Islands, a large part of New Guinea, Nauru, parts of the Solomon Islands, including Bougainville, and the Bismarck Archipelago, including New Britain.[1]

HMAT Berrima at Cockatoo Island

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[1] C.E.Bean, *Anzac to Amiens*, pp. 28-39

Army recruiting began on Monday 10 August 1914. Victoria Barracks in Sydney had already received 3,000 applications by the previous Saturday and soon new recruits were turning up at the rate of 15-hundred a day. It took only a week for 1,000 men to be selected, passed as medically fit, and start training. A number of men from the Granville district signed up for the force on 11 August. They included William Acheson, 27, a labourer of South Merrylands, Joseph Henry Banks, 23, tanner, of Oak Street Granville, F. Baulch, 35, a cooper of Albion Street Harris Park, Alfred Fisk, 22, a tailor's presser of Calliope Street Guildford, Victor Hartley Perry, 26, a commercial traveller, of Rosehill Street Harris Park, Arthur Langworthy, 26, a reporter of Adderley Street Auburn, Henry Joseph Newing, 28, a fireman, of Albion Street Harris Park, James Joseph Sowter, 23, a warehouseman of Woodville Road Granville, Robert Leslie Steer, printer, of Orchardleigh Road Guildford, and Selwyn Arthur Upton, 20, an analytical chemist of Station Road Auburn. Sydney William Barker, 20, an accountant of The Avenue Granville, and Ernest George Beesley, 37, a commercial traveller of Auburn Street Auburn, both enlisted on 12 August. Meanwhile, at Cockatoo Island, dockyard workers were converting the 11-thousand tonne P. and O. steamship *Berrima,* built in 1913, to a troopship. The Australian and New Zealand Governments had requisitioned 23 passenger ships as troopships from shipping lines such as P. and O., Adelaide Steamship, Blue Funnel and White Star. [2]

A mother walks with her son in the march

On Tuesday 18 August, the contingent marched from its barracks at Hyde Park to Bennelong Point, and then boarded ferries that took them to Cockatoo Island where the *Berrima* was berthed. Big crowds waving Union Jack flags lined city streets and cheered as the men marched by.

The Sydney Morning Herald said women rushed forward to greet husbands, sons or brothers, and in Macquarie Street every window or balcony was packed with spectators. The large turnout was surprising since the march had not been publicised in the newspapers. Twenty-four hours later, the *Berrima* secretly slipped out of Sydney and sailed north to Palm Island near Townsville in North Queensland, to await a strong naval escort. [3]

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[2] *Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)*, 10 August 1914 p. 10, 12 August 1914 p. 12; Australian War Memorial (AWM), ANMEF Enlistment Roll; *SMH,* 18 August 1914, p. 8

[3] *Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)*, 10 August 1914 p. 10, 12 August 1914 p. 12; Australian War Memorial (AWM), ANMEF Enlistment Roll; *SMH,* 18 August 1914, p. 8

While the army was selecting recruits for the new infantry battalion, the Royal Australian Navy had also acted quickly. The navy squadron was at sea when war was declared, but elements of it were swiftly moved into New Guinea waters. At night on 11 August, the light cruiser *Sydney* and three destroyers, *Parramatta, Warrego ad Yarra* were sent to search German anchorages on New Britain but the enemy squadron was not there. A landing party went ashore the next day in an unsuccessful search for a German wireless station that had been sending reports on their movements, but when they were unable to find the transmitter it was decided this part of the operation could wait for the arrival of the expeditionary force. The battle cruiser *Australia* was meanwhile searching elsewhere in the Pacific for the German squadron. However on 29 August *Australia* and *Melbourne* were sent to support the New Zealand Expeditionary Force in its

HMAS Sydney

occupation of German Samoa. Melbourne was then ordered to Nauru to destroy the communications station there. The ANMEF troops on the *Berrima* were at that time undergoing training at Palm Island until two Australian cruisers, *Sydney* and *Encounter* arrived to escort their ship to Port Moresby to join the rest of the Australian fleet and a 500-member volunteer militia unit raised in North Queensland. As training continued at Moresby, the Queenslanders were deemed to be unprepared and ill-equipped for active service, and then the stokers on their ship *Kanowna* mutinied, claiming they had not agreed to serve overseas. The ship subsequently returned the militia unit to Townsville.[4]

The combined naval and military force sailed from Port Moresby on 7 September for an attack on two enemy wireless stations in the vicinity of Rabaul. The ships reached Blanche Bay near Rabaul at dawn on 11 September, and there being no sighting of enemy warships, landings by two small parties of naval reservists went ahead. There was some initial resistance from a small group of German and native defenders and reinforcements were called for. Sixty armed men from the destroyers rushed forward to support the landing party, which was being held up by a series of enemy trenches and

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[4] Bean, *Anzac to Amiens,* pp. 28-39; J. Perryman, '*The Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force – First to Fight'.* Royal Australian Navy history webpage,

sniper fire from trees. More reinforcements arrived and the Australians pushed ahead but suffered their first casualties of the war when four sailors and an army doctor were killed. They were Able Seaman William Williams, Able Seaman John Courtney, Able Seaman Harry Street, Able Seaman Robert Moffatt, and Captain B.C.A. Pockley of the Australian Army Medical Corps. A Royal Navy officer, Lieutenant Commander E.B. Elwell was also killed. After further clashes, the Germans were persuaded to surrender by nightfall and the wireless mast was destroyed. Although the acting governor of the German colony had not yet formally surrendered, the British flag was hoisted at Rabaul two days later. Thus the Australian naval and military contingent had captured Germany's Pacific headquarters with the loss of only six casualties. Most of the other German territories in the region were occupied over the next two months.[5]

Three days after the capture of Rabaul, the Australian submarine *AE1* disappeared with the loss of all 35 crew, while patrolling waters east of Rabaul with the destroyer *Parramatta.* The RAN's two submarines, *AE1* and *AE2,* were launched in England in 1913, and reached Sydney in May 1914. Both took part in the operations leading to the capture of German New Guinea. No trace of the *AE1* has ever been found.[6]

Despite the tragedy of the AE1's disappearance, Australian forces in the last five months of 1914 had assisted in clearing enemy warships from the South Pacific, and seized all German colonies in the region.

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[5] Bean, *Anzac to Amiens,* pp. 28-39; J. Perryman, '*The Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force – First to Fight'.*
[6] http://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-ae1