

HMAS OTWAY 1968 - 2018

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of HMA Submarine Otway arrival in Australia; 36 of her commissioning crew and families gathered in Coolangatta, Queensland to remember their much-loved Submarine.

Built and commissioned in Scotland, HMAS Otway headed for Australia on 22 July 1968 sailing via West and South Africa, across the Southern Indian Ocean to Fremantle, then Eastward to arrive in her home port Sydney on 7 October.



Maiden voyage: HMAS Otway arrives HMAS Platypus in Sydney

The reunion 50 years later was welcomed; while much water has passed over our Submariner lives, a strong bond remains between all of us. It was a delight to meet again with so many of that wonderful crew who trusted and held each other in such high regard so many years ago. Many of our number have crossed the bar and are no longer with us but their achievement and contribution remain with us. We recalled a unique time in our lives and those of our families. We remembered the sacrifices made by our loved ones and did not forget the significant contributions our families made during our sometimes hazardous life in Submarines.

During our 3-5 year training program while attached to the British Royal Navy Submarine Service many of our crew married British Ladies. The Ladies immediately became part of the Royal Australian Navy Submarine Service family.

We had trust in the chain of command and in each other in those days.

As we progressed up the ranks we understood the responsibilities that came with the privilege - we had faith in our mates. We knew their training and dedication was absolute. Then and today, we retain great trust in each other as submariners do.

Over her 25 years of service HMAS Otway sailed 415,000 miles.

Her succession of ship's companies preserved the highest of standards expected of any submarine. HMAS Otway decommissioned on the 17th February 1994 in Sydney. Otway was eventually scrapped at Sydney's Garden Island Dockyard.

Today Otway's casing and fin can be seen in Holbrook, NSW as part of the Submarine Museum in the tiny rural town of 1,500 people located 500 km south-west of Sydney.



HMAS Otway commissioning crew 2018