



## ERIC "RICKY" DEVEREUX (Able Seaman)

Born 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 1921 Armadale, WA. Ricky and his sister Joan had a very happy childhood growing up in the little town, and being a bit of a larrikin, Ricky and his mates got up to plenty of mischief, like racing their homemade bilycarts down the steep Bedfordale Hill, and one day nearly blowing themselves up with dynamite they found (probably from the old brickworks).

Ricky's father Gordon, ran the silent pictures in the 1920's and mum Ellie played the piano during the films, so the two kids got to watch all the pictures for free, much to the envy of the other children in town.

Ricky delivered newspapers every morning before school on his bike, then at 14, left school to work at a sawmill, barrowing the sawdust over to a big pile. A couple of Armadale boys had joined the navy, so Ricky thought that sounded more exciting, and signed up, and was sent to *Cerberus* Training Base, Victoria. In Feb 1939 he was assigned to *HMAS Sydney*.

By May 1940 they were off to join the British Mediterranean Fleet based in Alexandria, Egypt. Ricky's action station on *Sydney* was on the 4-inch anti-aircraft guns. He wrote a diary for 290 days while on that tour of duty, and in it he describes much of the action as he saw it from the gundeck, such as the battle in which *Sydney* sunk the Italian ship *Bartolomeo Colleoni*. Later to be called **The Battle of Cape Spada**.

After the battle, Ricky describes *Sydney's* arrival back in Alexandria, and writes that they were "*cheered by battleships, cruisers, destroyers and depot ships alike, and signals are arriving from everywhere every minute and there are many reporters on board taking photos of the funnel etc*".

One of the destroyers signalled the following message:

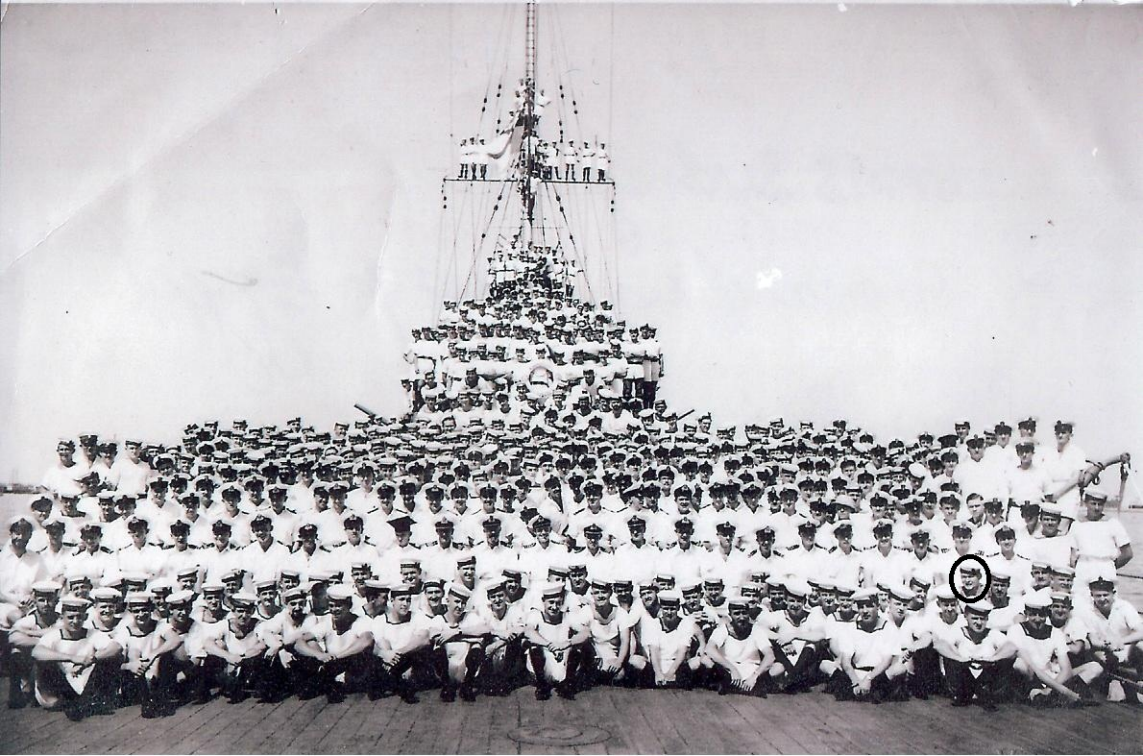
**Nice work!**                    ***Up jumped the Sydney,  
And gripped her with glee,  
And we sang as we watched the digger gunners  
shooting,  
You'll come a Waltzing Matilda with me***

In his diary, Ricky describes his 19<sup>th</sup> birthday in Alexandria as a "*lonely day*". On that day he was promoted to Able Seaman and after they arrived back in Australian waters in Feb 1941, he was rated Seaman Torpedo (ST).

When *Sydney* left Fremantle on her fateful journey in Nov 1941, the story goes that Ricky was given a lift to the port by one of his Armadale mates who had a car. They were running late, but managed to get there before she left port. Later, after the devastating loss of *Sydney* and all her crew, that young driver was left to wonder for the rest of his days.....

**"If only they had missed the ship that day - Ricky may have lived!"**









# WEST AUSTRALIAN MEMBERS OF SYDNEY'S COMPLEMENT

THERE were 90 members of the complement of H.M.A.S. Sydney whose home addresses were in this State. Following is the official list.

## OFFICERS.

- CLIFTON, Pay. Sub-Lt. (Prob.) J. I., R.A.N.R., W.A.  
 SCHOCH, Eng. Sub-Lt. F. H., R.A.N.V.R., W.A.  
 BINGER, Lt.-Com. M. M., R.N., W.A.

## PETTY OFFICERS AND MEN.

- ANDERSON, A/B R. H.  
 ANDREWS, A/B A. J.  
 BALDING, A/B H. E.  
 BARKER, A/B B. J. H.  
 BAVERSTOCK, A/B E. G.  
 BETTANY, A/B J. H.  
 BEVAN, A/B H. V.  
 BLOM, Stkr. L. M.  
 BODMAN, A/B A. A.  
 BRADLEY, O/S R.  
 BUCKINGHAM, A/B C. F. P.  
 BURNSYDE, Stkr. W. E.  
 BUTLER, Sup. Asst. K. N. H.  
 CANNON, Teleg. L. J.  
 CHAPMAN, O/S N. O.  
 CLARKE, A/Lds. Stkr. H.  
 CLAYTON, Stkr. A. S.  
 CLIVE, Stkr. A. W.  
 COOKESLEY, Stkr. C. W.  
 COONAN, A/Ldg./S B. R.  
 COOPER, Stkr. R.  
 COURTIS, Stkr. R. J.  
 DARBY, A/B S.M.  
 DAVIES, Elec. Art. S. J.  
 DeGRACIE, O/S J. P.  
 DEVEREUX, A/B E. G.

## 645 On Board

★ The crew of the Sydney, all of whom are reported missing, comprised men from every State as well as a small number from other parts of the Empire.

The personnel was made up as follows:—R.A.N., etc., officers, 41; R.A.A.F. officer, 1; R.A.N., etc. ratings, 594; R.A.A.F. ratings, 5; canteen staff, 4; total, 645. The complete list of the crew is given below.

- DIX, A/Ldr. Stkr. G. K.  
 DIXON, Ldg. Stkr. T. G.  
 DOBSON, A/B H. H.  
 DOXEY, A/B A. H.  
 GARDINER, O/S H. D.  
 GARRETT, A/B B. F.  
 GRACO, A/B H. M.  
 GRONBERG, Stkr. E. E.  
 HARRINGTON, A/L/S. A. F.  
 HAWKER, Steward, G. C.  
 HAWKES, A/B. S. W.  
 HENDERSON, Stkr. W. L. D.  
 HILL, A/B. P.  
 HOWARD, A/B L. J.  
 INGHAM, A/L/Stkr., J. W.  
 JESNOWSKI, O/S. L. A.

- JONES, A/Eng. Rm. Art. IV. I. D.  
 KEENAN, Stkr. F. B.  
 KIRKHAM, A/B. E. J.  
 KNIGHT, Steward, N. K.  
 LOVE, Stkr. S. E.  
 MACKINNON, P/O. M.  
 MILLER, Stkr. H. A.  
 MORISEY, A/B. E.  
 MURRAY, A/B. M.  
 McLEOD-SMITH, P/O. A. F.  
 NICHOLLS, A/B. M. G.  
 NOELL, Stkr. A. J.  
 NORMAN, L/S. F. W.  
 NYAL, Stkr. II. L. J.  
 PASCOE, Stkr. P. H.  
 PEAK, Stkr. J. M.  
 PERRYMAN, A/B. R. S.  
 POTTER, A/Sy. P/O. C. A.  
 PRIKE, A/B. J. J.  
 PULHAM, A/L/Stkr. E. G. M.  
 RAMSAY, A/B. E. W.  
 REDFEARNE, Stkr. C. H.  
 REDMOND, Ord. Sig. E. N.  
 RIPPEL, Teleg. E. H. G.  
 ROBERTS, Stkr. L. I.  
 ROTHBAUM, Asst. Std. L.  
 ROWE, A/B. A. L.  
 ROWE, Teleg. J. R. J.  
 SHEPHERD, A/Eng. Rm. Art. IV. A. H.  
 SHORT, A/B. H. K.  
 SMITH, A/B. C. F.  
 SMITH, A/B. E. E. F.  
 STAMMERS, Cook, R.  
 STUBBS, Stkr. I. K.  
 SUTTON, A/B. D. O.  
 TASSELL, P/O. H. W.  
 TAYLOR, Teleg. J.  
 TAYLOR, A/B. K. G.  
 THOMSON, Stkr. A. J.  
 TUFFIN, A/B. E. D.  
 TURNER, A/B. W. E.  
 WALKER, L/Sig. W.A.G.  
 WARD, A/B. F. E. C.  
 WHITE, A/B. R. G.  
 WILLIAMS, Stkr. II. J. H.  
 WITTON, A/Lds. Teleg. B. L.  
 WOOD, A/B. A. T.  
 WOODHAMS, Stkr. II. R. B. C.  
 WOODS, A/Eng. Rm. Art. IV. W. R.



**Her Captain**  
 Captain Joseph Burnett, who took over the command of the Sydney on May 15 from Captain J. A. Collins.

## LOCAL MEN WHO MANNED HER

When H.M.A.S. Sydney returned from the Mediterranean early this year this group of West Australian members of the crew was taken in Perth.

Individual photographs of some of the West Australian members of the crew are also published on this page.



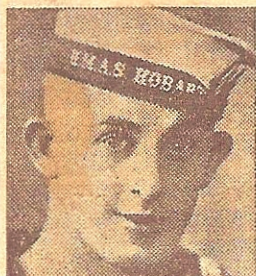
Stoker R. J. Courtis.



Stoker F. B. Keenan.



A.B. M. G. Nicholls.



A.B. E. W. Ramsay.



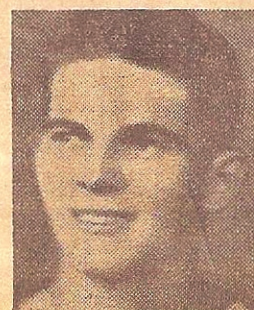
A.B. B. J. H. Barker.



A.B. E. D. Tuffin.



A.B. J. J. Prike.



A.B. D. O. Sutton.



A.B. A. H. Doxe.



A.B. E. G. Devereux.



A.B. C. F. Smith.



Stoker R. A. Miller.

WAR OF 1939-45

Honour Roll - Royal Australian Navy

Name: **DEVEREUX** Christian Names: **E. C.**

Alias (if any):

Number:

Rank **ABLE SEAMAN** Unit: **HMAS. SYDNEY.**

Date of Death: **20-11-41.** Place:

Cause of Death:

Panel No.: **17**

Next of Kin:

Authority:

R. A. N. NOMINAL ROLL OF DECEASED  
Supplied by Navy Office, Melb.

PARTICULARS RE-CHECKED BY  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY, 1962  
RECORDED DETAILS CORRECT ✓  
DETAILS AMENDED AS SHOWN:





Letter from Jan Kramer –

Niece of **Eric (Ricky) Devereux HMAS Sydney II**

Uncle Ricky was my Mum Joan's brother, and was only 20 when he was lost on *Sydney*, and Mum was 22. They were the only children of our grandparents, Gordon and Ellie Devereux and they spent all of their childhood in Armadale, WA.

I was born eight years after *Sydney* was lost, so never knew Uncle Ricky, and by the time my two sisters and I came along, the tragedy was not really spoken of.

The only thing my Grandpop ever said when we were children, was that "Ricky was lost on *Sydney* and when she went down – **Not even a cap floated!**" He always kept Ricky's memory alive with a photo of him on his dressing table until his own death in 1970 at the age of 80.

Nanna never spoke of Ricky to us. But I'm sure there were many tears behind closed doors. However, in her later years, she did tell another family member that she was "**still waiting for Ricky to walk through the door**". She died at age 93 in 1986, and I believe, was still expecting her son to return, right up until her last breath.

Even our Mum Joan didn't speak of her brother Ricky to us. Sadly, she died suddenly at age 53, in 1972, and being young at that time, I regret that I had never got ask her about him, and how it had affected her, losing her younger brother, and not knowing where he was.

The saddest part is that they had all passed on before *Sydney* was found, and they went to their graves like so many other mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, wives and children, wondering what happened to their missing sailor.

However, our generation, and the siblings and wives who are still alive, are so grateful to those many people who pursued looking for the *Sydney* for many years and never gave up. At least it has brought some closure for some family members after so many years of not knowing.

The wonderful *HMAS Sydney II* Memorials at Geraldton and Carnarvon are appreciated so much by the families, in keeping the memory alive of their brave boys.

The "Waiting Woman" statue on Mt Scott in Geraldton completely personifies our Nanna, peering out to sea, just waiting, and hoping, that one day her beloved Ricky will finally come home.