

CDF General David Hurley salutes the Navy



Souvenir



HMAS Sydney



HMAS Sydney

HMS Daring (Royal Navy) and  
INS Sahyadri (Indian Navy)  
approach Sydney Harbour.

# WARSHIPS IN THE HARBOUR

The Royal Australian Navy's International Fleet Review in Sydney from 3 to 11 October this year, was a spectacle of the highest order. The review was held to commemorate the centenary of the Royal Australian Navy's First Fleet entry into Sydney in 1913. Led by the then recently commissioned flagship, HMAS Australia, the new Australian fleet also comprised HMA Ships Melbourne, Sydney, Encounter, Warrego, Parramatta and Yarra. Their magnificent entry into Sydney Harbour for the first time, greeted by thousands of cheering citizens lining the foreshore, was a moment of great national pride and importance, one recognised as a key indicator of Australia's progress towards national maturity. And, in 2013, the centenary International Fleet Review was almost as magnificent.

From kids to adults all around the Sydney Harbour foreshore, from a group of about 100 cadets at Fort Denison, right up to Governor-General Quentin Bryce aboard HMAS Leeuwin, the centerpiece event of the nine-day IFR saw the Royal Australian Navy's Ceremonial Fleet Review deliver a lot of colour, noise and excitement.

On 5 October, crowds gathered at every vantage point around Sydney as tall ships, recreational craft, cruise ships and charters big and small cleared a path to make way for Leeuwin as Ms Bryce accompanied by HRH Prince Harry, Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Ray Griggs, Chief of Defence Force General David Hurley and Prime Minister Tony Abbott prepared to review the fleet.

After receiving a royal salute and cheers from ships moored at Garden Island, Leeuwin took pride of place in front of the Sydney Harbour Bridge as a 100-gun salute ignited proceedings.

Navy's helicopter display team took to the skies and a ceremonial flypast led by

two Seahawks carrying the Australian National Flag and the Navy's White Ensign soared over the harbour, followed by RAAF Roulettes, Hornets, Wedgetail and Orion.

Other aircraft included Seahawks from 816 Squadron, MRH-90s from 808 Squadron, Squirrels from 723 Squadron, Bell 429, the heritage Iroquois, Army's 173 Aviation Squadron Kiowas and international aircraft from France, the UK, Canada, New Zealand and the US.

Then HMA Ships Sydney, Darwin, Perth, Parramatta, Bundaberg, Diamantina, and Huon, followed by 30 foreign vessels cruised past Leeuwin for the official review.

Later that evening, with a crowd estimated at well over a million watching from all the usual spots, and many more watching on TV, the sky was lit up by a spectacular pyrotechnics and light show almost the equal of any before in Sydney.

Sydney Harbour was transformed as city landmarks as well as ships in the harbour

were incorporated into an audio-visual spectacular that paid homage to a century of Royal Australian Navy service.

RAN helicopters started the show, flying down the length of the harbour with lights on the tips of rotor blades and flares fired from counter missile systems.

Then the iconic Sydney Opera House and even Harbour Bridge piers became projection screens for a 30-minute tableau of Navy's past, present and future, while pyrotechnics were launched from ships up and down the length of the iconic waterway.

Sailors and officers in ceremonial uniform lined the upper decks of ships, adding another splash of colour, as the sky lit up, coordinated by music.

Other service men and women even became part of the spectacular show, firing blank ammunition from .50 calibre machine guns during an impressively choreographed acknowledgement to the senior service.