Armidale Project: Funding Appeal

For the majority of Australians whose lives have been spared the direct impact of conflict and associated personal suffering, it is difficult to imagine the actual pain and anguish of fellow humans directly involved. Although we see the horrors of conflicts around the world almost daily through the modern media, such familiarity with scenes of suffering does dull our senses. Similarly, the separation of distance encourages complacency. Despite occurring over 80 years ago, this tale remains poignant.

The Australian Corvette HMAS *Armidale* was sunk by enemy aircraft near Timor Leste on 1 December 1942. Those survivors who abandoned ship then succumbed to untreated wounds, dehydration, exposure and exhaustion whilst drifting in tropical shark infested waters for six to eight days.

HMAS Armidale under attack 1 December 1942. Painting by John Ford

Mr Craig Monahan - an accomplished Screen Writer, Director and Producer - is championing the *Armidale* story by producing a high-quality feature length documentary covering all aspects of this epic moment in our naval history. This would build on his nine-part Podcast series – produced on 2022 – that related the story. He is now supported by a small Armidale Project team, whose number includes historians, documentary makers and family members of those lost after the sinking, and who are very mindful of the enormous suffering endured by the *Armidale* survivors. They believe the full *Armidale* story, including the unimaginable despair of her surviving ships company, needs to be told.

Among the supporters of this Project is Mr John Perryman CSM, former Director of Strategic and Historical Studies at the Royal Australian Navy's Sea Power Centre – Australia. In 2023 he wrote:

> "*There are many facets to this episode in Australian naval and military history, not the least of which was the posthumous award of a Victoria Cross to Ordinary Seaman 'Teddy' Sheean [in 2020] following many decades of campaigning by a large cross-section of the Australian community. Sheean's bravery was, however, the first of many extraordinary acts involving a*

cast that included Australian and British naval personnel serving ashore and at sea in the various ships involved, soldiers of the 2nd A.I.F., members of the Netherlands East Indies forces and the Royal Australian Air Force. Armidale's sinking ..... was of course only the beginning of the ordeal that followed for those who were forced to abandon ship and who became castaways. Their story of survival is one of triumph and tragedy and I agree wholeheartedly that it is deserving of wider appreciation in the annals of Australian history".

The following link gives access to a YouTube presentation Mr Monahan gave recently to the Naval Historical Society of Australia (Victoria Chapter). This explains in some detail the aims of the project and provides insights into the likely documentary content - note that film footage will eventually replace storyboards. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1tk_2vg7uQ&authuser=0.
The Project aims for the documentary to be released around ANZAC day or Remembrance Day.

Donations are now keenly sought, to help bring this Project to fruition. These can be made in a number of ways:
- A 100% Tax Deductable contribution;
- A direct contribution; or
- An equity investment.

How to Donate
- The project has been accepted by the Documentary Australia Foundation (DAF), enabling any investor to receive a **100% tax deduction**. Donations can be made via the

- **Documentary Australia website**:
  https://documentaryaustralia.com.au/project/armidale/

- **Direct donation** to the Armidale Film Pty Ltd bank account.

  ANZ Bank South Melbourne
  Account Name: Armidale Film Pty Ltd
  BSB: 013 017
  Account: 1683-10088

- **Equity Investment** (minimum investment $5,000) – please contact:
  armidale.film@gmail.com

PLEASE CIRCULATE TO ANYONE WHO MIGHT WISH TO ASSIST.