**CHIEF PETTY OFFICER UNDERWATER CONTROL SUBMARINES**

**PHILLIP WILLIAM VINE**

Chief Petty Officer Phillip Vine was born on the 7th of October 1952 and joined the RAN from Sefton NSW on the 29th of February 1972. In late May 1972 he graduated from the recruit training school at HMAS Cerberus and posted to the Daring Class Destroyer HMAS Duchess. He was promoted to Ordinary Seaman on the second of June 1976 and served onboard Duchess until January 1973. Having completed his ordinary seaman’s time he undertook Underwater Control (UC) training at HMAS Watson in Sydney, before posting to the newly commissioned Destroyer Escort HMAS Swan as an ABCUC 2. Phil remained with Swan until his selection for the submarine service in July 1975 and in September of that year he travelled to the United Kingdom to undertake his initial submarine training.

Phil was a natural submariner, a skilled sonar operator, an excellent seaman and gifted with a personality that suited the informal but highly professional submarine arm. His first submarine was HMAS Onslow. He joined her in late November 1975 and on the 8th of April 1976 he was awarded his Submarine Qualification Badge, the prized “Dolphins”. He remained on Onslow until early January 1977 at which time he transferred to HMAS Ovens for eight months.

In August 1977 Phil returned to the UK to become a member of the commissioning crew of the sixth and last of the RAN’s Oberon Class submarines; HMAS Otama. The submarine commissioned at Greenock Scotland on the 28th of April 1978 and after working up off Scotland, sailed to Australia in early August via Denmark, Netherlands, Canada, Panama, Mexico and the United States (Florida, California & Hawaii) arriving in Sydney on the 15th of December 1978. He would remain onboard Otama until September 1979 at which time he posted ashore to undertake his qualification course for promotion to Leading Seaman. On the 14th of March 1980 he was promoted to Leading Seaman Underwater Control and returned to Otama in June of that year immediately before the submarine deployed to South East Asia.

In early 1981, although only having been a Leading Seaman for a little over six months, Phil was selected for his promotion course to Petty Officer – The “UC1 Course” at HMS Dolphin at Gosport, UK in 1981. Further testimony to his skill as an acoustic analyst was that he would be promoted to Petty Officer in June 1982, after just two years as a Leading Seaman immediately posting to HMAS Otway as the senior Underwater Control rating (UC1).

A gifted and talented acoustic analyst he would remain with Otway until January 1985 when he was selected to undertake advanced Acoustic Analysis training with the Canadian Forces in Halifax Nova Scotia. Having served at sea for many years Phil’s talents were now put to use training the next generation of submariners at the Royal Australian Navy’s Submarine School at HMAS Platypus. His skill was again recognised when he was promoted to Chief Petty Officer in late 1985 – He has had progressed from Able Seaman in March 1980 to Chief Petty Officer in December 1985 a remarkable achievement.

In 1987 Phil would return to sea – this time to HMAS Orion for four months before joining the staff of the Australian Joint Acoustic Analysis Centre (AJAAC) at HMAS Albatross, where he would remain, except for a five month posting to HMAS Oxley in 1991, for the rest of his career. Phil was one of only a few men to have served at sea on all six of the RAN’s Oberon class submarines.

In the 28th of February 1992, having completed twenty years service, Phil retired from the RAN and headed off to Adaminaby in the NSW Alps to go fishing in nearby Lake Eucumbene. Tragically his retirement was short lived and just days later he was killed in a motor vehicle accident whilst returning from a morning fish. His funeral was held in Adaminaby and was attended a large contingent of submariners, general service sailors and naval airmen who he had served with. At his wake, held at the local hotel in Adaminaby, a spare white ensign taken to the service was signed by all those attending and presented to the hotel in memory of Phil.

Phil Vine’s legacies to the RAN are the high operational and analytical training standards he set for his sailors; standards which are now the norm and not the exception. Though the training and mentoring he provided to numerous sailors and officers over his 17 years in submarines those standards are now enduring.

Phillip William Vine, through his service to his nation, is entitled to the; Australian Service Medal with Special Operations Clasp, the Australian Defence Force Service Medal, and the Australian Defence Medal.