Figureheads

QUEEN VICTORIA figurehead at Garden Island, from the ex-clipper Windsor Castle, is admired by Captain A. W. Pearse, 92, who knew the ship well.

CAPTAIN PEARSE, founder of the Ancient Mariners' League in Australia, had many thrilling tales to tell these cadets about the figureheads and the ships which bore them many years ago.

HISTORIC ship figureheads which revive memories of the adventurous and colorful days of sail occupy places of honor at Sydney naval establishments.

At Garden Island Naval Base, the figurehead of Queen Victoria today watches the busy dockyard traffic. She once sailed the ocean on the ex-clipper Windsor Castle of Aberdeen, 1869-1891, which was commanded by Captain William Cargill, who superintended her building.

Commanding a view of Sydney Harbor, another figurehead, in the form of a lovely woman, stands on the lawns of Garden Island. She is from HMS Sealark, which will be remembered by many sea veterans as Wanderer and Consuela.

Keeping watch on the life and activities at Rushcutter Bay Naval Depot is the figurehead of Admiral Nelson from HMS Nelson. The figure holds a replica of Nelson's telescope in his good hand and has the sleeve of his other arm held across his chest.

Nearby stands the steering wheel of HMS Nelson. They share prominence with the figurehead of an old barque, Woodburn, and an historic Spanish gun with the date of casting as 1595.

HMS Nelson, a 120-gun ship of 2030 tons, was laid down at Woolwich in 1805, launched in 1814. She was presented to Victoria in 1867, arriving at Melbourne in 1868. After 23 years' service she was paid off in 1891.