

Lieutenant Commander Ian (Peter) Hamilton Wrigley MBE RD RANVR Ret

Ian Wrigley Crossed the Bar on 6 June 2018. He was the son of a sea captain who first went to sea under sail, and later operated on NSW coast during the 1930's and 1940's.

Ian attended The Scots College, Bellevue Hill, from 1932 to 1939. He joined the RAN in 1942 and was promoted to officer in 1943. He gained his watchkeeping qualifications in the Minesweeper HMAS DELORAINIE operating off North Australia, and was then posted to HMAS AUSTRALIA as a watchkeeping officer, and assistant navigator. He was in the ship at Leyte Gulf in October 1944 when a kamikaze crashed into the foremast and bridge structure. In October 1945 he was posted to the United Kingdom for Radar Direction courses and then posted to HMAS WATSON as an instructor. He remained in the Naval Reserves for a further seven years based at HMAS WATSON and served as an Aide to the Governor, Sir Eric Woodward, during this period.

In 1950 Ian joined the Port Jackson Steamship Company as the Accountant and then later moved to Gordon Edgells to become Company Secretary. In 1956 he represented Australia at the Melbourne Olympic Games in rifle shooting.

During this period in business he purchased a holding in the Blayney area which still remains in the family. He was in the management team for the Dame Patty challenge for the America Cup in 1967. In 1972 he joined Winchcombe Carson as the Managing Director. He joined the Royal Agricultural Society of NSW during this time, and by 1981 became a Director of Dalgetys.

Amidst his business interests Ian developed the Blayney property and became closely involved in fine wool production. This led to him being on several agricultural committees including the RAS, and being closely involved in the establishment of the Orange Agricultural College, now part of the Charles Sturt University. In 2000 he was a bearer for the Olympic Torch.

In retirement he was a keen sailor, maintained his agricultural interests, attended the Ancient Mariners lunches at HMAS WATSON, and undertook research work at the Naval Historical Society at Garden Island.

A podcast interview with Ian covering his wartime experiences can be downloaded from the Naval Historical Society website www.navyhistory.org.au under Research.