

Vale Bertie Putman

V.X.66153 Alan Carey tells this story about Bertie Putman:

Bertie and I were good friends. When we were kids, we made a canoe out of corrugated iron, caulked it with tar and so on, and towed it behind our pushbikes using pram wheels. By this means, we carried the boat to the Albert Park Lake. Once, we played a trick on another kid. There's an island in the middle of Albert Park Lake and we said to the kid: "we'll row you over to the island", which we did. I said to him: "jump out and take the rope to moor the boat". He jumped out, and we rowed away, leaving him on the island in the middle of the Lake.

On another occasion, we were towing the boat home. We each had a rope tied around the saddle of our bikes and were towing our corrugated iron canoe down St Kilda Road, when an elderly lady stepped out in front of us. Unfortunately, Bertie rode to the left of her, and I rode to the right of her. And the canoe on its pram wheels headed straight for the lady. It was a disaster.

The day after Alan Carey enlisted, his mate Bertie Putman was killed in action when the HMAS Sydney was sunk by the H.S.K. Kormoran. Bertie was a torpedo man.



Note: Alan Carey's mothers' marriage certificate was witnessed by Ethel May Putman (Bertie's Mum) and William Blaskett. William Blaskett was Ron Blaskett's father. The Ron Blaskett of Gerry Gee fame!



Studio portrait of 24374 Ordinary Seaman (OD) Albert Edward Putman, Torpedoman, HMAS Sydney, RAN. A native of Launceston, Tasmania, he enlisted with the Royal Australian Navy on 22 May 1940. On 19 November 1941, OD Putman, aged 18, was among 645 hands of HMAS Sydney who were killed during an engagement with the German auxiliary cruiser HSK HSK Kormoran off the West Australian coast.

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Please Note:

The photo of Bertie Putman is available as a digital copy from the Australian War Museum website (<http://cas.awm.gov.au/item/P06439.001>).

For your convenience, upon request, I will email you the text of the interview with Alan Carey.

Yours sincerely,



David Carey

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