

Stanley Peter William Stenton was known as Billy. He was born on 25 November 1922 at Port Melbourne and grew up at Chelsea on Port Phillip Bay, the lovely curve of white sandy beach his playground.

Billy enlisted in the RAN as soon as he was able. His father Stanley Snr and brothers George and John also served in the RAN during WWII.

After training at HMAS Cerberus Billy's embarkation as a sailor was delayed while he cared for his convalescent mother and his younger siblings.

He joined HMAS Sydney on 30 October 1941: the final entry on his Record of Mobilized Service reads: "D.D." 20 November 1941.



I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky,
And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song, and the white sails shaking,
And a grey mist on the sea's face, and the grey dawn breaking.

I must go down to the seas again, for the call of the running tide
Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied;
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the sea-gull's crying.

I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,
To the gull's way and the whale's way, where the wind's like a whetted knife,
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow rover,
And a quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long trick's over.

*Grateful thanks to the Society of Authors, London
on behalf of the estate of John Masefield
for allowing the use of **Sea Fever**.*

19 July 2011

Mr Les Dwyer
HMAS SYDNEY 11
PO Box 614
Yandina QLD 4561

Dear Les

Re Stanley Peter William (Billy) Stenton

In the end I fear that the lab has let me down, they did a rather hasty, while-you-wait job and the scanned image does not look as clear to me as the print copy they did earlier, which I am also enclosing in the event that it is more usable.

I am not entirely familiar with the processes involved so I will leave it up to you and hope that the enclosed material will suffice. If not, please let me know. There is no need to return the disc but I would be grateful if you could return the print in due course.

Thank you for your patient assistance.

Yours sincerely



Kerry Page

Les Dwyer

From: page [mrspage@bigpond.com]
Sent: Wednesday, 29 June 2011 8:30 PM
To: HMASSYDNEYTwo@NavalAssoc.org.au
Subject: Stanley Stenton
Attachments: S P W (Billy) Stenton.jpg; HMAS SYDNEY Virtual Memorial SPW 'Billy' Stenton.docx

Dear Les

Thank you very much for your valiant attempts to contact me this morning, and apologies for the dodgy disc. Attached is the material for submission to the Virtual Memorial site.

I came across the memorial site while researching family history and my father George Albert Stenton's service record. I was curious to see if there were any submissions for his brother Billy. There were not. Rather sad, I thought, and when I mentioned it to my mother Avis Stenton she produced the photograph. It broke my heart.

I then went through the Virtual Memorial submissions, particularly for Stokers, to see if perhaps there was any material which might relate to Billy. It was a very hard thing to do, the reading of the submissions was a profoundly moving experience. I had known since childhood that "Billy went down with the Sydney" but could not conceive what this actually meant. Now I know the story, I understand how much the loss of his little brother must have affected my father; the news of the HMAS Sydney reached him while he was serving on HMAS Canberra, and he was on board that ship when it was hit. I feel sure that the thought of Billy's death haunted him all his life. The photograph of was one of his most treasured possessions.

Regrettably, my father passed away in 1995. My mother is now almost 88 years old, she knew Billy only briefly and is not able to confirm much detail about him. I can best honour the Uncle I never knew and his shipmates with the sea poem we all learned and loved at school.

Kindest regards

Kerry Page

