

AWM78
**Reports of Proceedings,
HMA Ships and Establishments**

HMAS BENALLA (I)

Item number: 61/2

Title: March-April 1945. Duplicate



AWM78-61/2

[61/2]

DUPLICATE

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

H.M.A.S. "BENALLA"

Classification Authority—Defence Records
This record has been reviewed and has been
declassified by the Department of Defence
(navy) with effect from: 1 Nov 1990
Authority Dlg (N) Admin 16-13.
Reviewer: LCDR R. L. Smith (RANEM)

Signature: R. L. Smith Date: 1 Nov 90

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(See file 71/51/50)
Barley

2026/7/ 1270

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY.

MINUTE PAPER

SUBJECT: H.M.A.S. "Benalla" REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS.
March and April, 1945.

S.N.B. 22/6

2 N.M. 23/6

3 N.M. 26/6

D. of P. 27/6

D.R.M. 28/6

D.N.I. N 15 29/6

Ops. (N) 30/6

N.5. 1/7

D.E. (N) 2/7

D.O.T.M. 10 11/7

D.N.M.S. 12 11/7

H.P.B. 24/7

N.A.2.N.M. 24/7

N.5. 1/7

D.N.I. (N.H.R.O.) 2

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Mrs. Brown

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BRANCH
20 JUL 1945
NAVY OFFICE

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY.
MINUTE PAPER.

2026/7/1270

~~14/146~~ SUBJECT: HMAS "Benalla" Report of Proceedings March & April 1945

~~DPS~~ *18/6*

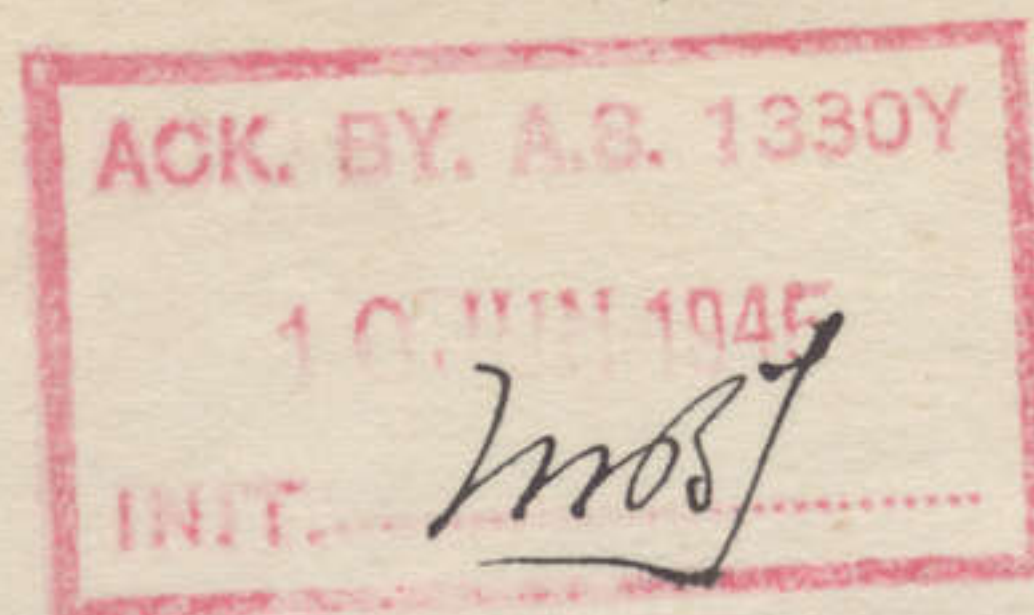
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(Commanding Officer, H.M.A.S. "BENALLA"'s reports dated 7th April
and 2nd May 1945).

H.M.A.S. "BENALLA" - MONTHLY REPORTS OF PROCEEDINGS - MARCH AND APRIL 1945.

II.

N.T.0600/65
The Secretary,
NAVAL BOARD.

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Submitted for the information of the Naval Board.

2. My submission N.T.473/14 dated 15th April 1945, forwarded a full report in connection with the incident referred to in paragraph 6 of "BENALLA"'s March report.

B. Dyer

A/CAPTAIN, R.A.N.
Naval Officer-in-Charge, Darwin.

HN
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Naval Headquarters,
DARWIN. N.T.
6th June 1945.

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29/11/60

Subscribed
17/1/45

Commonwealth of Australia.

Department of The Navy.

Royal Australian Navy.

From The Commanding Officer H.M.A.S. 'Benalla'.

Date 2nd May 1945. Reference No.

To The Secretary of the Australian Naval Board.

Subject Report of Proceedings - April 1945.

Submitted for the information of the Naval Board, the following Report of Proceedings for the month of April 1945.

2. H.M.A.S. 'Benalla' with H.M.A.S. 'Broome' in company, departed Darwin A.M. 4th April for the surveying ground north of Penguin Shoal. At 100 I/5th April, H.M.A.S. 'Hawk' joined company, and at 1300 I, the three ships commenced sounding in company.

3. At 0800 I/6th, 'Castlemaine' arrived on the survey ground and at the same time 'Hawk' was despatched to Darwin to operate under H.M.A.S. 'Shepparton'.

4. Eight floating beacons were laid P.M. 6th April and fixed by Radar ranges and stellar observations taken by 'Benalla' 'Broome' and 'Castlemaine' P.M. 6th and A.M. 7th April. Sounding in company on a scale 1/150,000 was carried out on the 7th, 8th and 9th April. On the latter date a dust haze reduced visibility to $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles and similar conditions prevailed during the following three days.

5. 'Broome' departed for Darwin 0800 I/10th April for fuel, 'Benalla' and 'Castlemaine' continued sounding on 1/150,000.

6. On the 11th April examinations of two banks in positions latitude 12 degrees 37 minutes south, longitude 126 degrees 05 minutes east, and latitude 12 degrees 43 minutes south longitude 126 degrees 09 minutes east, were carried out on a scale of 1/25,000. Least depths obtained in each case was 12 fathoms. On the 12th April, A.M., 'Benalla' and 'Castlemaine' recovered those beacons no longer required for sounding and at 1400 I, proceeded to Darwin arriving 1800 I/13th April.

7. On the 15th April at 0700 I, 'Benalla' and 'Castlemaine' departed Darwin for Baldwin Bank, latitude 12 degrees 52 minutes south, longitude 124 degrees 09 minutes east (approximately) and arrived 0800 I/16th April. Five beacons were laid and fixed and sounding boards prepared on a scale of 1/25,000. The sounding of Baldwin Bank was carried out from the 17th - 20th April inclusive.

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the survey being completed on the latter date. Least depth obtained was 8 fathoms 4 feet. April 21st, beacons were recovered A.M. and both ships proceeded to Penguin Shoal, arriving at 1430 I. Four beacons were then laid, and the taut wire measurement made and stellar observations taken by 'Benalla' and 'Castlemaine' at one of the beacons P.M./21st and A.M./22nd April.

8. The sounding of Penguin Shoal (on a scale 1/25,000) was commenced A.M. 22nd April and was completed P.M. 23rd. The forenoon of the following day was spent filling in a small gap in the 1/150,000 scale survey, beacons were recovered during the afternoon and at 1600 I 'Benalla' and 'Castlemaine' departed for Darwin, arriving 1700 I 25th April.

9. April 29th, 'Benalla' departed to lay mark buoys to enable U.S.C.G.S. 'Mesquite' to

(a) re-lay Abbott Shoal light buoy on western end of Abbott Shoal.

(b) Establish new light buoy in position 11 degrees 41 minutes south, 131 degrees 39 minutes east.

10. Arrived at Abbott Shoal 1730 I/29th April, fixed position of existing light buoy and anchored near the shoal for the night. During the forenoon of April 30th, a beacon was laid to mark the new position of the light buoy, and the ship sounded over Abbott Shoal to ensure new position being relatively correct. 'Benalla' then proceeded to position (b), running with Abbott Shoal beacon astern together with taut wire measurements. The second beacon was laid in position 11 degrees 41 minutes south, 131 degrees 38.9 minutes east and checked by sextant angles between objects ashore. On completion 'Benalla' returned to anchorage at Abbott Shoal, where 'Mesquite' arrived at dusk. The relevant information was passed to 'Mesquite' and at 0700 I 1st May, 'Benalla' departed to rendezvous with C.T.U.70.5.3 at Cape Fourcroy, Bathurst Island.

11. En route the positions of Bill Shoal buoy, and that recently established south east of East Vernon light, were fixed. These buoys were found to lie 032 degrees 8 cables and 192 degrees 8 cables respectively from their former reported positions.

12. The health and conduct of the ship's company remains good.

13. Steaming figures for the month are as follows.

Distance steamed	2,542.4 miles
Hours under way	277 15/60 hours
Av. Dist. per ton fuel	8.2 miles.
Dist. steamed since commissioning (28.4.43)	49,873.6 miles.
Average speed.	10.1 knots.
Total hours under way.	4,909 45/60 hours



Hale
Lieutenant Commander. R.A.N.
Commanding Officer.

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Commonwealth of Australia.

Department of The Navy.

Royal Australian Navy.

From... The Commanding Officer H.M.A.S. 'Benalla'.
Date... 7th April 1945. Reference No.....
To... The Secretary of the Australian Naval Board.
Subject... Report of Proceedings.

Submitted for the information of the Naval Board, the following Report of Proceedings for the month of March 1945.

2. March 3rd, 'Benalla' departed Darwin for the survey ground in the vicinity of Penguin Shoal, arriving 1300 I/4th March when sounding was commenced. Four days were spent in this area but little progress was made, mainly due to frequent rain storms and overcast sky, resulting in lack of sufficient astronomical observations to control the soundings.
3. During the night 7th - 8th March, the wind and sea began to rise and by morning the weather conditions prevailing, indicated that a storm was approaching from the north west. H.M.A.S. 'Hawk' was due to depart Darwin A.M. 8th March to rendezvous with 'Benalla' on the survey ground. In view of the weather, 'Hawk' was instructed to return to Darwin and 'Benalla' proceeded to that port. Arrived Darwin A.M. 9th March and remained there for three days to allow the weather to clear before returning to Penguin Shoal.
4. During this period, the outstanding section of the Timber Wharf, Darwin, was sounded and results forwarded to the Hydrographic Branch.
5. 'Benalla' and 'Hawk' departed Darwin A.M. 12th March for the Penguin Shoal area and commenced sounding P.M. 13th March. This was an unusually fine day with sea calm, wind West-South West, force 2-3 and sky $\frac{1}{4}$ covered with cumulus cloud. Such conditions, however, lasted only until the forenoon of the following day, and by 1400 I, it was necessary to despatch 'Hawk' to Port Nelson. 'Benalla' continued sounding until the afternoon of 15th March, when heavy rain storms began to sweep over the area. At 1830 I, course was set for Port Nelson and the ship arrived there at 1200 I 16th March. Very little surveying at Port Nelson was possible for the following two days due to continuous rainstorms, but by the morning of the 19th March, the weather had cleared, and 'Hawk' sounded in Port Nelson while 'Benalla' continued with the coastlining and sounding the approaches to Port Nelson.

6. March 20th, while sounding, 'Benalla' developed a leak in the starboard condensor. The ship returned to Port Nelson to open up the condensor, but on anchoring, it was found that the condensor inlet valve could not be closed. It was hoped that the collision mat could be utilised in effecting repairs, but this idea was found to be impracticable due to the proximity of the valve to the bilge keel. 'Benalla' departed Port Nelson 1000 I 21st March steaming on the port engine only. A few lines of soundings were run in the Penguin Shoal area during the 22nd March and the ship then proceeded to Darwin. H.M.A.S. 'Hawk' was left at Port Nelson to continue the coastlining of several small islands west of Port Nelson. The sounding had been completed before 'Benalla's' departure. 'Benalla' arrived Darwin A.M. 24th March and the Base Staff commenced diving operations to effect repairs to the starboard condensor inlet valve. These operations occupied two days and it was found that part of the thread of the inlet valve spindle was stripped. Another spindle was fitted and the starboard condensor opened. Three tubes were found to have leaks and the after tube plate had a general leak over a number of ferrules. The latter were tightened and the defective tubes plugged.
7. 'Benalla' completed with fuel A.M. 27th March, and proceeded P.M. to an anchorage in East Arm, Darwin, for boiler cleaning.
8. The health and conduct of the ship's company, remains very good.
9. Leaky rivets are becoming noticeable in the air fuel tanks, and pitting has commenced on the ship's skin, between the engines. Non-ferrous metals are being attacked, presumably electrolytically, where they are in contact with salt water and occasional condensor failures are attributed to this cause. The boiler tubes show distortion in many cases. The ship's performance however, continues satisfactorily.
10. Conditions on board are made more difficult by the fact that the complement of H.M.A.S. 'Benalla' exceeds that of a normal A.M.S. vessel, resulting in an oppressive atmosphere between decks. Lower deck scuttles are nearly always closed, this being necessary with the ship under way by day and anchored by night in localities where a "black out" is essential. It is not practicable to sleep on deck at night due to frequent rainstorms.
11. Steaming figures for the month are as follows.
- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| Distance steamed: | 3,107.7 miles |
| Hours under way : | 324 hours |
| Average distance per ton of fuel : | 10.9 miles. |
| Distance steamed since commissioning (28.4.43) | 47,831.2 miles. |

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Average speed of : 10.3 knots.
Total hours under
way since 28.4.43: 4,632 30/60 hours.



Lieutenant Commander. R.A.N.
Commanding Officer.