

Stawell Historical Society Fact Sheet 1



The Story of H.M.A.S. Stawell

- H.M.A.S. Stawell was a Minesweeper (Corvette) which saw active service in the Second World War.
 - The Stawell was named after the Victorian town still bearing that name, and a display of artifacts and memorabilia is on prominent display in the Stawell Historical Society's Museum.
 - H.M.A.S. Stawell was one of sixty Australian mine- sweepers built in Australian shipyards during World War II.
 - Operating in the New Guinea theatre of operations, the Stawell was kept busy escorting, carrying stores, mail, and troops.
The Stawell also carried out duties in the Philippines, Borneo and at war's end, Hong Kong as part of the occupation forces.
 - On July 1st, 1945, the A.I.F. landed at Balikpapan Borneo, on July 23rd 1945 the H.M.A.S. Stawell, the H.M.A.S. Latrobe with the H.M.A.S. Gascoyne operated in a support action at Balikpapan. On the 3rd August, 1945 2200 Hrs. they went to action stations after firing star shells.
 - The H.M.A.S. Stawell was instrumental in sinking Japanese small vessels, which were carrying stores and troops, taking a prisoner. The prisoner had on his person a Field sword, which was relieved of him by a crew member of the Stawell, who later swapped it to another crew member for a month's supply of cigarettes.
This sword is on display at the Stawell Historical Society's Museum, and is held in trust for the City of Stawell.
 - H.M.A.S. Stawell saw service from August 1943 to March 1946, and then was commissioned with the New Zealand Navy as H.M.N.Z.S. Stawell in the 1950's.
- For more information on H.M.A.S. Stawell please contact Stawell Historical Society and / or visit the Museum and inspect the display.