

# Naval celebrations with the Russians

By Graham Davis

Two Australian Navy Cadets, and a senior cadet officer, have had an experience of a lifetime.

They served in a Russian training ship.

Just back from St Petersburg are Cadet Petty Officer Scott Wood, 16, and a member of the ship's company of TS *Gayundah* (Bulimba) and Cadet Leading Seaman Tom Green, 18, from Sydney's TS *Condamine*.

Scott is in Year 11 at St Francis College, Brisbane while Tom attends university.

Also back with them is LCDR John Stanton, ANC, CO of TS *Gayundah*.

The trio spent 10 days away participating in a multi-national cadet exchange to Russia.

Much of the time was spent aboard the Russian cadet training ship TS *Lord Novgorod the Great*.

Built in 1954 as a passenger ship, she was set to be scrapped when the Russian Young Sailors Club bought her, refurbished her and transformed her into a training ship.

As Scott told *Navy Reserve News*, days aboard the ship were busy with morning exercises (0735) leading to breakfast (0800) and 'hands to instruction/clean ship' starting at 0900.

"There was more 'hands to instruction' at 1400 and dinner at 2000," he said. "Lights out was at 2300.

"During a PT competition we had

to do squats, chin-ups, sit-ups, lifting 24 kg weights, push-ups and chest raises while lying on our stomachs.

"A US cadet petty officer came first, I came second and Tom third."

He said throughout the exchange there were many duties which needed to be done.

"All teams rotated duties such as keeping watch in the engine room, bridge and gangway ... except for during shore leave.

"We also had galley duties during each meal," Scott added.

He said that when not sailing on Ladoga Lake the cadets were involved in ceremonial activities as well as sightseeing and historic visits.

"We visited many museums, fortresses and churches."

Naval cadets celebrated the end of WW2 for Russia on July 29 in a ceremony that culminated in placing a wreath into the lake.

"That night we had an extended final disco and fireworks," Scott said.

"The lake was very rough with high swells.

"And the following day, we arrived back in St Petersburg to celebrate the Russian Navy Day."

Scott described Russia as an amazing place.

"It has a huge history, many old and famous buildings and many great and beautiful sites," he said.

"The people are helpful and friend-

ly and although they are quite different from Australians, they really live quite an interesting life.

"The exchange was an absolutely amazing experience and one which I will never forget."

Scott thanked International Sea Cadets Association (ISCA) coordinator LCDR Zenda Gardiner (ANC), his CO and the Novgorod Young Sailors Club for making the exchange possible.



ABOVE: Cadet PO Scott Wood. RIGHT: Scott and Cadet LS Tom Green with the CO of TS *Lord Novgorod the Great*.

BELOW: Scott with the famous Russian cruiser *Aurora*, now a museum ship in St. Petersburg. BELOW RIGHT: TS *Lord Novgorod the Great*.



# And Scandinavian sailing with the Swedes

## International evergreen lessons and a big, pink bus in Sweden

By CPOMT Glenn Askew

Each year Australian Navy Cadets invite cadets from several nations to attend their annual camp here in Western Australia. They come from countries such as England, Sweden, Canada, USA and Russia.

In turn, our cadets are invited to annual camps all over the world. With each group of Australian Navy Cadets attending an overseas camp an escorting officer is sent to look after the cadets.

I'm a Naval Reservist working as the Cadet Liaison Officer for Western Australia (CLO-WA) working both for the Director Australian Navy Cadets (DANC), CMDR Wayne Mitchell, and CO HMAS *Stirling* CMDR Paul Bartlett. I also work very closely with the Senior Officer of the Navy Cadets in WA, CMDR (ANC) Geoff Hurren.

As an engineer I was asked to assist as an instructor for a basic outboard/engineering course for cadets attending the annual camp.

During this camp I met LCDR (ANC) Zenda Gardiner who is the Australian International Sea Cadets Association (ISCA) coordinator for the international cadet exchange.

She rang me with a problem for the exchange to Sweden: because of cadet staff's normal day jobs, she couldn't find anyone to escort one nominated cadet for the Sweden exchange. Could I fill the position?

I left Australia on July 2 and met Cadet CPO Jeremy Bray (from Cairns) at Singapore Airport. Together we flew first to London, then straight onto Stockholm. On arrival we were met by LEUT Frida Svedrin

and driven to their recruiting office in Stockholm.

We were the first to arrive so we got about five hours to explore Stockholm while waiting for the other international cadets to arrive. The first thing I found strange was when we went to pick up the Canadian cadets at 1900 with the sun at our midday position. They have the longest days! Our group had cadets from USA, Canada, Lithuania, Russia and England.

Our first stop was Hanosand about five hours north of

time the bond between the international cadets was growing.

We toured a Cold War underground fort that could protect more than 400 troops in the event of a nuclear attack. After three days we sadly said goodbye to our hosts at Lungo and headed back to the mainland to begin a tour through central Sweden heading south.

We were met by the Pink Bus. This is a camping/touring bus with a wooden decking on the roof. We stayed at beauti-

dates Australia's colonial history. This fort was the base for the second cadet camp and the highlight was an overnight camp on a small island, sailing there in whaling boats.

Karlskrona has a rich history and the whole town is a world heritage site. After three more fun-filled days we said goodbye again and had a one-day trip north - back to the coast just east of Stockholm.

By this time the true meaning of the exchange was evident. We were from many different cultures and countries, but by this stage we were one very big happy family.

For some of the countries, English was their second language. But if they couldn't find the correct words another English-speaking member helped bridge the gap.

It reminded me of the John Lennon words in his song *Imagine*: there were no borders and no religion - just 25 people enjoying life and each other's company. Perhaps our world leaders should do a similar trip.

The third camp had the cadets on another island and here they did bush camping exercises and more sailing. The whole area has a thousand islands.

The trip ended with a tour of Stockholm which is a city built on more islands. We attended the changing of the guard at the Royal Palace and were welcomed by a Swedish admiral who said he was very impressed with the young people he met.

With a very sad goodbye we boarded our separate flights home.

But we have made lasting friendships and had experiences we will all never forget.

ISCA is a fantastic experience. It is a world-wide scheme that teaches values and lessons



Sea and Naval Cadets from Australia, England, Sweden, Canada, the United States and Russia pitch camp with the aid of the Big Pink Bus in Sweden.

Stockholm for three days on the island of Lungo.

Lungo hosts about 100 Swedish cadets. The Swedish cadets learn navigation using naval work boats and they have sailing dinghies and yachts. Lungo is surrounded by other islands making it a great place for navigation training and very sheltered for dingy sailing.

We sailed with the Swedish cadets and ate meals and shared stories with our hosts. All the

ful lakeside caravan parks, and in the camping area with a tarp roof cover on top of the bus. All the cadets slept in relative comfort.

The tour included seeing a 16th century copper mine with dugout caves as big as basketball stadiums.

We said goodbye to the Pink Bus after three days of touring at the Swedish Navy base, Karlskrona. We stayed at a 18th century fort which pre-



ABOVE: Cadet CPO Jeremy Bray makes a presentation to LEUT Jonas Kindoren that includes a sign, unfamiliar in the Gulf of Bothnia or the Baltic Sea, warning against swimming because of crocodiles.

BELOW: Naval and sea cadets on exchange in Sweden pose with their instructors for a group shot outside the Royal Palace in Stockholm.



that students would not find in books.

It demonstrates that cultures and borders don't make people different.

The young people who

attended now appreciate that, even with language barriers, relationships and friendships can still be very strong. And these lessons will stay with these young people forever.