

Stories from the Honour Boards

Stories of those who served and are remembered on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church

Booklet Number 59

IAN CHESBOROUGH ROSE MACDONALD 1900 - 1937



Charles Dixon's painting of HMS Cardiff leading the surrendered German Fleet

This booklet remains the property of Saint Andrew's Uniting Church.
Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

Commander I C R Macdonald, RN

Ian Chesborough Rose Macdonald was born at Hamilton, Brisbane on 30 September 1900, youngest child of Alexander Rose Macdonald, Under-Secretary, Department of Mines in Brisbane, and Nancy née Armitage. Mr and Mrs Macdonald were communicant members of Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Brisbane. Ian attended Brisbane Grammar School in 1913 and entered the Royal Australian Naval College at Geelong in 1914. After he had been there a year, the naval college was transferred to Jervis Bay where he completed the remaining three years of his initial officer course.

He left for England in 1917 and was appointed Midshipman on HMS *Agincourt*. He served with the Grand Fleet till the end of the First World War and was present at the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet on 21 November 1918 in the Firth of Forth. He returned to Australia as a Sub-Lieutenant on HMAS *Melbourne* in May 1919. He served on various ships in Australian waters and successfully completed courses required for promotion from rank to rank. He achieved distinction by winning the Jackson Everett Prize awarded to the outstanding member of the class of officers from all Empire navies undergoing advanced signals courses in England. On returning to Australia he was Flag Lieutenant and Squadron Signal and Wireless Telegraphy Officer to Rear-Admiral Edward Evans, CB, DSO, RN. Later he was attached to the Navy Office as Assistant to the Director of Signals and Communications and while serving in this capacity was appointed Commander in 1935.

Cover Illustration. *Midshipman Ian Macdonald was present at the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet at Rosyth in the Firth of Forth. The fleet was then moved to Scapa Flow in the Orkney Islands where it was scuttled.*

He left again for England and was stationed with the Royal Navy on the China Coast. He returned to Australia in July 1936 and was serving as Executive Officer and Second-in-Command of HMAS *Sydney* when he became ill and died at the Lister Hospital, Sydney on 15 December 1937.

Aged only 37 years, Commander Macdonald was one of the most capable officers of the Australian Navy. He left a widow, formerly Miss Gertrude Courtney Dix. A service with full naval honours was conducted at Darlinghurst and his funeral was held in Brisbane the following day. He is buried in a Macdonald Family grave at Toowong Cemetery.

Select Bibliography

Archives, Brisbane Grammar School, *The Golden Book*

National Archives of Australia, navy records

Saint Andrew's Presbyterian Church Annual Reports 1901-1925 Saint

Andrew's Uniting Church Archives, Brisbane

Commonwealth Navy Orders, 15 February 1939

The Courier-Mail, 16 Dec 1937; 8 June 1939

The Argus, 16 Dec 1937

The Sydney Morning Herald, 16 Dec 1937

"Macdonald, Alexander Rose (1845-1931)", *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 5, MUP, 1974

Queensland Register of Births

Compiled by N E Adsett, Brisbane, May 2015



Lest we forget