

Naomi Sinclair's Story:

"From that awful day 7th December 1951, when Legacy stepped in and looked after me and my 14-week old son Roger, Legacy and London Legacy has been there in the background. Always at Christmas, they remembered us. When I needed some method of augmenting my pension they gave me the money to buy a sewing machine and I was able to do dressmaking etc. which was a great help.

As for my husband, Sub Lt. Richard Roslyn Sinclair RAN, he was born in Perth W.A. on 14th May 1929. He attended Hale School Perth and he was a middle distance runner who did very well. His two older brothers had both served in the RAAF as bomber pilots during the 2nd World War. His father served in the 1st World War and they had all returned home safely.

Dick joined the RAN in 1948 to train as a fighter pilot for whom he was sent to England and, in March 1950, we met in HMS Garnet at Eglinton Co. Derry as an aircraft engine mechanic in the WRENS. We were the missing halves of each other and we married on June 3 1950. His time over in the UK was up in July that year and, after much begging and pleading, we were fortunate enough to get berths on the same ship, RMS Orcades, arriving in Fremantle in August 1950, where he received orders to stay on board and proceed to Melbourne and Point Cook, leaving me with his parents and brothers in Perth.

He returned to Perth at the end of August on two weeks leave. Then he had to return to Point Cook, for training in how to become an officer, having been raised from P4 to Sub Lt.

I then followed him across the Nullabor Plains taking three trains by myself for the 3 day, 3,000 miles trip. From there it was a room in Frankston, south of Melbourne, before my husband was posted to Sydney. I followed again and we were a month there. Then we went to Nowra, south of Sydney on the coast, to a caravan in December.

In March 1951, he was told that HMAS Sydney was going to Korea for 6 months to relieve HMS Glory. From that time he was on board much of the time training on Sea Furies. By then I was pregnant and our child was due on the 18th of August that year, the day that Dick came home on embarkation leave and when we moved into our first married quarters. The baby however had other ideas and did not put in an appearance until 2.20am on Tuesday the 28th of August, 1951, 10 days late. Dick had said goodbye at 10.30 am on Thursday the 30th. He never saw his son again.



(Naomi now and inset: With Roger as a baby).

Sadly, he was killed in action aged 22 on the 7th of December, 1951. He was heavily strafed and forced to bail out only to hit his head on the tail of his Sea Fury, his body was recovered and a burial service was held on HMAS Sydney that day. In the letter he wrote the day before he died, he said he was very frustrated at that point as they had just been told that instead of going straight back to Sydney as planned; they would be escorting Princess Elizabeth on her proposed 1951 tour of Australia.

However, the King died the day before I left Australia to return home to live and I do not think that tour ever happened. Sorry if I've bored you with this but it is the background into which Legacy and later London Legacy stepped in. I have never forgotten the verse Dr Morrison told me in 1951 - To you, from failing hands we throw the torch. Be yours to lift it high. If ye break faith with us who die we shall not sleep though poppies grow in Flanders fields. Australian Legacy and London Legacy have not broken faith and I am grateful – 80 years old now and still grateful. Thank you all. God Bless Naomi Sinclair

Many past and present London Legacy Legatees served on HMAS SYDNEY III - Lindsay Birrell 1956, John Gwilt 1964/66, the late David Woodcroft 1964/66, Trevor Rieck in the 70's and John Hill 1980 to name just a few hence our heightened interest in Naomi's story.

It's what London Legacy is all about hence we thanked present at our Annual Reception tonight at Australia House who have supported us financially so that we can give support to Australian War Widows in countries away from Australia but mainly in the UK

The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) presents a bereavement pin to a close family member them to have a tangible yet discrete memento of their loved one who lost their life in the service of the nation. The Navy Bereavement Pin is a symbol of commemoration to the life and service of a loved one who was lost to them.

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