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TUESDAY, 27<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 1970

## State Intelligence

### HONOURS AND AWARDS

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF  
THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.  
27th January 1970.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased, on the advice of Her Majesty's Australian Ministers, to give orders for the following appointment to the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire:

*To be an Additional Member of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order, for Gallantry:*

(To be dated 22nd January 1970)

Lieutenant Commander Colin John PATTERSON,  
Royal Australian Navy.

For distinguished conduct and gallantry in rescue operations at sea following the collision between H.M.A.S. Melbourne and the American destroyer U.S.S. Frank E. Evans on 3rd June 1969.

At the time of the collision at 0315 on 3rd June 1969, Lieutenant Commander Patterson was on the flightdeck preparing for flying operations which were scheduled in the normal course for 0330. After being alerted by the sounding of the ship's sirens and the piping of hands to collision stations, he had fire hoses rigged forward with a minimum delay despite the danger of flying debris after impact.

He followed the after section of the U.S.S. Frank E. Evans as it drifted past H.M.A.S. Melbourne's starboard side and when it came to rest on the quarter, he immediately had cargo nets rigged from the flight deck. He then led a group of his men on to the after section of the destroyer to direct the evacuation of survivors. After getting the evacuation under way, and regardless of personal risk, he conducted a search of the internal compartments of the stricken ship. Having satisfied himself that all survivors were clear of the U.S.S. Frank E. Evans he ordered his men to return to the carrier, cast off the lines which secured the "Frank E. Evans" to the

"Melbourne" and then returned on board to continue supervision of flight deck operations.

Throughout this whole period he displayed outstanding qualities of leadership and courage. His gallant actions were an inspiration to all under his command and contributed materially to the success of the rescue operations.

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF  
THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

St. James's Palace, London S.W.1.  
27th January 1970.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased, on the advice of Her Majesty's Australian Ministers, to approve the award of the Air Force Cross to the under-mentioned:

(To be dated 22nd January 1970)

Lieutenant Commander Desmond Noel RODGERS,  
Royal Australian Navy.

For distinguished conduct in rescue operations at sea following the collision between H.M.A.S. Melbourne and the American destroyer U.S.S. Frank E. Evans on 3rd June 1969.

Lieutenant Commander Rodgers was the Commanding Officer of 817 Squadron (Wessex Helicopter aircraft) embarked in H.M.A.S. Melbourne. At the time of the collision he was airborne and immediately started search and rescue operations.

Lieutenant Commander Rodgers displayed outstanding leadership, airmanship, and physical endurance during the fifteen and one quarter hours the squadron was engaged in the search and rescue operations for survivors. He personally flew for all but a few hours of this period.

His helicopter was not only one of the first over the scene of the collision but also winched from the water the last U.S.N. survivor.

His personal example contributed greatly to the maximum effort sustained by the squadron and to the success of the rescue operations overall.