

THE TEDDY SHEEAN STORY

No RAN person has received a VC. 50 VC's were awarded to RN personnel in WW I and 23 in WW II.

Teddy Sheean on HMAS ARMIDALE was the youngest at 18 and the most junior rank – an ordinary seaman and a loader for the OERLIKON anti-aircraft gun. The ship was attacked by 13 Japanese planes attacking from different directions. Two torpedoes hit the ship and the order was given to abandon ship. Teddy helped launch the motorboat then decided to stop the Japanese who were strafing his mates in the water.

The Navy recognized him by naming a COLLINS class submarine HMAS SHEEAN.

The chief of Navy Vice Admiral Michael Noonan AO (RAN) words best describe the actions of Teddy Sheean to support the awarding of the VC.



“Sheean independently decided to forgo his opportunity at survival by not abandoning ship but rather returning to the gun. Despite being wounded enroute, he strapped himself in to shoulder mounts and harness, potentially giving up any chance of survival, and commenced firing the gun at the enemy, shooting down one aircraft and possibly damaging others whilst also attempting to disrupt and distract the enemy aircraft from strafing and killing his defenceless shipmates in the water. He sacrificed his life trying to save his shipmates and despite his severe and possibly fatal wounds he continued firing the gun as the ship slipped under the waves dragging him with it to his grave. Sheean’s actions on that day, 1 December 1942, were absolutely amongst the most conspicuous and most gallant we’ve seen in our Navy.”

