

HMAS *Broome* – J191



Namesake: Town of Broome WA
Builder: Evans Deakin & Company
Laid down: 3 May 1941
Launched: 6 October 1941
Commissioned: 29 July 1942
Decommissioned: 24 August 1946

Battle honours: Pacific 1942-45
 New Guinea 1942-44

Fate:
 Paid off on 24 August 1946, was sold to the Turkish Navy and renamed Alanya. The vessel left Turkish service in 1975.[3] The ship's bell was recovered before the sale, and returned to Broome. It was presented to the Broome Road Board in June 1952, who then passed the bell on to Broome State School in November. The bell later ended up at the town's Returned and Services League club.



Class & type: Bathurst-class corvette
Displacement: 650 tons (standard), 1,025 tons (full war load)
Length: 186 ft (57 m)
Beam: 31 ft (9.4 m)
Draught: 8.5 ft (2.6 m)
Propulsion: triple expansion engine, 2 shafts
Speed: 15 knots (28 km/h; 17 mph) at 1,750 hp
Complement: 85
Armament: 1 × 4-inch gun, 3 × Oerlikons, Machine guns, Depth charges chutes and throwers

Ordered for the British Admiralty and commissioned by RAN, HMAS *Broome* was laid down at Evans, Deakin & Co Ltd, Brisbane, Queensland on 3 May 1941. She was launched on 6 October 1941 by Mrs MJ McKew, the wife of the ship builder's works manager and was the first RAN warship to carry the name of the coastal, pearling and tourist town in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, 2240 kilometres north of Perth.



Mrs MJ McKew christens Broome at her launching on 6 October 1941.

Broome commissioned at Brisbane on 29 July 1942 under the command of Lieutenant Commander Ronald Alexander Denovan RANVR.



The ship remained in the builder's hands until accepted by the Royal Australian Navy on 19 August 1942, and on 25 August sailed for Sydney to complete fitting out.



Broome Minesweeping Trials 1942

Broome commenced her operational service on 19 October 1942 when she joined a Sydney to Brisbane convoy off Newcastle. She parted from the convoy off Moreton Bay and proceeded to Townsville and then to Cairns. Until mid-November 1942 the ship was engaged on anti-submarine patrols and escort duties in the North Queensland area, when she transferred to New Guinea waters for similar work in the Port Moresby and Milne Bay areas.



Troops from the 2/9th Battalion AIF on the quarterdeck of Broome, en route from Milne Bay to the Buna Area, 14 December 1942. (AJ Davies, AWM 305243)

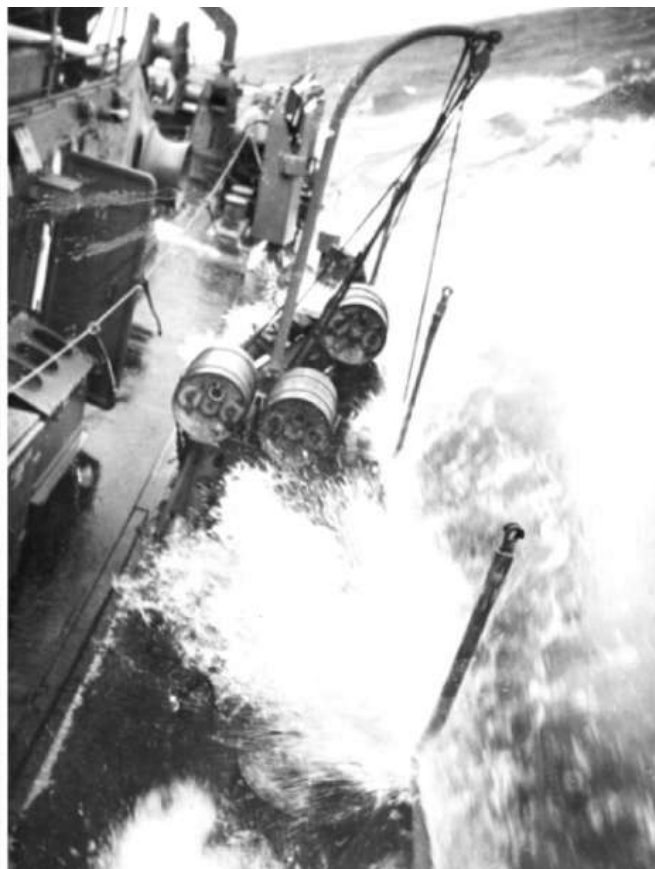
In December 1942 *Broome* and her sister ships *Ballarat* and *Colac* were detailed to transport Australian troops and land them as far forward as possible in the Buna area. The three vessels reached the landing point at Cape Sudest near Oro Bay without incident, but a few minutes later unidentified aircraft began dropping flares.

Because of the threat of attack from enemy aircraft and from enemy warships believed to be in the area it was decided to retire temporarily after only 46 men had disembarked out of a total of 762. Later the same day (14 December) the operation was successfully completed using a new landing position and under cover of darkness all troops were put safely ashore.

In January 1943 *Broome* returned to Australia where she spent a month based on Townsville before resuming escort duties. From 8 February 1943, when she sailed from Townsville for Port Moresby, until mid-May, she was constantly in service escorting convoys between Townsville and Milne Bay.

Japanese submarines were very active in Australian waters during this period and merchant ships were sunk, but neither *Broome* nor any of the ships in her convoys were attacked.





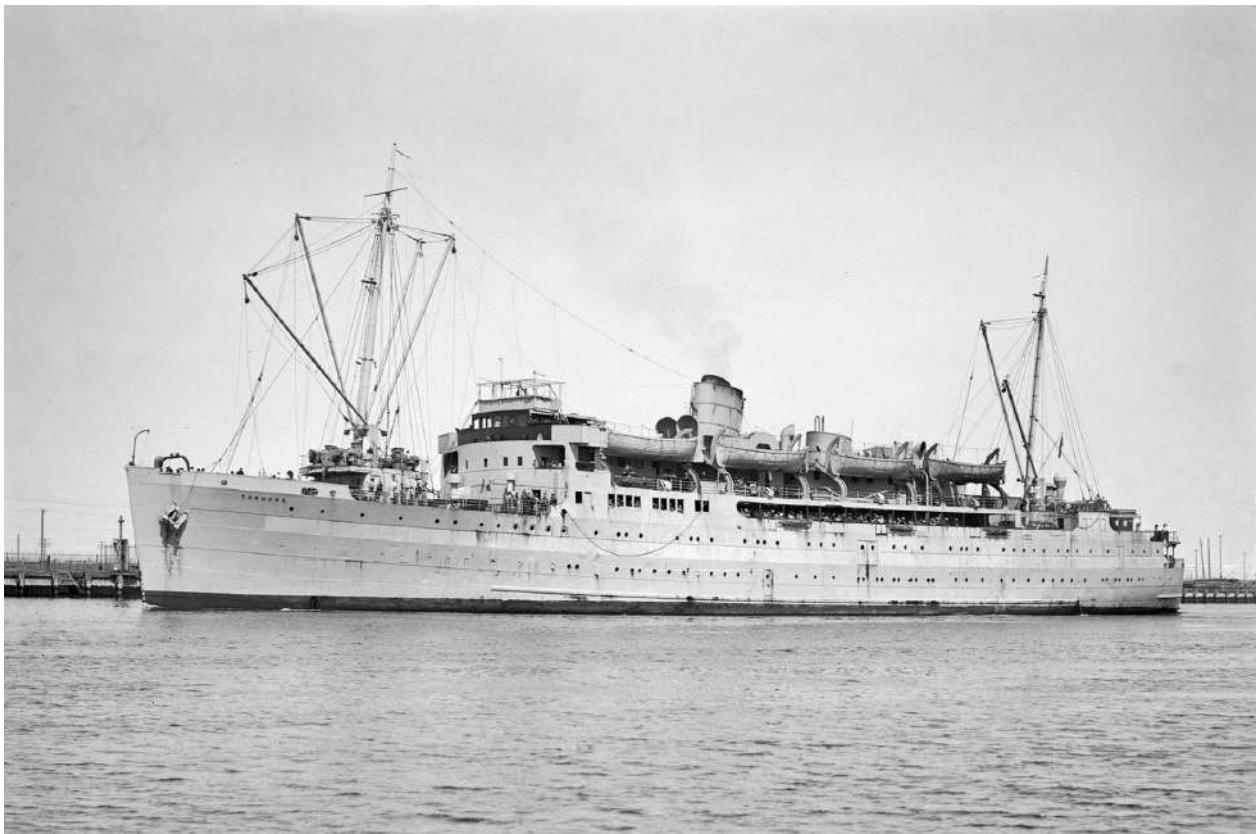
HMAS Broome in heavy weather in the Coral Sea 2 Jan 1943. (L: AWM 041290, R: AWM 304516)



HMAS Broome in heavy weather in the Coral Sea 2 Jan 1943. (Left: AWM 041288)

14 February 1943 *Broome* towed SS *Coorabie* off a reef in Collingwood Bay. At Milne Bay 5 May 1943, troop transport MV *Taroona* grounded off Lyle Wharf. *Broome* attached towing wire and pulled her off.





MV Taroona



On 26 May 1943, *Broome* returned to Sydney after an absence of seven months. Following a major refit she was assigned, in July 1943, as an escort vessel on the east coast of Australia, mainly between Sydney and Brisbane. In December 1943 she resumed escort of convoys proceeding between Queensland ports and Milne Bay, which kept her busy for most of the first half of 1944. On December 26 1943 at Milne Bay, *Broome* attempted to free US tanker *Pueblo* from Doraisai Shoal, but was unsuccessful.

In December 1944, *Broome* was assigned to New Guinea waters for escort and patrol work, operating as far north as Morotai Island in the Halmaheras. This period witnessed the final defeat of the Japanese in New Guinea and except for mopping up operations, the end of the Allied campaign in that theatre of war.





A lugger laden with fresh fruit comes alongside Broome as members of the ship's company prepare to receive a mooring rope, circa 1944.



Broome, circa 1944, by which time she had been equipped with Type 271 Radar

In January 1945 *Broome* returned to Australia for refit and then, after further service in New Guinea in the Mios Woendi, Noemfoor and Morotai area, proceeded to Darwin in late March 1945 where she joined the Royal Australian Navy Survey Group. After a month on survey duties in the Darwin area she proceeded to Fremantle, then to Adelaide for refit, and finally to Sydney at the close of June 1945. Her arrival there completed *Broome's* circumnavigation of Australia. She had steamed 96,000 miles since commissioning.

In July 1945 *Broome* again returned to New Guinea for further escort and anti-submarine patrol duties. Shortly before the end of hostilities she visited Morotai, Borneo and the Philippines. When hostilities ceased on 15 August 1945 the ship was at sea on escort duty, en route from Zamboanga in the Philippines to Morotai.

After returning to the Philippines *Broome* commenced preparations for mine-sweeping duty in Hong Kong where she arrived on 30 August.

In company with the ships of the Royal Australian Navy Mine-sweeping Flotillas, she carried out clearance sweeps, survey duties and anti-piracy patrols. Returning to Morotai on 17 October 1945, she was subsequently engaged in ferrying troops and stores in the Moluccas and searching the islands of Banda, Toel and Kai for signs of missing aircraft.

On 29 December 1945 arrived at Darwin and sailed three days later for her namesake town, which she visited on 4 and 5 January 1946. On 10 January she arrived at Fremantle, bringing her wartime service to a close. She had steamed 109,869 miles.



On the slipway April 1945

In mid-April 1946 *Broome* was paid off and recommissioned into the Royal Navy. On 8 May 1946 the ship sailed from Fremantle for Colombo en route to Istanbul.

She arrived on 22 August 1946 and two days later was officially handed over to the Turkish Navy and renamed *Alanya*. *Alanya* was classified as a corvette (logistic support ship), and was decommissioned from the Turkish Navy in 1975.



Alanya



HMAS *Broome*'s ship's bell

Broome's ship's bell was removed as a relic before transfer to Turkey.

The bell was landed at the town of Broome from HMAS *Mildura* on 20 May 1952 and presented to the Broome Road Board by His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia on 29 June 1952.

The Board presented the bell to the Broome State School on 7 November 1952, and it now hangs at the Returned Services' League in Broome.