


HMAS Toowoomba – J157/B257/A124



<p>Namesake: City of Toowoomba, QLD</p> <p>Builder: Walkers Limited</p> <p>Laid down: 6 August 1940</p> <p>Launched: 26 March 1941</p> <p>Commissioned: 9 October 1941</p> <p>Decommissioned: 5 July 1946</p> <p>Motto: "Fearless"</p> <p>Battle honours:</p> <p>Pacific 1942</p> <p>Indian Ocean 1942–44</p> <p>Fate: Transferred to RNN</p> <p>Netherlands</p> <p>Name: Boeroe</p> <p>Commissioned: 5 July 1946</p> <p>Out of service: 1958</p> <p>Fate: Removed from service</p>		<p>Displacement: 650 tons (standard), 1,025 tons (full war load)</p> <p>Length: 186 ft (57 m)</p> <p>Beam: 31 ft (9.4 m)</p> <p>Draught: 8.5 ft (2.6 m)</p> <p>Propulsion: triple expansion engine, 2 shafts</p> <p>Speed: 15 knots (28 km/h; 17 mph) at 1,750 hp</p> <p>Complement: 85</p> <p>Armament:</p> <p>1 × 4-inch gun (later replaced by 1 × 12-pounder gun)</p> <p>then reinstalled)</p> <p>3 × 20 mm Oerlikons (later 2)</p> <p>1 × 40 mm Bofors (installed later)</p> <p>Machine guns</p> <p>Depth charges</p> <p>chutes and throwers</p>
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Ordered for the British Admiralty and commissioned by RAN, HMAS *Toowoomba* was laid down at the Walkers Yard, Maryborough, Queensland on 9 August 1940. She was launched by Mrs CW Lowther, wife of a Walkers Ltd employee on 23 March 1941.



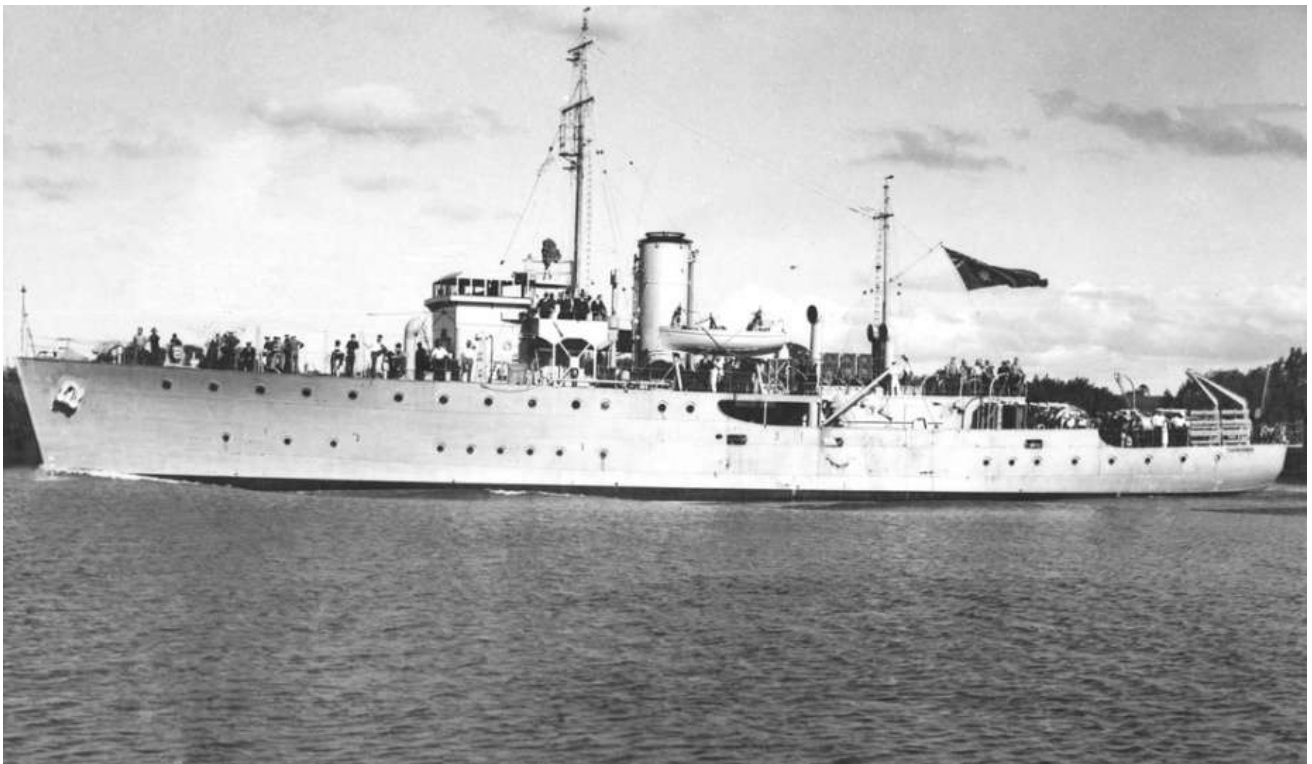
Toowoomba on the slipway prior to her launch on 23 March 1941.



Toowoomba sliding down the ways on 21 March 1941 at the Walkers Yard, Maryborough, Queensland.



Mrs Lowther, wife of a Walkers Ltd employee, pictured above holding a bouquet of flowers, was the launching lady for Toowoomba.



Toowoomba leaving harbour to conduct acceptance trials. Note the Red Ensign flying from her mainmast indicating that she is still in the hands of the builders.

Following acceptance trials *Toowoomba* commissioned at Brisbane on 9 October 1941 under the command of Lieutenant Commander Paul H Hirst, RAN (Emergency List).



Right to left: Toowoomba's submarine detector rating Syd Dodge with Signalman Will Haynes and Telegraphist Geoff Brooks during shore leave in Victoria, 30 November 1941. (AWM P02435.030)

The ship departed Brisbane for Sydney on 10 October, arriving on 12 October, after which she was employed on convoy escort duty on the Australian coast. In January 1942 she proceeded to Batavia in company with her sister ships HMA Ships Ballarat and Wollongong. During the remaining two months of the disastrous Malaya/Java campaign *Toowoomba* was almost constantly at sea. On passage from Singapore to Palembang early in February 1942, *Toowoomba* and Ballarat came under heavy bombing by five Japanese aircraft, which were repulsed by gun fire after *Toowoomba* had sustained slight damage.

In the final stages of the Malaya fighting, the ship arrived at Batavia on 14 February (the day before Singapore fell) in company with the destroyer HMS *Jupiter* and escorting four tankers.

Following the collapse of resistance to the Japanese forces in the Netherlands East Indies, *Toowoomba*, her sister ship HMAS *Maryborough* (I) and the Dutch merchant ship *Gernraal Verspyck* entered Fremantle Harbour on 10 March. Thus all the ships of the 21st Minesweeping Flotilla, of which *Toowoomba* was a member, had safely returned to Australia after a series of desperate rear-guard actions.

From March until November the ship remained in Australian waters on escort duties in the south and south western area. On 23 November 1942 she departed Fremantle to join the British Eastern Fleet.

On joining the Eastern Fleet in December, *Toowoomba* began a period of service which ranged widely over the Indian Ocean on convoy escort and patrol work. Her service included duty in the Persian Gulf.



HMAS Toowoomba carried two mascots on board during World War II. Left: Digger. Right: A memorial service for the passing of Tiddles.

The British Pacific Fleet was formed on 22 November 1944. The fleet included two flotillas of Bathurst Class minesweepers; the 21st Minesweeping Flotilla (reconstituted on 1 December 1944), of which *Toowoomba* was a member; and the 22nd Minesweeping Flotilla. Although built as minesweepers the ships of the Bathurst Class did comparatively little sweeping.

The exigencies of war dictated that they were to be occupied mainly in convoy escort, anti-submarine patrols and various other duties, for which they were not always ideally suited.



L-R: HMA Ships Toowoomba, Lismore, Burnie and Maryborough nested at Ceylon, Colombo in November 1944.



HMAS Toowoomba as she appeared late in the war. Note the addition of radar enclosed in what was known as the 'lantern' at the rear of her bridge.

Toowoomba returned to Fremantle on 3 December 1944 to undergo a refit following her service with the Eastern Fleet. The refit was completed in mid-March 1945 and the ship sailed for Manus Island in the Admiralty Group, via Melbourne and Townsville, on 16 March. The remainder of the war saw the ship engaged in convoy escort duties and anti-submarine patrols, operating between Australia and New Guinea.



Lieutenant Commander Harold Frank Goodwin, RANVR was Commanding Officer of HMAS Toowoomba from May-December 1945.

The end of hostilities came on 15 August 1945 and on 21 September *Toowoomba* arrived at Hong Kong. She was soon busily engaged in minesweeping in the area and also carried out surveys of Hong Kong and Swatow Harbours.



Two of *Toowoomba*'s ship's company are commemorated on the Roll of Honour at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

Toowoomba returned to Australia in December 1945.

Telegraph (Brisbane) Mon 3 Dec 1945:**Plane Picks Up Patient From Ship**

Melbourne: In a dramatic but unsuccessful effort to save the life of an Australian naval signalman he was transferred in midocean from his ship to a flying-boat. He was Signalman Nott, of Tasmania. He died in Darwin on Saturday from peritonitis following appendicitis. Nott was transferred at sea hundreds of miles from Darwin from the corvette HMAS *Toowoomba* to an RAAF Catalina flying-boat and was flown to a hospital at Darwin.

The Naval Information section said today that the *Toowoomba* was proceeding to Brisbane via Thurs day Island. She was a unit of the 21st Minesweeping Flotilla of the Royal Australian corvettes which had been working with the British Pacific fleet off the coast of China. A week ago the *Toowoomba* signalled that she had a case- of suspected appendicitis on board and gave her position as just east of Aru Island, about 500 miles from Darwin. She was ordered to Darwin at top speed so that a Catalina flying-boat could be sent if the patient's condition became worse. At 8 o'clock next morning Nott was transferred to the Catalina, which landed in the wake of the corvette after having flown most of the night. The patient was dangerously ill at Darwin and died on Saturday.

Naval authorities at Darwin sent the following signal to air operations (north-eastern area) ' Your ready co-operation and efficient execution of the task involved in the removal of a dangerously ill patient from the *Toowoomba* at sea are very much appreciated.

On 11 December the Commanding Officer, the First Lieutenant and fifty sailors of the ship's company paid an enjoyable visit to the city of *Toowoomba* in south east Queensland, after which the ship had been named.

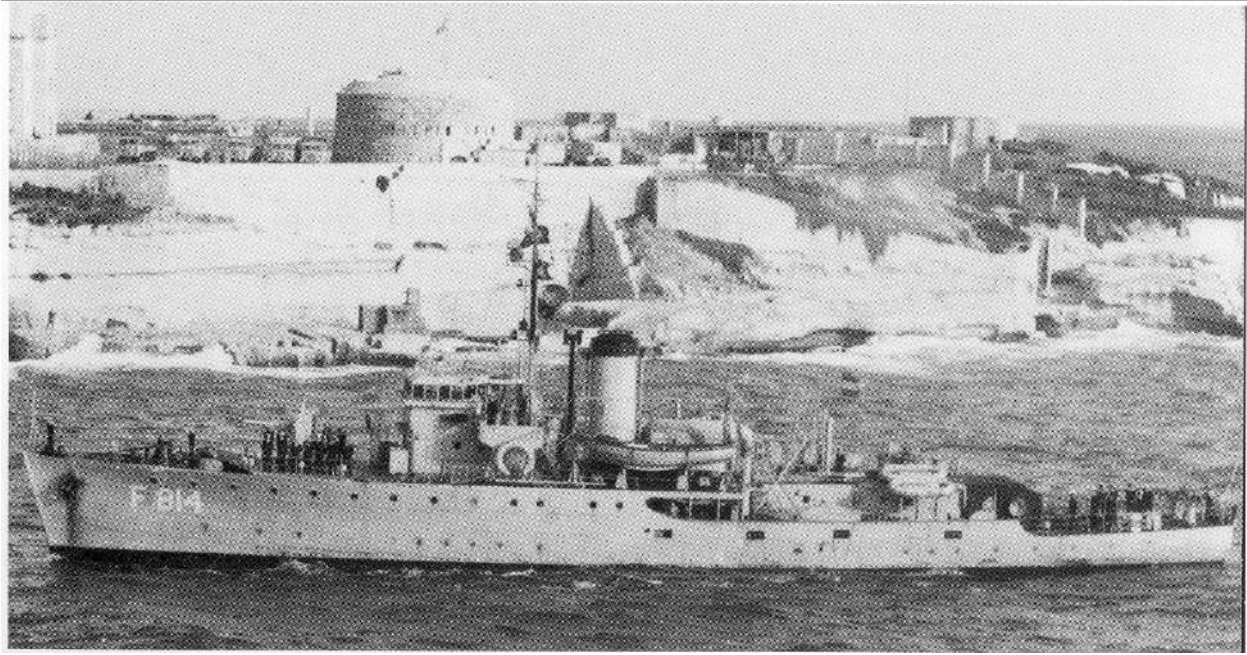
On 4 June 1946 *Toowoomba*, in company with her sister ships HMA Ships *Burnie* and *Ipswich* departed Brisbane for Trincomalee, Ceylon

On 5 July 1946 at Colombo the three ships paid off and were transferred to the Royal Netherlands Navy. *Toowoomba* was renamed *Boeroe*. During her RAN commission the ship had steamed over 100,000 miles



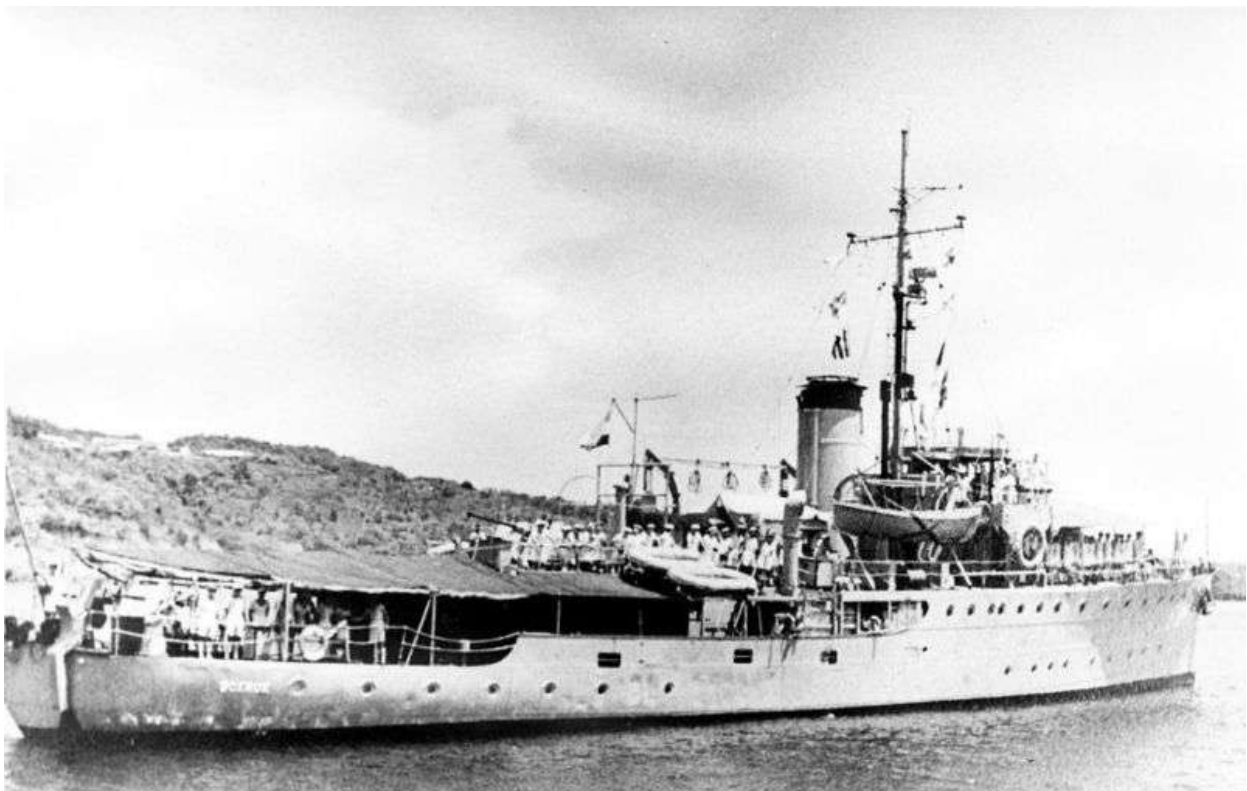
H.M.A.S. TOOWOOMBA

Toowoomba departed on 5 July for Sabang on Sumatra for Tandjongpriok where she arrived on 18 July and was renamed *Hr.Ms. Boeroe*.



Hr.Ms Boeroe Malta Habrour 1946

After *Boeroe* had participated in the fighting against Indonesian nationalists till end 1949 the ship became the first ship-on-station in Dutch New-Guinea. In 1952 *Hr.Ms Boeroe* was relieved by *Hr.Ms. Ternate* and the corvette left for the Netherlands. After a large maintenance check the ship was deployed in Dutch waters as a patrol boat and police cruiser. During Netherlands service carried the pendant numbers B251, MV26, PK6, P11, M814, F814, A871.



Boeroe was removed from the effective list of the Royal Netherlands Navy in 1958 and in September 1961 was sold to be scrapped.