

Basic Detail Report



00028281

Title

Captain Bill Reynolds officer's cap

Date

1917-1942

Primary Maker

Army and Navy Stores Limited

Medium

Serge, leather, gilt wire

Dimensions

Overall: 130 x 285 x 265 mm, 0.35 kg

Name

Cap

History

Originally a fishing vessel named KOFUKU MARU, KRAIT was built in 1934 in Japan and collected fish from fishermen and ports around the Rhio Archipelago, transporting the catch to markets in Singapore. In early World War II the vessel was confined to port and was used by Captain Bill Reynolds to evacuate hundreds of civilians to Sumatra and rescue survivors of ships sunk along the coastline of Sumatra and Malaya. It was renamed KRAIT, a deadly species of snake, and soon was central to the highly successful covert Operation Jaywick in September 1943. Under the cover of darkness and disguised as a Japanese fishing vessel, it took 14 men, 5 British and 9 Australian commandos and Z Special Force personnel, to within 20 miles of Japanese occupied Singapore undetected. Three pairs of operatives in folboats (folding canoes) used limpet mines to blow up and damage seven Japanese tankers and freighters, totalling 37,000 tonnes. A few days later the raiders and KRAIT met the rendezvous point successfully and all members of the unit were returned safely. It was commissioned HMAS KRAIT in 1944. After the war KRAIT was sold to a British saw miller for the Borneo timber trade and was renamed PEDANG (Sword). In the late 1950s two Australians, in Borneo for a business trip, recognised the vessel and set up a public appeal and trust fund to purchase the vessel. It returned to Australia in 1964 and was operated by the Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol. In 1985 it was transferred to the Australian War Memorial and restoration work was completed by the Sydney Maritime Museum to return it to its wartime appearance. It has been on display at the Australian National Maritime Museum since 1988 and is the focal point for an annual Remembrance Day ceremony.