

Basic Detail Report



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Title

Navy Sea League Cadets with signal flags at Snapper Island in Sydney

Date

20 July 1935

Primary Maker

Samuel J Hood Studio

Medium

Emulsion on glass

Name

Glass plate negative

History

Snapper Island, Sydney Harbour's smallest island, was declared a public recreation reserve in 1879. In 1913, the Royal Australian Navy assumed control over the island as part of its jurisdiction over nearby Cockatoo Island. In 1930, Leonard E Forsythe convinced the Australian Government to lease him the island so that he could convert it into a training depot for naval cadets. About 50 boys were recruited as Navy Sea League Cadets to work on the island and convert it into a land-based ship. Over the next few months, around 1,000 tonnes of rock was blasted away in order to flatten the island. The stone walls of the island were also sculpted in the shape of a ship, facing the suburb of Drummoyne. The cadets also used parts from HMAS SYDNEY I which they salvaged when it was stripped at Cockatoo Island in 1932. Forsythe's vision was that the island would be a national memorial to the town class cruiser. On 20 July 1935, Federal Minister for Defence Sir Robert Archdale Parkhill conducted an inspection of the island and the Navy Sea League Cadets and awarded the cadets badges for their part in transforming the island.