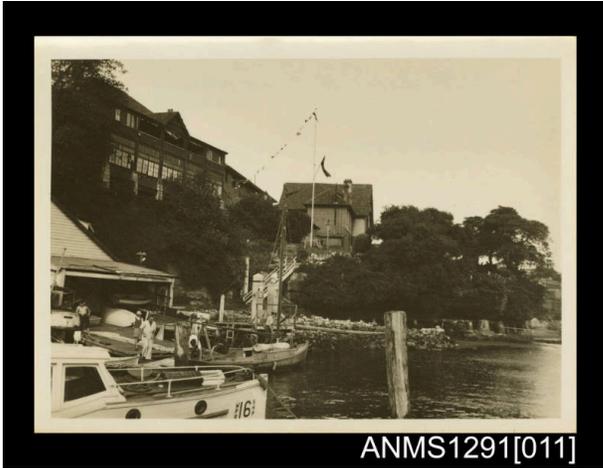# Basic Detail Report

ANMS1291[011]

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Title
Photograph depicting the DAYDREAM I and the buildings Seahorse Depot and Craig Nathan Headquarters

Date
1941- 1942

Medium
Silver gelatin print

Dimensions
Image: 109 x 155 mm Overall: 121 x 165 mm

Name
Photograph

History
Robert P R Drummond was a member of the Volunteer Coastal Patrol. He was owner and skipper of TALASEA in the 1950s and participated in many patrols with fellow members. Bob was awarded his examination certificate which included section 6 navigation and was awarded the rank of Skipper, by appointment Divisional Skipper. The Volunteer Coastal Patrol, the oldest voluntary sea rescue organisation in Australia, was established on 27 March 1937. It evolved from discussions between Royal Navy Captain Maurice Blackwood and Harold Nobbs and Bill Giles, who believed that an organisation of volunteer yachtsmen would be beneficial in a country with a 12,000 nautical mile coastline. Their ideas were presented to Commander Rupert Long, Director of Naval Intelligence, who made recommendations to the Naval Board concerning the establishment of the VCP. The Naval Board agreed to the concept and the organisation was formed from a nucleus of 12 boat owners. The VCP's objectives were to bring together yachtsmen and those interested in small ships and encourage them to undergo a course of training so that their services would be of value to the authorities in rescue situations, and to train and educate these yachtsmen so that Australia's waterways could be made safer for those who ventured upon them in small craft. The VCP was organised at two levels, consisting of National headquarters and individual divisions with two parallel arms directing the administration and operations of the organisation. Instructors were drawn mainly from naval personnel to provide training in necessary operational manoeuvres. The visual signal section in particular reached a very high standard. When World War II was declared in 1939, members of the Patrol affirmed their desire to serve their country as a volunteer service, assisting the Royal Australian Navy, Australian Army, Water Police and Maritime Services Board in the vital defence of Sydney Harbour. Oil depots, wharves, troopships, dockyards, the State ammunition dump in Bantry Bay and flying-boat base in Rose Bay were all patrolled by the VCP until war's end. In 1940 the Patrol had some 500 vessels and 2,000 members on its register. The Patrol went into camp in 1939 at The Basin, Pittwater

and in early 1941 at Clontarf, to concentrate on training and operational exercises with the Army. The discipline and courses of the VCP were influenced by the association it had with the Navy, Army and Police, forming the basis of the organisation that we know today. On 12 June 1941 the RAN established the voluntary Naval Auxiliary Patrol along the lines of the VCP. Through control of this body, the RAN took over all the autonomous coastal divisions of the VCP, with a view to doing the same with the Port of Sydney division. In 1942, after much bitter debate with the RAN, then Commanding Officer Arthur Morgan and his skippers refused the RAN's terms and conditions for amalgamation, and the VCP ceased its relationship with the Navy and Army. However it maintained its patrol function with the Water Police and was absorbed as an auxiliary to the National Emergency Service Organisation (NES). The VCP continued to operate in the post-war period in a purely voluntary capacity, constituting an important element in national security. Its objectives were rewritten to make the organisation of value to the country in times of emergency as well as peace, by making waterways safer for yachtsmen and by setting an example to all those on the water. In 1974 Her Majesty the Queen bestowed the 'Royal' prefix to the Volunteer Coastal Patrol. While the VCP was originally designed to use properly equipped privately owned vessels, in the 1980s this became unfeasible and the Patrol now owns some 50 vessels.