

# Basic Detail Report

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00045740

## Title

Crossing the Line certificate, Clem Dine, HMAS PERTH, 7 March 1940

## Date

1940

## Primary Maker

Ray Parkin

## Medium

Printing ink on paper

## Dimensions

Sheet: 400 × 293 mm

## Name

Certificate

## History

Crossing the Line certificates are a significant tangible symbol of those ceremonies held to mark a sailor's passage across important geographic parallels and to pay homage to King Neptune to ensure a safe voyage. The certificates are often beautifully coloured with hand-drawn illustrations, resulting in a souvenir that can be displayed as proof of a recipient's ability to endure the hardships of life at sea. Captain Leonard Norman Dine, RAN was born on 11 September 1910 in Randwick NSW, the son of W. Dine of Sydney. He was educated at Randwick Royal Australian Naval College (RANC), Royal Naval Engineering College (RNEC) Keyham England and returned to RANC from 1926-1928 where he won the prizes for Physics and Chemistry. Dine also won the prize for Seamanship. He became a Midshipman in 1929, a Sub-Lieutenant in 1932, Lieutenant in 1933, Lieutenant-Commander in 1941 where he served aboard PERTH, NEPAL, SHROPSHIRE and BATAAN. In 1947, he became a Commander and during 1950 was Department Director Naval Construction and Naval Liaison Staff, London, England. Dine was an Engineer Officer aboard HMS VENGEANCE from 1950-53 and Acting Captain Fleet Engineer Officer to the Australian Fleet during 1954-56 when he then became Captain. Dine was appointed General Manager of HMA Naval Dockyard in Williamstown in Victoria 1957 until 1961 when retired. Leonard Norman Dine died 6 November 1992, aged 81. Dine served as Lieutenant-Commander of HMAS PERTH I during the 1940s. HMAS PERTH I was a light cruiser from the modified Leander class and was originally commissioned as HMS AMPHION at Portsmouth on 15 June 1936. AMPHION spent two years as Flagship of the Africa Station which was based at the Cape of Good Hope. When refitted in early October 1938, AMPHION was fitted with a heavy catapult to accommodate a Seagull V amphibian aircraft along with twin 4-inch anti-aircraft mountings in place of the

original old single guns. Following an agreement between British and Australian Governments, the RAN purchased AMPHION in 1939. On 29 June 1939, the cruiser was commissioned in the RAN at Portsmouth as HMAS PERTH under the command of Captain Harold B. Farncomb MVO RAN. During peacetime, PERTH visited New York to represent Australia at the World's Fair. When war broke out, PERTH was in the West Indies and was ordered to protect the oil tankers operating between Trinidad and Venezuela. PERTH was part of many escort and refuelling duties as well as taking part in the reinforcement of forces before returning to patrol duties. During March 1941, PERTH played a minor role in the Battle of Matapan. On 29 April 1941, PERTH's aircraft was shot down off Suda Bay, Crete, with three of the crew rescued and PERTH damaged. After urgent repairs were carried out in Alexandria, PERTH sailed for Crete to assist with the evacuation of allied troops from the island. During the evacuation it was attacked five times and on 30 May, was hit by a bomb in a boiler room. After repairs, PERTH was relieved by HMAS HOBART and returned to Australia on 12 August 1941 for an extensive refit at Cockatoo Island Dockyard. In February 1942, PERTH sailed for the Java theatre and was attacked by Japanese aircraft without sustaining damage. During the night of 27-28 February, an eleven-ship ABDA (American, British, Dutch and Australian) force engaged Japanese forces in the Battle of the Java Sea, from which only PERTH and USS HOUSTON survived. As PERTH left Tandjung Priok, Indonesia, a large number of Japanese destroyers attacked from all directions. HMAS PERTH escaped from damage until the very end of the action. Four torpedoes were too much for the ship and the vessel heeled over to port and sank at about 0025 on 1 March 1942. Most of the crew abandoned ship between the second and third torpedoes but it is doubtful if any of the boats were successfully launched. During the abandon ship operation, PERTH was under fire from several destroyers at close range and many hits were scored and casualties caused. Many were killed or wounded in the water by the explosion of the last two torpedoes. PERTH's company numbered 681, comprising 671 naval personnel, six RAAF and four civilians. 350 naval personnel and three civilians did not survive the sinking. Four naval personnel died ashore without having been taken prisoner with a further 106 men dying in captivity. Four sailors were recovered from captivity in September 1944 after the sinking of a Japanese transport. After the end of hostilities, 214 men (211 naval, two RAAF and one civilian) were repatriated to Australia.