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NEWSLETTER

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A theme has emerged this month of destroyers getting destroyed...

In Which We Serve

The 1942 film *In Which We Serve*, starring and directed by Noel Coward (with more than a little help from David Lean) is one of the better wartime films. It tells, through the flashbacks of its surviving crew members, the story of the destroyer HMS Torrin, from its pre-war commissioning through to its sinking by dive bombers in the Battle of Crete.

Made as a British propaganda piece in what is now a very dated stiff-upper-lip style, it still manages to be both moving and memorable, particularly in the scene where the captain, played by Coward, says farewell to his old crew members. Here understatement only adds to the impact, a point that is all too often lost on modern-day movie makers.



Fletcher Class lost in action

Vince's Fletcher Class destroyer rolled onto its beam ends and sank in February after its props tangled with a plastic bag. Isn't it about time we banned these? (The bags, I mean.)



HMAS Nestor

The Nestor was one of five N Class destroyers (essentially repeats of the successful K Class) that whilst owned by the Royal Navy, was commissioned in 1941 as an Australian ship with an Australian crew. Her sister ships were the Napier, Nizam, Nepal and Norman. *HMAS Nestor in 1941*



Initially serving in the North Atlantic, Nestor took a minor role in the search for the Bismarck before being transferred to the Mediterranean for escort duty. Very much in the thick of the action, she narrowly avoided being torpedoed by an Italian submarine and later by a German U-Boat, but had her revenge on 15th December 1941 when credited with the sinking of the submarine U-127 after dropping a pattern of five depth charges. Following a period of service in the Far East she returned to the Mediterranean in June 1942. It was there, on the 15th, that Nestor's luck ran out.

Straddled by near misses from two bombs dropped by a high level Italian bomber, Nestor suffered a flooded no.1 boiler room and listed to port. As the dynamos were located in the no.1 boiler room, electrical power was lost, followed by the loss of steam pressure when no.2 boiler room flooded. Fire broke out but was brought under control whilst as much top-weight as possible was jettisoned to reduce the list. An attempt was made to tow the ship to Alexandria but this was 250 miles away and with little chance of getting there under darkness, the crew were taken off by HMS Javelin and the ship scuttled.

Plans for the N Class are available from the Naval Historical Society of Australia and would make an attractive model at 1:72 scale (approx. 1500mm long by 150mm wide, 6kg). Images are from the Australian War Musuem, via WikiCommons, nos P00490-005 and AWM-301085.jpg

The final minutes of the Nestor

