



## Wartime Story of the Krait

By David Salt



John Hancox (l) thanks Noel Phelan (r)

Noel Phelan from the Maritime Museum entertained 70 Members and Guests on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September with a fascinating in-depth talk on the history of the “Krait” and the daring raid on shipping in Singapore Harbour during WWII. Noel made you feel that you were there with his detailed descriptions, anecdotes and pictures.

The “Krait” was originally a Japanese fishing vessel based in Singapore called *Kofuku Maru*. Following the outbreak of WWII the ship was taken over by the Allied forces and used to evacuate over 1,100 people from Allied ships sunk along the East Coast of Sumatra. The “Krait” eventually reached Australia in 1942 and was handed over to the Australian Military. In Australian service she was renamed “Krait” after the small but deadly snake.

In September 1943 the “Krait” transported members of Z Special Unit to Singapore in the guise of a Japanese fishing vessel carrying the Japanese flag; there they successfully raided the city's harbour in two kayaks, sinking seven ships totalling 34,000 tonnes with limpet mines. She returned to Australia after eluding Japanese Air and Naval vessels in October. The “Krait” was subsequently used by the Australian military throughout the war and was present at the surrender of the Japanese forces on Ambon in September 1945.



The "Krait" was later used as transport for intelligence gathering missions to islands in the area including Buru, Aru, Ceram, Banda and Saparua. The "Krait" is currently undergoing a total refit and refurbishment back to its original form and will be displayed at the Australian National Maritime Museum for all to see.



Next Cruising Division Presentation will be on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October (NOTE: Change of date from normal meeting) 'Sail the World – Everything you need to know to circumnavigate the Globe' with Erick Reickert. [Book online here](#)