

3 JUNE, 1999 - Sydney, Australia

Today I have the distinct honor to represent all of the Frank E. Evans shipmates and officers who ever served aboard our ship during the three decades of the 40"s, 50"s and 60"s.

I felt an emotional and reflecting mood as I was thinking about what I would say today. We are recalling to our memories the many years in the life of two ships: The HMAS Melbourne and the U.S.S. Frank E. Evans. Two very, very proud ships of the line in both of our navies. In the case ~~of~~ <sup>of</sup> the Frank E. Evans we are remembering twenty five years of a ship on active duty that proudly served her country in many ways when she was called upon. Today we are assembled thirty years after the sinking of the Frank E. Evans with the sorrow and heartaches that has touched the lives of both Australian and American sailors and their families. Were it not for the gallant effort of the sailors on the HMAS Melbourne, the cost in lives would have been far greater. For this, our association thanks you again! SO, let us remember that we are here today to show our respect to those lost on that fateful night thirty years ago, and the ultimate price that those 74 sailors paid! (1)

This week the HMAS Melbourne Association has provided opportunities for all of us to renew friendships and make new acquaintances. Let us use these friendships to make "good memories" from this point forward. Life indeed MUST go on!

With your permission I would like to read a prayer that was given August 29, 1998 at the 7th annual U.S.S. Frank E. Evans Association Reunion in Alexandria, VA. It was written by Sister Dorothy Reilly, who is the sister of survivor Larry Reilly and Aunt of Fireman Lawrence John Reilly, Jr., who was lost with the ship.

**GOD OF THE OCEANS AND SEAS, WE COME TOGETHER THIS DAY TO REMEMBER AND HONOR ALL THOSE WHO SAILED THE SEAS IN THE U.S.S. FRANK E. EVANS FROM HER COMMISSIONING IN 1944 TO HER DECOMMISSIONING IN JULY 1969.**

**WE REMEMBER AND HONOR THE OFFICERS AND MEN WHO SERVED THEIR COUNTRY ABOARD THE EVANS, A QUICK AND POWERFUL DESTROYER, NICKNAMED "THE FIGHTER" ... IN WORLD WAR II, AND IN THE POST WAR YEARS, IN THE KOREAN WAR AND THE VIETNAM CONFLICT.**

**GOD OF THE OCEANS AND SEAS, WE COME TOGETHER,  
OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE EVANS. THEIR FAMILIES AND  
FRIENDS, AND INVITED GUESTS TO REMEMBER AND HONOR  
IN A SPECIAL WAY THE 74 OFFICERS AND MEN WHO GAVE  
THEIR LIVES IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY ON THAT  
FATEFUL DAY OF JUNE 3, 1969. INDEED THERE IS NO  
GREATER LOVE THAN THIS...TO LAY DOWN ONES LIFE FOR  
OTHERS.**

**THESE MEN ARE PERHAPS THE UNSUNG HEROS OF THE  
"SEATO" TASK FORCE, BUT IN THE HEARTS OF THEIR FAMILY,  
FRIENDS, FELLOW OFFICERS AND MEN, THEY ARE INDEED  
HEROES. WE STILL FEEL THEIR LOSS BUT WE KNOW THAT  
THEY WILL ALWAYS BE A PART OF OUR LIVES AND THAT ALL  
THE GOOD THEY HAVE SHARED WILL LIVE ON IN OUR HEARTS.**

**GOD OF THE OCEANS AND SEAS, WE REMEMBER AND HONOR  
THESE 74 MEN AND ALL THOSE WHO SERVED *on* *in* THE U.S.S.  
FRANK E. EVANS. MEN WHO UPHELD, LIVED AND EVEN DIED**



**FOR THOSE IDEALS PROCLAIMED BY OUR ANCESTORS:  
JUSTICE; DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY; COMMON DEFENSE;**

**GENERAL WELFARE; AND THE BLESSINGS OF LIBERTY FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR POSTERITY.**

**IT IS NO WONDER THEN THAT ON THE DAY OF HER DECOMMISSIONING, IT WAS WITH A GREAT DEAL OF PRIDE THAT A TRIBUTE WAS PAID TO THOSE OFFICERS AND MEN, LIVING AND DEAD, WHO HAD SERVED HER SO WELL...THE U.S.S. FRANK E. EVANS - "A FINE FIGHTING SHIP."**

**AS WE REMEMBER AND HONOR THESE MEN, WE USE THE WORDS OF THE NAVY HYMN, PRAYING...**

**"ETERNAL FATHER, WHO IS STRONG TO SAVE AND WHOSE ARM HAS BOUND THE RESTLESS WAVE," HEAR OUR PRAYERS AND THOUGHTS THIS DAY.**

**FOR THOSE WHO HAVE GONE BEFORE US, THOSE WHO ARE STILL WITH US - THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE U.S.S. FRANK E. EVANS.**

**FOR ALL THEY ARE, FOR ALL THEY HAVE BEEN, FOR ALL THEY HAVE DONE, WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD.**

**AMEN**