



Great White Fleet

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The "Great White Fleet" sent around the world by President Theodore Roosevelt from 16 December 1907 to 22 February 1909 consisted of sixteen gleaming, white modern American battleships & their escorts, that later came to be known as the Great White Fleet. The fourteen-month long voyage was a grand pageant of American sea power. The squadrons were manned by 14,000 sailors. They covered some 43,000 miles and made twenty port calls on six continents.

The fleet was greeted with excitement around the world. In port after port, citizens in the thousands turned out to see and greet the fleet. The fleet travelled to San Francisco, Honolulu, and Auckland before entering Sydney Harbour on August 20th, 1908 where they remained until the 27th. Following Sydney, the fleet arrived at Melbourne on August 29th and remained until September 5th when most of the fleet left for Albany.

The visit was a vast occasion in Sydney and Melbourne, crowds of between 400,000 and 600,000 turned out to welcome the fleet. They arrived at Albany on September 11th and remained until the 17th when they departed for Manila. A number of events, from balls, sports days, city parades, and concerts were held in honour of American visit.

In 2008 the United States celebrates the centenary of the voyage of the Great White Fleet. Much has changed in 100 years. In support of this 100 year anniversary, American and Australian Navy ships will reenact the Australian visit to Sydney Melbourne and Albany. To support the Great White Fleet visit, a number of events have been scheduled.

In August, there will be a ceremonial entry into Sydney Harbour and a combined RAN/USN fleet reception later that evening. The RAN Band and USN Pacific Fleet Band will host a joint concert in Sydney on August 22nd 2008. On August 23rd 2008, the Australian National Maritime Museum will open the GWF exhibition and symposium followed by a ball hosted by the Australian American Association.

On August 29th 2008, the USN will host a fleet reception in Melbourne. On September 10th 2008, there will be a combined RAN/USN fleet reception with the City of Albany hosting a civic reception on September 12th 2008. The Royal Australian Navy enjoys strong ties with the United States Navy and look forward to the opportunity to participate in such a significant historical event.

