



Government House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
29 July 2019

The Governor-General is pleased to announce the following honorary award within the General Division of the Order of Australia:

ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

Honorary Medal (OAM) in the General Division

Mr William Eric NANCE, Washington, United States of America

For achievement as the first Australian to sail solo round the world during the period of September 1962 to February 1965.

By His Excellency's Command

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Singer'.

Paul Singer MVO

Official Secretary to the Governor-General

AWARDED AN HONORARY MEDAL (OAM)
IN THE GENERAL DIVISION OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA

Mr William Eric NANCE, Washington, United States of America
For achievement as the first Australian to sail solo round the world during the period of September 1962 to February 1965.

Mr Nance was the first Australian, and 16th person, to sail solo round the world. At the time he was 23 years old and relatively inexperienced at sailing a yacht, particularly across oceans.

Mr Nance sailed a small ocean going yacht without modern means of electronic navigation, weather information, communication, or engine – he learned navigation by self-study, using Mary Blewitt’s “Celestial Navigation for Yachtsmen”, and sailed with a number of charts, a sextant, log tables, a used Navy surplus deck watch and a transistor radio.

He departed England in September 1962 sailing to Fremantle, via Buenos Aires and Cape Town, then continued to Melbourne before eventually departing from Tasmania for New Zealand. He then crossed the Southern Ocean to Cape Horn and on to Buenos Aires, thus completing his circumnavigation.

Mr Nance was the youngest man to have sailed alone round Cape Horn and he achieved it in the smallest boat (a record which stood until 1973).

During his voyage he experienced frequent gales, storms and large seas. His ship was dis-masted, capsized, and he was washed overboard. Despite these events, Mr Nance demonstrated determination, resolution and perseverance in completing his solo round the world voyage.