

Memorials to mark two world wars

The winner of the National Memorial Design Competition for two separate but complementary war memorials to the fallen of World War I and World War II was scheduled to be announced early in July. The two new memorials will be built on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin at the southern end of ANZAC Parade, Canberra.

The members of the Memorial(s) Development Committee, which was formed in 2005, were drawn together by a shared belief that the loss, suffering and sacrifice caused by World War I and World War II should be recognised in the nation's capital.

The task they set themselves was to elicit support to plan, design, construct and dedicate separate but complementary memorials to World War I and World War II in Canberra's National Triangle.

Australia's participation in war in the 20th century cost more than 101,000 Australian lives, yet only 1% of these died after 1950. While all post-1950 conflicts claimed too many lives, the terrible catalogue of war dead from these conflicts is dwarfed by the massive list of Australians who died in the two world wars.

Early in the 20th Century, two generations of a very young nation with a relatively small population absorbed most of the physical and emotional battering from our participation in global conflict. People had to give meaning to the tragic impact of that involvement. They had to find commemorative forms to express a country's grieving. Somehow, Australians had to acknowledge the supreme sacrifice of their fallen and say thanks. They did so by establishing memorials, shrines and sites of dedication across the country.

The Australian War Memorial was intended originally to commemorate the Great War. However, because of its delayed completion in 1941, the Government extended the memorial's charter to include World War II. Again,



Mock ups of the areas designated for two new memorials where ANZAC Parade meets Lake Burley Griffin, Canberra.

in 1952, the charter was extended to become Australia's national memorial to all wars. Since then, and after Australia's subsequent commitment to a range of military and peacekeeping operations, the purpose of the Australian War Memorial is now broader, to "commemorate the sacrifice of those Australians who have died in war".

The Australian War Memorial, its grounds and the ANZAC Parade precinct include many outstanding national memorials and artefacts recognising the contribution of Australians who have served the nation or paid the ultimate sacrifice. Although all Australians are impressed by the quality of the War Memorial and the ANZAC Parade memorials precinct, the unfortunate fact is that the precinct does not provide a focal point for the two global conflicts of the 20th century that helped shape our nation.

Put simply, although we have memorials to the Vietnam War, the Korean War and, in the near future, the Boer War, we have no dedicated memorials to acknowledge specifically the enormous contribution and sacrifice of the people of those times, as well as those

who served and those who supported, made to maintain the peace and prosperity of our nation and our allies in World War I and World War II.

In the last three and a half years, the Memorial(s) Development Committee has gained the support of the National Capital Authority as well as the Federal Government. Two prime sites have been allocated on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin at the major axis point of the nation's capital. The MDC has gained also the support and involvement of the Governor General and former Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer as Patron-in-Chief and Patron respectively.

This project will change the landscape of our national capital by providing two world-class memorials sited in the very heart of the National Triangle on the shores of Lake Burley Griffin.

On February 18, the Governor General launched the National Memorial Design Competition at Parliament House with representatives of both Government and Opposition and World War II veterans and their families. To mark this occasion, a crew from the Temora Aviation Museum flew a World

War II Hudson Bomber (the only remaining Hudson flying) over ANZAC Parade and Parliament House.

The design competition will be a two-stage process. A jury, led by RSL National President Major General Bill Crews, will shortlist four designs from a field of over 170 international and national entrants.

At the end of this first stage, the four entrants will be invited to enter a second stage in which their designs will be refined and developed. At the end of the second stage, the jury will select a design to be endorsed by the bipartisan Canberra National Memorials Committee. This process will be completed by early July when a winning design will be announced.

The Memorial(s) Development Committee will keep the Australian defence community informed of the progress of this very important project, so look out for future articles detailing the winning design and details on the construction and dedication of the two memorials.

More information on the Memorial(s) Development Committee and the Memorials is available at:

www.mdc.org.au

Out of a neglected area, they are remembered

After more than 30 years an RSL Remembrance stone has been relocated to the Ex-Service Section of the Gungahlin Cemetery.

Originally erected in a grove of trees on the Remembrance Driveway at Woolshed Creek, just outside Canberra, the recent rerouting of the Federal Highway made access limited and the area fell into disrepair.

The stone, inscribed and dedicated "In Memory of Departed Comrades" was first erected on November 9, 1975 and was relocated and rededicated in May this year.

A special guest at the rededication was Mr Ray Kelly OAM, who was ACT Branch Treasurer at the time the proposal to erect the stone in its original location was proposed.

Others present were the ACT Branch President, Mr Gary Brodie OAM, representatives of various ACT sub-branches and members of the Board of the ACT Public Cemeteries Authority, who provided an alternative site for the stone at the cemetery.

Gary Brodie thanked Project Officer



Pastor Wayne Lyons, left, of the High Street Church, Queanbeyan, dedicates the relocated stone to departed comrades.

and Branch Vice President Jan Paulga for his efforts and also the Cemeteries Authority for making the site available.

Mr Robert Smeaton, chairman of the

Cemeteries Authority, said the authority was pleased to accept the stone and believed it enhanced the area reserved for ex-service graves.

Pastor Wayne Lyons, of the High Street Church, Queanbeyan, dedicated the stone to departed comrades.

A bronze plaque outlining the history of the stone will be affixed later.

Jan Paulga welcomed all present, outlined the bureaucratic processes that have taken three years, and conveyed his thanks to the Cemeteries Authority, Mr Gary Brodie and branch secretary Mr James Davidson for their support.

\$21.5m for good ideas

Australian companies and universities will share \$21.5 million in the latest round of defence capability development funding. Twelve proposals have been selected for further development under the Capability and Technology Demonstrator Program — from wearable solar panels to submarine sonar, grenade launchers to GPS anti-jam units. Details at: <http://www.dsto.defence.gov.au/collaboration/3743/>