



Australian Government

Department of Veterans' Affairs

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL, LONDON



Office of Australian War Graves





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MESSAGE FROM THE
PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA
THE HON JOHN HOWARD MP

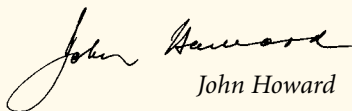
*On the occasion of the dedication of the
Australian War Memorial, London,
11 November 2003*



This memorial is a lasting tribute to those Australians who lost their lives in defending those values which are the foundation of the democracy and freedom shared and cherished by Australia and the United Kingdom. It epitomises the struggle to ensure that the citizens of both our countries, and of the world, could enjoy peace and security. In the two great world wars of the twentieth century, we stood united against the forces of tyranny. Those wars transformed the course of history and reaffirmed bonds of friendship and respect between our two nations which endure to this day. During those titanic conflicts, Australian servicemen and women from the Army, Navy and Air Force stood alongside their comrades from the British Isles to face the common foe. In dedicating this memorial today, we express our gratitude for their service and commemorate their sacrifice. The sites of some of those great struggles carved into this memorial – Gallipoli, Villers-Bretonneux, Passchendaele, Tobruk, El Alamein, Normandy and the battles of the Atlantic and Berlin to name a few – are similarly etched deep in our memory.



It was from Britain that so many Australians embarked for the front line of those terrible conflicts: in the First World War for the mud of the Western Front, and in the Second World War for the skies over Europe, the bleak waters of the Atlantic and the deserts of North Africa. Although nestled in the heart of London, this memorial evokes the green and grey of the Australian bush, the sweep of our landscape and the openness of our people. It records the names of the thousands of Australian towns which sent their sons and daughters to defend our way of life, speaking not only of the memories of their courage and hardship, but also of the pain and grief of those who were left behind.


John Howard

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL, LONDON

Memorials invite us to imagine, to reflect and to honour. The Australian War Memorial, London, brings to the mind's eye those great battles and conflicts of a world at war in 1914–1918 and 1939–1945. Carved here in stone are words symbolising some of the deepest wounds ever inflicted on the Australian people as they fought with their comrades of the British Empire and Commonwealth for principles and beliefs which all held dear. Lone Pine, Pozières, Bullecourt, Ypres, Tobruk, Singapore, Coral Sea, Kokoda and Berlin – at such places, two generations of Australians forged the meanings and messages of what it was to be Australian. For as long as the future holds true to those stories, then the struggle and sacrifice of Australia's servicemen and women in war will have left a lasting legacy.

This Memorial also reflects on the impact of war beyond the battlefield. Recorded here are 24,000 home towns of those who put on the uniform of the Royal Australian Navy, the Australian Army and the Royal Australian Air Force in two world wars. Of those one and a half million men and women, over 101,000 did not return home. Their names are etched on headstones and on memorials in dozens of countries around the world. They are also recorded on thousands of memorials across the Australian continent in those home towns where on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day since World War I Australians have gathered to remember them. Those local memorials remind us that war has left an enduring mark of pain and loss upon the consciousness of thousands of communities and families. In these places, throughout the war years, people worked to support their loved ones overseas. In World War I, millions of pounds were raised and thousands of parcels of comforts were dispatched to



Two Australian soldiers (right foreground) watch the Royal Navy contingent at the Victory March at Hyde Park Corner, 1919. [The National Archives, Public Record Office Image Library WORK21/74]

the front line. In World War II, as total war engulfed the nation, those on the home front toiled for victory in factories and farms.

To honour those who served and died in two world wars, we must remember why they fought. In July 1913, when George V dedicated the foundation stone of Australia's other great monument in London – Australia House – the King uttered these words:

In any national emergency Australia will be ready to play her part for the common cause, and the loyalty of her sons will never be appealed to in vain.

That common cause was, in the words of poet John Hewitt, *man's rare hinted possibility of being just, compassionate and free*. Such ideals are not empty slogans. In every era they have been challenged by those who would enslave others and bend them to their will. Australians and Britons have risen to that challenge and shown a loyalty, even unto death, to the principles of human liberty. For as long as Australians hold those values, then as they stand before the Australian War Memorial, London, they will lower their heads in respect to those past generations who laid down their lives to protect a priceless inheritance.



THE MEMORIAL SITE

The site of the Australian War Memorial is within the 1.5 hectare parkland known as Hyde Park Corner, in the heart of London. The site was identified as a potential memorial location in the master plan report on initiatives to improve and upgrade the area. It was commissioned by English Heritage on behalf of the Hyde Park Corner Steering Group, comprising representatives from major London authorities including Westminster City Council.



Memorial site, Hyde Park Corner prior to construction

With Wellington Arch the central element, Hyde Park Corner provides the pivot of the processional route linking the Royal Palaces through the Royal Parks from Admiralty Arch to Marble Arch.

The prestigious precinct is noted for existing war memorials including the Royal Artillery Monument and the Machine Gun Corps statue of David. The site presented an opportunity to locate the new Australian War Memorial in a central London location adjacent to other important memorials and to provide an ideal



Memorial under construction - wall formwork in place and granite panels ready to uncrate



Construction of formwork for supporting walls

area for large scale gatherings such as that expected on Anzac Day each year.

In negotiating use of this space, the Australian Government proposed to Westminster City Council a memorial solution that also satisfied the Steering Group proposals.

In consequence, the Memorial not only commemorates those who served in two world wars but also provides an amenity that greatly improves the utility of this green space.



Australian War Memorial, London at night



DESIGN

The design for the Memorial was selected as a result of a limited, by invitation, design competition. Of the twelve architectural firms selected, four were chosen to prepare detailed designs and models. A panel of selectors comprising veteran representatives, architects and art advisers was convened to oversee development of the brief and to assess the entries.

The winning proposal was submitted by Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Pty Ltd (TZG) architects, in association with Janet Laurence, artist. TZG had previously won competitions for the Australian National Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Anzac Parade, Canberra, and for the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier within the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

The selected design was presented to the Public Arts Advisory Panel of Westminster City Council, where it received unanimous support. The design was subsequently approved by the Council and numerous other approvals were obtained from London authorities before construction could commence.



Wreaths at Australian War Memorial, London after dedication service



Principal architect Peter Tonkin states, ‘The form chosen for the Memorial reflects the sweep of Australian landscape, the breadth and generosity of our people, the openness that we believe should characterise our culture.’ Inspired by the contours of Hyde Park Corner, the Australian War Memorial becomes partly a landform, rising from the surface and creating a focus for the site. Its use of green/grey Australian granite reflects the essence of the bush.

PLACE NAMES

The wall is set with thousands of place names recording the origins of Australia’s sons and daughters who served their nation in two world wars. These place names also recall the impact on their families and communities. The place names were assembled after extensive research using numerous data bases including original records of World War I and World War II, the World War II Nominal Roll, National Archives of Australia and The AIF Project, UNSW@ADFA. The list is published on the



Memorial unveiled in December 1917 to honour the men and women of Ipswich, Queensland, who enlisted in World War I. [AWM H17698]

Department of Veterans' Affairs Internet site and the public was invited to review the selection before the names were finalised.

Design team architects and graphic designers determined a random distribution pattern for positioning the names on the vertical wall panels.

Computers were used extensively to achieve the density of text required to ensure the superimposed 'battle sites' were legible. Individual stones were then masked with a sheet vinyl material on which the computer-generated names had been laser-cut and individual letters removed. These letter surfaces were then sand blasted by stone masons. A durable waterproof coating was applied to the sand blasted letters to enhance legibility.



BATTLE SITES

Superimposed on the place names and etched in large lettering are 47 battle sites representing theatres of conflict from both world wars that involved the Australian Navy, Army and Air Force. The representative battle sites were selected by a group of military historians from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the Australian War Memorial and all three arms of the Australian Defence Force. The selection is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to reflect the geographic spread of the service and sacrifice of Australians during two world wars.

<i>Amiens</i>	<i>Crete</i>	<i>Lone Pine</i>	<i>Polygon Wood</i>
<i>Atlantic</i>	<i>Damascus</i>	<i>Markham-Ramu</i>	<i>Pozieres</i>
<i>Bardia</i>	<i>Darwin</i>	<i>Mediterranean</i>	<i>Rabaul</i>
<i>Beersheba</i>	<i>El Alamein</i>	<i>Megiddo</i>	<i>Ruhr</i>
<i>Berlin</i>	<i>Fromelles</i>	<i>Mesopotamia</i>	<i>Savo Island</i>
<i>Bismarck Sea</i>	<i>Gallipoli</i>	<i>Messines</i>	<i>Singapore</i>
<i>Borneo</i>	<i>Gaza</i>	<i>Milne Bay</i>	<i>Sunda Strait</i>
<i>Bougainville</i>	<i>Imphal</i>	<i>Mont St Quentin</i>	<i>Tobruk</i>
<i>Brallos Pass</i>	<i>Indian Ocean</i>	<i>Normandy</i>	<i>Villers-Bretonneux</i>
<i>Bullecourt</i>	<i>Kokoda</i>	<i>North Sea</i>	<i>Wewak</i>
<i>Cocos Keeling</i>	<i>Krithia</i>	<i>Okinawa</i>	<i>Ypres</i>
<i>Coral Sea</i>	<i>Lingayen Gulf</i>	<i>Passchendaele</i>	

CONSTRUCTION

The Memorial consists of the green/grey Australian granite from Jerramungup, Western Australia, on a reinforced concrete base, with elements of bronze, stainless steel and hydraulic fittings. Granite is used for cladding and paving on all visible surfaces. Highly complex computer modelling of the entire Memorial site was needed before it was possible to detail the three dimensional shapes and sizes of the thousands of stone components that fit together with exceptionally fine tolerances.

A substantial underground plant room accessed from the subway staircase landing accommodates the necessary electrical gear, hydraulic pumps and filters to operate the water display. Falls of water will be programmed to change in sequence and be recycled via a series of concealed ducts and weirs. Special LED lighting bars will illuminate the text panels by night.

The ceremonial area of the Memorial utilises large monolithic blocks of granite to support cast bronze elements such as the three Service insignia and the Australian Commonwealth Coat of Arms. A dedication text is located centrally on one stone, with supporting descriptive and explanatory plaques mounted atop two of the seating blocks placed forward of the wall on the forecourt.

All visible components of the Memorial were sourced from Australia, despatched to the site and incorporated during the construction phase. All the Australian granite was shaped and finished in Australia and fixed on-site by Australian tradesmen.

The Office of Australian War Graves will manage ongoing care and maintenance of the Memorial in perpetuity on behalf of the Australian Government.



