



BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA COMMEMORATION

Honouring those who served on land and sea
and in the air repulsing the direct threat
to Australia in 1942-1945

THE CENOTAPH
MARTIN PLACE, SYDNEY
5 SEPTEMBER 2018
AT 11.00am



HISTORY

The Second World War involved Australian service personnel from its earliest days - the Navy on all oceans; the Army in North Africa, Greece, Crete, Syria, Malaya and the South West Pacific; and the Air Force in the United Kingdom, Europe, North Africa and the South West Pacific.

On 7-8 December 1941 Japan entered the war when it launched its attacks in America and other countries. Its invasion forces were remarkably successful and, when Singapore surrendered, Britain suffered its largest ever defeat and most of Australia's 8th Division became prisoners of war. The Japanese continued to thrust east and inflicted heavy losses on the Allies at sea and on land. The small Australian garrisons at Ambon, Timor and New Britain fell and, commencing on 19 February 1942, Darwin was subjected to air raids which killed many of its civilian population.

In May 1942 an enemy convoy set out from Rabaul to occupy Port Moresby. Fortunately it was intercepted by the United States Navy; The Battle of the Coral Sea ensued; and the invasion force had to return to Rabaul. Japanese midget submarines attacked Sydney at the end of May, not a week later the Americans sank four Japanese carriers in the Battle of Midway.

Frustrated by their failure to seize Port Moresby from the sea the Japanese decided on an overland attack. The threat to Australia increased when the Japanese landed unopposed at Gona on 21 July 1942, and pushed out along the Kokoda Trail over the Owen Stanley Range. Opposed initially by a small number of Australian and Indigenous soldiers, horrific battles developed. In the meantime (25-26 August) the Japanese landed at Milne Bay, from where an heroic and aggressive defence by a much smaller force of Australian soldiers and airmen forced them to flee.

On the Kokoda Trail, after both sides had suffered very heavy casualties, the Australian and Indigenous infantry (with the help of the "Fuzzy Wuzzy" porters) halted the Japanese virtually within sight of Port Moresby; they then steadily pushed the Japanese back to the northern coast. In that way, coupled with having won the battle of Milne Bay, Australia inflicted the war's first land defeat of the Imperial Japanese Army, inspiring those confronting the Japanese in other theatres.

Back on the coast in Buna/Gona area the Japanese had their backs to the sea and fought with fanatical ferocity. These "Battles of the Beaches" were fought in appalling conditions, over the next three months, extracting heavy losses from both sides. Further west eight months were spent in 1943 steadily driving the Japanese from Wau to the coast in the "Battle of the Ridges". In 1944 and 1945 the Japanese were defeated in New Britain, Bougainville, and in Northern New Guinea.

By then the enemy threat to the Australian mainland had been removed, but the fighting and the strain of the conditions continued to take their toll as the Allies progressively cleared the Japanese from the areas they had occupied. The years until the Japanese finally surrendered on 15 August 1945 saw steady increases in the Australian casualty lists of sailors, soldiers, airmen and merchant mariners, and, not infrequently, servicewomen such as when the Japanese sank the hospital ship Centaur.

When the Japanese had entered the Chinese city of Nanking they murdered more than 300,000 of its civilian occupants- a statistic which highlights why the many who played a part in the "Battle for Australia" gave so much to protect their fellow countrymen and women. Little wonder that today is dedicated to the commemoration of the Battle for Australia and its outcomes which ensured the unique society and freedom which Australians continue to enjoy.

Introduction

Mr Darren Mitchell – Master of Ceremonies

Arrival of the Governor's Representative.

Led by the Pipers from The Scots College

Catafalque Party Mounts

Address of Welcome

Group Captain Doug Roser RAAF (Ret'd)
President
Battle for Australia Association NSW Inc.

Hymn The 23rd Psalm (Crimond)

1 The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not
want.
He makes me down to lie
In pastures green, He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.

2. My soul He doth restore again;
And me to walk doth make
Within the paths of righteousness,
Even for His own Name's sake.

3. Yea, though I walk in death's
dark vale,
Yet will I fear no evil;
For Thou art with me; and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still.

4. My table Thou hast furnished
In presence of my foes;
My head Thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.

5. Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me;
And in God's house forever more
My dwelling place shall be.

Reading

Bible Reading: Psalm 46 and John 3:16-17 by a student from Mater Maria College

Prayers

Lead by Chaplain Darren Hindle, RAN

In remembrance of the Fallen and those who have died and suffered as a result of war; for Peace and our Nation.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven
Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done, on earth, as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the Kingdom,
The Power and the Glory, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Address

Air Commodore Michael Kitcher AM, DSM,
Commander Air Combat Group

Laying of Floral Tributes

The Governor's Representative will lay the first floral tribute followed by other official tributes.

Lament

The Lament will be played by Pipers from The Scots College

Ode of Remembrance Laurence Binyon

The Ode to the Fallen will be given by two students from Tempe High School.

They went with songs to battle.
They were young, straight of limb
True of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end
Against foes uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old,
As we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
And in the morning,
We will remember them.

Assembly Responds: *We will remember them*

Lest we forget.

Assembly Responds: *Lest we forget*

Last Post

Sacred Silence: A minutes silence is observed

Rouse

Choral Item

The Lord bless you and keep you, sung by the Choristers of St Andrew's Cathedral School

Australian National Anthem

Advance Australia Fair

Australians all let us rejoice,
For we are young and free;
We've golden soil and wealth for toil,
Our home is girt by sea:
Our land abounds in nature's gifts
Of beauty rich and rare:
In hist'ry's page, let ev'ry stage
Advance Australia fair.
In joyful strains then let us sing
Advance Australia Fair.

Benediction

Catafalque Party Dismounts

Departure of the Governor's Representative

Those who have not yet done so will be invited to lay floral tributes

Close of Ceremony

The Commemoration for all who served in the Battle for Australia in the years 1942-1945 is an annual event which takes place at the Cenotaph, Martin Place, Sydney, on the first Wednesday in September, starting at 11.00am. It is organised by the Battle for Australia Association NSW Inc.

Enquiries: Mr Doug Roser

President

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The Battle for Australia Association NSW Inc thanks the following for their contribution to this year's Commemoration.

Defence Ceremonial from Department of Defence

Royal Australian Navy

Australian Army

Royal Australian Air Force

Department of Veterans' Affairs

New South Wales Police

NSW Police Band

Council of the City of Sydney

The Returned and Services League of Australia

The Custodian of the Cenotaph

St. Andrew's Cathedral Choir

St Andrew's Cathedral Junior School

St John Ambulance Australia

Mosman Preparatory School

The Scots College

Tempe High School

Mater Maria College

THE BATTLE FOR AUSTRALIA

The term "Battle for Australia" was first used by Prime Minister John Curtin in an appeal to the Nation on 16 February 1942. When the war ended, many ships, squadrons and army units commemorated those actions specific to themselves. Such occasions tended to fragment commemorations with some units receiving greater emphasis than others. In more recent times veterans have felt that what is needed is one major commemoration to honour all service and sacrifice in the defence of Australia.

However there was no clear consensus as to what to call such a commemoration. In August 1998 a national committee was formed to consider this problem and out of their deliberations the "Battle for Australia Commemoration Day" was approved. This was to be the first Wednesday in September each year.

A National Council, as well as State Committees, were formed and their common mission was to be three-fold, namely;

1. That national honour and commemoration be accorded on the first Wednesday in September to all those who served in the defence of Australia.
2. To educate our children to understand and appreciate the sacrifice of many thousands of young Australians during World War Two in the South West Pacific.
3. To build upon the existing good will between the people of Australia and our Allies in those years, especially the people of Papua New Guinea.

In September 1998 the first Battle for Australia Commemoration service was conducted at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne and the following September the first NSW Battle for Australia Commemoration was held at the Cenotaph in Sydney.

On the 19th of June 2008, His Excellency, Major-General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC, Governor General of Australia, proclaimed that the "Battle for Australia Day" was to be a national day of Remembrance, to be held on the first Wednesday in September.