



State Minister's Message Issue 51 (29 January, 2010)

A regular update from the Office of the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, The Hon. Michael Atkinson M.P.

ANZAC Eve Youth Vigil Wins Australia Day Award

The Anzac Eve Youth Vigil conducted annually at the South Australian National War Memorial on the corner of North Terrace and Kintore Avenue, Adelaide has been announced as the Community Event of the Year by the Adelaide City Council.

The annual award is to acknowledge the "most outstanding community event in the City of Adelaide". In a presentation ceremony held at the Adelaide Town Hall on Australia Day, the Inaugural Chairman of the Vigil Committee, Mr Bill Denny, AM received the award from the Right Honourable Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Mr Michael Harbison.

Mr Denny thanked all of the vigil participants for their ongoing contribution and said that the dedication they have shown has enabled the Vigil to become a success. Following the success of the Vigil in Adelaide, Vigils have been held at Morphett Vale, Blackwood and Marion.

The ANZAC Eve Youth Vigil plays an important part in ensuring that the ANZAC spirit of remembrance is passed on to our young and to more recent arrivals in South Australia. In ten years over 3,000 young people from 16 different youth groups have directly participated in representational roles remembering and honouring those who gave their lives in our name.

Mr Denny also acknowledged the contribution of Multicultural SA, who coordinate more than fifteen multicultural groups to attend each Vigil. "I'm sure the original ANZACs would be extraordinarily proud of the young South Australians who so generously commit themselves to this activity" he said.

Hospital Ship "Centaur" Website and Hotline

On 20 December, 2009, the wreck of the Hospital Ship "Centaur" that was lost off the Queensland coast over 66 years ago on 14 May, 1943, was found. The finding of the HMAS Centaur resolved one of our most enduring and tragic wartime disasters.

The Centaur was white with red crosses to signify it was a hospital ship, and brightly lit up, when it was torpedoed by a surfaced Japanese submarine. 268 men and women were lost, three came from South Australia, eventually 64 were rescued by an American ship after a 36 hour wait in shark infested waters.

Minister Atkinson welcomes the establishment of a phone hotline to assist relatives of those who were on board the ship when it was sunk in 1943. Relatives can now contact 1800 019 955 to receive information about a memorial service that will be held in March, 2010.

A website also has details about the memorial service. It includes details of how relatives can register to receive more information about the memorial service.

The website can be found at http://www.army.gov.au/AHS_Centaur.asp

For more information about any of the items mentioned, please contact Veterans SA on 8207 1723.