



**Message from the Office of the State Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Issue 76 (31 August, 2010)**

Please find below a message from Bill Denny AM, Director, Veterans SA for your information, distribution and possible use in newsletters, and on "Veterans" themed radio programs.

Lest We Forget

Minister Snelling joins all Australians in mourning the tragic loss of another young Australian soldier killed in action in Afghanistan.

Lance Corporal Jared MacKinney, 28, of the 6th Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment, was killed by insurgents in the Deh Rawud region on 24 August, 2010.

Lance Corporal MacKinney is the fourth member of 6RAR Battalion to be killed in action in recent weeks. As a result of this incident 21 Australian soldiers have now been killed in Afghanistan.

Minister Snelling's thoughts and prayers are with Lance Corporal MacKinney's wife Beckie and daughter Annabell during this difficult time.

This tragic death is another reminder of the dangers inherent in the service rendered to our nation by the brave young men and women of our defence force and the sacrifice and loss experienced by their family, friends and local communities.

Lest we forget.

Battle for Australia Day

The Battle for Australia will be commemorated on Wednesday, 1 September, 2010.

The Battle for Australia is commemorated on the first Wednesday in September each year after being proclaimed in June, 2008.

The Battle for Australia Day commemorates the service and sacrifice of Australia's servicemen and servicewomen who defended Australia in 1942 and 1943 when the Japanese advanced towards our nation.

Prime Minister John Curtin announced the Battle for Australia when Singapore fell on 15 February, 1942. The Australian mainland was attacked, particularly in Darwin, and fierce battles were fought in the Coral Sea and Papua and New Guinea, including Milne Bay and the Kokoda Track.

The first Wednesday in September was chosen as the Battle for Australia Day as it marks the first defeat of Japanese forces on land in the Battle of Milne Bay.

The sacrifice of those on the home front, who lived in a time when the entire Australian economy was directed towards the war effort, is also remembered on the Battle for Australia Day.

Merchant Navy Day

On 3 September the merchant seamen who served Australia in wartime will be officially commemorated on Merchant Navy Day.

The role of Australia's merchant mariners was vital and often dangerous. During the Second World War they evacuated civilians from threatened areas, and transported supplies and personnel to and between areas of conflict.

The date for Merchant Navy Day was chosen to mark the loss of the first Allied merchant ship in the Second World War, which occurred the day war was declared in 1939. The United Kingdom and Canada also commemorate Merchant Navy Day on 3 September.

Thousands of Australian merchant mariners served during the two World Wars on Australian, Commonwealth and Allied ships, as well as merchant ships from other nations. Australian and Commonwealth memorials commemorate 435 Australians known to have lost their lives serving in the Merchant Navy.

Merchant Navy Day is an occasion to give merchant mariners the prominence in Australia's wartime history that they deserve.

This Week in Australian Military History

Did you know that Charles Edwin Woodrow (C.E.W.) Bean died on 30 August, 1968? Charles Bean did more than any other individual to establish the Australian War Memorial. Bean was Australia's official war correspondent during the First World War and wrote six volumes of the *Official History of Australia in the war of 1914–1918*.

Bean landed at Anzac Cove on Gallipoli about 10 a.m. on 25 April 1915, some five and a half hours after the first landing. Bean famously said, "ANZAC stood for and still stands for reckless valour in a good cause, enterprise, resourcefulness, fidelity, comradeship and endurance that will never admit defeat."

On 2 September, 1918 Temporary Corporal Lawrence Carthage Weathers won the Victoria Cross for most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty on the 2nd September, 1918 north of Peronne, France, when with an advanced bombing party.

Cpl Weathers was born in Te Kopuru, New Zealand, he moved to South Australia with his family in 1897 and attended Snowtown Public School. Cpl Weathers was killed in action, north-east of Peronne on 29 September, 1918.

For more information about any of the items mentioned, please contact Paul at Veterans SA on 8226 8552.