



## **HMAS SYDNEY II VIRTUAL MEMORIAL OPENS ON THE 19<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2008**

On this Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> of November 2008, the Finding Sydney Foundation and the Naval Association of Australia will launch an internet based Virtual Memorial at [www.sydney Memorial.com](http://www.sydney Memorial.com), to commemorate the 645 men lost with *HMAS Sydney II* on 19th November 1941.

The Finding Sydney Foundation, a group of five committed Australian volunteers, managed the highly successful search for *Sydney* in March 2008, an historic event and one which has been of immense comfort to the relatives of the brave men lost with *Sydney*. Having found the wreck, the Foundation now lives up to its second promise of creating a permanent, web-based memorial to tell the stories of the men, their families and friends.

The Naval Association of Australia began its life in 1920 as the Ex-Navalmen's Association and is the premier organisation outside of the Navy looking to the interests of both serving and ex-naval members. The Naval Association has agreed to manage the site throughout its lifetime.

The Virtual Memorial launch is timed to coincide with services all over Australia, especially the historic Sunset Memorial Services at Geraldton, WA and on *HMAS Manoora* at sea over the wreck site on the first anniversary of the ship's loss since the discovery of her wreck. The formal launch will be at a function to held by the Mayor of Geraldton following the Sunset Service, in the company of the Governor General and representatives of the Federal and State Governments, families and friends.

Foundation Director Bob Trotter said:

*"We are providing a unique experience accessible globally for those wanting to learn more about the human loss of HMAS Sydney II and honour the memory of the individual sailors through shared stories and images. We are very grateful to the Naval Association for accepting the task of carrying the 'Sydney' banner into the future."*

Les Dwyer, National President of the Naval Association said

*"It is a great honour for the Naval Association to provide the perpetual means for future generations to remember 'Sydney' and her brave crew, as well as share in the unique personal histories of the sailors who died in Australia's greatest maritime tragedy."*

The website located at <http://www.sydney memorial.com> features an Honour Roll with individual pages of information for each of the 645 sailors lost. Families are invited to submit stories, images and other related content to feature on each sailor's pages.

The website will also house *HMAS Sydney II* historical information and an extensive set of archival photographs courtesy of the Royal Australian Navy and the Australian War Memorial. Video footage can also be viewed. It includes previous commemorations; the search for the wreck; scenes of the ship and crew in Queensland (1936); Egypt (Jul 1940) after the successful engagement with the Italian cruiser *Bartolomeo Colleoni*; the triumphant welcome home to Sydney (Feb 1941); and scenes aboard the ship taken during the months before her loss.

Website: [www.sydney memorial.com](http://www.sydney memorial.com)



#### Media Images:

<http://www.sydney memorial.com/press/vm.zip> (jpg high resolution)

#### Media Contacts:

##### Naval Association of Australia

Les Dwyer, National President

Phone: +61 1300 780 054

Email: [NationalPresident@NavalAssoc.org.au](mailto:NationalPresident@NavalAssoc.org.au)

Web: [www.navalassoc.org.au](http://www.navalassoc.org.au)

##### Finding Sydney Foundation

Bob Trotter, Foundation Director

Phone: +61 8 9261 7749

Email: [media@findingsydney.com](mailto:media@findingsydney.com)

Web: [www.findingsydney.com](http://www.findingsydney.com)