



ANZAC MEMORIAL

HYDE PARK SYDNEY

Monuments to Service and Loss

Only two Australian soldiers who died in the Great War have ever been brought home: Major-General Sir William Throsby Bridges, Commander of the Australian Imperial Forces, who died in 1915 from wounds sustained at Anzac Cove, and the Unknown Soldier who was laid to rest at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Those who grieved the other 62,000 dead, buried or lost overseas had to find different ways to mark their loss. The creation of a memorial was an important way for communities to pull together with towns and suburbs across NSW sponsoring civic memorials during the war.

On 25 April 1916, the first anniversary of the landing of the Australian Imperial Force at Anzac Cove, a fund was established to raise money to erect a permanent memorial in Sydney. By the end of the war, the fund had reached £60,000. Progress was delayed until 1923 when the decision was made to build a memorial in Hyde Park. In 1929 a design competition was won by 32-year-old Sydney architect Bruce Dellit, a leading proponent of the Art Deco style popular in the 1930s. His unique design included not only the contemplative memorial spaces but also offices and rooms to assist those who had returned from the First World War.

The foundation stones were laid on 19 July 1932 and the building completed in 1934. The economic impact of the Great Depression meant some elements of the original design, including a cascading water feature to the south, had to be deleted. Unemployment relief funds released to the City of Sydney allowed the Pool of Reflection to be built by the northern forecourt. The Memorial was officially opened by Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester, on 24 November 1934.

The building's stepped geometric form is typical of the Art Deco style. The concrete structure is clad in pink granite from the Bathurst region. While the stone cladding is unadorned, Rayner Hoff sculptures provide decorative and symbolic elements on all four facades of the exterior. Sixteen monumental Anzacs in modern military dress sit atop the Memorial's buttresses as if resting after their labours and sadly contemplating the havoc of the war years. A figure stands on each corner representing the Army, Navy, Air Force and the Army Nursing Service. Bas-relief panels illustrate the Eastern Campaigns and the activities of the Australian Imperial Force on the Western Front.

The main interior space is the circular Hall of Memory, entered from the north and south approaches. On each face is a large cathedral window with a semicircular head glazed in etched amber glass. Within it, the Well of Contemplation allows visitors to look down into the Hall of Silence. The sculpture *Sacrifice* is the central motif of the Memorial's design. Symbolising the spirit of courage, endurance and sacrifice, it depicts a body of a young warrior lying over a shield and sword. He is supported by three female figures and an infant, representing "his best beloved" – mother,

sister, wife and child. The infant also represents future generations. The *Sacrifice* group is in a bronze ring, signalling the flames of destruction. The design of the space causes visitors in the Hall of Memory to automatically bow their heads to view the *Sacrifice* monument.

The walls of the Hall of Silence are clad in white marble inscribed with the names of the areas where the AIF served. A wreath-like carved marble balustrade surrounds the Well of Contemplation. The walls of the Hall of Memory are also clad in white marble and lit by the amber glass of the main windows. These windows are etched with the AIF's rising sun insignia and the winged torch of liberty. The dome over the Hall is decorated with 120,000 stars representing the men and women from New South Wales who served overseas in the 1914-1918 War.

The Hall of Memory features four niches, each representing a major theatre of war. Principal battle areas are inscribed on the walls of each niche. Stones from Flanders, Gallipoli, Palestine and New Guinea are set in the rising sun motif on the relevant niche floors. Higher on the walls of the Hall of Memory are plaster frieze panels depicting the four branches of Australian Service. The Flame of Remembrance is on the eastern side of the space.

On 30 November 1984, during the Memorial's 50th anniversary year, the Memorial was rededicated to all Australians who served their country by the Governor of New South Wales.

The expansion of the Anzac Memorial was first considered in March 2007. After more than a decade of design development by the Office of the NSW Government Architect, architectural firm Johnson Pilton Walker Architects was engaged to develop the final concepts. In December 2013 the Trustees endorsed a plan comprising the construction of two lower ground floor levels skirting the southern half of the Memorial, with the water cascade leading to Liverpool Street doubling as a new entry point into the Memorial and leading to exhibition and interpretative spaces. This subterranean extension ensures the Memorial's heritage and landscape setting is preserved. Construction of the Centenary Extension began in August 2016 and was completed in October 2018.

The Hall of Service was named in acknowledgement of the existing Memorial's halls and to recognise the century of service by Australian servicemen and servicewomen. Visitors are able to see into the Hall of Memory via sightlines through the grand stairwell and the Oculus connecting the new spaces both visually and environmentally. The Oculus, which is centred above the Hall of Service with a view out to the Memorial exterior, is an architectural reference to the Well of Contemplation in the existing Hall of Memory, creating a similar indoor-outdoor room. The substantial precast concrete walls are complemented by warm-toned crafted bronze and timber hardware, and the Aurisina stone floor detail helps create a balanced palette.

The \$40 million Centenary Extension was made possible through generous support from the NSW and Commonwealth Governments who each contributed 50% to the capital works, and a \$3.4 million contribution to the Pool of Reflection by the City of Sydney; as well as strong involvement from local government, community groups and the general public. Built, an experienced heritage builder was the head contractor responsible for the Centenary Project construction ensuring the quality of this significant Centenary of Anzac legacy project. Built was also responsible for the refurbishment of the Australian War Memorial's First World War Galleries in preparation for the Centenary of the Gallipoli landing.

Media: Theresa Kyne | 0459 869 220

The Trustees of the Anzac Memorial Building

ABN 26 397 403 816 | Locked Bag 53 Darlinghurst NSW 1300 | www.anzacmemorial.nsw.gov.au