

AE2 NEWSLETTER

Number 2 | April 2008

AE2: The Silent ANZAC

AE2 Commemorative Foundation

HMAS AE2 was the first Allied submarine to penetrate the Dardanelles in 1915 as part of the Gallipoli Campaign, on the very morning the ANZAC soldiers landed at Anzac Cove. Scuttled after five days of hectic activity and her crew captured, AE2 lay unseen until 1998 when she was discovered apparently intact, in 73m of water in the Sea of Marmara.

The AE2 Commemorative Foundation aims to ensure the protection, preservation and promotion of AE2, to contribute to an informed debate on her future and ensure that AE2's contribution to the Gallipoli campaign is duly recognised.

Istanbul workshop to consider AE2 future

A joint Turkish/Australian workshop in Istanbul late in April will make a major contribution to determining the future management of the wreck of HMAS AE2.

Representatives of the Turkish Institute for nautical Archaeology and AE2 Commemorative Foundation will meet in Istanbul on 26 and 27 April to review results from the Maritime Archaeological Assessment (see story below) and consider options for preservation of the wreck. Government representatives from Turkey and Australia have been invited to attend as observers.

A scoping paper prepared for the workshop covers a range of options for future management of Australia's last major WW1 relic, including:

- preservation of AE2 at her current position
- relocation of the wreck to a safer, shallower position, or

- possibly raising and displaying the AE2 at a site close to the narrows of the Dardanelles.

Results of the MAA and the scoping paper will be presented and discussed on the first day of the workshop, with a recommendation for the future management of the wreck to be developed and finalised on the second day.

The joint recommendation will be presented to the Turkish and Australian governments for a decision on the AE2's future.

Marine Archaeological Assessment key input to workshop

The findings of the Marine Archaeological Assessment (MAA) carried out in September last year will be a key input to the Istanbul workshop on the AE2's future.

The MAA took place over 10 days in the Sea of Marmara, involving 24 Australian volunteers – maritime archaeologists and engineers, a naval architect, an electrochemist, logistics experts and, of course, the divers.

A remotely-operated camera was lowered through the open hatch of the conning tower, providing vision of the remarkably well preserved interior of the submarine.

Key findings from the MAA included:

- The submarine is lying in a particularly low corrosion environment.
- The pressure hull is in a remarkably good state of preservation, although a more detailed survey would be required to both confirm this impression and support full scale recovery.
- Before either moving or raising the submarine, additional data would be required.



A diveteam member inspects the AE2 conning tower. Picture courtesy of Craig Howell and Richard Harris



Expedition diveboat
Detek Salvor

- The remaining torpedo must be located and the risk from its warhead removed before any effort to move the submarine is made.
- The casing and fin have suffered significant deterioration arising from corrosion and impact by nets and anchors.
- Immediately required actions:
 - Ongoing site monitoring.
 - Installation of site physical protection measures.
 - Installation of cathodic protection.
 - Implementation of Turkish cultural heritage controls at the site.
 - Support from all parties for the joint workshop.
 - Education programs to be delivered in Australia and Turkey.

AE2 plaques project

The story of the AE2 and its role in the Gallipoli campaign are to be permanently recognised by the placement of commemorative plaques at key sites in Australia and Turkey.

Dr Ross Bastian, who has created 180 similar commemorative plaques in more than 20 countries, has been

commissioned to produce AE2 plaques for five Australian and six Turkish sites.

The plaques will include images of the AE2, the Sultanhisar torpedo boat, their crews, emblems or flags of the two nations, a map of the Dardanelles, as well as text outlining the AE2 story.

The plaques are scheduled to be cast in Melbourne later this year and completed in time for official launch ceremonies in April next year.

The proposed sites for the plaques are:

Australia

- Garden Island in Sydney, where AE2 was briefly based and from where its voyage to Gallipoli began on 19 December 1914.
- The Australian War Memorial in Canberra.
- The Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne.
- Albany in Western Australia, from where the AE2 departed Australia for the voyage to Gallipoli.
- The Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney.

Turkey

- The Turkish Naval Museum at Canakkale overlooking the narrows where AE2 entered the Dardanelles.
- Kabatepe War Museum on the Gallipoli Peninsula near Anzac Cove.
- Karabiga, the Turkish port from where the successful search for the AE2 was mounted.
- Istanbul Naval Museum at Besiktas.
- Afyon Karahisar, the site of the camp where the AE2 POWs spent most of their time in captivity.
- Belemelik, the site of the camp where AE2 POWs worked building a railway.

The AE2 Foundation is seeking sponsors to support the plaques project.

Gallipoli Submarine documentary to screen on Anzac eve

Gallipoli Submarine, a new documentary telling the AE2 story, will be screened nationally on ABC television on 24 April.

Western Australian documentary producers Electric Pictures have teamed with Mallinson Sadler Productions from the UK for this latest film on the heroic exploits of the Australian WW1 submarine.

The AE2 Foundation conducted preview screenings of the documentary in Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Fremantle during April for sponsors and other interested parties.

The documentary will go to air on ABC 1 at 8.30 pm on Anzac eve.

The AE2 Foundation gratefully acknowledges the support of:

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Australian Geographic
Colkan International
Department of Defence
Department of Environment & Heritage
DSTO
Graphic Art Mart P/L
Hellmann Worldwide Logistics
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Becca Saunders & Mark Spencer