

25 April 2014

MEDIA RELEASE



## Australians flock to Anzac Day 2014 Dawn Service

Today the Australian War Memorial hosted an estimated 37,000 visitors to the Dawn Service – a 2,000 increase on last year.

Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of the Australian War Memorial, says he's thrilled with this year's Dawn Service attendance.

"I am delighted with the number of people who came to the service. Anzac Day is Australia's most significant national occasion, marking the 99th anniversary of the landing on Gallipoli in April 1915. This anniversary also encourages all Australians to reflect upon the ongoing sacrifices that brave Australian men and women continue to make on our behalf," said Dr Nelson.

"It was also an unexpected pleasure to host their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge at the Dawn Service. Although their attendance was not on the official itinerary, they wanted to join with Australians in commemorating Anzac Day."

For the second year in a row, photographs of Australian service men and women who served in over a century of conflicts were projected onto the Memorial building prior to the start of the Dawn Service.

Images of the 40 Australian soldiers who sacrificed their lives in Afghanistan were projected onto the front of the Memorial while Lieutenant Commander Desmond Woods and Squadron Leader Sharon Bown read personal accounts of Australian service people.

"We encourage those that could not join us earlier today to come to the National Ceremony commencing at 10.15 am," Dr Nelson said.

This year's veterans' march will be led by Australia's Victoria Cross Recipients, Corporal Ben Roberts Smith VC MG, Corporal Daniel Keighran VC, Corporal Mark Donaldson VC, and Warrant Officer Keith Payne VC.

The Memorial will open to the public following the conclusion of the National Ceremony. The Australian War Memorial is one of the nation's most visited museums, a place where Australians can remember and learn about the nation's experience of war and its enduring impact on our society.

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