

Battle of Crete Memorial Dedication and Wreath Laying Ceremony

11 May 2024, Saw Avenue Kings Park WA

Welcome and thank you for attending today's unveiling of the Battle of Crete Memorial at the Saw Avenue precinct of Kings Park, and the wreath laying ceremony that follows.



Now some 83 years in the past, this battle was fought on the other side of the world, far removed from modern Western Australia. It was a battle that we did not win and as the years have passed, our memories of, and direct connections to this campaign, have somewhat faded. But there remain lessons learnt that must not be lost, and connections forged that must be preserved. This is the reason why this memorial has been built. We hope that you can enjoy this memorial as a place of reflection and as a source of inspiration and information on this not to be forgotten episode in our shared history.

Program

Dedication Ceremony

Perth Battle of Crete Memorial, 11 May 2024

10.10-10.15 Introduction MC

Arrival of VIPs and His Excellency the Honourable Christopher Dawson AC APM, the Governor of Western Australia

A special welcome to our Battle of Crete Veteran: Mr Arthur Leggett OAM

Welcome to Country - Ms Di Ryder OAM Noongar Elder

Official Welcome - Mr Bill Evangel, President Greek Australian Returned and Services League (WA)

Addresses By:

- His Excellency the Honourable Christopher Dawson AC APM, Governor of Western Australia
- The Honourable Roger Cook, MLA Premier of Western Australia.
- The Honourable Matthew Keogh MP, Commonwealth Minister for Veteran's Affairs representing the Prime Minister of Australia
- His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of Australia
- His Excellency Mr Stavros Venizelos, Ambassador of Greece to Australia

Catafalque Party - Take Post

Unveiling Ceremony for the Perth Battle of Crete Memorial

Prayer Dedication - led by Chaplain Wendy Robertson 11/28 RWAR

Memorial for the Departed - His Eminence Archbishop Makarios, Primate of the Greek Orthodox of Australia

Fly Over

Wreath Laying Ceremony

The Ode of Remembrance - Mr Arthur Leggett OAM

Last Post - One Minute Silence, Reveille/Rouse

National Anthems of Greece and Australia - Mr Apostoli Fotiadis

Concluding Blessing - Chaplain Wendy Robertson

Catafalque Party - Dismount

Governor of Western Australia - Departs

Concluding Remarks

Close.

Battle of Crete Memorial Dedication and Wreath Laying Ceremony

What you see before you today is an Australian war memorial, with a focus on those Western Australians that served, but it is more than that.

This Memorial also recognises and pays respect to the people of Crete who not only fought bravely, but also risked so much to assist Australian and Allied personnel defending the island, particularly their efforts to assist Allied troops evade capture in the aftermath of the battle.

The role of the Cretan people in assisting our soldiers was also recognised by the late Corporal Geoff Edwards OAM who remembered the bravery and sacrifice of the Cretans who helped him evade capture. He built in Margaret River in an area he named Prevelly Park, a Greek Orthodox Church, St John the Theologian, after the monastery at Preveli on Crete. During the battle, 274 Australian soldiers were killed, 507 wounded and 3,102 taken prisoner.

i For more information about the memorial and to read some of the first-hand accounts of the battle visit our website battleofcrete.org.au

Symbolism in the memorial design



The broken Column is a metaphor for a life cut short



Australian Solder of the 2nd/11th (City of Perth) Battalion facing North, the direction from where the invaders of Crete had come



Facing West, is a Greek Soldier of 1941. The symbolism of a Western facing ally is of an enduring connection between both nations



Facing South is a Royal Australian Navy Rating. HMA Ships Perth, Napier and Nizam fought valiantly in the campaign to keep sea lanes open and assist in the evacuation of the troops



Facing East is a rural Cretan woman - her presence recognizes the courageous efforts of the Cretan villagers and clergy in feeding and protecting our soldiers with considerable risk to their own lives



A funeral wreath of eucalyptus leaves is inlaid in the circular base. The base contains a dedication to the defenders of the island and a quote from the ancient Greek general and historian Thucydides. "Freedom stems from Valour" History of the Peloponnesian War (2.43.2)



The Committee is grateful and wishes to thank the following organisations that have provided support and significant financial assistance without which this project could not have proceeded

Our Partners

Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority
National Trust WA
RSLWA
Cretan Brotherhood WA
Cretan Federation of Australia and New Zealand
Zap It Web Solutions

Our Major Financial Supporters

Lotterywest
Government of Western Australia - ANZAC Day Trust
Australian Government - Saluting Their Service Commemorations Grant
Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Mr Nick Andriotakis

We also thank the individuals who contributed financially towards the funding of the Memorial

