

NAVY DAILY

Australian veterans of secret conflict honoured

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Veterans of the Indonesian Confrontation from the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association Australia Inc gather at Garden Island, Sydney after a ceremony for the 50th Anniversary of the Embarkation of HMAS Sydney by Army and Royal Australian Air force (RAAF) personnel.

Senior Australian Defence Force personnel and veterans of the Indonesian Confrontation (1962-66) gathered at Garden Island, Sydney on Saturday to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Embarkation of Australian Army and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) personnel into HMAS Sydney (III), destined for Malaysia.

Held under the memorial bow of HMAS *Parramatta* (I) at the Royal Australian Navy's Heritage Centre, the commemoration focussed on honouring the men and women who served as well as the 23 Australians lost in the conflict.

Event organiser and South Australian State President of the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association, Brian Selby said the commemoration was held to raise awareness of the somewhat little known confrontation.



State President at the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association Australia Inc, Mr Brian Selby, speaks to guests and VIPs at the 50th Anniversary of the Embarkation of HMAS Sydney by Army and Royal Australian Air force (RAAF) personnel held at Garden Island, Sydney.

“Unfortunately at the time there was little coverage in the media of Confrontation,” Mr Selby said.

“The Malayan Emergency and the Indonesian Confrontation are arguably the forgotten wars of our time. It is good to be here to recognise those who served and were lost.

“This commemoration is particularly special to us, as this is the first and perhaps the last commemoration to be conducted here in Australia.

“We are particularly thankful to the Royal Australian Navy for their support today and for allowing us to host the commemoration at the exact point of embarkation.”

Captain Nick Mason-Jones (Retired), a former member of the 111th Light Anti-aircraft Battery of the Royal Australian Artillery, said it was a good time to reflect on the events of Confrontation.

“Members from the Australian Army’s 7th Field Squadron, the 111th Light Anti-aircraft Battery of the Royal Australian Artillery and the RAAF 5 Squadron were all embarked in Sydney in 1964, headed for Sabah, Borneo and Penang, Malaya.

“The embarkation itself was done, under the cover of night, and with very little notice to the unit members and their families.

“It is good to see fellow colleagues here today from all three services, especially the Commanding Officer at the time of Sydney, Captain John Stevenson [RAN, ret.],” Captain Mason-Jones said.

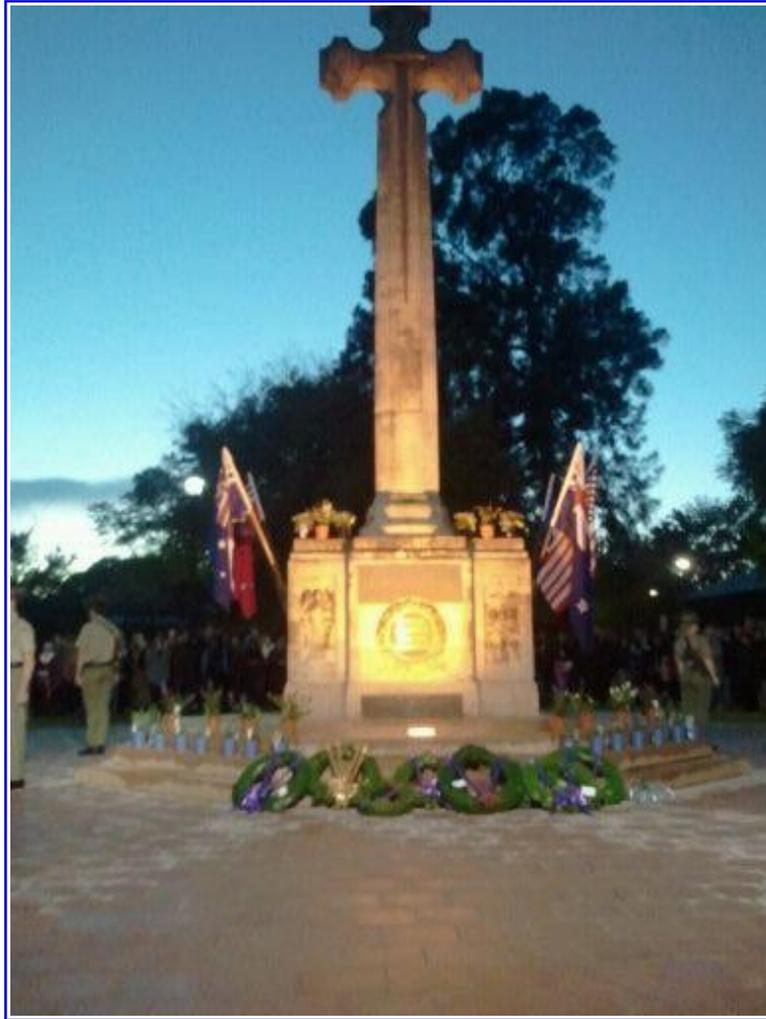
Minister for Veteran’s Affairs, Senator the Honourable Michael Robinson, Chief of Navy, Rear Admiral Ray Griggs, Commander Forces Command, Major General Mick Slater, and Group Captain Carl Newman laid wreaths for their Services to honour those who had served and those who lost their lives.

The Indonesian Confrontation and the Malayan Emergencies lasted a total of 13 years, making it one of the longest military commitments in Australia's history.

HMA Ships *Parramatta* (III) and *Yarra* (III) also participated in the conflict, escorting *Sydney* and her complement to Borneo and Malaya.

In July 2013, the Australian War Memorial unveiled a Roll of Honour at the Galleries of the Rolls of Honour for the 23 Australians who were lost in the conflict.









Source:

<http://news.navy.gov.au/en/May2014/Events/1084/Australian-veterans-of-secret-conflict-honoured.htm>