

SDFSFA Bulletin November 2006 – Sponsored by
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SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA

Working to develop the sport of Scuba diving in SA
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We are publishing this electronic bulletin as a separate publication to our normal monthly SDF News Sheet. Future issues of this “SDFSFA Bulletin” will include lengthy articles about matters of interest to recreational divers. We welcome contributions from our readers.

If you don't have the time to read through everything in this bulletin, take advantage of the following table of contents. Click on any item of interest to proceed straight to that section.

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HMAS *CANBERRA* TO GO TO VICTORIA

Dr Brendan Nelson, the Minister for Defence announced in October that Victoria would get the Ex-HMAS *Canberra*. He said that the bid submitted by the Victorian State Government, Tourism Victoria and the Victorian Artificial Reef Society had been successful. John Lawler, President of the Victorian Artificial Reef Society (VARS) reported on 19th October that the Federal Government will support the project with around \$2.8m funding and the Navy will deliver the *Canberra* from WA to Melbourne. He also said that VARS is very grateful to those groups who assisted with funding and general support to assist the project plans leading to this great success for the scuba divers of Victoria and the dive industry at large. Congratulations to VARS from SA! David Turner says that the *Canberra* is going in off Port Phillip Heads. In an October Dive Oz posting, John Allsop, the Vice President of the Victorian Artificial Reef Society, said that the currently favoured position is "somewhere between the J5 Submarine and the Rotomahana*."

*Off of Barwon Heads near Geelong.

According to Dr Brendan Nelson's press release dated 19/10/06: -

"New South Wales also stands to benefit, despite having been the unsuccessful bidder on this occasion for HMAS *Canberra*. The New South Wales Government will be offered first right to bid for HMAS *Adelaide* when she is decommissioned in late 2007. HMAS *Adelaide* is a ship of the same class as the ex-HMAS *Canberra*. I am confident the NSW Government will be able to make an at least convincing bid for the second ship. The NSW Government has indicated the preferred location for a dive site as the NSW Central Coast. My colleagues, Mr Jim Lloyd MP and Mr Ken Ticehurst MP, have been tireless and strong supporters of the Central Coast community. With their continued advocacy I am confident I will be in a position to gift the HMAS *Adelaide* to the NSW Government." Below are some details about HMAS *Canberra*: -

The frigates HMAS *Canberra*, *Adelaide*, *Sydney*, *Darwin*, *Melbourne* and *Newcastle* were all sister ships. The HMAS *Canberra* was launched on 1st Dec 1978 and commissioned on 21st Mar 1981. Her displacement was 4100 tonnes. She had a length of 138m and a beam of 14.3m. Her two General Electric LM2500 gas turbines enabled her to reach a speed of more than 30 knots. Visit <http://www.navy.gov.au/ships/canberra/default.html> for more details.

HMA SUBMARINE AE2

Neville Skinner recently sent us some information regarding the submarine HMAS AE2. The WWI sub sank in the Sea of Marmara on 30th April 1915. The site was only discovered in 73m in 1998. Neville also referred us to the website for the Submarine Institute of Australia - <http://www.submarineinstitute.com/> - where the following details were found: -

“AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT BACKING TO PROTECT AE2: OUR SILENT ANZAC

The Australian Government will provide the Submarine Institute of Australia (SIA) with \$368,500 in funding for a project aimed to protect, preserve and tell the story of the Australian Submarine HMAS AE2, which played an important role during the Gallipoli campaign of 1915. Mr Billson said he was delighted to confirm that the Australian Government had accepted the SIA's proposal to survey and protect the best interests of the AE2 and to also share the unique story of the submarine with the broader community. "I am pleased to confirm that the Australian Government has offered the SIA funding of \$368,500 to assist with conducting a detailed dived survey of the AE2 and its surrounding environment. "Data collected will assist with the development of a range of future management options for the submarine for consideration by the Australian and Turkish Governments," Mr Billson said. The Government's funding offer is based on the agreement that the Institute will match the contribution on a dollar-for-dollar basis. An amount of \$20,000 will also be provided to support a rehearsal dive survey in Port Phillip Bay in Victoria. Mr Billson also confirmed approval for the SIA to use the name "Silent ANZAC" to promote its work in relation to the AE2. "The SIA has the collective knowledge, expertise and dedication to be entrusted with this important work and I encourage the community to support their endeavours and fundraising efforts," he said. The AE2 was the first allied submarine to penetrate the Dardanelles as part of a successful submarine campaign which paralysed enemy shipping in the Sea of Marmara. It was a perilous assignment after entering the straits of the Dardanelles on April 25, 1915 . . . (As) the ANZACs landed on the beaches, HMAS AE2 penetrated the minefields, evaded the numerous patrol craft, survived the heavy shell fire from the many forts and successfully navigated the strong currents. It also torpedoed the Turkish gunboat *Peykisevket* and reached the Sea of Marmara, despite being hotly pursued by enemy surface vessels. On April 30 the AE2 came under heavy attack from the Turkish torpedo boat *Sultan Hissar*, resulting in the crew losing control of the submarine and being ordered to abandon the stricken boat, without loss of life. The AE2 then sank to the sea floor and has remained there until this day, 73 metres below the surface. President of the SIA Rear Admiral Peter Briggs (Ret) welcomed the Australian Government funding offer and said the organisation would work in partnership with the Turkish Institute of Nautical Archaeology. "All activities will be carried out with the agreement of both the Australian

and Turkish Governments and in accordance with the best practices for the management of shipwrecks, including the relevant draft United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) convention," RADM Briggs said. "Following the dived survey, SIA will prepare a report and facilitate a joint Turkish-Australian workshop to agree on options and make recommendations on the future management of the AE2. The work is being undertaken as a community service."

(The above announcement coincided with the SIA's Third Biennial Conference, which was being held at the Australian War Memorial. Defence Minister Dr Brendan Nelson opened the conference. The theme of the conference was "The Key Challenges in Achieving an Underwater Warfare Capability to Meet Australia's Needs in the Period 2020 to 2050".)

The SIA estimates that the above project will cost in excess of \$6m over the next 10 years. It is establishing a Trust for which Tax Deductibility will be sought. In the first instance, potential sponsors (either financial or in-kind) should contact the SIA as follows: -

Terry Roach, Commodore RAN rtd, Vice-President AE2, SIA, 02 4842 7175, 0427 003 059, T.A.Roach@bigpond.com .

MORE ABOUT THE SUBMARINE INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

The objective, purpose and current projects of the Submarine Institute of Australia (SIA) are as follows: -

Objective: To promote informed discussion and research in the fields of submarine operations, engineering, history and commercial sub-sea engineering - otherwise known as submarine matters.

Purpose: The Institute supports or promotes projects that support this objective.

Current Projects: The Institute is currently pursuing these projects: Ensuring the preservation and presentation of the submarine HMAS AE2 located in Turkish waters in the Sea of Marmara, contributing to an informed debate on the wreck's future and ensuring that AE2's contribution to the Gallipoli campaign is duly recognized."

Source: <http://www.submarineinstitute.com/> .

28TH ANNIVERSARY OF DECLARATION OF SHIPWRECK SUBMARINE

Our February 2006 Bulletin included an article titled "Wreck of the Japanese Submarine *I-124*". The article said that the Imperial Japanese Navy submarine *I-124* was located "somewhere in the Timor Sea, west of Darwin". The site is apparently 64kms northwest of Charles Point. The *I-124* was a mine-laying submersible of German design. She was sunk in May 1942 during WWII. The *I-124* was the subject of a salvage claim during the 1970s which ultimately led to the declaration of the Historic Shipwrecks Act. The sub was declared an historic wreck on 19th December 1978. She is now protected as a war grave under the Historic Shipwrecks Act. 19th December 2006 is the 28th anniversary of the declaration.

The Scuba Divers Federation of SA is a member of the following: -

Rapid Bay Jetty Design Group

SARFAC (SA Recreational Fishing Advisory Council)

Fleurieu Reef Management Committee (Ex-HMAS *Hobart*)
TRAIL COMMITTEES - SA Trails Coordinating Committee (Office of Recreation &
Sport) and Port Noarlunga Reef Underwater Trail South Australian Trails

Contact the Federation's Secretary on info@sdfs.net to be included on the mailing list
for this electronic bulletin.

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