

The Australian Submarine HMAS AE2 Gallipoli Commemorative Trust

Brief for Potential Sponsors or Service Providers

Preservation of the Australian Submarine HMAS AE2 and appropriate recognition of the role she and her crew played in the Gallipoli Campaign

The Opportunity

To assist in the preservation of the Australian World War I submarine HMAS AE2 and to recognize the hitherto unsung heroism of her crew for their exploits in the Dardanelles campaign in 1915. The deeds of the Australian soldiers who fought at Gallipoli have become legend, but the extraordinary story of the Australian sailors who also fought, has yet to be told.



The Crew of HMA Submarine AE2

Australian War Memorial Negative Number P00371.001

Background

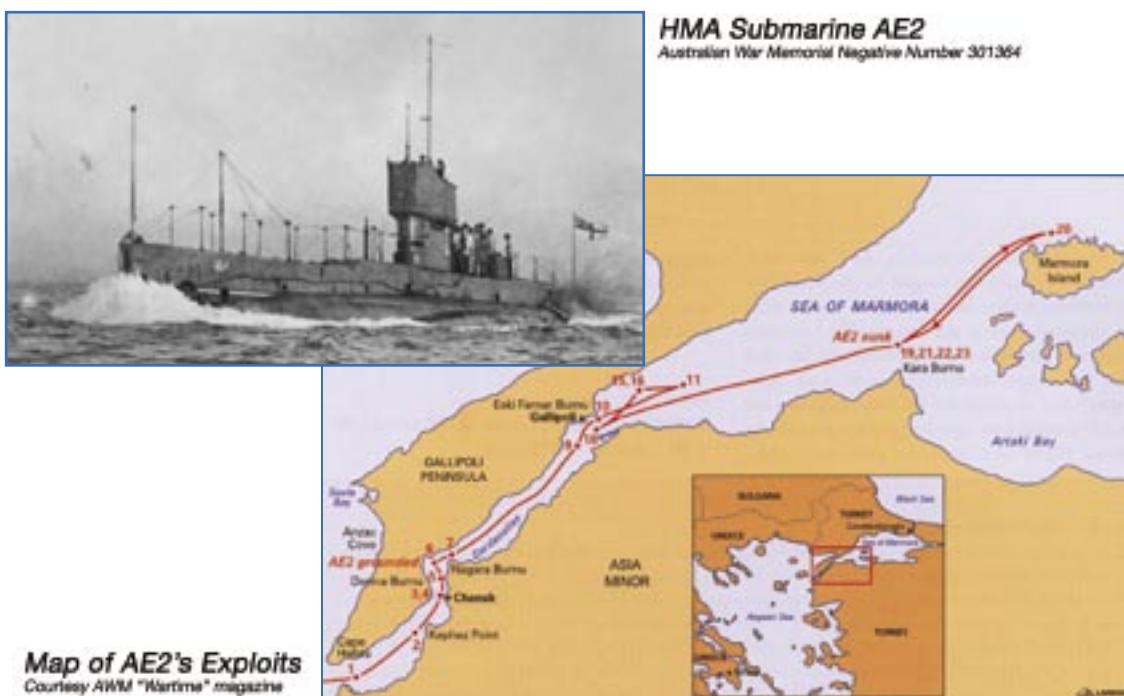
The Gallipoli Campaign of 1915-16 is generally associated with the invasion of the Gallipoli Peninsula by Allied forces including Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC), in an effort to knock Ottoman Turkey out of the war. The invasion was the beginning of seven months of costly land battles, ending with the evacuation of Allied forces.

However, another campaign was fought beneath the waters surrounding the Gallipoli Peninsula, one in which honors for both sides were even, with victories and disasters for both Allied and Ottoman forces.

The AE2 Story

In the early hours of 25 April 1915, AE 2 entered the Dardanelles, on the surface. Her mission was to create a diversion to the landings by ‘running amok in the Narrows’ and then enter the Turkish inland Sea of Marmara to cut the supply lines of the Ottoman army. Shortly before dawn, as the first boatloads of ANZAC soldiers were approaching the coast of the Gallipoli Peninsula AE2, under fire from Turkish shore batteries, dived into the heavily mined waters.

These minefields had already claimed three battleships of the British and French fleets and severely damaged three others. Two other Allied submarines had tried and failed the same task, resulting in their destruction.



Despite fierce Turkish opposition and against all odds AE2 succeeded. History suggests that a characteristically Australian approach, encompassing skill, bravery, fortitude and luck, meant she was the first of the Allied submarines to penetrate the Straits. AE2 paved the way for a number of other Allied submarines, causing great disruption to Turkish reinforcements moving on and around the Sea of Marmara.



HMA Submarine AE2 ‘running amok in the Narrows’

Painting by Phil Belbin courtesy of the RAN

So significant was the Australian submarine's achievement that it may have altered the course of the campaign, news of her passage arriving just as the evacuation of the ANZAC positions was being discussed by senior British commanders on the night of 25 April.

Her campaign ended five days later on 30 April 1915. The AE2 was lost, scuttled by her crew without loss of life, after being fatally damaged in an engagement with the Turkish torpedo-boat SULTANHISAR. Her crew of 3 officers and 29 sailors was taken as prisoners of war.

For more than 80 years, she lay hidden beneath the waters of the Sea of Marmara, undiscovered despite repeated attempts to locate the missing submarine, her story almost unknown except to a few historians. All this changed when, in 1998, after three long years of hard research, Turkish museum director and wreck explorer Mr. Selcuk Kolay found AE2 sitting intact and upright on the bottom in 73m of water - her final resting place.

The 2006 Gallipoli Campaign

The Submarine Institute of Australia (SIA) is seeking financial and in-kind support from Australian companies and Institutions to develop options for preserving and managing the historic relic for consideration by the Turkish and Australian Governments.

For too long, the story of AE2's contribution to the Anzac legend has been untold. This is the opportunity to correct that before the Centenary of the Gallipoli landings in 2015 so that AE2 can claim her rightful place in history.



The membership of SIA currently comprises serving and retired Navy officers and expert civilians with a collective knowledge spanning some 500 years.

The SIA seeks partner institutions that can complement our areas of expertise so that together, we may tell the remarkable tale of the AE2.

The SIA has members who have:

- Been involved in the dives on the wreck.
- Critical skills required in submarine engineering, project management and marine archaeology.
- Links to maritime museums and submarine community.

The SIA has sponsored early activity to identify and commence the interpretation of the AE2 relic. With these skills and involvement the Institute continues to be engaged in the development and implementation of a long term master plan by the Australian and Turkish Governments for the management and preservation of AE2.

The situation now:

- Interested Australian and Turkish groups and the Australian Government have agreed the need for a hydrographic and archaeological survey to assess the material condition of the wreck.
- The SIA has reached an informal understanding with the Turkish Institute of Nautical Archaeology (TINA) to jointly conduct a diving expedition in September 2006.
- A Memorandum of Understanding is currently being negotiated between the SIA and TINA.
- An Australian based Defence company has offered to fund and conduct the hydrographic survey.
- The Defence Science and Technology Organisation has agreed to support the expedition with a small Remotely Operated Vehicle. This may be able to enter the wreck to obtain images of the interior of the submarine.
- A group of volunteers from the Defence Science & Technology Organisation is developing a computer based ‘virtual model’ of AE2.
- The Australian marine archaeology team involved in the 1998 dive has assembled the skills necessary to conduct the balance of activities concurrently.

Following the survey, a report on future options with a recommended way ahead will be jointly developed by the SIA and TINA for consideration by the Governments of Turkey and Australia.



The Objective

The Submarine Institute of Australia believes the long term objective for the AE2 project should be to:

Ensure the Australian Submarine HMAS AE2's role in the Gallipoli campaign is appropriately recognised.

A strategy for achieving this objective is available on the SIA's website at
www.submarineinstitute.com

Proposed SIA Role

The Submarine Institute of Australia proposes to provide the necessary leadership for development of a long term management plan for agreement by all stakeholders and to manage the conduct of this critical survey:

- Fund raising will be undertaken by the proposed *The Australian Submarine HMAS AE2 Gallipoli Commemorative Trust*.
- This Trust will apply for Government support as Deductible Gift Recipient status.
- An Inter-Departmental Working Group [IDWG] has been established to coordinate the Australian Government's position on AE2.
 - The IDWG has endorsed the SIA's proposal.
- The SIA has briefed a number of Australian Government Ministers.
In particular:
 - The Minister for Veterans' Affairs has supported the proposal.
 - The Minister for Environment and Heritage has welcomed the SIA's proposal and has agreed to support an assessment of the feasibility of surveying the condition of the AE2.
- The ABC has indicated it has developed a comprehensive film treatment and assigned an award winning writer/director and production team, all of whom are on standby to film the proposed survey and tell the remarkable story of how a lone submarine changed the course of a war.

The Proposal

The 2006 survey should be seen as part of a longer term plan, leading to the centenary of the landings in 2015. It is essential that we act now to survey, protect and if practicable, preserve the wreck in situ, while decisions on its future are taken by the Australian and Turkish Governments.

The SIA is now seeking sponsors to fund or provide in kind services to assist in the conduct of the survey and preparation of the report to the Governments of Turkey and Australia.

We are offering you the opportunity to become involved in this unique project to preserve one of Australia's few, remaining, and significant World War I relics and to ensure the story of its heroic crew is told.



AE2's starboard bow draped in fishing nets

Courtesy of Dr Mark Spencer

The SIA estimates that this project will cost in excess of \$A6m over the next 10 years and 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 Submarine Institute of Australia:



**Terence Roach AM
Commodore RAN rtd
Vice President AE2
Submarine Institute of Australia
+61 2 4842 7175
+61 427 003 059
mail to: T.A.Roach@bigpond.com
<http://www.submarineinstitute.com>**