

Bundaberg & District
Ex Servicewomen's Association

75th Anniversary of the sinking of



A.H.S Centaur

Service of Remembrance

9.30 am Monday 14 May 2018
War Nurses Memorial Park, Bundaberg

PROGRAM

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING

*You are invited to join us at the Terrace , Bundaberg Services
Club,
17 Quay Street, for refreshments.*



The members of Bundaberg & District Ex Servicewomen's
Association
wish to thank the supporters of the Commemoration of the
75th Anniversary
of the loss of Australian Hospital Ship *Centaur* on 14 May
1943

Lieutenant Commander Reg Rayner, SOOPS Australian
Naval Cadets

Bundaberg Regional Council
Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch

Burnett Heads Progress & Sports Association
Rotary Club of Bundaberg Sunrise

Mrs Jan Thomas OAM 2/3 A.H.S. Centaur Association
Dr Madonna Grehan RN RM, Gr.Dip Hlth Eth, PhD
(Melbourne)

Australian War Memorial

And all contributors who are named within this program



Bundaberg & District Ex Servicewomen's Association Tribute C75



Service of Remembrance—75th Anniversary, sinking of AHS Centaur

MC: Ms Jennifer Waldron, President, Bundaberg & Dist. Ex Servicewomen's Assn.
PADRE: Chaplain Ray Nutley Ret.

0925 Please take your seats

Welcome and Introduction—Ms Jennifer Waldron

Prayer of Remembrance—Chaplain Nutley

Prayer for Australian Defence Force—Chaplain Nutley

Prayer for Nurses who paid the Supreme Sacrifice—Lieutenant Colonel Janet Rasmussen (Ret)

Addresses

AHS Centaur: Hon Keith Pitt MP, Assistant Minister to the Deputy Prime Minister, Federal Member for Hinkler

Survivors: Mayor Jack Dempsey, Bundaberg Regional Council

Sister Ellen Savage GM AANS: Captain Nicole Blackley

AHS Centaur Roll of Honour: President, Bundaberg RSL Sub Branch

Laying of Wreaths: (The MC will call out all wreath layers)

Lament: Piper, Arthur Mackenzie, Bundaberg Caledonian Pipe Band

Tribute to the Fallen (please stand)

Ode Adjunct Associate Professor Fiona Sewell, Executive Director of Nursing & Midwifery Services, Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service

Last Post Bugler, Cadet Leading Seaman Kieren Baart, T.S Bundaberg Australian Naval Cadets

Minute's Silence

"Lest We Forget"

Rouse

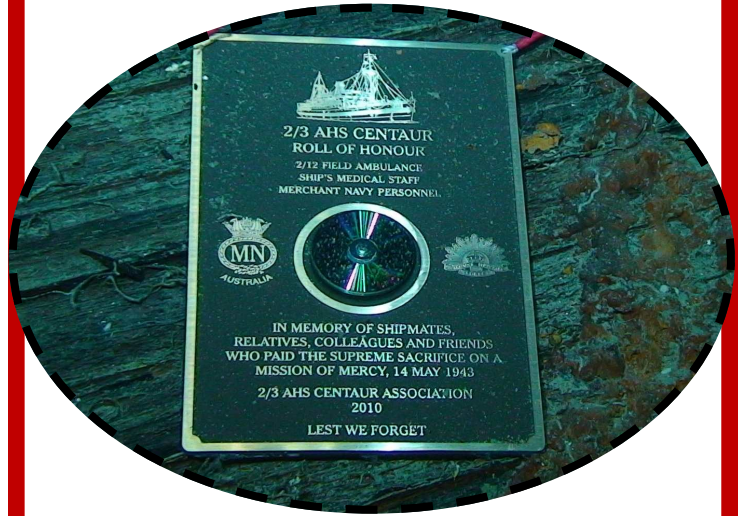
National Anthem

Closing Prayer : The Lords Prayer—Chaplain Nutley

Benediction:—Chaplain Nutley

Thank you and closing remarks:— Ms Jennifer Waldron

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We will remember them...

332 Embarked—

64 Survived—

268 Lives Lost

	Embarked	Survived
Ships Staff	75	30
Army Officers	8	0
Army Nurses	12	1
2/12 Fd Amb	192	32
Other Army	45	1

From Bundaberg:

**Sister Doris Joyce Wyllie
NFX138687 Staff**

**Private Mark Harold Cummings
QX25635 2/12 F Amb**



**REMEMBERING OUR
WAR NURSES**



The Nurses on the *Centaur*

Dr Madonna Grehan

Reprinted from 2.3 A.H.S Centaur Association newsletter with the kind permission of author, Dr Grehan and Association Secretary Jan Thomas OAM.

Twelve Australian Army Nursing Service nurses (AANS) were an integral part of the personnel of the 2/3 Australian Hospital Ship *Centaur*. Seven had served on 1 Netherlands Military Hospital Ship *Oranje*, during 1941 and 1942, retrieving invalided Australian, New Zealand and British soldiers from the Middle East. With the deaths of eleven of the *Centaur's* nursing officers, more than 100 years of nursing skill and experience was lost with them.

Major (Sarah) Anne Jewell was Matron of *Centaur's* AANS nurses. Born in Perth, Jewell trained and worked in Western Australia before moving to Melbourne where she was the welfare and accident nurse at the Sunshine Harvester Works for seven years. She was greatly respected by the 1,300 strong staff there. After Harvester, Jewell joined a rehabilitation doctor's practice in Melbourne. From 1940, Jewell served aboard various Sea Ambulance Transports, on HMT *Queen Elizabeth*, and *Oranje*.

Jewell's Deputy Matron on AHS *Centaur* was **Captain Mary Hamilton McFarlane**, from Cowell in South Australia. McFarlane was from a military family. Her uncle was a Brigadier, her father was an ex-serviceman and her brother was with the AIF. Well educated, accomplished in drawing, music, and fluent in French, McFarlane was the first Australian nurse to serve aboard *Oranje* as a member of Australia's liaison Staff.

Another Victorian was **Margaret (Marg) Adams** who had trained at the Children's and Allied Hospitals in Melbourne. Adams was working at St George's Hospital in Kew at enlistment. She was keen on outdoor activities and known for her warm personality and big smile. Her good friend, **Eileen (Nan) Rutherford** was an Alfred Hospital trainee, originally from Ham-

ilton in Western Victoria. At enlistment, Rutherford was sister-in-charge of the Operating Theatre at Windemere Private Hospital in Melbourne and Deputy Matron there.

Alice (Ali) O'Donnell was from a large family at Myrtleford in Victoria. After a career in the ES&A Bank, O'Donnell trained at the Melbourne Hospital in her late twenties and became private operating theatre sister to Sir Allan Newton, a surgeon whose speciality was the thyroid gland. Four of O'Donnell's brothers were in the military.

Jenny Walker, at 24 years, was the youngest of the *Centaur's* nurses. Also a graduate of the Royal Melbourne Hospital and a veteran of *Oranje*, she was described as rebellious, witty and immensely sociable.

Five of the nurses were from NSW; **Cynthia Haultain, Evelyn (Eva) King, Myrtle (Moss) Moston, Edna Shaw and Ellen Savage**. Haultain, King and Savage were veterans of *Oranje* and good friends. Haultain was experienced in respiratory nursing and operating theatre techniques, particularly for tuberculosis. She had trained and worked at Sydney's Infectious Diseases Hospital at Little Bay and then at a sanatorium in Sydney's West. Evelyn King, described as unassuming and reserved, was from Darlington Point in the Riverina. After training and working at Cootamundra District Hospital, King had been at Tumut for two years when she enlisted.

Myrtle Moston was born at Trangie in the Central West of NSW. She was a stenographer before training as a nurse in Sydney and was at Bathurst when she enlisted. **Edna Shaw**, from Sydney, trained at Newcastle Hospital. Shaw was at 102 AGH in Tamworth when she enlisted for service overseas. Her two brothers, also, were serving.

Born in Melbourne (**Doris) Joyce Wyllie** moved to Bundaberg as a young child. She elected to train interstate and stayed on the staff of the Sydney Hospital after completing training there. In 1941, she was attached to Concord Hospital. Wyllie volunteered for AIF service following the death of her fiancée in New Guinea on 30 August 1942. It came on his first day of fighting there.

Ellen Savage was the only woman to survive the *Centaur's* sinking. Born at

Quirindi in Central NSW, she trained at Newcastle Hospital and was working as a Baby Health Centre sister in Tamworth at enlistment. Savage was attached to Concord Hospital and in 1942 to *Oranje*. In the sinking of the *Centaur*, Savage sustained multiple injuries and burns, yet within three months, she was back at work at Concord where she continued until 1946. Savage was awarded the George Medal for 'conspicuous gallantry' in the aftermath of *Centaur's* sinking. After the war, she accepted a scholarship to study nursing administration overseas. On her return to Australia, Savage joined the administrative staff at Newcastle Hospital as Matron of Rankin Park, the hospital's chest unit.

The shock and outpouring of grief at the deaths of the nurses was profound in Australia and overseas. The deceased nurses were and continue to be, remembered.

In May 1943 a public subscription campaign called the Centaur Fund was launched to provide an education and recreational centre for nurses, where nurses could undertake postgraduate studies without having to go overseas. Now known as the Nurses Memorial Centre, this organisation commemorates *Centaur* and other defence nurses every year on the Sunday preceding ANZAC Day. Each year, the Centaur Association sends a representative to this service.

WA and SA developed Nurses Memorial Centres too, providing educational and recreational opportunities.

In Qld in 1948, the Centaur Memorial Fund for Nurses established a service, commemorating *Centaur's* sinking. It is held on 14 May each year in Brisbane.

Elsewhere, nursing prizes, sundials and memorial gates underscore the esteem that families, friends and communities held for the nurses of the *Centaur*. As a matter of respect and gratitude, other sectors of the nursing profession also acknowledge their forbears who paid the supreme sacrifice.

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Remembering lives lost on AHS *Centaur* 14 May 1943



Relatives, Kathleen Dahl, Bel & Allan Shield with RSL President, Jodie Lay



Glenda Everton-Brocklesby and Janet Rasmussen



Shirley Watson & wreaths

TS Bundaberg Bugler Kieran Baart

