

HMAS *PERTH* — MEMORIAL

Statement by Member for Cottesloe

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [12.52 pm]: On the evening of 20 June, I had the pleasure of attending a meeting organised by a group of people who assembled at TS Perth to discuss the establishment of an appropriate memorial to commemorate the loss of HMAS *Perth* during the Second World War. I know that many members in this house understand the significance of the loss of HMAS *Perth*, but for those unfamiliar, on 1 March 1942, HMAS *Perth* was sunk alongside USS *Houston* during a battle with the vastly superior main Japanese invasion force in the Sunda Strait between the islands of Java and Sumatra. Of the 681 sailors aboard, 353 were killed in battle. All but four of the 328 survivors were captured as prisoners of war; 106 died in captivity, many as forced labour on the notorious Burma–Thai railway, and the surviving 218 returned home to Australia.

A group headed by Commander Jim O’Neill, the state secretary of the Navy League of Australia, and Mr Ian Holthouse, the state president of the Naval Association of Australia, have worked with renowned artists Joan Walsh-Smith and Charles Smith to develop a concept proposal for a new memorial to commemorate the loss of HMAS *Perth* and so many Australian lives. I will share the details of this with members in this house so that perhaps some of them can join them to develop this memorial.