



MEDIA STATEMENT

A State Funeral Service with full military honours for Mr Albert Edward (Ted) Matthews, was held in St Stephen's Uniting Church, 197 Macquarie Street, Sydney, at 11.00 am on Tuesday, 16 December 1997. The service was followed by cremation at the Northern Suburbs Crematorium, Delhi Road, North Ryde, where the Returned and Services League of Australia conducted a service. His ashes will be laid at the RSL Garden of Remembrance at Rookwood Cemetery.

The officiating clergy were the Reverend Dr Scott McPheat, Senior Minister, St Stephen's Uniting Church, the Reverend Arthur Pearce and Principal Chaplain Bruce Roy of the Department of Defence.

Mr Matthews was the last survivor of the first Gallipoli landing on 25 April 1915, now commemorated as ANZAC Day. He died in his sleep on 9 December 1997, aged 101 years. In 1990, he was one of 59 Australian veterans who returned to Gallipoli, commemorating the 75th anniversary of Anzac Day.

He was born in the Sydney suburb of Leichhardt on 11 November 1896 and as a 17 year old enlisted and was assigned as a signals officer to the 1st Infantry Brigade, 1st Division Signals. After having fought at Gallipoli for the full nine months, he went on to fight in France, including Villers Brettoneux which marked the beginning of victory in World War I.

On returning from the war, Mr Matthews returned to his trade of carpentry and a range of other jobs. He married Stella Broderick and they had two daughters, Irene and Jean, both of whom married visiting American GIs during World War II and migrated to the United States of America. After his first wife died, he married Freda Corlett, whom he also outlived. He is survived by Irene, nine grandchildren and several grandchildren.

At the Service Tributes were given by the Governor-General and the Prime Minister, the 23 Psalm was read by the Governor of New South Wales, and a Lesson was read by Senator the Honourable John Faulkner, representing the Leader of the Opposition in the Commonwealth Parliament. A Eulogy was given by Mr Kevin Matthews and a Lesson was read by Mr Ralph Matthews, nephews of Mr Ted Matthews.

Official mourners included:

HE the Hon Sir William Deane AC KBE, Governor-General, and HE Lady Deane

HE the Hon Gordon Samuels AC, Governor of New South Wales

Hon John Howard MP, Prime Minister

Hon Andrew Refshauge MP, representing the Premier of New South Wales

Ms Jackie Kelly, MP, representing the Speaker of the House of Representatives

Senator Sue West, representing the President of the Senate

The following members of the Diplomatic Corps:

HE Mr Bilal Simsir, Ambassador of Turkey

Mr Ferit Ergin, Consul-General of Turkey

Mr Doug Law, Consul-General of New Zealand

Mr Philip Morrice, British Consul-General

Mr Jean-Claude Poinbeuf, Consul General of France

Ministers of the Federal Cabinet

Hon Bronwyn Bishop MP, Minister for Defence Industry, Science and Personnel

Hon Bruce Scott MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs, and Mrs Scott

Senator the Hon John Faulkner, representing the Leader of the Opposition in the Commonwealth Parliament

Hon R J L Hawke, AC, former Prime Minister

Hon Sir Eric Willis KBE CMG

Mr George Simpson, Tasmanian Travel Centre, Sydney, representing the Premier of Tasmania

Alderman Henry Tsang, representing the Lord Mayor of Sydney

General John Baker AC, Chief of the Defence Force

The following members of the Commonwealth Parliament:

Mr Laurie Ferguson MP

Ms Pauline Hanson MP

Mr Peter Debman MP, representing the Leader of the Opposition in the New South Wales Parliament

The following member of the New South Wales Parliament:

Mr Brad Hazzard MP

Mr Max Moore-Wilton, Secretary, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Dr Neil Johnston, President of the Repatriation Commission and Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs

Lt General John Sanderson AC, Chief of Army

Rear Admiral Chris Oxenbould, representing the Chief of Navy

Mr L. Bosman, representing former members of the Commonwealth Parliament

Ceremonial and Hospitality Unit

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

16 December 1997