



David Elliott
Minister for Transport
Minister for Veterans
Minister for Western Sydney

MEDIA RELEASE

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COMMEMORATING VICTORY IN THE PACIFIC DAY

Second World War veterans were honoured today at the Cenotaph in Martin Place and around the state on Victory in the Pacific Day (VP Day).

Minister for Transport, Minister for Veterans and Minister for Western Sydney David Elliott attended the commemoration with RSL NSW President Ray James to pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of our veterans over 77 years ago.

“Today we come together on VP Day to remember the efforts of our veterans who protected our nation abroad and here on the home front.” Mr Elliott said.

“We pay tribute to those who served and the 39,000 Australians who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.”

On 15 August 1945, Australia's Prime Minister, Ben Chifley, announced that the Second World War was over after Japan accepted the Allied Nations' terms of surrender. Australians were involved in Pacific Campaigns in New Guinea, Bougainville, New Britain, Borneo and the Philippines.

Retired Rear Admiral Rothesay Swan enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy in 1940 and retired in 1983 after 43 years of service.

Rothesay was on the bridge of the HMAS *Shropshire* during the Battle of Surigao Strait (Philippines).

“That’s where I learnt that if you heard the whine of the shells you knew they had already gone over the top of you, it was the ones you didn’t hear that you had to worry about,” RADM Swan said.

“We were action stations 80 per cent of the time. My bunk was normally the steel deck with a life jacket as a pillow. You didn’t get a lot of sleep ... you ate where you worked. They would bring around buckets of stew and dish it out. It was all very thrilling for a young lad. But there is no doubt about it, I am very lucky. You never knew from one moment to the next if you would be alive the next day. But it’s what you’re trained for.”

RADM Swan was one of many veterans who shared their [story](#) two years ago to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

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