


Labuan Remembrance Day

The background features silhouettes of soldiers in various poses, some holding rifles, and several military aircraft flying across a sky filled with white clouds. The overall tone is somber and commemorative.

"Honouring Our Fallen Heroes"

13 November 2022

Labuan War Memorial. Jalan Tanjung Batu

Large, vibrant red poppies are scattered across the bottom foreground, partially overlapping the text and the dark silhouette area.



Programme

13 November 2022 (Sunday) Labuan War Memorial

- 0900 hrs Arrival Of Public and Visitors
- 0930 hrs Arrival Of Invited Guests
- Arrival Of VIPs
- 1000 hrs Arrival Of Guest Of Honour
- Introduction of Remembrance Day by Emcee
- 1030 hrs Service Ceremonies
- Christian prayer session at the Colonnade
 - Muslim and Hindu/Sikh prayer session at the designated area
- 1050 hrs Prayer Service expected to end
- Return to Colonnade
 - Last Post
 - Wreath Laying Ceremony
- 11.30 hrs End of Ceremony

The Origin of the Remembrance Day

The cease-fire was made permanent the following year when members of the Commonwealth and the League of Nations signed the Treaty of Versailles. People across the world celebrate the war's end-celebrations tempered by thoughts of enormous suffering and life loss from the war.

More than 416,000 Australians volunteered for service in World War I of these 324,000 served overseas. Over 60,000 Australians were killed, including 45,000 who died on the Western Front in France and Belgium, and more than 8,000 died on the Gallipoli Peninsular in Turkey.

For Australia and other allied nations including New Zealand, Canada and the United States, November 11th became known as Armistice Day - a day to remember those lives lost in World War I. A day remained to be commemorated until this day.

At 11am On 11 November 1918, Guns On The Western Front Went Silence After Four Years Of Warfare. Having Inflicted Heavy Defeats, The German Call For Armistice (Suspension Of Fighting) In Order To Secure A Peace Settlement. Three German Government Representatives Accepted The Armistice Terms Presented To Them By An Allied Commander, General Foch Of The French Army. They Accepted The Allied Terms Of Unconditional Surrender.

After World War II, the Australian Government agreed to United Kingdom's proposal that Armistice Day be renamed Remembrance Day to commemorate those whose lives were lost in both World Wars. Today the loss of Australian lives from all wars and conflicts is commemorated on Remembrance Day.

In October 1997 the Governor-General issued a Proclamation declaring 11 November as Remembrance Day - a day to remember the sacrifice of those who dies in wars and conflicts.



Labuan World War II Cemetery

The cemetery located on the left of Jalan Tanjung Batu from Labuan town. It is approximately 0.5km from the airfield and about 3km from the town centre. The Labuan War Cemetery was primarily intended to commemorate the officers and men of the Australian Army and Air Force who died as prisoners-of-war (POWs) in Borneo and in the Phillipines from 1939 to 1945; as well as fallen men who fought during the 1945 operations to recover Borneo. Their graves were unknown.

The POWs of Sandakan, the perished war heroes of the Australian 7th, 8th and 9th Divisions, as well as those of the Punjab Signal Corp and few locals were buried here today at the WWI Memorial in Labuan.

The site was officiated by the Australian government in June 1953; contains 3,908 graves of soldiers in perfectly squared platoons, much alike they would stand in salutation; alive. These soldiers came from Australia, Great Britain, India, New Zealand and Malaysia. Of these 3,908 graves, 2156 were unidentified and became known as simply 'Known unto God'. The 1,752 identified graves, 1,523 were soldiers, 220 airmen, 5 sailors and 4 civilians. In which 814 are British, 858 Australians, 1 New Zealander, 43 Indian and 35 Malayan. The other 34 Indian soldiers were cremated and commemorated on the memorial at the Indian Army plot. The remains were shipped from Sabah; some with their military tags still glimmering around their necks.

Each white headstone engraved with the names, military positions and death ages of the fallen heroes. Poignant messages engraved from their family members still resonates tearful melancholy today. To those 2,156 un-sung heroes - the names of the brave ones may not be known on earth and they are never forgotten in the eyes of God. The Cross of Sacrifice stood in their names in the middle of the memorial ground.

Labuan War Memorial

This Memorial consists of colonnade forming a forecourt inside wrought iron gates of the main entrance to the cemetery. Facing the entrance, pillars with bronze panels of which engraved the names of those whom is honoured with dedicatory inscriptions. Some of those name appear on the memorial are undoubtedly buried in unidentified graves in the cemetery. Every year on a Sunday closest to November 11, Remembrance Day Cemetery is conducted to commemorate those who had fallen in Borneo during Second World War.



Remembrance Day A Commemorative Ceremony

Remembrance Day or 'Poppy Day' is observed on the 11th. Hour of the 11th. Day of November each year in some Commonwealth countries. Originated from the First World War (1914 - 1918), the auspicious day is to commemorate the Allied Servicemen, who gave their lives during the war.

Red poppies are worn at ceremonies such as ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day. These ceremonies share many similar customs and traditions. The central element of the Remembrance Day is the minutes of silence.

Remembrance Day in Borneo will be observed in Labuan World War II Memorial grounds. Let us remember those who sacrificed their lives during the war on this day. Buried here are also Malaysians.

The Laying of Wreaths

Flowers have traditionally been laid on graves and memorials in memory of the dead. Laurel is also a commemorative symbol; woven into a wreath, it was used by ancient Romans to crown victors and the brave as a mark of honour.



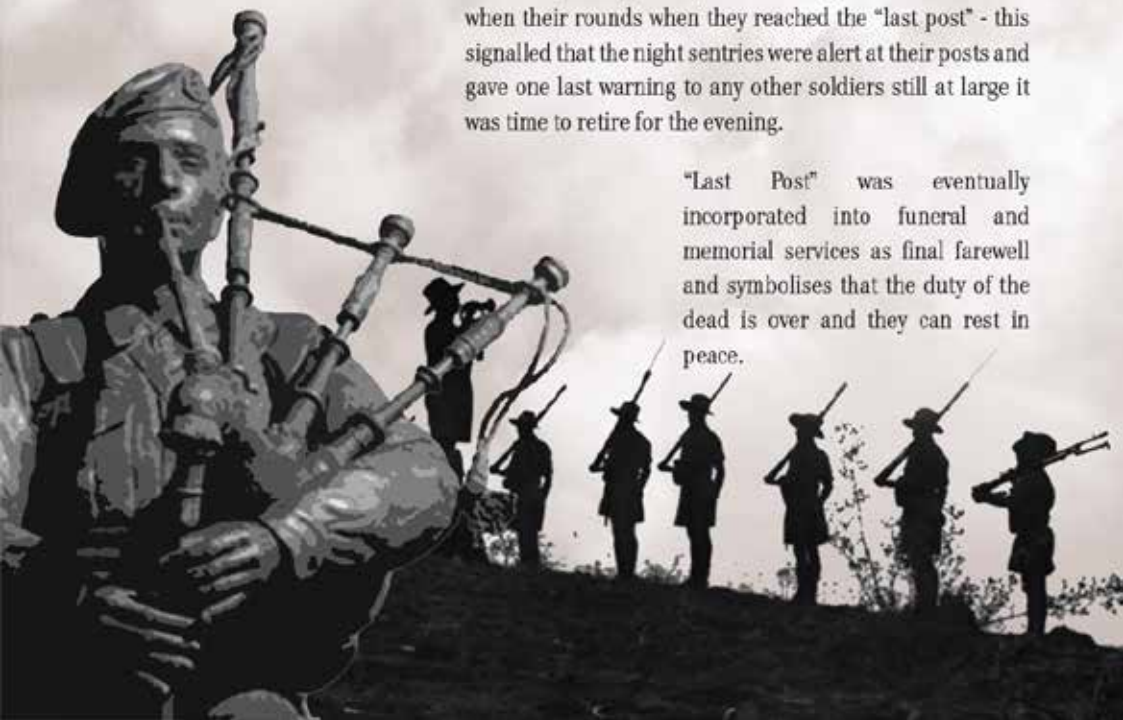
The Sound of The Last Post

The Last Post is one of a number of bugle calls in military tradition which mark the phases of the day. While "Reveille signals" signalled the start of a soldier's day, the Last Post signals its end.

It is believed originally to have been part of a more elaborate routine, known in the British Army as "tattoo" that had origins in the 17th. Century. During the evening, a duty officer had to do the rounds of his unit's position, checking that the sentry posts were manned rounding up the off-duty soldiers and pecking them off to their beds or billets. He would be accompanied by one or more musicians. The "first post" was sounded when the duty officer started his rounds and, as the party proceeded from post to post, a drum was played. The drum beats told off-duty soldiers it was time to rest - if the soldiers were billeted in a town, the beats told them it was time to quit the pubs. "Tattoo" is derivation of doe den tap toe, Dutch for "turn of the taps", a call which is said to have followed the drum beats in many Dutch pubs while English armies were campaigning through Holland and Flanders in the 1660s.

(It is also from routine that American practice of "taps" of "drum taps" originated). Another bugle call was sounded when their rounds when they reached the "last post" - this signalled that the night sentries were alert at their posts and gave one last warning to any other soldiers still at large it was time to retire for the evening.

"Last Post" was eventually incorporated into funeral and memorial services as final farewell and symbolises that the duty of the dead is over and they can rest in peace.



The Moment of Silence

The idea for the two minutes of silence observed at memorial services in memory of the dead is said to have originated with Edward George Honey, a Melbourne journalist, a First World War veteran himself living in London in 1919. He wrote a letter to the London Evening News in which he appealed for five minutes silence, amid the celebrations planned for the first anniversary of the end of the war to honour the sacrifice of those who had died.

October 27th, 1919, Lord Milner put a suggestion from his friend Sir Percy Fitzpatrick (a South African); to the king private secretary for period of silence on Armistice Day in all the countries of the empire. Fitzpatrick's idea had its origin in a period of silence that observed at noon in Cape Town following heavy losses among South African Brigade on the proposal. King George V was evidently very moved by the idea and took it up immediately. There is no record that Sir Percy was prompted by Honey's letter in the London Evening News, but with the King, both Honey and Sir Percy attended a rehearsal for a five-minute silence involving the Grenadier Guards at Buckingham Palace. Five minutes proved too long and the two-minute interval was decided upon.

On 7 November 1919, George V Sent a special message to the people of Commonwealth:

"I believe that my people in every part of the empire fervently wish to perpetuate the memory of the Great Deliverance and of those who laid down their lives to achieve it"

His Highness added:

"A complete suspension of all our normal activities" be observed for two minutes at eleventh hour day of the eleventh month" so that "in perfect stillness the thoughts of everyone may be concentrated on reverent remembrance of the Glorious Dead"

Two minutes silence was first observed in Australia on the first anniversary of the Armistice and continues to be observed on Remembrance Day today. The two minutes silence has over the years been incorporated into ANZAC Day and other commemorative ceremonies.



Labuan & World War II

1ST JANUARY 1942

A Japanese independent brigade lead by Major-General Kiyotake Kawaguchi invaded Labuan Island. The invasion led to a campaign to capture Borneo. Borneo sole Allied infantry unit, the 15th Punjab Regiment of the 2nd Battalion of the Indian Army resisted the Kawaguchi brigade campaign for ten weeks.

1ST MAY 1942

The surrender of the sole Allied force and Borneo was under Japanese rule. Under the Japanese rule; Borneo was divided into two divisions; the west coast including the interior of Kudat was changed to Sheikai Shiu; the east coast was changed to Tokai Shiu and Labuan was renamed Meida Island (Maida-Shima) after the Marquis Toshinari Maeda, the 1st commander of the Japanese 37th Army for the Northern Borneo government.

21ST JANUARY 1944

The Kinabalu Guerillas movement ended with mass murder of Kwok and his men in Petagas. The location of massacre is now known as the Petagas War Memorial. The infamous rebellion "Kinabalu Guerilla" were led by Albert Kwok in the west and another led by Datu Mustapha from the north.

FEBRUARY 1945

Allied Air Forces from the South West Pacific Air command carried out devastating bombardment on Japanese position in Borneo from 1941 - 1945; crippling Sandakan, Jesselton (Kota Kinabalu) and Labuan, POWs were forced to march away from habitations in

Ranau, which became known as the infamous Ranau Death March. Hundreds perished along the way and some were killed.

10TH JUNE 1945

The Allied forces began landing in Brunei and Labuan, a prelude to campaign to retake North Borneo. The Island was freed of Japanese occupation by Australian forces under Operation Oboe Six.

10TH SEPTEMBER 1945

The War ended with the official surrender of the Japanese 37th Army lead by Lieutenant General Baba Masao in Labuan.

The remains of the Allied troops and POWs from the battlefield all over Borneo were gathered and re-buried at the Labuan War Cemetery. Rows upon rows of white headstones mark the graves of the fallen heroes. Many stones bear poignant messages from families while others were simply inscribed as "Known Unto God".

Labuan resumed its former name and was under British military administration (alongside the rest of the Straits Settlements).

15TH JULY 1946

Labuan join British North Borneo which in turn became part of Malaysia as the state of Sabah in 1963.

14TH NOVEMBER 1993

After about 30 years, it was revived and Remembrance Day ceremony was held again on 14th November 1993. The first Remembrance Day Ceremony held in Labuan.





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Special Thanks Mr Esau Kak
Commonwealth War Grave Commission



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