

HMAS NIZAM — COMMEMORATION

Statement by Minister for Heritage

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Heritage) [12.05 pm]: I wish to inform the house of an important event I attended in Augusta on Sunday, 11 February, representing the government of Western Australia. Sunday, 11 February 2018 marked the seventy-third anniversary of the HMAS *Nizam* tragedy. This is a wartime disaster that not many Australians are aware of. HMAS *Nizam* and four other N-class destroyers—namely, *Napier*, *Nestor*, *Norman* and *Nepal*—were built in the United Kingdom and recognised by the British admiralty for their outstanding performance during World War II. Although part of the British Navy, they were designated as HMAS ships and crewed by members of the Royal Australian Navy.

Mandurah resident, Mr Ken Adams, is the president of the “N” Class Destroyers Association WA. Ken and members of the “N” Class Destroyers Association WA have worked tirelessly to ensure that this tragedy and the contribution to Australia’s war effort made by the crew of all the N-class destroyers does not go unrecognised and will never be forgotten. On 11 February 1945, at 10.18 pm, HMAS *Nizam* was approximately eight miles south of Leeuwin lighthouse when it was struck by a freak wave that caused the ship to roll over 75 degrees to the port side. Ten sailors were tragically swept overboard, never to be found. After the end of World War II, N-class destroyer associations were formed in most states in Australia, and today only the Western Australian branch is still operating.

In 1990, the “N” Class Destroyers Association WA constructed a cairn to record the names of the 10 shipmates who lost their lives on that night. The dedication of this cairn took place on 11 February 1993, with the former captain of the *Nizam*, Bill Cook, giving the address. The WA association later had a memorial wall constructed depicting plaques recognising other N-class sailors who have passed away since the end of World War II. This year marked the twenty-fifth anniversary since the *Nizam* cairn was dedicated. The Royal Australian Navy at HMAS *Stirling* supported this year’s commemoration with an address from the commanding officer, Captain Brian Delamont. The HMAS *Stirling* Navy band, its catafalque party and buglers were also in attendance.

It is important to acknowledge the significant contribution to Australia’s war effort played by the N-class destroyers and their crew in World War II, and 11 February each year is an important reminder of the loss of the 10 sailors from HMAS *Nizam*.

Lest we forget.