

## **NATIONAL BOER WAR MEMORIAL SITE DEDICATION**

The National Boer War Memorial Committee will conduct a ceremony on Anzac Parade, Canberra on Saturday, May 31 to dedicate a plot of land for the erection of a memorial to the 23,000 Australians who fought in the Boer War.

The allocated area is on the western sides of the ceremonial avenue between the existing New Zealand and Australian Light Horse memorials.

It will be a simple ceremony to bless and dedicate the site at 11 am on the anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Vereeniging that ended the South African war in 1902.

The first Australian troops arrived in Cape Town in 1899 and 589 lost their lives – the greatest number of Australian dead after the thousands lost in two World Wars. Five hundred members of the Queensland Mounted Infantry and the NSW Lancers took part in the forced march to relieve Kimberley.

The memorial will ensure that those who fought in South Africa are commemorated in a way, which will preserve this aspect of our heritage and military history for the education and benefit of future generations of Australians. The Boer War was the first full commitment of troops by all the Australian Colonies to a foreign war and with the formation of the

Australian Commonwealth on January 1, 1901 it became our country's first military involvement as a nation.

This war and deeds of those Australian volunteers is the only major war not to be commemorated in Anzac Parade, Canberra. More Australians were lost than in Vietnam, making the Boer War the third most devastating war after the two world wars. It has taken too long for Australia to recognise these sacrifices.

Members of the Howse family, Sir Neville Howse being the first Australian to win a Victoria Cross, will attend the Canberra ceremony. Descendants of Boer War veterans will also support it.

The memorial will be a long overdue national commemoration to honour our Boer War servicemen and nurses. It is an investment in our history and culture.

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Author – Chris Dawson. 340 words