

CN Address at the Find *AE1* Stakeholder Thank You Event at Australian National Maritime Museum

Sydney

12 March 2018

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good Evening.

It is said that

A ship is safe in harbour, but that is not what ships are built for.

Warships are built for a purpose — they are built to fight and win in an environment that can be harsh and unforgiving where one simple mistake or malfunction can result in the loss of the vessel and her crew.

This evening we gather to reflect on the service and sacrifice of *AE1* and her crew — they hold a very special place in our nation's naval memory — and thank those who have dedicated themselves to finding her final resting place.

With her discovery we can now provide answers to their families and the nation who still mourn the loss of her courageous crew, and we have solved the oldest mystery of Australian naval history.

As the Chief of Navy I am truly thankful for the efforts of all those who have searched for, and contributed to finding, *AE1*. I am indeed pleased that so many of those who have contributed can be here this evening.

In particular I would like to acknowledge Commander John Foster OAM RAN (Rtd), Dr Michael White OAM QC, Mr John Mullen, Rear Admiral Peter Briggs AO CSC, RAN (Rtd) and the many others from the Australian National Maritime Museum, Submarine Institute of Australia, Silentworld Foundation and Department of Defence who have contributed to finding *AE1* — your efforts are truly appreciated.

I would like to leave you with a reflection on service and sacrifice of the crew of *AE1* written by Able Seaman John Wheat of HMAS *AE2*:

To the memory of our sister ship AE1 and her crew. We took the first patrol on the 13th, they took the second next day. We came back, they didn't. They lie confined in the deep, keeping their silent watch at Australia's North Passage, heroes all.

Lest we forget.