A Memorial commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the ‘Launch’ in 1913 of HM Australian Submarines AE1 and AE2 - the first two Submarines to be built for the Royal Australian Navy - was unveiled by Admiral the Lord Boyce – Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and Patron of the Submariners Association - and James, Lord Abinger in Ramsden Square in Barrow in Furness at 1500 on Saturday 18th May 2013.

The weather forecast for the day was for torrential rain during the afternoon with up to 50-mm of rain likely. In the event, although it rained heavily until 1415, the rain then eased off and it remained dry but heavily overcast for the duration of the ceremonies.

Prior to the Unveiling a ‘Meet and Greet was held at 1330 in the Bluepole Offices above the old Fire Station Building in Abbey Road. This was an opportunity for the invited guests to meet the VIPs and, particularly for the descendant family members to meet each other for the first time. At 1415 the Unveiling Party and Guests proceeded to Ramsden Square for the Ceremony. Mr. Terry Spurling, the Project Manager of the Memorial Committee, acted as Master of Ceremonies.
The Unveiling Ceremony

The Worshipful Mayor of Barrow, Councillor Colin Thompson was introduced by Terry Spurling;

Councillor Colin Thompson then welcomed everyone to Barrow:

‘Admiral Lord Boyce, Lord Abinger, Distinguished Guests, Members of the Submariners Association and Barrovians.
I am honoured to be here today, as the Mayor of Barrow, to welcome you all to Barrow in Furness on the occasion to honour those who sailed from Barrow on what would be a remarkable journey for submarines at that time. Few Submarines of this era sailed so far without breaking down. The voyage to Australia took 83 days, 60 days being spent at sea, sailing from the UK on the 2nd March, arriving in Sydney on the 24th May.
This is a tribute not only to the crews but also to those skilled employees of the yard whose skills and expertise made this possible. Those Submarines were constructed in what was then known as Vickers Ltd Shipyard. Today it is BAE Systems, but to many in the town it will always be known as Vickers or the Shipyard.
These E-Class boats were themselves a major technical advance in submarine construction, something that the yard has excelled in over the hundred years since these boats were built.
For the first time the hull was sub-divided by traverse watertight bulkheads. In addition to improving safety, this added to the hull strength, enabling greater diving depths to be achieved. This may have been a contributory factor for the success of the other Barrow built E-class boats in the Dardanelles.
What these crews achieved is something that the Royal Australian Navy is rightly proud of. The exploits of Lieutenant Commander Stoker and his crew are an integral part of the ANZAC tradition. It being celebrated on the day, the 25th April, that the AE2 broke through the Dardanelles into the Sea of Marmara, raising the morale of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. They did not create the legend - that honour belongs to the troops on the beachheads. But they are honoured as the silent Anzac. The Anzac legend remains today, respected nearly a hundred years later throughout the Commonwealth if not the world.

It is fitting that the first Submarine memorial in Barrow should be for the combined Australian and British trail-blazers for those submarine exploits that followed in the Gallipoli campaign.

Neither should we forget the role of many local (Northwest) regiments during this period, the fact that one beach at Gallipoli is known today as the Lancaster Landing is a measure of their achievements. They too remember the deeds of AE2. Many Barrovians living here today would be fourth, fifth or sixth generation of shipyard worker. They are proud of their heritage, proud too of their ancestor’s roles in creating that milestone of Australian history.

Thank you. We will remember them.

The Guest of Honour, Admiral the Lord Boyce, thanked the Mayor for his welcoming speech.

‘Mr Mayor, Lord Abinger, Ladies and Gentlemen

In October this year, Australia is staging an International Fleet Review to commemorate the first entry of the RAN Fleet into Sydney in October 1913 and I am glad to say that I understand that the RN will be proudly taking part – glad because the RN and I have had a
long association with the Aussie Navy – especially the Submarine Service. Indeed my first visit to Australia was in a Submarine – HMS ANCHORITE. And to say that we were well looked after by our Australian counterparts is a serious understatement. And I still have a close friendship with some of the Submariners that I grew up with from the time I joined the RN and I know this is the case for lots of other colleagues, many of whom enjoyed exchange appointments in each other’s services. We shared training and the same ethos, an ethos that started in 1910 and was firmly forged in 1913.

When, one hundred years ago, in May 1913, Submarine AE1 was launched here in Barrow; and AE2 in June; and the two Submarines were then commissioned into February 1914 with crews of RN Officers and a mix of RN and RAN Submarine personnel. And, as I’ve said, the bond between the two Submarine Services was firmly forged then, and it is one that last until this day – as evidenced by having an RN Submariner standing here today.

After WWI and those first AE Submarines, the RAN Submarine service continued to receive boats built here in UK; and Submariners continued to cross-exchange as a series of different classes of boats were developed over the decades up until the 1970s. So, for example we had 6 ‘J’ Class Submarines gifted after the War – again with mixed crews; but they did not see much service. And they were superseded by two ‘O’ Class Submarines named OXLEY and OTWAY, ordered from Vickers at Barrow on 31st March 1925 and during WWII a considerable number of Australian Officers served in RN Submarines. They were variously Members of the Royal Navy, RAN and Reserve Forces from both Navies. Several Australian Officers served in X-Craft as well as in full size Submarines of all Classes. Although there were no Submarines in the RAN (except see Submarine K9 below) several Australian Officers also completed the Commanding Officer Qualifying Course and commanded Royal Navy Submarines.

And a number of Australian Ratings also served in Royal Navy Submarines during WWII: especially in late 1944 and in 1945 when RN Submarines were based in Fremantle, Western Australia for patrols in the Far East.

After the War, Royal Navy Submarines returned to Australia in late 1949 to be based in Sydney forming the 4th Submarine Flotilla and then in the 1960s, the RAN decided to re-establish an RAN Submarine Service with ‘OBERON’ Class Submarines again with many of the personnel manning these Submarines being transferees from the Royal Navy but the bulk were RN personnel.

Submarine co-operation between the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy Submarine Services continued with regular exchanges of personnel – including routine exchanges of Submarine Commanding Officers – until the decision in the 1990s that the Royal Navy would discontinue the employment of Conventional Submarines and to concentrate solely on nuclear powered Submarines. Since then contact has been maintained with the exchange of ideas on various aspects of submarining, and there is still a great affinity between the two submarine services.

So that is why it is appropriate that representatives from both our countries are here today to remember the brave Australian and British submariners who crewed AE1 and AE2 and who set the trend for decades the dangers of warfare from under the sea.

And binding us together we should remember the words of Winston Churchill who in WW2 said – and his words can just as easily apply to WW1 as they do today – ‘of all the branches of the men in the forces there is none which shows more devotion, and faces grimmer perils, than the submariner. Great deeds are done in the air and on the land; nevertheless nothing surpasses your exploits’.
Ladies and Gentlemen: it is fitting that this memorial is here in the birthplace of AE1 and AE2 to commemorate the memory of those submarines and their crews a century on.
And I feel enormously privileged and honoured to have been asked to be involved with its unveiling.’

A ‘Service of Dedication’ then followed - led by Mr. Alan Jones, the Lay Chaplain of the Barrow in Furness Submariners Association:

**MARK 4:39** He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm

**PSALM 93:4** Mightier than the thunder of the great waters, mightier than the breakers of the sea-- the LORD on high is mighty.

These two readings from Christian scripture remind us on this day that whilst mankind is capable of building powerful vessels for passage both on and below the waves, it teaches us that our power pales into insignificance in comparison. We have a creator God that holds the oceans in His almighty power and it in His holy name we pray.
OPENING PRAYER:
We are gathered here today before God our Heavenly Father to dedicate the names inscribed upon these memorial plinths. We remember with thanksgiving and pride those whose lives that were taken away so many years ago in the pursuit of peace. We pray that this memorial will continue to honour the memory of those who died, for justice and peace, both in their world of yester-year, and the world that is in existence for us today. We pray to our Almighty God to stretch forth His Mighty Arm to strengthen and protect our Submariners: grant that they meet any possible danger with courage; discipline; and loyalty, and may they truly serve the cause of justice and peace; to the honour of your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Barrie Downer then read the poem “Entombed but not Forgotten” written by an Australian - Del M'Cay in 1914 - following the unexplained loss of Submarine AE1:

She faced no battle flame, she heard no German gun,
   The ship without a name, the luckless AE-1.
Yet were her sailor's lives no less for Empire lost,
   And mothers, sweethearts, wives must pay the bitter cost.
Australia's warships sweep the broad Pacific main,
   But one from out the deep will never rise again.
Yet we shall not forget, through all the years that run,
   The fate that she has met - Goodbye to AE-1.

Pent in their iron cell, they sank beneath the wave,
   Untouched by shot or shell, they drifted to the grave.
Until their painful breath at last began to fail;
   Upon their way to death let pity draw the veil.
They could not strike one blow, but out of sound and sight
   Of comrade or of foe they passed to endless night;
Deep down on Ocean's floor, far from the wind and sun
   They rest for evermore - Goodbye to AE-1.
Alan Jones read:

**‘The Submariner’s Prayer’**:

O Father, hear our prayer to Thee  
For your humble servants, beneath the sea  
In the depths of oceans, as oft they stray  
So far from night, so far from day  
We would ask your Guiding Light to glow  
To make their journey safe below  
Please oft times grant them patient mind  
Then ‘ere the darkness won’t them blind  
They seek thy protection from the deep,  
Please grant them peace when ‘ere they sleep  
Of their homes and loved ones far away  
We ask you care for them each day  
‘Until they surface once again  
To drink the air and feel the rain  
We ask your guiding hand to show  
A safe progression sure and slow  
Dear Lord, please hear our prayer to thee  
For your humble servants beneath the sea.

The order ‘OFF CAPS’ was given by Lieutenant Commander Colin Torney of HMS ARTFUL.

Alan Jones led everyone in saying the **Lord’s Prayer**.

The ‘**Prayer of Dedication**’ was read by Alan Jones:

Almighty and eternal God, from whose love we cannot be parted either by death or life, we offer our thanksgivings for all whom we remember this day. Bless these names inscribed upon this wall, which we now dedicate. In thy gracious goodness, Fulfil in those whom we commemorate the purpose of your love, and bring us all with them to your eternal glory;  
This we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord AMEN.

The Order ‘ON CAPS’ was given by Lieutenant Commander Colin Torney
The Unveiling

Admiral Lord Boyce then said:

‘We dedicate this Memorial to those brave Submariners of our two nations who lost their lives in the service of their country.’

James, Lord Abinger then said:

‘We also dedicate this Memorial to the memory of the ancestors of all our families who served their country on board these Submarines.’

The Memorial was revealed by a Chief Petty Officer and a Leading Seaman from HMS ARTFUL – currently under construction in the BAE Shipyard - and two Sea Cadets from TS SOVEREIGN - Barrow in Furness Sea Cadet Corps who lifted the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy Ensigns which had been concealing the Memorial.
The Barrow Branch Standard Bearer Mike (Ginge) Cundell lowers the Standard
Mr Tom Tribe of AE1 Inc. U.K. (a descendant family member) and a member of the Australian Memorial Committee then spoke about the AE1 families:

Tom Tribe told of Lieutenant the Hon. Leopold Scarlett who joined the Royal Navy and became a Submariner in ‘B’ Class Submarines. He later developed tuberculosis and was invalided from the Navy. Leopold Scarlett then went to Australia where he hoped the dry climate would help him recover. In 1914, after the arrival of the AE Submarines and, after war broke out, additional Officers were needed to crew the Submarines and Leopold Scarlett volunteered. Apparently cured of his tuberculosis he was accepted and he was appointed to Submarine AE1 as the 3rd Hand. Two weeks later Submarine AE1 was lost with all hands in mysterious circumstances off Papua New Guinea.

Tom then read a letter which had been received from the AE1 Descendant Families’ Association in Australia:

To the AE1 and AE2 UK Memorials Committee
Dear Tom, Terry and Barrie
On behalf of the Descendent Families Assoc. in Australia we would like to send a greeting and express appreciation on the occasion of the unveiling of the memorial to AE1/AE2 Submarines and their crews.
When AE1 one lost, it was the first naval casualty for the new Australian Navy, and the Navy has always been faithful in honouring the memory of her crew. However the loss of 35 men on an island far distant from battlefields of Europe was completely overshadowed by the catastrophic losses of Australian troops there over the following 4 years.
In many ways our family members mourned alone. To now have their sacrifice and grief acknowledged and their son and brother honoured by the community in the place where AE1 was built is treasured by their descendants.
Our heartfelt thanks to all those involved in this ceremony and the memorial honouring the men of AE1 and AE2.
Yours sincerely
Vera Ryan (Convenor), Robyn Rosenstrauss (Secretary)
Finally Tom also spoke about the sad situation of Emma Elizabeth Thomas - the wife of Able Seaman James Thomas of AE1. She had embarked in England for passage to Australia with her young children and arrived in Australia not knowing that Submarine AE1 had been lost. On arrival she was met by a lady who was to be her new neighbour and who had intercepted a telegram from the postman that morning. Realising what news the telegram contained she rushed to the jetty to meet Emma and break the news. Emma decided to stay in Australia and became good friends with her new neighbour. One of Emma’s daughters was living in a care home in Australia when the Memorial in Sydney was unveiled in 2011 and attended that ceremony.

James, Lord Abinger – related to Lieutenant the Hon. Leopold Scarlett then said:

‘It is a great honour for me to be here today, with my wife and children, to mark this very historic occasion. For me personally, it provides the opportunity to talk about the many tragic events that took place nearly 100 years ago.’
The next speaker was Commander Gustaaf Henri Nord-Thomson from the Australian High Commission in London – representing the Royal Australian Navy.

Admiral Lord Boyce, Lord Abinger, your Worship the Mayor of Barrow - Councillor Colin Thomson, relatives here today of those who served in AE1 and 2, Members of the Barrow in Furness Branch of the Submariners Association, Ladies and Gentlemen – it is indeed a great honour to be here today to represent Australia and the Australian people at the unveiling of this memorial. As a fellow submariner, I can say that submariners world-wide are a special breed, rarely understood by mere mortals and never by skimmers – those who deem to spend their lives on the surface. Submariners of all nations understand this and share a mutual respect, knowing the hardship and danger that each has faced to achieve membership of that elite club to which submariners belong. And today is such an occasion to recognise the close submarine bond that exists between our two nations – one that is near on now 100 years strong and also it is an opportunity to salute you for honouring the family members of those who served in AE1 and AE2, present today from both countries. Following on from previous speakers, today I will take the opportunity to talk about Australian submarines that proceeded AE1 and AE2, and the closer relationship that has continued between our countries since. I will also look to our future relationship in respect of Australia’s future submarine programme.
After the loss of AE1/AE2 the remaining Australian submariners served in a number of British submarines. Several lost their lives, including Read admiral Creswell’s son when XO of E47 on 20th August 1917—although born in Australia he was actually Royal Navy. One Australian born submariner – Reuben Mitchell – won a DSM in the Dardanelles in E14, the CO of E14, Lieutenant Commander White, won a posthumous VC in the same action. During the Zeebrugge raid in 1918 the CO of C3 was awarded the VC. His XO, Lieutenant Howell-Price was Australian born but Royal Naval Reserve and later transferred to the RAN.

We also lost PO Kempster, DSM, RAN in G8 on 3rd Jan 1918 and one of the first RAN College entrants, Midshipman E S Cunningham in K17 on 31st Jan 1918.

A relationship that began with AE1 and AE2 was continued throughout the War, forged in action and sacrifice. After the War the UK gave Australia surplus J Class submarines in thanks for our wartime efforts. Commander Boyle (who won a VC in the Dardanelles) came out from UK to take charge of them. We also still had RAN personnel in British Submarines in the inter war years like Lieutenant R C Casey, RAN who was lost in the submarine M1 in 1925.

In the late 1920s Australia bought two ‘O’ Class submarines. Again all our training was done with the British. When we could no longer afford them we gave them back to the UK and they served in WWII.

During WWII several Australians served in British Submarines, again some were lost. One of our most famous submariners was Max Shean who participated in the X-Craft raids in European waters and South East Asia.

Post-war Anti-Submarine Warfare training in Australia relied on the presence of British Submarine Squadrons in Sydney until we got our own ‘OBERON’ Class boats in the late 1960s.

Oberon Class Submarines

Post-war Oberon’s were built in UK and we relied on British officers to get everything up and running. I think we had an exchange CO programme for most of their life. Indeed I served in HMS ONSLOW which was built in UK and I must say it was a fine submarine! It wasn’t until four initial Oberon Class Submarines were commissioned that we began to build a strong submarine fleet. While the Oberon’s were not involved in any conflict while in service, their presence was invaluable to the Navy. Four boats were commissioned initially: OXLEY (March 1967), OTWAY (March 1968), OVENS (April 1969) and ONSLOW (December 1969).

HMAS OXLEY’s arrival in Sydney coincided with the commissioning of the Submarine Base, HMAS PLATYPUS, at Neutral Bay, Sydney. In 1977 and 1978 two more submarines were commissioned – HMAS ORION and OTAMA.

COLLINS Class Submarines

To the present day the ‘COLLINS’ Class submarines are a key element of Australia’s Defence Force, both as an intelligence-gathering platform and as a forceful opponent during times of war. The names of the ‘COLLINS’ Class Submarines commemorate the memory of six members of the RAN who served their country with distinction – being HMAS COLLINS, FARNCOMB, WALER, DECHAINEUX, SHEEAN and RANKIN. They achieve an optimum match between innovation and proven technical prowess.

Future Submarines
Finally moving on to Australia’s future submarine programme – the 2013 Defence White Paper highlights the strategic value and importance of Australia’s submarine capability and confirms the Government’s commitment to replacing the existing COLLINS Class fleet with an expanded fleet of twelve conventional submarines, to be built in South Australia.

The Future Submarine Project will be the largest and most complex Defence project ever undertaken by Australia. It is a national challenge of unprecedented scale and complexity, and will span decades.

The Government has now taken the important decision to focus resources on progressing an ‘evolved COLLINS’ and new design options that are likely to best meet Australia’s future strategic and capability requirements.

The Government has also directed that new land-based submarine design facilities be established directed to research, integrate, assemble and test the propulsion and energy systems of the Future Submarine.

The implementation of the project will require a sustained and co-ordinated national effort harnessing the knowledge, skills, expertise and lessons-learned over the last fifty years of Australian Submarine ownership. The success of the project will depend critically on close collaboration with Commonwealth and State Agencies, and strategic partners which already includes the UK.

I conclude with acknowledgements and particular thanks to Admiral Lord Boyce, Lord Abinger and Councillor Thompson. I thank all the Submarine Associations that have worked together to make this Memorial a reality – Barrow in Furness has and always will have a very special link with Australia and its Submariners. Finally, I thank you all for attending this event to honour our first submarine – AE1 and AE2 and their Officers and Crew.

Centenary of Submarines 2014

In order to mark a century since the 1914 arrival in Australia of HMA Submarines AE1 and AE2, the Submarines Institute of Australia has established a Submarine Centenary Project.

Australia’s Submarine Centenary will commemorate submarine plus important places and people in Australia’s submarine history. Celebrations will culminate in late 2014 with activities, conferences and commemorative services in Fremantle, Western Australia – raising the submarine profile continuously through to 2014, other submarine history items are being promoted and pursued at every opportunity. So if you can make it along, you will be most welcome.
NATIONAL ANTHEMS

The Australian National Anthem ‘Advance Australia Fair’ was sung by the Barrow Mail Voice Choir and this was followed by the National Anthem ‘God Save the Queen’

The Barrow Male Voice Choir

CLOSING WORDS

The Closing Words were spoken by Mr David Barlow – Chairman of the Barrow in Furness Branch of the Submariners Association:
My Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Had it not been for the vision, dedication and perseverance of AE1 Incorporated this Memorial would have remained just a dream and I thank them for bringing this project to fruition.
The Barrow Branch of the Submariners Association has been honoured and privileged in being asked to assist in bringing that dream into reality.
To that end I must specifically thank our historian, Mr. Barrie Downer, who did the initial spade work and ensured the accuracy of the words and names on the Memorial, Mr. Terry Spurling who has Project Managed the whole event, Mr. Robert Pointer who has been our direct liaison with the Barrow Borough Council and Mr. Alan Jones who has officiated here this afternoon.
I would also like to thank:
The Barrow Borough Council - for providing and preparing the site, for their legal and planning expertise, as well as allowing us to disrupt the traffic and the normal Saturday afternoon calmness of the town
Bluepole - for their hospitality and for printing the programmes
Mossops Monumental Masons - for manufacturing and erecting the Memorial
The Barrow Male Voice Choir
Co-operative Funeral Care for providing limousines for our principle guests
BAE Systems
The North West Evening Mail
But finally I thank you, the townsfolk of Barrow, for coming along this afternoon and witnessing this very unique event, the unveiling of the first Memorial in Barrow, to Barrow built submarines.

Thank you.