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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FALL OF SINGAPORE

Today marks the 75th Anniversary of the Fall of Singapore, which saw 7,500 Allied lives lost in conflict, and 15,000 Australians taken as prisoners - a third of whom would not survive the war.

A National Service at the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial in Ballarat will form part of the commemorative events to mark this significant moment in the history of Australia and the Second World War.

The occasion will also be marked by the official opening of the Garden of the Grieving Mother, recognising family members who felt the loss of their loved ones.

The Fall of Singapore changed tens of thousands of Australian lives, both at home and abroad.

With 1,800 Australian lives lost or listed as missing in action, 1,300 wounded and 15,000 taken as POWs, the battle of Malaya and Singapore was an overwhelming loss, devastating for our troops and their families at home.

Today's commemorative service allows us to once again reflect on the sacrifice of so many Australian servicemen and servicewomen and their families during the war.

The conditions which Australian men and women endured as POW's were marred with horror and brutality.

While their suffering was unimaginable, their stories of mateship and compassion continue to strike our hearts today and inspire us to live up to their example.

Today we pause to remember those lives which were never the same as a result of the Fall of Singapore and the conflict on the Malay Peninsula.

There is no greater sacrifice than those who served their country.

WEDNESDAY, 15 FEBRUARY 2017