



The Hon Michael McCormack MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Minister for Defence Personnel

Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Centenary of ANZAC

Deputy Leader of the House

Federal Member for Riverina

MEDIA RELEASE

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Canberra Glassworks showcases sculpture for Sir John Monash Centre

A GLASS sculpture of the Rising Sun, commissioned for Australia's Sir John Monash Centre in France has gone on public display at the Canberra Glassworks.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Michael McCormack, who visited the glassworks today, said the Rising Sun was an iconic symbol of Australia's soldiering tradition.

"The Rising Sun Badge has been worn by generations of Australians since 1902," Mr McCormack said.

"It was proudly worn by soldiers of the Australian Imperial Force in both World Wars and is commonly identified with the spirit of ANZAC. The bayonets and swords arranged in a semi-circle originally symbolised co-operation between the forces of the Empire.

"Since then, the Rising Sun has come to embrace the esprit de corps of the Australian Army because of its associations with our ANZACs."

Mr McCormack said the sculpture would be installed in the courtyard of the Sir John Monash Centre, overlooking the fields where Australians fought.

"This is a very fitting tribute to our servicemen and women on the Western Front. Minimal decoration will allow visitors to focus on the Rising Sun symbol and the solemnity of the location," Mr McCormack said.

Glass artist Lisa Cahill said she was honoured to create the sculpture.

"I grew up in a family with a long association of service in the Australian Army. I understand how important this memorial is to the families of those who served on the Western Front and in keeping alive the memory of that sacrifice," Ms Cahill said.

Ms Cahill said the work was a feat in structural engineering, mounted on a totem with each sun ray resting on the next.

"The sculpture has nearly 28 individually cast lead-crystal rays that will produce angular forms and light projections," she said.

Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) can be reached 24 hours a day across Australia for support and free and confidential counselling. Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 8 8241 4546). VVCS is a service founded by Vietnam veterans.

“The rays will be visible through each other, creating depth and shadows, and the textures are reminiscent of the muddy fields and surrounding terrain where the Battle of Villers-Bretonneux was fought.”

The Sir John Monash Centre, adjacent to the Australian National Memorial in Villers-Bretonneux, is being built by the Australian Government as a lasting tribute to the more than 295,000 Australians who served on the Western Front during the First World War and the some 46,000 who died there.

The Centre will officially open in April 2018. For more information or bookings to visit the Centre, go to www.sjmc.gov.au

To view the Rising Sun sculpture before it is shipped to France, visit the Canberra Glassworks, 11 Wentworth Ave, Kingston from 10 am to 4 pm until Sunday 18 February 2018.

For more details visit www.canberraglassworks.com

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