World War II heritage honoured with The Territory Remembers program

13 October 2015

The Northern Territory Government today launched its *The Territory Remembers* program to commemorate the Territory’s World War II heritage.

“*The Territory Remembers* program will run over the next two financial years and culminate with the 75th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin on 19 February 2017 to echo the first raid,” Chief Minister Adam Giles said.

“Starting immediately, the years of war will be recalled, remembered, and revisited.

“The Northern Territory saw conflict on our land and in our sea, from January 1942 to November 1943. In 2017, it will be the 75th anniversary of our most difficult times.

“One of *The Territory Remembers* most important projects will be the creation of a statue of Matthias Ullungura, a hero of the first air raid on Australia.

“The Matthias statue commemorates a most important occasion – the capture of the first prisoner of war on Australian soil – Zero pilot Hajime Toyoshima,” Mr Giles said.

Toyoshima was in the air armada which bombed Darwin on 19 February 1942. His Zero was hit, lost oil pressure and he had to crash land on Melville Island to Darwin’s north. There he was captured by local man Matthias Ullungura.

This air raid was the start of two years of air attacks, resulting in the deaths of thousands of people.

“The statue of Matthias Ullungura on the Tiwi Islands recognises his contribution, and the contribution of many other Indigenous Australians to the war effort during World War II,” Mr Giles said.

“All Australians should know the story and recognise the contribution that First Australians made when Australia was at war.

“The Northern Territory Government is proud to provide $2.25 million in funding to lead the commemorations which will include community events, memorials, an education program, a history program, and a special emphasis on the 2017 commemoration.”
The Territory Remembers program will be led by former Deputy Chief Minister Mike Reed and its Steering Committee members include:

- Brigadier Michael Ryan, Australian Defence Force
- Alderman Allan Mitchell, Darwin City Council
- Don Milford, Darwin RSL Sub Branch
- Clinton Bock, History Lecturer, St Johns College
- Noted military historian Dr Tom Lewis OAM will provide historic advice.

The Territory Remembers program will include:

- A Travelling Display, which will tour 11 communities across the NT, starting in early 2016. This project includes electronic displays, giant banners, models, and an Investigation Table of WWII equipment.

- A book of historical papers centred around a theme of promoting further understanding of "the Territory at War."

- Veterans on Parade – special filming of WWII veterans and civilians who have a special connection to the Territory. They will appear in television commercials, and on giant screens at special events. This project includes footage of Kaname Harada, a Zero pilot who took part in the first air raid, and Brian Winspear AM, an RAAF gunner.

- Research into indigenous military soldiers' and workers' involvement across the Northern Territory in the war.


- The publication of the book Forgotten Honourable Warriors, detailing the hundreds of Japanese aircrews Killed In Action across northern Australia.

To keep up-to-date with the latest news about The Territory Remembers program ‘like’ the facebook page https://www.facebook.com/TheTerritoryRemembers or visit the website www.territoryremembers.nt.gov.au

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Photograph of Matthias Ullungura