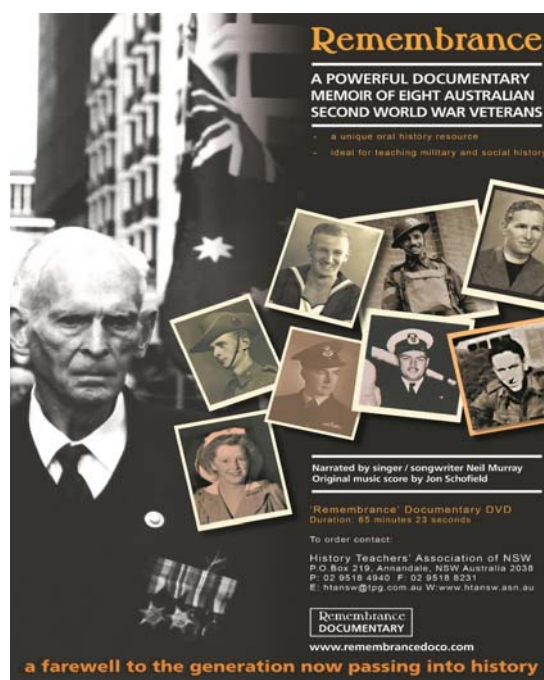


TEACHER NOTES FOR DVD RESOURCE

Remembrance – a farewell to the generation now passing into history



“A great gift to our nation...” Dr Brendan Nelson,
Director of the Australian War Memorial

“This film is oral history at its best”
Paul Kiem, History Teachers' Association of NSW

“Helps younger generations understand the war with true meaning and depth” Marianne, Year 10 student

“Parents rang to compliment the school on the positive effect Remembrance had on their teenagers”
Kerry Wright, History Teacher

Background: *Remembrance* is a student resource in DVD format produced with the support of the **Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training**. This program conveys the candid and honest recollections of eight Australian World War II veterans. **It is *their* stories.**

This program has been piloted in a number of high schools where the feedback from both teachers and history students confirmed the program provides a unique, powerful and highly valuable learning experience: **“A new educational view of the war that enables viewers to connect on a deeper, more personal level...”**
Lauren, Year 10 student.

Recommendations for teachers:

- View the documentary before screening to students.
- Be prepared to provide context to the students that the views expressed are of the veterans featured and how terms such as ‘The Japs’ are an authentic recollection of how the World War II era Japanese were often referred to.
- The interviews are organised into four sections: *War on the Horizon*, *War on Australia’s Doorstep*, *Prisoners of War* and *Aftermath & Farewell*. These can be shown as individual sections or, as a complete program (allow 65 minutes).
- You have the option to use any of the nine special short features on topics such as *The Atom Bomb* and *Bringing Home the POWs* to stimulate further student research.
- Be prepared to answer questions about the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders in World War II.

Topic: Australia and World War II

Inquiry Question: What were some of the experiences of Australians as a result of their involvement in World War II?

Text: ‘*Remembrance*’ (documentary in DVD format)

Task: Students will:

- View the documentary ‘*Remembrance*’
- Gain an understanding of the Australian WWII experience at a personal level
- Have the opportunity to ask questions of their teacher to enhance their understanding of different people’s experiences of WWII
- Complete a worksheet on the issues raised in the documentary ‘*Remembrance*’

Synopsis: Eight Australian World War II veterans describe their childhood in the Depression era, their wartime experiences and their reflections on what their memories of those experiences mean to them today. The program also serves as a farewell to a generation who are now passing into history.

Key themes:

- Personal stories that illustrate how ordinary people deal with extraordinary challenges
- The impact war has on people – physically and mentally

Documentary objectives: The program will provide Year 9-12 school students with an understanding of the sacrifices made by Australians during the Second World War, to support their learning in history and civics and citizenship education. It will also promote reflection on the value of oral history and respect for older Australians.

Veterans featured in *Remembrance* documentary

Name:	Theatre of operations:	Service	Born:
Gordon Nelson	Sapper (Engineer) 8th Division. Prisoner of War (PoW) of the Japanese. Twin brother served in New Guinea.	Army	1920
Elizabeth Eaton	Voluntary Aid Detachments (supporting Nurses). Concord Hospital & repatriation of PoWs at the end WW11 on HMAS Formidable (British aircraft carrier converted to hospital ship). Husband Ron Eaton was in the 8 th Division and became PoW of the Japanese.	Red Cross Nurse	1922
Peter White	Duntroon graduate. Officer, Infantry, 8 th Division, PoW Japanese	Army	1912
Rev. Roy Wotton	Chaplain, 7 th Division Komodo, New Guinea & Borneo 1942-45. Rev. speaks of Stewart Murray, an Aboriginal soldier he served with in New Guinea.	Army	1913
Leslie Birrell	Visual signalman. HMAS Canberra, Australia, Bathurst, Midura & Shropshire. Younger brother Dallyn "put his age up" joined at 16 and was killed in New Guinea.	Navy	1920
Bill Sinclair	Private, frontline infantryman, 9 th Division New Guinea & Borneo. Joined in 1942, also "put his age up" and joined at aged 16. His father served at Gallipoli in WWI	Army	1926
Reg Giddey	Lancaster Pilot, Bomber Command, England. PoW Germany. Brother also served in the RAAF. Describes his regret at not being able to save one of his crew.	RAAF	1918
Douglas McDonald	Radio Officer, Merchant Seaman. Atlantic, Mediterranean, Malta & Pacific convoys. Brother was a highly decorated fighter pilot in England. Wonders if he could have done more to save one of the crew.	Navy	1920

Questions for students:

1. What were some of the skills gained during the Depression years that would serve Australians well during WWII?

2. *“Once war was declared, Australians joined up for a variety of reasons”.*
Write down THREE reasons given for Australians joining the war effort.

3. What were THREE campaigns Australians were involved in during WWII?

4. What were some of the difficulties faced by the Australians in New Guinea?

5. Why might some WWII veterans still harbour resentment towards the Japanese?

Acknowledgments:

- Based on the original teacher notes developed courtesy of Newcastle Grammar School
- Documentary Technical advisor: Dr Peter Stanley, FRHistS - Principal Historian, Australian War Memorial
- *Remembrance* was produced with the full cooperation of the featured veterans and their families

Documentary Review courtesy NSW History Teachers association:



Remembrance: A farewell to the generation now passing into history

DVD documentary (65 mins) + special features

Written and directed by Larry McGrath

Narrated by Neil Murray Original music Jon Schofield

