

- **Your Excellencies**
- **Distinguished Guests:**
- **My fellow Finding Sydney Directors:**
Chairman: Ted Graham, Commodore Bob Trotter,
Don Pridmore and Keith Rowe.
- **Families**
- **Ladies & Gentlemen**

Napoleon once said:

**VICTORY BELONGS TO THE MOST
PERSEVERING**

It is therefore a great honour to be standing here representing all of those individuals and organisations that persevered for so many years to keep the hope of finding *Sydney* alive.

The Finding Sydney Foundation was formed in 2001 as a not for profit company with two main purposes:

- To locate the resting place of *Sydney*, and to
- To establish a web based ‘Virtual Memorial’ to commemorate her crew.

The motive behind these objectives were the same as the motivation which inspired this beautiful Geraldton Memorial – to show the families of the 645 men who lost

their lives on this date in 1941, that Australians did honour and care about their sacrifice.

Many years of hard work by the Foundation Directors, past and present, eventually resulted in sufficient funds being raised to mount a professional search for *Sydney*. Through persistence, science & research we were able to convince both the Navy and State and Federal Governments that the Finding Sydney Foundation could mount a search for *Sydney* with an acceptable likelihood of success.

Special mention must be made of the assistance provided by the Navy, who managed the Commonwealth funding, in particular the wonderful support of Commander Fiona McNaught and Lt John Perryman.

This time last year, I stood here and promised you: “We will find your ship”. At the time I did not realise the trials and frustration that lay in our path as we put together a search operation of this scale in a short four month lead time .

It was an enormous responsibility for a small volunteer group of people and a wonderful team effort.

It is amazing, looking back, that the correct expertise, technology and vessel could be marshalled in time, and paired with the experience and talents of those on board the *SV GEOSOUNDER* when it departed Geraldton on 29 February 2008. Special thanks go to all our contractors: particularly the incredible David Mearns who directed the successful search at sea; Patrick Flynn

our on shore manager; and Richard Sojka who managed our website, which incidentally received nearly fifteen million hits by the time we got back into Port. Such was the interest nationally and internationally.

I was privileged to represent my fellow directors on board, an honour I will never, ever forget. It was an emotional and eventful experience with two cyclones, and some mechanical and technical problems, but the eventual sonar and video results were extraordinary. All our search material has been handed over to the Commonwealth and West Australian Museum.

We hope that our efforts have bought some comfort to the families of the men and we would like to encourage them to contribute to our web based Virtual Memorial.

Persistence pays: thank you.