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# THE AGE

## Long-awaited tribute to soldiers lost in Greece

By ANDREW HEASLEY

A memorial to Australians and Greeks killed in action in Greece and on Crete in World War II was dedicated in the Domain Gardens, near Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance, yesterday.

The Australian Hellenic Memorial was designed by the Greek-born Melbourne artist Evangelos Sakaris using 12 granite pillars framing an urn.

The names of the more than 700 soldiers who died in the campaign will be inscribed on a scroll and placed in a crypt in the memorial.

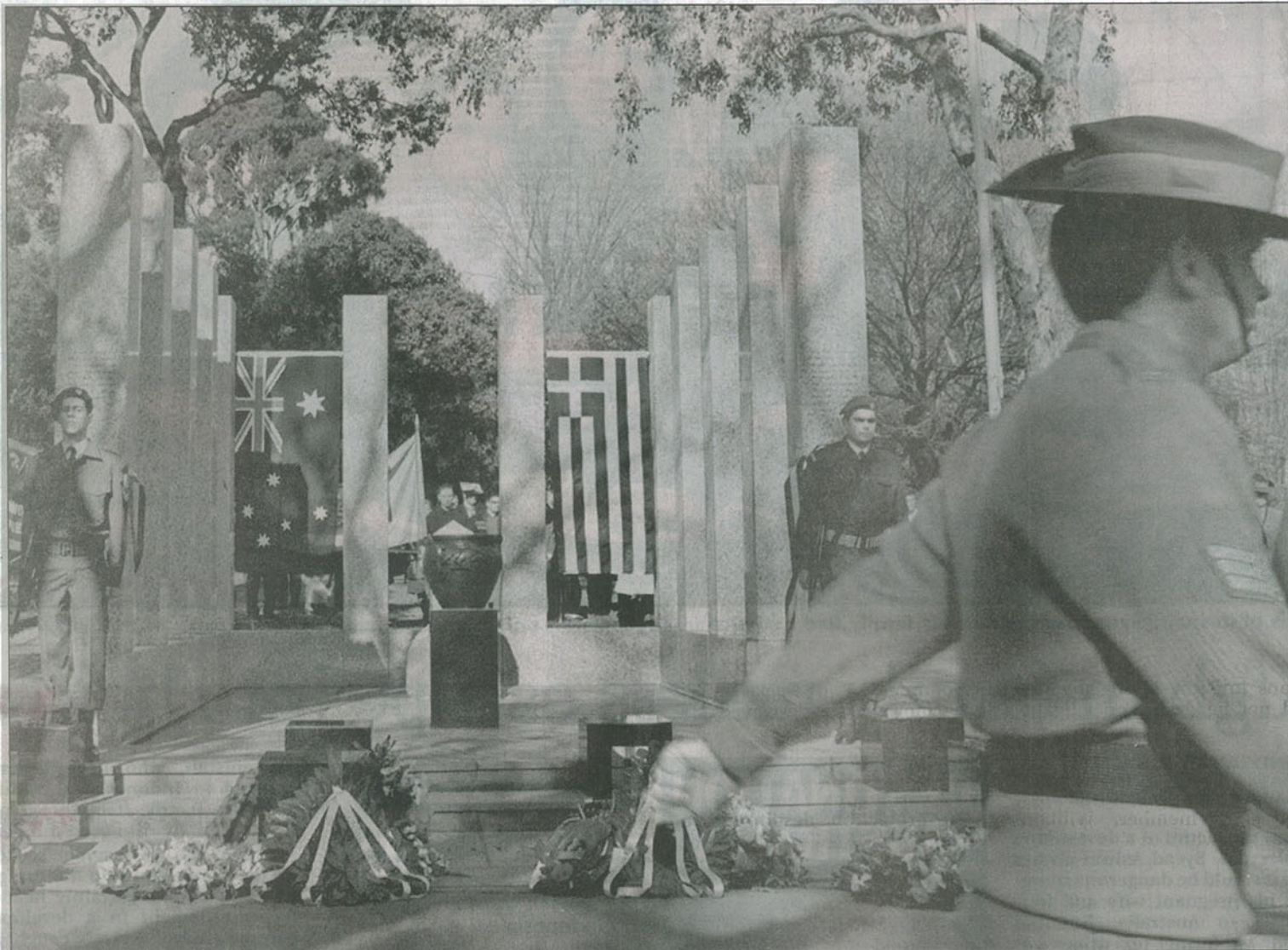
The memorial was dedicated by Greece's Major-General Christos Tzaferos and Veterans' Affairs Minister Bruce Scott, flanked by Australian soldiers and Greece's Hellenic Presidential Guards before a crowd of Australian and Greek returned soldiers and their families.

In April, 1941, German soldiers advanced into Greece. A month later, Germany launched an airborne attack on Crete to secure airfields for planes to deliver army supplies. Up to 50,000 Allied troops, around 20,000 of them Australian, fought alongside Greek partisans.

Two of Australia's returned soldiers, Jack White, 88, and Jim Pidoto, 81, were members of the Second 1st Machine Gun Battalion, which fought the Germans in Greece and Crete.

"You'd see 1200 planes in the air at the one time, all in layers," Mr Pidoto said. "After the planes at the lower level did their job of shooting up the area, the bombers would come over. And the next wave after that. You can imagine how terrible that was."

Said Mr White: "The people of Greece were marvellous. They assisted us in every way they could."



Day of ceremony: Soldiers march past the Australian Hellenic Memorial after its dedication.

Picture: SANDY SCHELTEMA