

## Australian War Memorial

Address Anzac Parade, Campbell, ACT, 2612

Practice John Crust & Emil Sodersten

Designed 1928 Completed 1941

History & Description An international architectural competition (for Citizens of the Empire) was held in 1926 to design the Memorial, but no individual entry was the outright winner with all 69 entries at first being disqualified for exceeding the cost limit. Aspects of two of the designs were determined to be appropriate; John Crust produced a scheme that included cloisters & Emil Sodersten's Byzantine dome & Art Deco themes were highly regarded. Crust & Sodersten were invited to collaborate to produce a final design. Construction commenced in 1929 but was then postponed in the same year due to the Great Depression & recommenced in 1934. In 1936 Sodersten left the joint venture leaving the project to Crust. The memorial was completed in 1941.

The Australian War Memorial is set at the end of Anzac Parade, below Mount Ainslie on Griffin's land axis. The masonry building, faced in sandstone, was designed with two main elements; a Commemorative Courtyard with side loggia & a domed Hall of Memory. The Commemorative Courtyard is a linear design with two loggias set beyond front pylon like structures. The loggias enable a procession of viewing the names of those who have died in war. The courtyard forms a relationship with the monumental Anzac Parade which is on the same axis. The centroidal planning & dome of the Hall of Memory, with Mount Ainslie rising behind it, are appropriate for a memorial. Underneath the centre of the dome is the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier, installed in 1993. The Hall features an impressive Art Deco interior with Napier Waller's stained glass windows, installed 1947-50 & the mosaic cupola, installed 1955-58.

The Memorial has been altered internally & extended, notably with the addition of Anzac Hall, by Denton Corker Marshall, 2001, an exhibition pavilion which was awarded the Canberra Medallion in 2005.

Emil Sodersten is recognised as one of Australia's key practitioners of the Art Deco style with his work in Sydney including highrise housing in brick & the former City Mutual Life Building.

Statement of Significance The original Australian War Memorial is a significant example of civic architecture in Australia with elements of the Inter-War Art Deco style of architecture. The design was a joint venture between architects John Crust & Emil Sodersten & combined both architect's design ideas; Crust's cloistered courtyard, which was seen to embody Australian sentiment for gardens & sunlight, & Sodersten's vigorous Byzantine imagery, with its solid massing culminating in a domed shrine. The significance to the nation of the Memorial is shown by its prominent position on the land axis.

Criteria Applicable N2. Significant heritage value in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.  
N3. Significant heritage value in establishing a high degree of creative achievement.



Australian War Memorial placed on Griffin's land axis, set below Mount Ainslie at the end of Anzac Parade. (Photo: Graeme Trickett c.2003)



Hall of Memory & courtyard with side loggia. (Photo: Graeme Trickett c.2003)



Exterior (Photo: Graeme Trickett c.2003)