

# DEVIL FISH PERISCOPE

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# CONCEPT SUBMISSION

13 AUGUST 2014

AN ARTWORK FOR THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM TO COMMEMORATE  
THE LOSS OF THE SUBMARINE AE1 IN THE WATERS OF NEW GUINEA IN SEPTEMBER 1914

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## 1.0

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

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## DEVIL FISH PERISCOPE

### **General Description**

This document provides the concept for an artwork for the Australian National Maritime Museum to commemorate the loss of the submarine AEI in the waters of New Guinea in September 1914. It has been created in response to the AEI Commemorative Art Installation Brief issued on August 7 2014.

## 2.0

### ARTWORK CONCEPT

CONNECTING PLACE OF REMEMBERING TO PLACE OF LOSS, DEVIL FISH PERISCOPE CREATES AN INTIMATE AND PUBLIC, LYRICAL AND REVERENTIAL EVOCATION OF THOSE LOST TRAGICALLY AND MYSTERIOUSLY ABOARD THE AE1 SUBMARINE, AND HIGHLIGHTS ITS RELEVANCE TO US HERE TODAY.

The AE1 submarine was lost on September 14, 1914 whilst patrolling waters off Cape Gazelle New Guinea and has never been found since. **Devil Fish Periscope** adopts and reinvents the submariner's crucial viewing tool, the periscope and is named after the description of the AE1 and its partner submarine the AE2, as 'devil fish' when first viewed by New Guineans in 1914.

A visually commanding, functioning periscope stands strikingly tall on the timber boardwalk next to the HMAS Onslow submarine. Its dramatic sculptural form, kinetic function and interactive multimedia experience invite viewers to look in. The 34 names of the AE1's lost submariners are inscribed vertically along its external length.

**Devil Fish Periscope** honours the tragic and mysterious loss of the 2 Officers and 32 Crew by 'transporting' the viewer to where the submariners were lost and still lie, somewhere in New Guinean waters off Cape Gazelle. At the same time, the artwork highlights the environs of the Australian National Maritime Museum, and particularly the Warships Exhibit, within which we remember their service and sacrifice.

**Devil Fish Periscope** will combine two visual and technological 'mechanisms'. One will employ the traditional periscope mirrors and lenses to allow the user to view their surrounding environs in 'close-up'. The view will however be slightly distorted, perhaps inverted, stretched, coloured or fractured. This distortion can suggest looking anew to poetically evoke a different perspective. Alongside these real time views of the museum's warship exhibits and Darling Harbour are images of the land and seascape where the AE1 was lost and still lies. These images might be video, either real time or an edited sequence, or a montage of still images. Again the views would be distorted as if seen perhaps through a simple kaleidoscope. The distortions will suggest the mysterious nature of their disappearance and the ongoing connections between disparate times, places, people and events.

The overly tall periscope rises above and pierces the timber boardwalk next to the HMAS Onslow submarine. Unexpectedly it has viewing lenses both top and bottom to capture aerial and underwater views. Likewise the video imagery in New Guinea will be both above and below water. At head height above the timber deck, a minimal shroud provides for contemplative viewing.

Viewers of **Devil Fish Periscope** will 'mix' these images as they turn the periscope sculpture clockwise and counter-clockwise. One direction will show the local environs of the ANMM, the other will show the New Guinean locale. The viewer then becomes an active participant in the artwork. As they 'conduct' the periscope's images, they highlight their own role in this ongoing story and are offered a moment of poetic reflection and contemplation.

The names of the Officers and Crew inscribed in an honour roll down the length of **Devil Ship Periscope** providing a collective, public commemoration to accompany the more private and intimate experience of the periscope views. The list may also include the sailors' immediate families to acknowledge the terrible loss suffered by those left behind.

The **Devil Fish Periscope** concept envisions an artwork that is evocative but not didactic. It will offer an experience that suggests links and relationships but does not specifically spell them out. Who are the names listed along its length, why are there images of different places? The questions poetically evoked can lead the viewer to discover more of the story within the Museum or on the accompanying website.

**Devil Fish Periscope** evokes loss and time passed in an unknown elsewhere. It takes us both 'over and back there' whilst highlighting our presence here and now. By interweaving the two, **Devil Fish Periscope** celebrates the ultimate sacrifice made in another place and another time to allow us to be free here today. The AE1 and its crew remain there, in their mysterious place of rest and we honour them here, from our contemporary place of living.

## 3.0

### ARTWORK DESCRIPTION

#### **Artwork Type**

**Devil Fish Periscope** is an interactive, kinetic and multimedia artwork.

#### **Location**

It will stand on the boardwalk alongside the entrance to the Australian National Maritime Museum's 'Warships Experience' exhibit on South Wharf.

#### **Dimensions, Circulation, Volume of Visitors**

Approximately 6 -8 metres tall, it will become a striking vertical landmark within the complex of the Museum's outdoor exhibits. Between 300 and 600mm in diameter, its minimal footprint will allow for ease of circulation with a large volume of visitors. The length of the below deck component will be determined by tidal height and range.

#### **Individual and Collective Use**

Whilst the periscope's function can only be interacted with one at a time, the periscope's sculptural form and honour roll provides a more public and collective experience. Its kinetic (the turning periscope lens) and interactive (turning handle and multi-media imagery) components will draw attention to its function and provide an enticing performative component.

#### **Connection to the Harbour Water Movement**

It is possible that the Periscope can be designed with a gimble, a crane 'slewing bearing' and connection to a ballast tank below deck. This would allow the tower of the periscope to move ever so slightly side to side because in effect it would be floating. Controlled by constraints preventing it to tip more than a few degrees it would otherwise be free to rotate (with a degree of drag presented by water friction) and to tip. These combined movements create the buoyant experience of being on water. Viewing imagery at the same time as instigating rotation through water will challenge the senses making this a corporeal as well as visual experience.

The feasibility for this aspect of the design would need to be scoped and explored during development

#### **Form, Material, Colour**

The sculpture will be minimal in form and bold in material and/or colour. Adopting either polished brass or stainless steel and maritime yellow or red, it will stand out against the white of the museum backdrop and the blacks and greys of the naval vessels. It could be brass or stainless steel outside with a painted interior perhaps maritime red suggestive of the body and its occupation inside the shroud.

The structural materials may be steel, stainless steel, fibreglass or carbon fibre. Other materials will likely include paint, brass, mirrors, lenses, video screens, lights.

#### **Inscription of Names**

The 34 names listed along its outside length will be highly visible. They may be inscribed, in relief, illuminated or applied in paint.

#### **Context for Audio and Light**

Lighting for night will be an integral component of the design. Multiple options exist including illuminated names, highlight lighting on the rotating lens devices, external illumination. Any underwater component will require illumination both day and night. Audio is not conceived as part of the work.

#### **Lifespan, Damage and Graffiti**

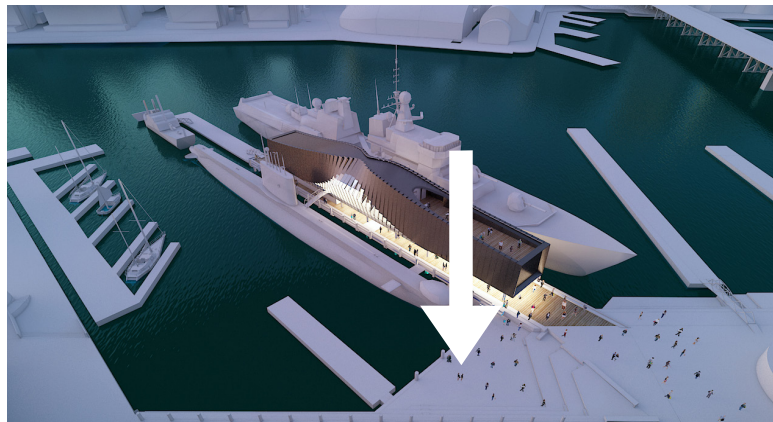
The work will be designed to withstand both the harsh environment, constant use and wilful damage and graffiti. Utmost care will be taken to reduce maintenance to a minimum with a goal of an annual service. The video component may need to be replaced every 5 or so years to maintain currency with developments in technology.

#### **Public Safety and WH&S**

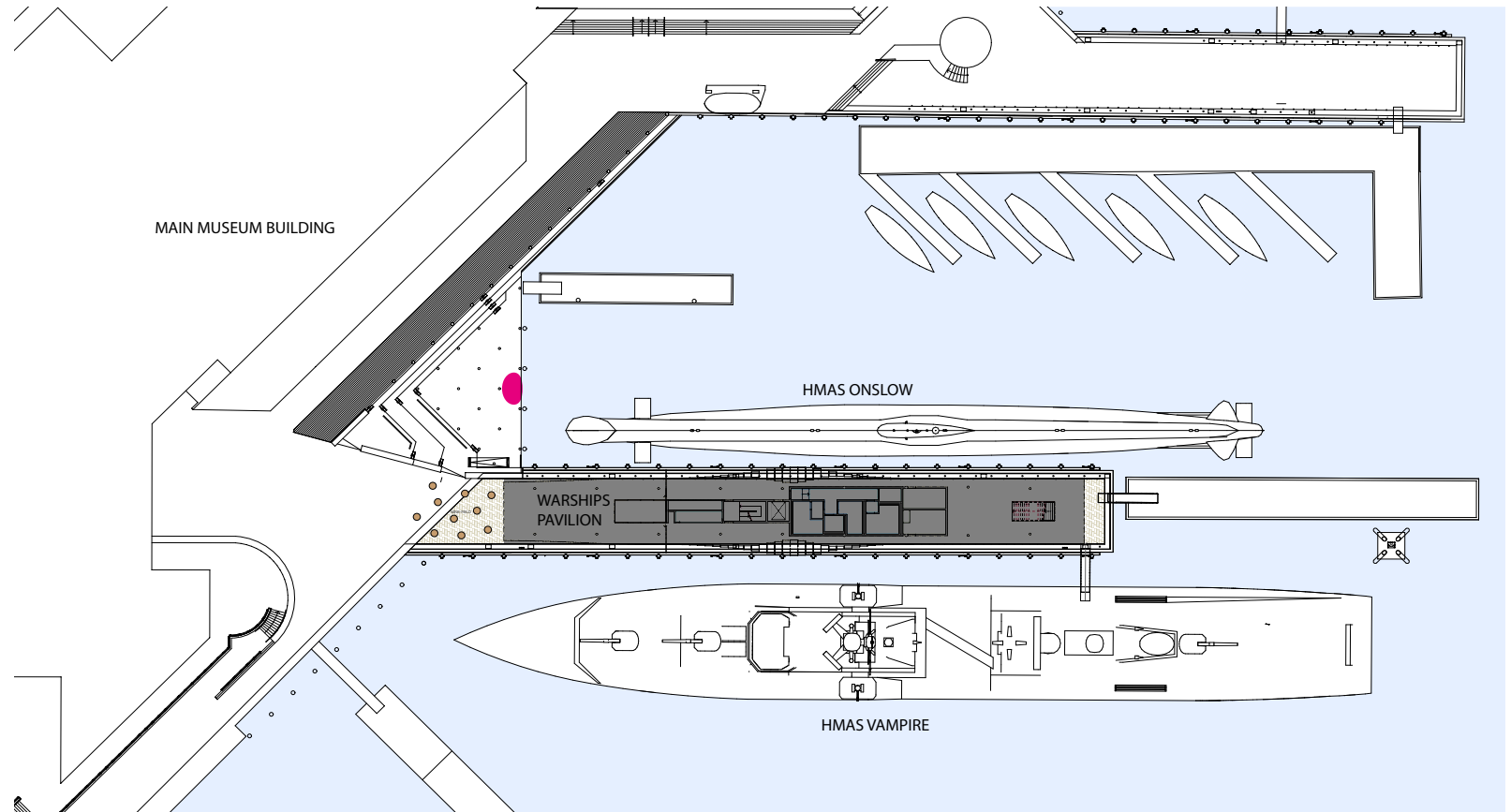
The work will be designed to meet all public safety and WH&S standards.

5.0  
SITE IMAGES

SITE LOCATION & PHOTOS



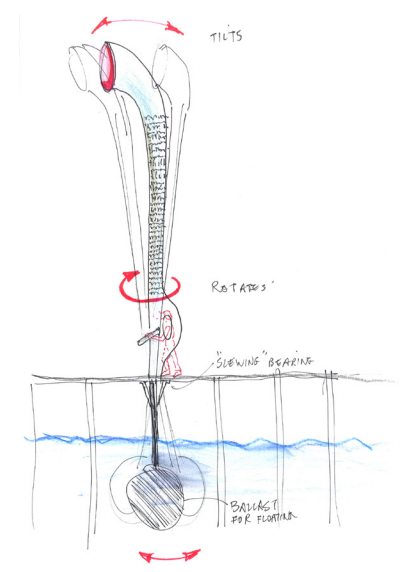
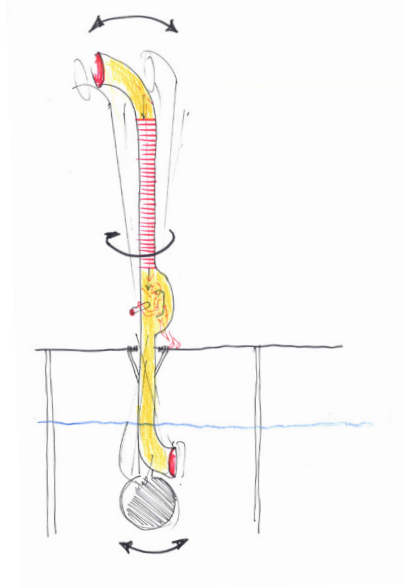
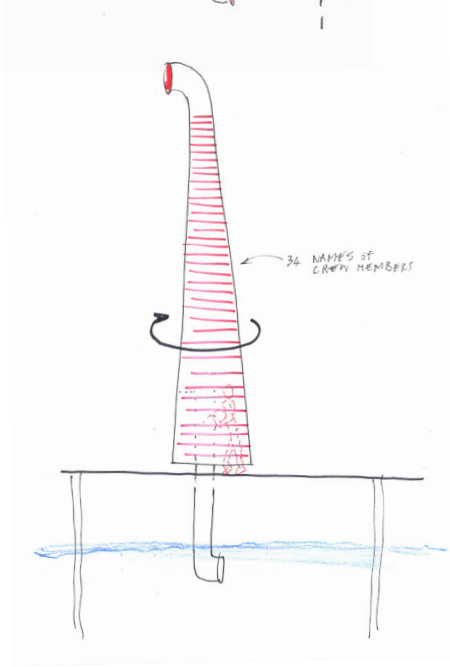
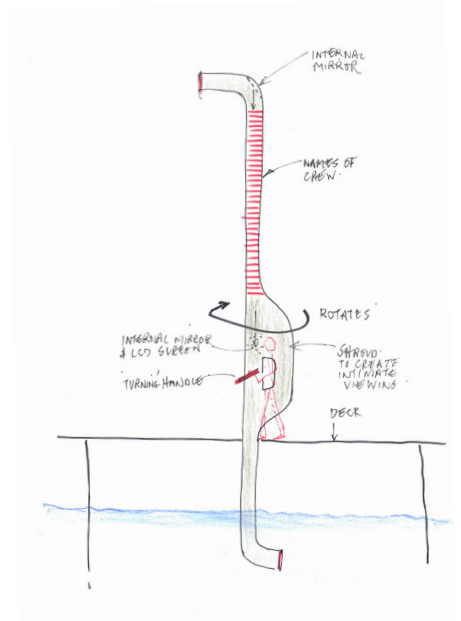
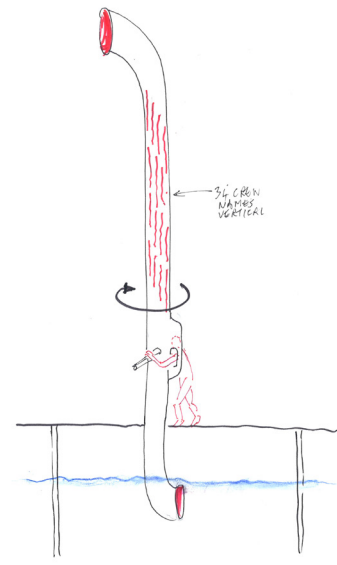
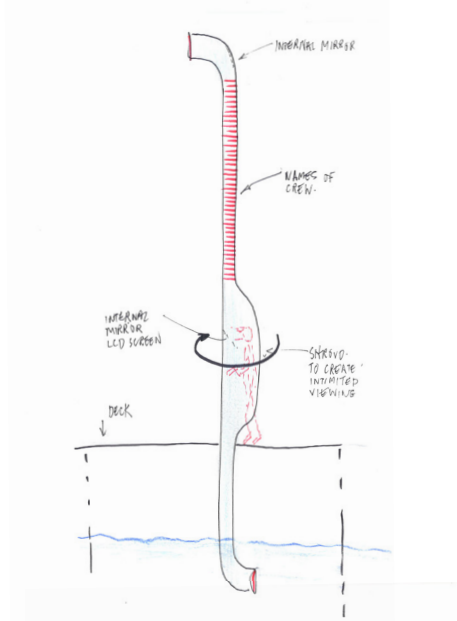
6.0  
SITE PLAN



The artwork will stand on the boardwalk alongside the entrance to the Australian National Maritime Museum's 'Warships Experience' exhibit on South Wharf.

7.0  
CONCEPT  
SKETCHES

PRELIMINARY



8.0  
PRECEDENT  
IMAGES

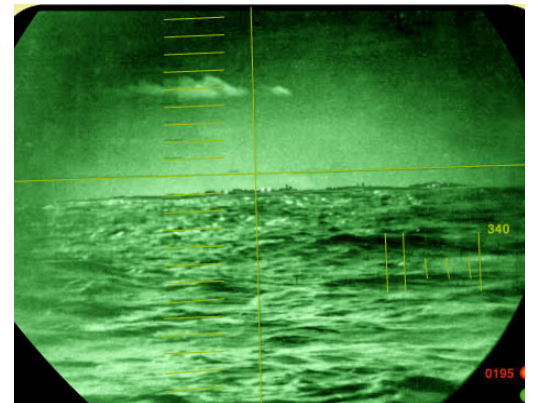
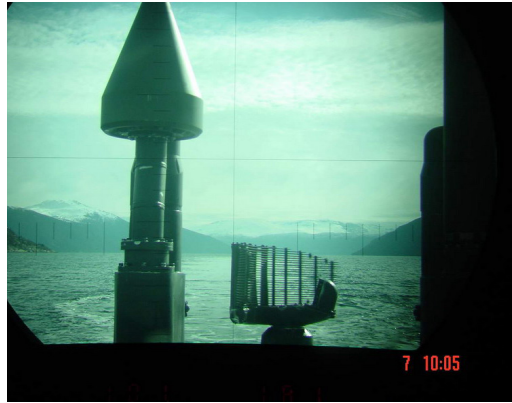
*PERISCOPES*



# 8.1

## PRECEDENT IMAGES

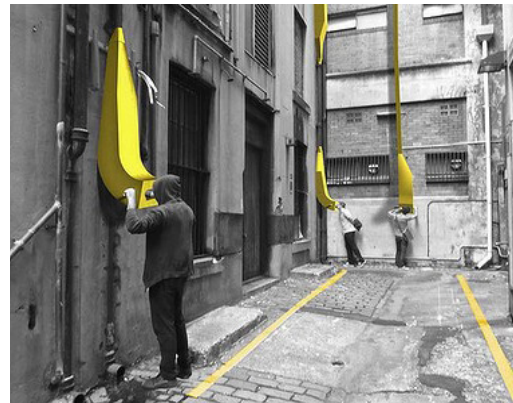
### PERISCOPE VIEWS



## 8.2

### PRECEDENT IMAGES

#### *PERISCOPE SCULPTURES*



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## 8.3

### PRECEDENT IMAGES

#### CAPE GAZELLE

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