

The Military History Society of NSW presents
LECTURE DOUBLE FEATURE SAT 1 AUG 2026
ANZAC MEMORIAL HYDE PARK, SYDNEY



Starting at 10:30AM

Virginia Handel on:

**THREE GEORGE CROSS
HEROINES OF THE WW2 SPECIAL
OPERATIONS EXECUTIVE**

Starting at 11:20AM

Major Paul Handel (rtd) on:

**THE AUSTRALIAN CRUISER
TANK - SENTINEL**



TIME AND VENUE: 10:30AM and 11:20AM Saturday 1 August 2026 at The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Hyde Park South, corner Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Admission is free of charge but a donation would be appreciated. For info call 0419 698 783 or email: president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au See below for more details:

FIRST LECTURE by Virginia Handel starting 10:30AM: Three George Cross Heroines of the WW2 Special Operations Executive

The secret organisation the Special Operations Executive (SOE) was formed by the British Government in 1940 to “coordinate, inspire, control and assist the nationals of the oppressed countries who must themselves be the direct participants”.

Thirty-nine women of the SOE did extraordinary things in the course of duty. Three of these women were awarded the highest civilian gallantry honour, the George Cross. They each displayed extreme courage and sacrifice in non-combatant roles as couriers and wireless operators in enemy occupied France: their names were Violette Szabó, Odette Hallowes and Noor Inayat Khan.

This talk will present the history of the George Cross and the stories of these extraordinary women.

SECOND LECTURE by Major Paul Handel RFD (retd) starting 11:20AM: The Australian Cruiser Tank – Sentinel

During WW2 the Australian Army was unable to obtain armoured vehicles from the United Kingdom because of losses sustained in France. Factories were engaged at capacity in producing vehicles for the British Army. Australia had already started to build light armoured vehicles, but tanks had never been manufactured here.

The design and manufacture of the Sentinel Tank was thus a great industrial feat; the only time Australia has produced a tank.

This presentation will look at the design, manufacture and service use of the Sentinel Tank.

Our Venue

The venue for The Military History Society of NSW lecture program is the Auditorium on the lower level of Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, corner of Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Numerous bus services stop at the location and Museum railway station is only 160 metres away. The venue opens its doors at around 10:00AM.

