

# A sign of our deep respect

Jane Chudleigh

ON A quiet stretch of Queensland beach, the hidden bravery and sacrifice of navy submariners will be remembered by their own.

Mon Repos beach, the famous turtle-breeding habitat near Bundaberg, was a training base for top-secret Royal Australian Navy XE-craft submarines during World War II.

Ken Briggs was a diver on an XE-craft at Mon Repos during the war and will remember his shipmates at today's memorial and wreath-laying service.

The submariners were engaged in stealth attacks on enemy ships and Japanese undersea communications cables.

"When you went in under the (enemy) ship, the diver got out and placed a limpet mine on the boat and got back in and then you left," Mr Briggs said.

And you left very quietly, so the enemy didn't see you.

Cutting the underwater cables forced the Japanese to use decodable radio communications and had a profound effect on the outcome of the war.

It was dangerous work on the midget vessels. Two of Mr Briggs' shipmates were killed in training at Mon Repos.

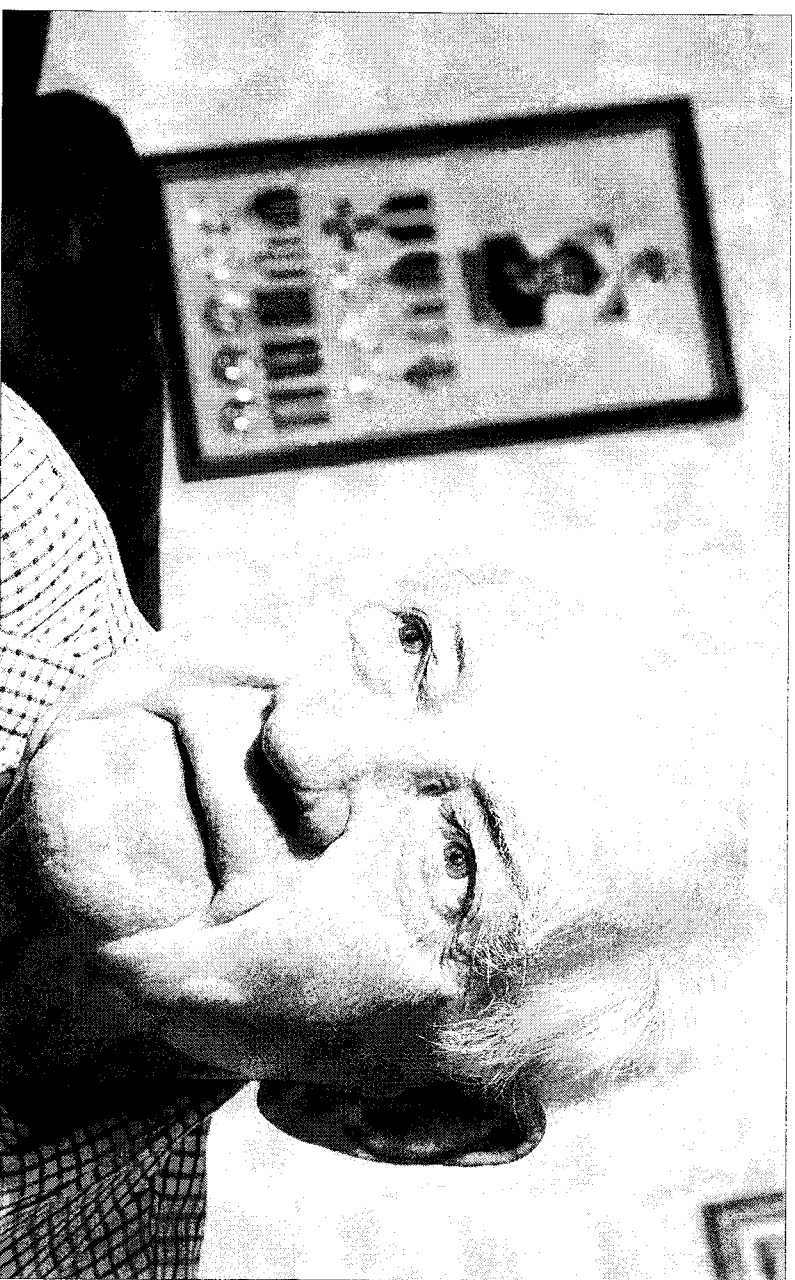
Past and present submariners will gather at a memorial plaque at the beach to remember those who lost their lives at sea.

Submarines Association Australia Queensland Branch president Don Currell said today's event was a special gathering for submariners to pay their respects.

"It's dear to our heart. We really don't do enough for the old boys here," he said.

Mr Currell said he was amazed at the incredible feats of XE-craft crews during the war.

"It's taken 60 or so years for this to be written about. We don't even know what they did out there, and we're submariners," he said.



**LOOKING BACK:** Ken Briggs will remember his days as a submariner (left) and his shipmates who died in the XE-craft submarines (right) today at Mon Repos.  
Main picture: Liam Kidston

