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MEDIA RELEASE

PERTH MINT UNVEILS SILVER COIN TRIBUTE TO MARK THE DISCOVERY OF HMAS SYDNEY

The Perth Mint marks the discovery of HMAS *Sydney II* after a mystifying 67-year wait with a magnificent commemorative coin.

Disappearing in November 1941 following a deadly engagement with the German raider *Kormoran*, the famous Royal Australian Navy cruiser was lost with all hands in the Indian Ocean. Her fate proved baffling until the Finding Sydney Foundation announced on 16 March 2008 that it had located the wreck approximately 207km off the Western Australian coast.

Perth Mint Chief Executive Officer Ed Harbuz said the enormous historical and cultural significance of HMAS *Sydney II* meant the discovery warranted a special numismatic tribute. "It is a project that The Perth Mint has been exceptionally proud to undertake," he said.

Issued as legal tender under the Australian *Currency Act 1965*, the superb tribute coin is struck from 1oz of 99.9% pure silver in proof quality.

The coin's reverse portrays HMAS *Sydney II*, which served Australia with distinction in the Mediterranean during the early part of World War II. The design includes two significant dates – '19 November 1941' and '16 March 2008' - representing the frustrating length of time she lay undiscovered in the Indian Ocean.

Destined to be a rare collectable, just 7,500 coins will be struck by the historic Mint. Of these, 5,000 coins will be released in individual presentation packaging accompanied by a numbered Certificate of Authenticity. The remaining 2,500 coins are reserved for a premium HMAS *Sydney II* Coin, Medallion and Badge Set.

Simply a stunning presentation, the set includes a 1oz silver proof medallion and two fascinating pieces of naval memorabilia. The medallion portrays HSK *Kormoran*, the disguised German raider that engaged HMAS *Sydney II* with such devastating consequences for both ships. Lying 12.2 nautical miles from her adversary, the wreck of the *Kormoran* was discovered by the Finding Sydney Foundation on 12 March 2008.

The medallion's obverse depicts a fascinating diagrammatic representation of the ships' courses during their fatal engagement and the coordinates of their final resting places.

The silver coin and medallion are accompanied by two replica badges. Inspired by haunting seabed images of HMAS *Sydney II*'s lifeboats still displaying their anchor emblem, The Perth Mint has created a blue enamel and gold-plated version of the ship's famous badge. It is paired with a gold and silver-plated replica of the Kriegsmarine's (German Navy's) Auxiliary Cruiser Badge.

Mr Harbuz said the limited coin and set would be sought-after by Australian collectors, and expressed his hope that they would be welcomed by serving and past members of the Royal Australian Navy, and families who lost loved ones aboard HMAS *Sydney II* in 1941.

Available from The Perth Mint Shop, located at 310 Hay Street, East Perth, or on FREECALL 1800 098 817, the individual coin and set retail for \$82.50 and \$179.00 respectively. Alternatively, collectors can order online at www.perthmint.com.au or check availability with their local Australia Post outlet and coin dealer.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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