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Indigenous Australians at War ***AIATSIS Library launches new online exhibition***

The AIATSIS Library today launched a new online exhibition telling the story of Indigenous Australians at War.

The site was originally compiled by Garth O'Connell, an Indigenous soldier and currently an employee of the Australian War Memorial. AIATSIS has taken over the redevelopment and hosting of the site from Mr. O'Connell for future safe-keeping.

"Indigenous Australians at War is a journey into the author's research into Australian Aboriginal servicemen in the defence of Australia," AIATSIS Principal Steve Larkin said today.

"It gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and non-Indigenous Australians a free, online resource about an aspect of history that is not very well known.

"We are very grateful to Mr O'Connell for his dedicated work on this site and we hope all Australians will visit it to learn more about the contribution Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians have made and continue to make to the Australian defence forces."

The website includes biographies and an honour roll amongst historical and modern information about Indigenous Australians in the armed forces from the Boer War until now. The exhibition will be continuously updated and those interested in contributing new information or offering correction are invited to email library@aiatsis.gov.au in the first instance.

A dedication on the site reads in part: "To the kids in communities today, that they find out that we've got heaps of pride when it comes to fighting for our country – we've always stepped up when freedom was being threatened both here and overseas."

Published by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) in Canberra, the exhibition comes in time for ANZAC Day tomorrow. To view the online exhibition go to

<http://www1.aiatsis.gov.au/exhibitions/iaaw/dedication.html>

The AIATSIS library is also displaying medals and memorabilia belonging to Australia's only Indigenous WW2 Fighter pilot, Sergeant Len Waters and Captain Reg Saunders, the first Aboriginal serviceman to command a rifle company. These items are on loan from the Australian War Memorial.

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