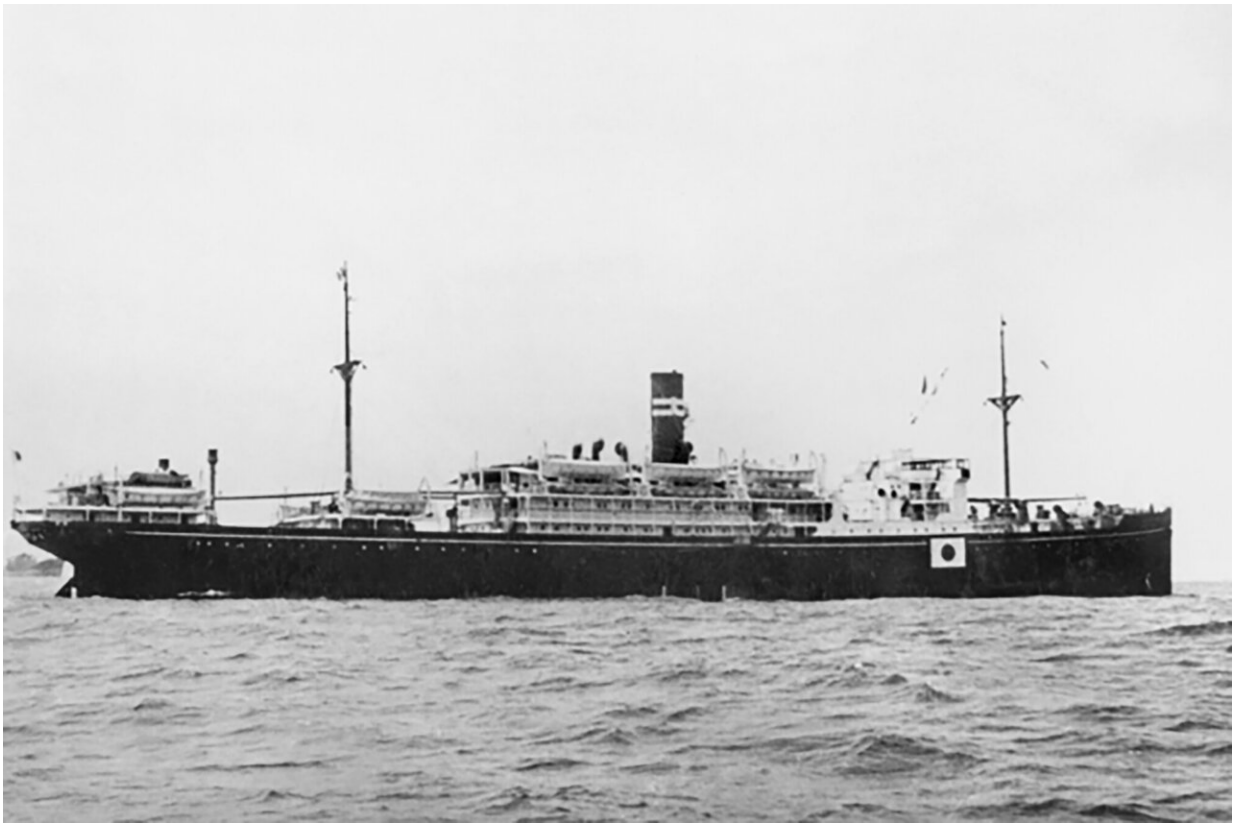


Explorers find WWII ship sunk with over 1,000 Allied POWs

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This photo provided by the Australian War Memorial shows the Montevideo Maru. A team of explorers announced it found the sunken Japanese ship that was transporting Allied prisoners of war when it was torpedoed off the coast of the Philippines in 1942, resulting in Australia's largest maritime wartime loss with a total of 1,080 lives. Credit: Australian War Memorial via AP

A team of explorers announced it found a sunken Japanese ship that was transporting Allied prisoners of war when it was torpedoed off the coast of the Philippines in 1942, resulting in Australia's largest maritime wartime loss with a total of 1,080 lives.

The wreck of the Montevideo Maru was located after a 12-day search at a depth of over 4000 meter (13,120 feet)—deeper than the Titanic—off Luzon island in the South China Sea, using an [autonomous underwater vehicle](#) with in-built sonar.

There will be no efforts to remove artifacts or human remains out of respect for the families of those who died, said a statement Saturday from the Sydney-based Silentworld Foundation, a not-for-profit dedicated to maritime archaeology and history. It took part in the mission together with Dutch deep-sea survey specialists Fugro and Australia's Defense Department.

"The extraordinary effort behind this discovery speaks for the enduring truth of Australia's solemn national promise to always remember and honour those who served our country," Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said. "This is the heart and the spirit of Lest We Forget."

The Montevideo Maru was transporting prisoners and civilians who were captured after the fall of Rabaul in Papua New Guinea. The ship was not marked as carrying POWs, and on July 1, 1942, the American submarine Sturgeon, after stalking the ship through the night, fired four torpedoes, which found their target, sinking the vessel in less than 10 minutes.

Those killed included 1,080 people from 14 nations, including 979 Australians.

"Families waited years for news of their missing loved ones, before

learning of the tragic outcome of the sinking," said Silentworld director John Mullen. "Some never fully came to accept that their loved ones were among the victims. Today, by finding the vessel, we hope to bring closure to the many families devastated by this terrible disaster."

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