

2024 Battle for Australia Ceremony

Student Script No 4:

HMAS CANBERRA

Sunk at Battle of Savo Island

Speaker: Male Student

Duration: 1min. 10secs.

“Navy heavy cruiser HMAS CANBERRA was severely damaged near the Solomon Islands in a 1942 surprise attack by a Japanese naval force ... in an action known as the ‘*Battle of Savo Island*’.

“HMAS CANBERRA was hit 24 times in less than two minutes ... 84 of her crew were killed ... including Captain Frank Getting.

“At the time of the action CANBERRA had formed part of a United States Navy / Royal Australian Navy force screening American transports during the 1942 landing operations of US marines at Guadalcanal.

“A failure of Allied intelligence and vigilance resulted in this screening force being surprised by a determined group of seven Japanese cruisers and a destroyer near Savo Island.

“HMAS CANBERRA as the lead ship of the screening force was the first to be attacked ... CANBERRA received the full force of the Japanese barrage.

“In darkness and confusion ... the rampaging Japanese attackers wreaked havoc with other Allied ships before withdrawing.

“Casualties of the Battle of Savo Island:

“Royal Australian Navy suffered 193 casualties ... including 84 killed or died of wounds ... United States Navy suffered 1,593 casualties including 939 killed or died of wounds”.

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