

2024 Battle for Australia Ceremony

Student Script No 3:

# HMAS ARMIDALE

## Lost at Sea Leaving Darwin

Speaker: Male Student

Duration: 1min. 10secs.

---

**“1942 ‘*Battle for Australia*’ was the most perilous year of WW II in the Pacific ... a series of victories brought Japanese forces within a few miles of the Australian mainland.**

**“The tragic story of HMAS ARMIDALE combines themes of bravery ... sacrifice ... and endurance while performing sea rescue ... convoy escort ... supply ... and evacuation.**

**“Spotted by Japanese reconnaissance aircraft on leaving Darwin ... HMAS ARMIDALE in company of HMAS CASTLEMAINE survived repeated air attacks.**

**“Near Timor ... CASTLEMAINE carrying refugees ... returned to Darwin ... HMAS ARMIDALE was ordered to continue operations in daylight ... tragically ARMIDALE came under relentless attacks and was sunk.**

**“A hundred lives were lost when the ship went down ... however despite continuing attacks from Japanese bombers and Sharks ... 49 men managed to survive at sea for up to eight days on a make shift raft ... with the wounded aboard a small motor boat.**

**“21 sailors from HMAS ARMIDALE made for Australian waters in the motor boat ... another 29 survivors began the same journey clinging to a raft ... the sailors in the motor boat were picked up ... but the men left on the raft disappeared without trace”.**

---

*Author:*

*SQNLDR Peter Meehan OAM (Ret'd) Battle for Australia Foundation*

*Mobile: 0412 334 415 [www.petermeehan.net](http://www.petermeehan.net)*