

## YOUR VIRTUAL VISIT - 2

### TO THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY MUSEUM OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA



*The Australian Army Museum of Western Australia is temporarily closed for public visits in support of mitigation measures and social distancing during the current COVID-19 pandemic.*

*This does not mean that you will miss out completely on a museum experience. Each week, the Museum will present an object from the collection and tell its story. Included will be links and related material which will allow you, your family or friends to continue a journey of self-discovery. Enjoy the experience and stay well.*

#### Large Technology Collection - M3 Stuart Light Tank



#### DESCRIPTION

The M3 Stuart, officially Light Tank, M3, was an American light tank of World War II.. It was supplied to British and other Commonwealth forces under lend-lease prior to the entry of the U.S. into the war. Thereafter, it was used by US, Australian, and Allied forces until the end of the war.

With a crew of 4, it is armed with a 37 mm gun and a coaxial machine gun and weighs 12,500 kilograms. It is powered by a Continental W-670 250 horsepower engine, gasoline fuelled, giving it a top speed of 58 kilometres per hour and a range of 112 kilometres. The Stuart saw Australian service in North Africa, Australia and New Guinea.

The British service name "Stuart" came from the Civil War Confederate general JEB Stuart, a renowned cavalry commander..

## HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Beginning in 1939, the 2nd Australian Imperial Force divisions included a cavalry reconnaissance regiment equipped with light tanks and scout carriers. Only three regiments were eventually formed as it was believed that the 8th Division did not need armoured support in Malaya in the jungle.

The cavalry regiments of the 2nd AIF divisions operating in Mediterranean theatre were initially equipped with the Universal Carrier and unarmoured trucks before being progressively mechanised using British Army equipment. Only the 9<sup>th</sup> Division received Stuarts in North Africa.

The Australian 1st Armoured Division was raised in 1941 as part of the 2nd AIF. Intended to be deployed to North Africa in late 1941, it was retained in Australia following the outbreak of the Pacific War. The Division's armoured regiments subsequently began re-equipping with M3 Grant medium tanks and M3 Stuart light tanks in April and May 1942.

The 2/6th Armoured Regiment deployed to Port Moresby and Milne Bay in New Guinea in September 1942. In December two squadrons were subsequently shipped to Buna on the north coast of Papua. The lightly armoured M3 Stuart tanks proved to be unsuited to jungle warfare and suffered heavy casualties, but played an important role at Buna between December 1942 and January 1943

In January 1943, the remainder of the division deployed to Western Australia between Perth and Geraldton, Western Australia as part of III Corps, tasked to counter a Japanese invasion. The 1st Armoured Division formed a key element of Australia's mainland defences, but after that threat passed in September 1943, it was disbanded

## LINKS FOR FURTHER ENJOYMENT

Visit the Australian Army Museum of Western Australia web site

<https://armymuseumwa.com.au/>

Discover the story of Australian armour in the Middle East 1940 – 42

<https://www.army.gov.au/our-history/history-in-focus/australian-armour-in-the-middle-east-1940-to-1943>

Build your own 1/35th scale model of a Stuart tank

<https://www.metrohobbies.com.au/products/tamiya-1-35-m3-stuart-late-production-tank>

Build your own 1/72nd scale model of a Stuart tank

<https://www.frontlinehobbies.com.au/hasegawa-1-72-light-tank-m3-stuart-mk.i-plastic-ki>

Wartime Perth as an inspiration for mystery novels

<https://www.nla.gov.au/content/the-landscape-of-the-past-wartime-perth-as-a-backdrop-to-mystery>

Evacuation of 80,000 considered for wartime Perth

[https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/95182115?searchTerm=Gordon%20Bennett&searchLimits=exactPhrase|||anyWords|||notWords|||requestHandler|||dateFrom=1943-01-01|||dateTo=1943-12-31|||advstate=Western+Australia|||word=\\*ignore\\*%7C\\*ignore\\*|||sortBy](https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/95182115?searchTerm=Gordon%20Bennett&searchLimits=exactPhrase|||anyWords|||notWords|||requestHandler|||dateFrom=1943-01-01|||dateTo=1943-12-31|||advstate=Western+Australia|||word=*ignore*%7C*ignore*|||sortBy)



## PHOTOGRAPHS FROM THE MUSEUM COLLECTION



Get an overview of the battles for Buna, Gona and Sanananda  
<https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/kokoda-track-1942-1943/events/japanese-besieged-battle-beachheads-buna-gona-sanananda>



It is amazing where the Continental W-670 engine was used.  
<http://www.all-aero.com/index.php/contactus/64-engines-power/12610-continental-r-670-w-670>