

OVERVIEW



The War Years: Americans at Newstead

Year 10 Program

The *War Years: Americans at Newstead* is a half day program that engages young people, using Theatre-in-education, in the culture clash experienced by the people of Brisbane when the 'American Invasion' of US service personnel occurred during WWII's expansion into the South Western Pacific from 1941. Newstead Wharf, opened in 1936, was used by the military during WWII. In March 1941 crowds gathered in Newstead Park and other vantage points to welcome a fleet of American ships. By December, the USS Pensacola arrived unannounced following the bombing of Pearl Harbour by the Japanese. From 1942 Brisbane became a major military supply depot and naval base for the war in the South Western Pacific. Brisbane had a population of 300,000 in 1941 and over the next four years the city hosted over a million US servicemen.

Newstead House was occupied from 1942 by service personnel of the Photographic Detachment of the 832nd Signal Service Company, Signal Section of the United States Army Services of Supply. The house was used as barracks for the men, whilst nearby Cintra House contained the photographic laboratory. A gun emplacement was located on the riverfront beyond the bandstand and a series of air raid slit trenches were dug in Newstead Park. An air raid shelter was located in the park on the creek bank, built over by the Breakfast Creek Bridge in 1959.

Immediate impacts of the 'American invasion' included new forms of entertainment culture: dances, drinks, dress and sport. Cola became the drink of choice, with 10 000 bottles imported to the first American PX (postal exchange) in South Brisbane in 1942. Americans taught local girls to jitterbug, baseball was played at Perry Park and volleyball at Newstead House. Many local girls fell in love with American servicemen and war brides were an international phenomena during and after the war.

We invite your students to experience war time Brisbane through *The War Years: Americans at Newstead* as they are transported back to this place in time.

Key inquiry questions provide a framework for developing students' historical knowledge, understanding and skills through the use and interpretation of sources. They include:

- What were the consequences of World War II? How did these consequences shape the modern world?
- How as Australian society affected by other significant global events and changes in this period?
**The War Years: Americans at Newstead* Theatre-in-education program supports Depth Study #1: World War II (1939 – 45)

Curriculum Intent

History

Historical Knowledge and Understanding – World War II

- An overview of the causes and course of World War II ([ACDSEH024](#))
- Experiences of Australians during World War II, such as Prisoners of War (POWs), the Battle of Britain, Kokoda, the Fall of Singapore) ([ACDSEH108](#))
- The impact of World War II, with a particular emphasis on the Australian home front, including the changing roles of women and use of wartime government controls (conscription, manpower controls, rationing and censorship) ([ACDSEH109](#))
- The significance of World War II to Australia's international relationships in the twentieth century, with particular reference to the United Nations, Britain, the USA and Asia ([ACDSEH110](#))



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Historical Skills

Chronology, terms and concepts

Use chronological sequencing to demonstrate the relationship between events and developments in different periods and places ([ACHHS182](#))

Analysis and use of sources

Process and synthesise information from a range of sources for use as evidence in an historical argument ([ACHHS188](#))

Perspectives and interpretations

Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past ([ACHHS190](#))

Identify and analyse different historical interpretations (including their own) ([ACHHS191](#))

Explanation and Communication

Select and use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies ([ACHHS193](#))

Critical and creative thinking

Inquiring – identifying, exploring and organising information and ideas

Identify and clarify information and ideas; Organise and process information

Analysing, synthesising and evaluating reasoning and procedures

Draw conclusions and design a course of action

Generating ideas, possibilities and actions

Seek solutions and put ideas into action

Ethical Understandings

Understanding ethical concepts and issues

Explore ethical concepts in context

Reasoning in decision making and actions

Reason and make ethical decisions; consider consequences; reflect on ethical action

Exploring values, rights and responsibilities

Explore rights and responsibilities; consider points of view

Personal and social capability

Social awareness

Appreciate diverse perspectives

*A Curriculum Activity Risk Assessment is available on request.



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