

Websites and References

Publications

- Chester Wilmot, *Tobruk, 1941*, Penguin, Sydney, NSW 2009.
- Barton Maughan, *Australia in the war of 1939–1945*. Series 1 (Army) ; Vol. 3 *Tobruk and El Alamein*, Australian War Memorial, Canberra, 1966.
- Peter Fitzsimmons, *Tobruk*, Harper Collins, Sydney NSW, 2008.
- Glenn Wahlert, *The Western Desert Campaign 1940–41*, Army History Unit, Canberra, 2006.

Websites

Department of Veterans' Affairs

- *Australia's War 1939–1945*: <http://www.ww2australia.gov.au/scrapiron/index.html>
- *Search Tobruk for personal stories*: www.australiansatwarfilmarchive.gov.au

Australian War Memorial

- *Roll of Honour*: www.awm.gov.au/roh
- *About the Second World War*: www.awm.gov.au/atwar/ww2.asp
- *April 1941*: www.awm.gov.au/atwar/thismonth/apr.asp

Teaching Activities

Use the websites and references above to research the answers to the following questions.

1. The Siege of Tobruk resulted in one of the North African campaign's major confrontations. Give reasons why it was important to the Commonwealth Forces.
2. Look at a map of North Africa and the Mediterranean Sea. How important was the port of Tobruk to the enemy? List the features of the physical environment that would have made fighting difficult for the Australians.
3. Given the location of Bardia and Tobruk, how important do you think the Royal Australian Navy was in this campaign? Why was the Navy referred to as the 'scrap iron flotilla'? What role did the navy play in the town's defence?
4. The men of the 9th Division and the 18th Brigade of the 7th Division were known as the 'Rats of Tobruk'. Who coined this name and why? Did the Australians dislike being known as rats?
5. Look at the photograph 'Rats to you' on the *Australia's War 1939–1945* website. What does it show about the spirit and sense of humour of the Australian men?
6. Corporal Jack Edmonson was the first Australian in the Second World War to be awarded the Victoria Cross, for his actions on 13 April 1941. Use the information on the *Australia's War 1939–1945* website to write an article for the local Wagga Wagga newspaper outlining the circumstances, his bravery and the reasons for his citation for this medal honour.
7. Look at the scrapbook of Mrs Edmondson on the website. What more can you learn about her son Jack by reading her collection of clippings and photographs?
8. Watch the video of Private Richard Gordon Hughes on the *Australia's War 1939–1945* website. Write several diary entries of his experience, taken from his comments about serving at Tobruk.
9. Look at the images of the Rats of Tobruk Memorial on Anzac Parade, Canberra. From your reading about the campaign do you think it is a good representation and design? Do you think it commemorates those who fought at Tobruk? Why or why not?
10. Go to the Australians at War Film Archive and search under the topic of Tobruk and read about the experiences of one of the army, naval or airforce personnel serving during this campaign.