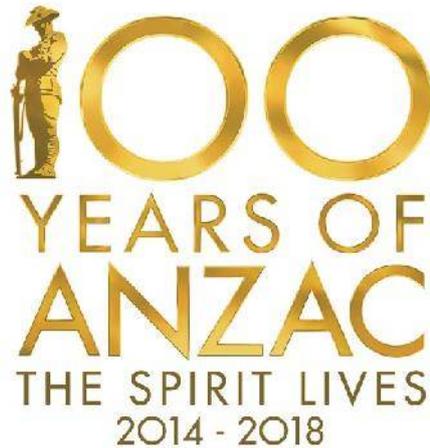


Newsletter Date
25 April 2014

Magnetic Island RSL



The Price of Freedom is Eternal Vigilance



A Special Edition, 2014

The 2014 special edition pays tribute to voices from the past, in the words of actual ANZAC soldiers. Despite the horrors that they endured, there still rings a special spirit in their words as they speak to us from the front.

We start with a short extract from a family diary of Private Cecil Alfred Blow, the step-grandfather of a valued RSL member, Pat Trewin. Pat notes that: *"He was a musician in the Army during WWI, enlisted 29 Jan 1915 aged just 18, but on 1 Sep 1915 the band was 'disbanded' and he landed in Gallipoli on 11 Sep 1915 to work as a stretcher bearer. This is his Gallipoli experience - it makes an interesting read.*

He was wounded in France (Poitiers) on 29 Jul 1916 and repatriated to hospital in England, rejoining his unit on France in Dec 2016. Came back to Australia in 1918 and discharged July 1919."

A Touch Closer to Home...

From the Diary of Private Cecil Alfred Blow AIF

25th Battalion, C Company, Division 2

Arrived at Mudros harbour Lemnos Island on Sept 7th and anchored inside. We got off the Minnewaska on the 11th onto the HMS Sardinia and went straight to Anzac and landed in barges. We saw a destroyer shelling the end of the Turkish trenches with a searchlight at Gaba Tepe and thought it was a great sight at the time. We landed on the Anzac pier and marched in single file round the beach to the left to a gully and sat down till daybreak. No one seemed to know where we were to go till the middle of the next day. We started out

then in single file back the way we had come the night before and tuned to the right into the open of the gully that led up to the firing line.

We should have made this move at night as the Turks could see us when we turned up the gully. We had to go across an open space of about 100 yds to get to a sap which was fairly safe to get up to the trenches.

The Turks did not start firing till about 2 companys had got safely across, then they poured in shrapnel while the rest of us did the trip. The shells were badly timed and only a few got hit. We arrived in a gully behind Durant's post and camped there till we went into the trenches.

Four of us (SB's) were camped behind the firing line at Durant's Post. It was just opposite the Turks on hill 971. Durant's Post was along a sharp ridge running paralell with with 971 at a distance of about 800 yards. We had very few causalities there.

October 5th We moved to the right to the apex where our trenches run right up to within about 50 yards of the Turks. We had a lot of very hard work there getting wounded men out of deep narrow and winding trenches and carrying them down a steep gully to the 7th Field Ambulance. Shrapnel and bombs did all the damage. Built a new dressing station just before we left. A bomb dropped beside the place while we were at work and knocked us all down. Charlie Fuller had his jaw broken with a piece, but the rest of us were only deafened for a day or two. Left the Apex on Nov 10th. Turks gave us a hurry-up as we were on our way to the beach. Wind blowing clouds of dust about.

Camped in reserve gully first night and wind nearly covered us with dust. Weather getting very

cold. First snow November 28th. Had everything pulled down ready move off at 2 hours notice. Could not get off on account of the rough weather.

Left from William's pier on the night of December 17th at 11pm on a lighter and got on board the SS "Osmaniah" and watched the stores burning on the beach till daylight on 18th when we sailed away. The last thing we saw was the same searchlight shining onto the end of the Turkish trenches. At Gaba Tepe as we saw when we landed. Anzac out of sight in fog as we left."



"A bomb dropped beside the place while we were at work and knocked us all down"

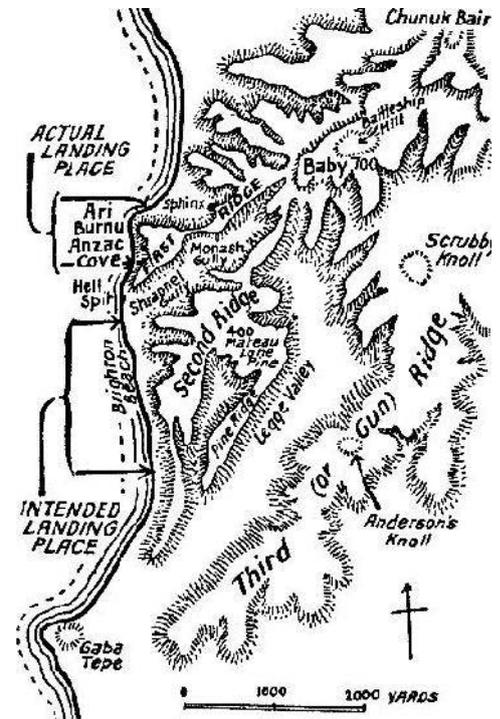


Interesting Facts

- The ANZACs were all volunteers.
- April 25, Anzac Day, was the day the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915.
- 25 April, was officially named ANZAC Day in 1916.
- The first dawn service on an ANZAC Day was in 1923.
- AIF is an abbreviation for Australian Imperial Force.
- There is no town called "Gallipoli". It is the name of an area. Visitors to Gallipoli usually stay at nearby towns such as Ecubeat.
- ANZAC Day was not a public holiday in New Zealand until 1921
- ANZAC Day was not a public holiday in Australia until 1921. However it was not observed uniformly in all the states.
- The Gallipoli Peninsula is very near the famous ancient city of Troy
- The term ANZAC is protected under Australian law.

Interesting Facts

- More than 11,000 ANZACs died at Gallipoli and more than 23,500 were wounded.
- Services are held at dawn because in battle, dawn was the best time to attack the enemy. Soldiers would wake in the dark so at the first signs of light they were alert and awake.
- The original Anzac biscuit was known as an Anzac wafer or tile and was part of the rations given to the ANZAC soldiers during World War I. They were included instead of bread because they had a much longer shelf life.
- Anzac biscuits were created by wives of soldier's who wanted to bake healthy goodies for their men. They lacked egg and milk, so kept for a long time and didn't spoil during transport.
- The Poppy as a symbol comes from Canadian John McCrae's WWI poem. In Flanders Fields. It was used as a symbol by the Canadians for their Remembrance Day, and has been adapted as a reminder of the loss of all veterans in all wars.
- The wearing of rosemary on ANZAC Day is done as a mark of respect for the men who never returned from Gallipoli, or indeed, later wars. The wearing of it honours the memory of those brave men.
- The 'Last Post' is incorporated into funeral and memorial services as a final farewell and symbolizes that the duty of the dead is over and that they can rest in peace.
- The men who served on the Gallipoli Peninsula created a legend, adding the word 'ANZAC' to our vocabulary and creating the idea of the ANZAC spirit.
- In Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands and Niue, ANZAC Day is also commemorated to honour their soldiers who participated to the campaign.
- ANZAC Day is commemorated in France in the towns of Le Quesnoy and Longueval.



"The original Anzac biscuit was known as an Anzac wafer or tile"

Other letters from the front... Myles O'Reilly, served in 8th Battalion

On the 17th August we were transhipped into a small steamer and packed down below...we steamed across and arrived at Anzac Cove about midnight. We could see the rough outline of the cliffs—and hear the constant reports of isolated rifle fire, with machine gun joining in the chorus, while a deep bass note was sounded in the distance by a warship supporting the British—she would first sweep her search lights over the Turk's position, fix it awhile on a certain spot then drop a shell on the same place as nicely as you please ...We were taken in tow by a tiny launch and crept slowly towards the beach—once a star-shell exposed us nicely but I suppose the enemy thought we were only stores or something less valuable because no shell came.

Once landed, we were marched up a formed road along the cliffs which had been taken on the day of the landing – it was hard work doing it without opposition, it must have been hell for the others...

...This went on until 10am when my rifle jammed. I was reaching for another when a bomb landed fair on my back; fortunately it was to the left of my spine but even though I suffered a few minutes agony.

Fortunately I had put my haversack on my back and it absorbed most of the force of the explosion. (The army biscuits which it contained were too hard for the bomb to do its



"The army biscuits which it contained were too hard for the bomb to do its work properly."

...letters from the front

work properly). When I managed to get my breath I threw away my equipment, leaving the ammo itself for those in the trenches and then crawled along the parapet until a comrade helped me to the back of the Indian's trench; he returned to be shot dead through the mouth (I was afterwards told). I found myself among about six wounded and as the hours dragged on we suffered from thirst... I tried to crawl away but

could not manage and on looking around I could see 3 of the group had died and 3 had crawled away and I was alone. I was picked up by the New Zealand Red Cross man who dressed my wound and helped me to where our stretcher bearers were...the bearers had to double across one or two places that were under fire, but made no complaint.



The ANZAC SPIRIT

To cope with the tragic losses our country saw at Gallipoli, the men and women of Australia searched for the positive in the experience. To get through such a horrendous time the soldiers had to develop strong bonds with each other and demonstrate extraordinary courage, endurance and bravery.

So, today, when you hear someone speak about the ANZAC spirit, think of courage, bravery, endurance, mateship, determination and sacrifice. These are the values that were demonstrated so strongly by the soldiers at Gallipoli and are important in defining Australia as a nation.

The ANZAC spirit was also demonstrated by a wealthy Australian named Charles Billyard-Leake who, in 1914, was living at Harefield Park: a large manor house in Middlesex, England. Charles was too old to join the army in 1914 but he still wanted to support the war effort of his birth country. He did this by allowing his house and its large, sprawling grounds to be used as a hospital for ANZAC soldiers. Throughout the war and for six months after it finished, 50,000 ANZACs stayed at Harefield Hospital. The King and Queen of

England also paid a visit in 1915.

Today the students from a local primary school, Harefield Junior School, are keeping this time in history alive by studying the stories of Australian soldiers who stayed at Harefield Hospital. The local village holds an ANZAC Day celebration every year, where children parade through the town before laying wreaths or flowers on some of the 111 graves of Australian soldiers and one nurse.

A flag from Harefield School was used to cover the coffins of the soldiers who died at Harefield Hospital. This flag now hangs in Adelaide High School in South Australia, a sign of their shared history. During World War I, the Adelaide High School community sent parcels of food and money donations to every student and teacher at Harefield School. The two communities still keep in contact today.

ANZAC Day 2014, Magnetic Island



"Lest We Forget"



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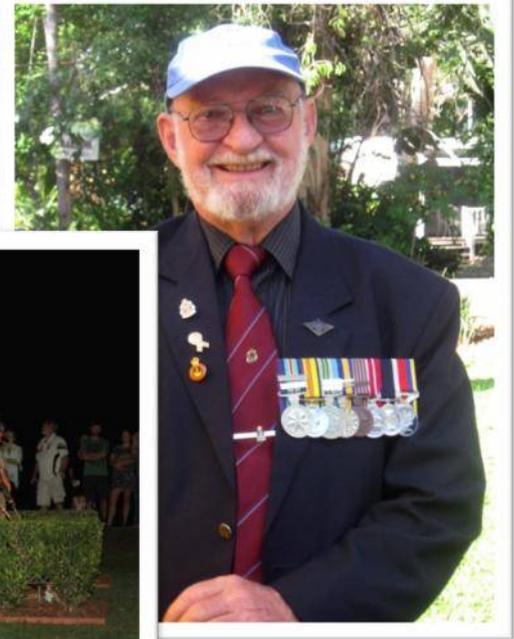
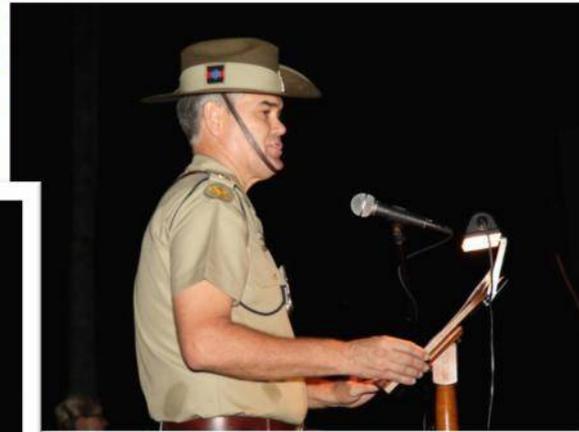
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