



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

ANZAC DAY 2021
Sunday 25 April 2021

The Hon. James Merlino MP, Acting Premier
Senator the Hon. Jane Hume, representing the Prime Minister
Captain Peter Crutchley, representing the New Zealand High Commissioner
The Hon. Michael O'Brien MP, Leader of the Opposition, Victoria
The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Cr Sally Capp
Major General Andrew Bottrell CSC and Bar, Senior Army Officer Victoria
Commodore Greg Yorke CSC RAN, Senior Naval Officer Victoria
Air Commodore Greg Frisina, Senior Air Force Officer Victoria
Chief Commissioner Shane Patton APM, Victoria Police
Dr Robert Webster OAM, State President RSL Victoria
Captain Stephen Bowater OAM, Chairman, Shrine of Remembrance Trustees
Our speakers today:
Major General (Ret.) Emeritus Professor Jeffrey Rosenfeld AC, OBE
Mr Angus Murray and
Distinguished guests

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and I pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this morning.

In the galleries of our Shrine, photographs and names of some of those who landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula more than a century ago today, scroll through on a loop.

Amongst them:

Sergeant Leslie Starr 22 years, School teacher

Private Harry Barrett, 18 years, Plate glass worker

Lance Corporal Ken Sutherland, 20 years, Carrier, and

Private Arthur South, 19 years, Boiler maker

The loop and the list scroll on.

As we gather in the cool dawn this morning – whether here, at cenotaphs dotted right around our State or in our driveways – we think of them and the 16,000 members of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps who, full of patriotism and anticipation, had left their home

shores, to find themselves early on that April morning, travelling through darkness, as their boats disgorged them into an impossibly inhospitable landscape of rugged spurs and gullies.

There to be met by devastating bombardments.

That evening, looking at his battalion waiting to go ashore, Signaller Ellis Silas confided in his diary:

...for the last time in this world many of us stand shoulder to shoulder. As I looked down the ranks of my comrades I wonder which of us are marked for the land beyond.

Sadly, many of them were so marked. By the end of just that first day of the landing, two thousand lay dead or wounded.

One year later, reflecting on that day, 23 year old Vera Deakin, daughter of our second Prime Minister, wrote to her parents from her Red Cross posting in Cairo:

Today is the anniversary of the heroic Landing, the day which plunged half the world into admiration & awe & half our Continent into sorrow & mourning.

It was an apt description. There was much to admire, and so many to mourn.

As there has been since.

We admire the valour and we mourn the loss of those who fought on at Gallipoli and throughout WWI, those who, several decades later, battled to fight back invading armies to save French and Belgian villages or to stave off threats in the Pacific or, later again, in jungles in Vietnam, and since in deserts, and wherever and whenever they have been called to fight or to keep the peace.

In those scrolling names in the Gallery here, and etched into monuments in every corner of our country, we see a snapshot of their particular time in history.

It is in fact a snapshot of us all.

Those from our biggest cities and our smallest towns. Those from our First Nations and those more recently arrived. From every different walk of life: much loved members of families, workplaces, teams and clubs and congregations.

Each Anzac Day we gather to remember.

We know that our remembering will not bring back those who died in the course of duty. It won't erase the pain of grieving families, or sufficiently lighten the burden for those who were injured.

But we remember because they have gifted us a legacy.

Their legacy is the character of our nation, forged from their service.

Exactly 50 years ago, speaking in Canberra on the 50th anniversary of the Royal Australian Air Force, when he too was in his 50th year, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh spoke of service, citing amongst the crucial factors *courage, endurance and leadership*, concluding that:

In the end it is this human content ... which is decisive in both peace and war.

In the Anzacs we saw that human content.

That is their legacy.

The years pass, but not the lessons.

Lest we forget.