



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
VICTORIA

**REMEMBRANCE DAY**  
**Thursday 11 November 2021**

**The Honourable Daniel Andrews MP**, Premier of Victoria  
**The Honourable Scott Morrison MP**, Prime Minister of Australia  
**The Honourable Matthew Guy MP**, Leader of the Victorian Opposition  
**Members of State and Federal Parliaments**  
**The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor Sally Capp**, Lord Mayor of the City of Melbourne  
**Captain Stephen Bowater**, Chairman, and Trustees of the Shrine of Remembrance  
**Dr Robert Webster OAM**, State President, RSL Victorian Branch  
**Senior Officers of the Australian Defence Force**  
**Former and current service men and women**  
**Members of the Consular Corps**  
**Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls**

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 Elders from other communities who might be joining us.

Today, more than 100 years have passed since the first Remembrance Day, recognising the anniversary of the Armistice that brought an end to the First World War.

With the passage of time, naturally, no-one who served in that war is with us now.

In years past, they would have attended large Remembrance Day commemorations. The first, in 1919, came after V-Day celebrations had been cancelled earlier in the year, as the Spanish Flu swept through the nation.

But by that November, the pandemic was subsiding, and – in a way that particularly resonates with us today – large crowds welcomed the chance to gather at various vantage points across our city, suburbs and regions, to commemorate the Armistice.

Trams and trains stood still, as Victorians – like other Australians – paid their tribute with two minutes silence.

In the stillness of that cool and cloudy Melbourne morning, how poignant it must have been as The Last Post was sounded across the city rooftops.

And how raw the scars must have been for those who had returned.

Their memories of the horrors of war were fresh.

The reality of mates by their side, and then ... no longer.

The many hardships that they had endured. And the heartache of long absences from their families and friends.

How raw too were the scars of those who had been left at home.

The deprivation that wartime had brought. The anxious wait for news – sometimes received at its very worst. Or, the adjustment to life with loved ones who had returned, but were forever changed.

On this Remembrance Day, more than 100 years since the first, we are now a very long way from that time.

As a nation we are different.

Then, almost 90% of us were born here.

Today, we are a diverse and multicultural community, coming from some 250 different countries, with almost half of us born overseas or with one parent born overseas.

Our homes, our work and the way we live are also different from all those years ago.

With so much changed, what is it that still binds us to that time, and to the men and women who served in that First World War?

Why do we still pause at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month?

It is of course to remember those who sacrificed so much for us, and to remember that such sacrifice was by no means confined to the First World War.

Tragically, within just decades, it continued in Europe and the Pacific in World War II. And then in wars and conflicts and peacekeeping and peacemaking across the many decades since.

Of course, the service of our Australian Defence Force is not just historical. The first 21 years of this 21st century have seen our troops serve in dozens of countries: amongst them, Sudan, Iraq, Timor Leste, Solomon Islands and Afghanistan.

And service continues, thanks to the thousands of men and women who represent us here at home or overseas.

Each one building on the legacy of the ANZACs.

At the heart of our remembrance today lies the gratitude of a nation.

We are grateful for our safety.

For the peace made, and the peace kept, in places near and far.

And we are grateful for the support of our community here at home, whenever and wherever we have found ourselves most tested.

These are the reasons why we pause to remember.

These are the reasons why we must not forget.