



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

ANZAC DAY DAWN SERVICE

Monday 25 April 2022

The Honourable Daniel Andrews MP, Premier of Victoria
Senator the Honourable Jane Hume, representing the Prime Minister of Australia
His Excellency Jean-Pierre Thébault, Ambassador of France to Australia
The Honourable Matthew Guy MP, Leader of the Victorian Opposition
Senator Raff Ciccone, representing the Leader of the Federal Opposition
The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor Sally Capp
Mr Shane Patton APM, Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police
Captain Stephen Bowater OAM, Chair of the Shrine Trustees
Dr Robert Webster OAM, State President and members of RSL Victoria, and members of
other ex-service organisations
Victorian Senior Officers of the Australian Defence Force and representatives of other
Defence Forces
Members of the Consular Corps
Victorians and Visitors

I want to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are gathered, and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and to Elders from other communities who are here with us.

I also want to acknowledge the past and present members of the Australian Defence Force with us this morning – and to thank each and every one of you for your service.

I especially want to acknowledge the Vietnam veterans and their families, as this year we mark the 60th anniversary of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam conflict.

All those who have served, or who are serving, are the reason that we gather on this holy ground.

You'll see that description of *holy ground* – the words of Sir John Monash, one of our greatest soldiers, carved into the western wall of this shrine:

'Let all men know that this is holy ground. This Shrine, established in the hearts of men as on the solid earth, commemorates a people's fortitude and sacrifice...'

That inscription is here because it is so true. So apt.

Indeed, this is holy ground.

Every stone ... every statue ... every memorial tree is holy.

They are made holy by the generations of Australians who have served, and do and shall serve our country.

They are made holy by the ways in which those men and women have been and are prepared to sacrifice their youth, their wellbeing, their health and their lives.

And they are made holy by our remembrance.

This is a Shrine of Remembrance.

It is a place designed and built and paid for with more than money by the ANZAC generation.

It is – as one of the Shrine's architects first put it – *'the fruit and outcome of a people's gratitude, a people's agony, a people's pride.'*

The architect who said that was Phillip Hudson.

He had served in the First World War – and lost two brothers.

The Shrine's other architect – James Wardrop – was also an ANZAC.

The people who built this Shrine – working for sustenance pay during the Depression – were ANZACs too.

And the people who paid for the construction of this Shrine – paid by donation at a time when a third of Victorians were out of work – were the families who'd sent those ANZACs to Gallipoli ... to the Middle East ... to the Western Front.

When the Shrine's foundation stone was laid in 1927, one of the first people to leave a wreath was Caroline Madden of Bay Street, Port Melbourne.

Mrs Madden's son – Private Les Fackrell – had gone missing at Fromelles on July 19, 1916.

They never found his body.

Private Fackrell's name was inscribed on the memorial wall of the V.C. Corner Australian Cemetery at Fromelles.

But Mrs Madden was unable to travel all the way to France – so she came here instead.

As have so many others.

That generation of Victorians could not forget the agony of war. And so they built this Shrine, to ensure that it would never be forgotten.

When the Shrine was officially opened on Remembrance Day 1934, more than 300,000 people gathered: a third of Melbourne's population at the time, and equivalent to a crowd today of around 1.7 million people.

That is how deeply connected to this place they were.

The collective gratitude, agony and pride of those Victorians consecrated this place: made it holy.

And, since then, generations of Victorians have followed in their footsteps – and re-consecrated this holy ground whenever they came, by themselves or in great numbers, to remember what Monash called the '*unspeakable cruelty*' of war.

All of which brings me to this generation of Victorians – to us – and the debt we owe to those who served and those who serve in our name.

We cannot change the past.

We cannot bring back those lost to the traumas of conflict.

We can only support those who did return.

We can only honour and remember those who did not.

That is the purpose of this place of pilgrimage, this Shrine of Remembrance, this part of home that never forgets those who served.

Its purpose is to honour and remember.

And, in doing so, to understand the terrible cost of war.

Look around you.

You are surrounded by fellow pilgrims who have come to honour and remember.

Individually, you hail from different parts of this city and our State.

Collectively, you are – by coming here today – by that sacred act – now connected to the generations of pilgrims who came before you ... all the way back to Caroline Madden of Bay Street, Port Melbourne ... and the ANZACs who built this place by hand, to honour the comrades they fought beside and lost.

And, this morning, what your individual and collective act of remembrance is doing is re-consecrating this place as holy ground: reclaiming its memory, protecting its civic purpose, ensuring the gratitude and agony and pride that make sure this place is not forgotten.

The Shrine of Remembrance is the living soul of Melbourne.

And this soul will remain alive – this Eternal Flame will keep burning – as long as we keep returning – and remembering.

Lest we forget.