



# ANZAC DAY

25 APRIL



**Commemorative Service  
Pietà Military Cemetery 9:00am**

Since the first Anzac Day commemorations on 25 April 1916, Australians have paused to recognise and honour the service and sacrifices of veterans and families.

*‘Malta and Australia are two islands separated by continents and seas but now firmly linked by ties of family and history. It was the First World War which began the close relationship between our two countries. During that terrible conflict Maltese and Australians lived, fought and died together.*

*Over 10 per cent of Malta’s 222,000 people volunteered for war-related duties, with almost 1,100 members of the Malta Labour Corps working with Australians at Gallipoli, Lemnos and Mudros. The Maltese served gallantly with Australian regiments, six of them receiving decorations for their service in the 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade.*

*In addition, many thousands of Australians owed their survival to the tremendous and selfless efforts of the Maltese who tended and nursed the wounded back to health. Malta, which history remembers as the ‘nurse of the Mediterranean’, became a focus of heartfelt gratitude for the soldiers who convalesced there. To this day the memory of the ANZACs is kept alive in Malta, just as it is in Australia, through annual commemorations.’*

R.J.L. Hawke, Former Prime Minister of Australia

Foreword to ‘Gallipoli: The Malta Connection’ by John A. Mizzi. December 1990.



Photo Courtesy of Australian Army Museum of Western Australia

## Anzac Day: history and significance

The Anzac legend was born on 25 April 1915, when some 16,000 soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed under fire on the shores of Gallipoli, Türkiye.

Australian and New Zealand soldiers formed part of the expedition that set out to capture the Gallipoli peninsula in order to open the Dardanelles to the Allied navies. These landings were the first occasion where soldiers of the two fledgling nations fought together.

After meeting fierce resistance from the Ottoman Turkish defenders, what had been planned as a bold stroke quickly became a stalemate, and the campaign dragged on for eight months.

At the end of 1915 the allied forces were evacuated from the peninsula, with both sides having suffered heavy casualties and enduring great hardships. Over 56,000 Allied soldiers were killed in the campaign, including more than 11,000 Australian and New Zealand troops.

Although the Gallipoli campaign failed in its military objectives, the actions of Australian and New Zealand forces during the campaign left a powerful legacy. What became known as the 'Anzac legend' became an important part of the identity of both nations, shaping the ways in which they viewed both their past and their future.

Once used to refer to those who fought in the First World War, as time has passed, the term 'Anzac' has come to express characteristics such as courage, equality, endurance and mateship, and today it also honours those who have served through more recent conflicts and on peacekeeping missions.



Wounded Australian and British soldiers at Tigne Hospital: Building D, Ward 4., Malta. © Imperial War Museum (HU 129298)

## Anzac Day in Malta

In both world wars, Malta's position in the Mediterranean made it an important strategic location. During World War One, it was well positioned to receive casualties from the ill-fated invasion of Gallipoli in 1915.

In total, 28 hospitals and convalescent camps were operational in Malta during the war, including Malta's three pre-existing hospitals and Mtarfa Military Barracks, which was given over to medical use. Between them, these sites held more than 26,000 beds and treated more than 135,000 sick and wounded throughout the duration of the war, earning Malta the nickname 'the nurse of the Mediterranean'.

Malta became the last resting place of 204 Australian and 72 New Zealand soldiers. We remain grateful for Malta's care for so many of our wounded soldiers.

Anzac Day has been commemorated in Malta since 1916. Originally, two services were held due to the practice of burying servicemen according to religion: one service was held in Pietà and another at the Addolorata cemetery for Catholics.

After the unveiling of the War Memorial in Floriana by HM The Queen in 1954, services were combined up until 1979 when the service returned to Pietà Military Cemetery, as it contains the highest number of ANZAC war graves (231) in Malta.



A young Maltese boy poses amidst some of the wreaths on the Malta War Memorial after the Anzac Day service in 1953 which was organised by the Malta Anzac Committee and 78 Fighter Wing RAAF.

Photo Courtesy of Australian War Memorial

# The Second World War

Malta's pivotal role in the Second World War requires little introduction. A valuable, strategic outpost hosting several airfields and as the only safe allied harbour between Gibraltar and Alexandria, Malta was critical to air and maritime operations in the Mediterranean theatre.

Ships of the Royal Australian Navy took part in the protection of merchant shipping and the supply of aircraft and stores (Operations *EXCESS*, *SUBSTANCE*, *HALBERD*, *HARPOON* and *PEDESTAL*). Aircraft and crew from both the Royal Australian and Royal New Zealand Air Forces operated in the defence of Malta under the Air Headquarters, an overseas command of the Royal Air Force that was established in December 1941.

The Malta Memorial in Floriana commemorates 205 Australian and 85 New Zealand service personnel who were killed in action during the Second World War with no known grave; the majority of these were air crew. A further thirty-one Australian and New Zealand air crew are buried in Kalkara Naval Cemetery and one Australian in Pembroke military cemetery.



A Wellington bomber of 458 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) with the call sign 'J' for Johnny displaying a large section of nose art depicting a map of Australia and New Zealand which has been over painted with a large Kookaburra holding a tiki in its beak.

Photo Courtesy of Australian War Memorial - collection C337201.

## Pietà Military Cemetery

More than 1,300 Commonwealth casualties buried at Pietà Military Cemetery date from World War One. 882 of the burials here, nearly 60 per cent of the total number of casualties, died in 1915 having been wounded or contracted sickness at Gallipoli and evacuated to Malta. As well as a large number of British war dead, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for a large ANZAC contingent at Pietà, with more than 230 burials of New Zealand and Australian casualties. There are also 28 Indian casualties commemorated here, and two Canadians.


Across Malta's military cemeteries, 308 Australian and New Zealanders are buried from both world wars.

*Under the shady trees of Pietà there are many new-made graves, and the chaplain stops on his return from another funeral beside a little plot and thinks of a boyish face that had looked up at his so wistfully and frankly from the pillow.*

*"He was a brave lad," he murmurs to himself; "and it did me good to know him."*

*That face is looking into some other heart far away, and its smile brings a sweet ache, and the longing to see the lonely grave at which the unknown chaplain is the only mourner.*

Albert G. Mackinnon, *'Malta – The Nurse of the Mediterranean'*, 1916, Chapter Three: 'A Sad March Past'



PTE. O. LAWSON.  
18<sup>th</sup> BATT. AUS. IMP. FORCES.  
DIED 17<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 1915.  
AGE 30 YEARS.



# Order of Service



08:45 Guests to be seated

09:00 Service commences

## Welcome

Mrs. Jeanette Camilleri-Dawes, Master of Ceremonies



## Hymn

(All Stand)

## O Valiant Hearts

O valiant hearts who to your glory came  
Through dust of conflict and through battle flame;  
Tranquil you lie, your knightly virtue proved,  
Your memory hallowed in the land you loved.

Proudly you gathered, rank on rank, to war  
As who had heard God's message from afar;  
All you had hoped for, all you had, you gave,  
To save mankind - yourselves you scorned to save.

Splendid you passed, the great surrender made;  
Into the light that nevermore shall fade;  
Deep your contentment in that blest abode,  
Who wait the last clear trumpet call of God.

# Prayer

Father Meli, Chaplain, Armed Forces of Malta

O Lord, lover of souls, who through the mouth of your prophet of old declared that all souls are yours, we thank you for the brave and faithful dead, who willingly laid down their lives on the battlefields of war and succumbed to the perils of the deep or of the air. We bless you for the dauntless courage of these defenders of our country who have fallen in the cause of truth and righteousness. In your hand, O Father, we leave their departed spirits. Grant us to follow their good example in faithfulness and endurance, even unto death, that we may with them be found worthy of the crown of everlasting life.

(Audience Responds)

***Amen***

(Please Sit)



## Commemorative Addresses

HE Mr Matt Skelly, High Commissioner of Australia

and

Mr Kevin Bonnici, Honorary Consul of New Zealand



## Reading

HE Mr Barkin Kayaoğlu, Ambassador for the Republic of Türkiye

Reading of the Tribute to Anzacs Who Died at Gallipoli attributed to Turkish President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, First President of the Republic of Türkiye

*'Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives. You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side now here in this country of ours... You, the mothers, who sent their sons from faraway countries wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land, they have become our sons as well.'*



## **Reading of *'In Flanders Fields'***

Mia and Kayla Skelly

*'In Flanders Fields'* by Lt. Col. John McCrae, 1915

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.



## **Wreath Laying**

Mrs. Jeanette Camilleri-Dawes, Master of Ceremonies

Wreaths layers will be invited to lay their wreaths in accordance with the separate order of wreath laying sheet and will be announced by the Master of Ceremonies.

(All Stand)

## **The Ode of Remembrance**

Sergeant Matthew Psaila, Armed Forces Malta

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,  
We will remember them.

(Audience Responds)

**We will remember them.**



## **The Last Post**

(All Stand)

## **One Minute's Silence**

Lest We Forget

(Audience Responds)

**Lest We Forget**

## **The Rouse**

Flags Raised



Please remain standing for the national anthems of Australia, New Zealand and Malta.

(All Stand)

## **National Anthems of Australia, New Zealand and Malta**

Mrs. Jeanette Camilleri-Dawes, Master of Ceremonies

Please remain standing for the national anthems of Australia, New Zealand and Malta.

## **Ceremony Concludes**

Mrs. Jeanette Camilleri-Dawes, Master of Ceremonies

Thank you for attending today's service to commemorate Anzac Day.



Men of the 3rd Battalion AIF landing in Anzac Cove at about 6 am on 25 April 1915.

Photo Courtesy of Australian War Memorial - collection A03224.

# Acknowledgements

The High Commission of Australia gratefully acknowledges the assistance provided for Anzac Day by:

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC)  
Mr Mark Fitzgerald - Malta's CWGC Supervisor and staff  
Pietà Local Council

Father Joe Meli - Chaplain, Armed Forces of Malta

Colonel Jonathan Cutajar, Armed Forces of Malta

Sergeant Psaila, Armed Forces of Malta

Captain Jonathan Borg and all members of the Armed Forces of Malta Band

Malta Police Force

TS St Paul Sea & Royal Marine Cadets Corps (SCC Malta)

St Aloysius College Scout Association

Mrs Jeanette Camilleri-Dawes

Coro Bel Canto Choir

St. John's Ambulance & Rescue Malta

Mr Henry Zammit Cordina

## Standard Bearers

George Cross Island Association (Malta G.C. Branch)

Royal British Legion (Malta G.C. Branch)

Royal Naval Association (Malta G.C. Branch)

Royal Marines Association (Malta G.C. Branch)

Royal Air Forces Association (Malta G.C. Branch)

Merchant Navy Association UK

## Sources

Anzac Portal: <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au>

Commonwealth War Graves Commission: <https://www.cwgc.org/>

Australian War Memorial: <https://www.awm.gov.au/>

Department of Veterans Affairs, Australia: <https://www.dva.gov.au/>

Australian Army: <https://www.army.gov.au/>

National Library of New Zealand: <https://natlib.govt.nz/>

*The ANZAC Experience in Malta, Tours 1 – 4* by Terence Mirabelli (Island Publications Ltd. 2015):

<https://malta.embassy.gov.au/>

Australian Army Museum of Western Australia: <https://armymuseumwa.com.au/>

Imperial War Museum: <https://www.iwm.org.uk/>

*Gallipoli: The Malta Connection* by John A. Mizzi, (Tecnografica Publications 1991)

# Anzac Day and Youth

The survival of the significance attributed to Anzac Day is perhaps reflective of its capacity to attract and include a wide range of participants, from veterans to peace activists, and from children to centenarians.

*'In 2025, in the children and young people who reflect in the dawn light, lay wreaths with respect, and march in honour, we can see this day of commemoration as an enduring experience of remembrance and renewal.'*

*In the words of one young Australian,*

*"... commemoration can inspire Australia's potential to be brave and extraordinary ..."*

The Governor-General's 2025 Anzac Day address.

For children, it is about connecting with history and understanding the freedoms they have today and developing their own understandings about the contribution and commemoration of Australian servicemen and women.

A 2025 News Corp Growth Intelligence Centre survey indicated that 63% to two-thirds of Generation Z Australians believe the Anzac legacy should be preserved for future generations.



Abbotsford, Vic. 1943. Pupils wearing their father's medals listen quietly during the Anzac Day ceremony at the local state primary school. Photo Courtesy of Australian War Memorial

## **Zoe Power, student, personal reflection on Anzac Day, 23 March 2014.**

*'Many Australians worry about glorifying warfare through celebrating conflicts of the past. For me, this question is very important, but when I attend the dawn service I put such thoughts aside. Instead, I focus on paying my respects to the individual people who have risked and sacrificed so much in times of war.'*

## **Su-Kim Macdonald, student, personal reflection on Anzac Day, 23 March 2014.**

*'I have been going to the dawn service on Anzac Day for as long as I can remember. Despite having very little personal connection to the Australian military, it is one of my favourite things to attend and I can't imagine ever not going ... [B]eing in a crowd of thousands of people, I've never felt a greater sense of community and belonging ... everything else suddenly just goes away, and you join with your fellow people to remember the brave men and women who died for Australia.'*

The Department of Veterans Affairs Anzac Portal provides free learning resources for Australian educators and student friendly information and engaging learning activities, on the experiences of Australians in wars, conflicts and peace operations. It is designed specifically for teachers and students in Australian schools. The below case studies, collected by DVA through the Anzac Day Schools' Awards, provide brief descriptions of how some school communities in Australia have learned about and commemorated Anzac Day.



Anzac Day Parade, Townsville 2023.  
Photo Courtesy of RSL Queensland

### **Riverton Primary School, Western Australia, 2013**

The school researched and created a replica 'care package' that would have been received by a soldier in 1915. The 'boiled lollies' had snippets of factual information about the First World War. The Year 7 class joined with the Year 3 class and created nineteen care packages that were sent to the Explosive Detection Dog Unit in Afghanistan. The senior students worked with groups of up to 32 younger students to read the book *Anzac Biscuits* and make Anzac biscuits. Workbooks were also created by students across all years to look like those that were used in 1915.

### **Sorell District School, Tasmania, 2012**

Students wrote poems to explore the feelings of war as seen through the eyes of a soldier and listened to members of staff whose relatives had served during the Second World War in New Guinea. Students had the chance to interact with a currently serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) member, and they baked Anzac biscuits and served them to the veterans who attended a school morning tea.

There continues to be a high turnout amongst young Australians at dawn services and school involvement, such as laying wreaths or wearing rosemary, indicating a strong, continuing connection to the tradition.

*'And to the young Australians here today – you are the future custodians of the Anzac spirit. You honour this legacy when you:*

- *Stand by your mates, just as the Anzacs did.*
  - *Demonstrate resilience in the face of challenges, just as they showed us.*
  - *Give back to your community, ensuring that we continue to look out for one another'*
- By Major Dennis Weston, 27 March 2025.

# A camera on Gallipoli

The photographs of Charles Ryan

A unique series of photographs taken on Gallipoli form an enduring record of the Australian experience of the campaign.

For Charles Ryan serving as a senior medical officer in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) was the culmination of a long, exciting, and colourful life. His remarkable images of Australian soldiers capture the mateship, the stoicism, and the dogged persistence that became the spirit of Anzac.



Photo courtesy of Daniel Cilia



**DIN L-ART ĦELWA**  
NATIONAL TRUST FOR MALTA

This exhibition has been enabled with the support of



The Australian War Memorial's 'A Camera on Gallipoli' exhibition is on display at Torri Mamo from **Monday 27 April to Monday 04 May 2026**. Check the latest opening times by phoning Din l-Art Ħelwa 2122 5952/2122 0358 for updated information on visiting hours.

A visit to the exhibition also provides an opportunity to learn more about the history of Torri Mamo.

Please note that photographs and footage will be taken throughout Anzac Day Service These may be used by the Australian High Commission in our publications, on our website and in social media. Please contact a staff member of the Australian High Commission if you have any concerns. Recordings, photographs and videos taken by the Australian High Commission follow the guidelines on Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's guidelines on ethical photography.



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