

## ANZAC day and why is it important

*"The Anzac Day tradition,  
Has meaning for us all,  
And if we listen closely,  
We can hear their mournful calls.  
Fighting for the freedom,  
The freedom of this land,  
Fighting for their loved ones,  
On that cold and desolate sand.  
So in that minute's silence,  
Remember those that fell,  
Fighting for the freedom,  
The freedom for us all."*

— Anthony T. Hincks

ANZAC day is on the 25<sup>th</sup> April. This important national event marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War. The war began in 1915 and ended 13 years later, the government was eager to establish a reputation among the nations of the world. The Australian and New Zealand forces landed on Gallipoli on 25<sup>th</sup> April meeting fierce resistance from the Ottoman Turkish defenders. So why is this important for Australia? Well more than 8,000 Australian soldiers had died in the campaign. 25<sup>th</sup> April soon became the day on which Australians remembered the sacrifice of those who died in the war.

The ANZACS were courageous and although the Gallipoli campaign failed in its military objectives, the Australian and New Zealand actions during the campaign left us all a powerful legacy. The spirit of ANZAC with its qualities of courage, mateship and sacrifice, continues to have meaning and relevance for our sense of national identity. In December 1915, the Allies commenced to withdraw, having suffered heavy casualties. So on 25<sup>th</sup> April in every year since, Australians have in some way commemorated the actions of those men on the Gallipoli peninsula. Many saw the ANZAC spirit as having been born with equal rights from birth and mutual support. As a result, the ANZACs united and established an unwritten law of mateship, where mates would 'lay down their lives' for one another. While still on Gallipoli, a historian, Charles Bean edited the ANZAC Book, which sold tens of thousands of copies and was reproduced with additional material in 2010.

The battle of Gallipoli was a combat between the central powers and allied powers. During this battle, Gallipoli peninsula became the centre of bloody war. In January 1915, Russia asked France and also Britain for assistance and the Gallipoli campaign was born. Russia

found itself isolated and it lacked modern weapons although had a large army. England and France wanted to supply Russia with weapons and munitions. At the end of April, the number of dead and wounded on Turkish and ANZAC sides ran into the tens of thousands. Allied troops began to depart from the peninsula and the last troop departed on January 9, 1916.

We celebrate ANZAC day by holding the dawn service and the ANZAC day march. The first commemorative event of ANZAC day is the dawn service. The dawn service is around the time men of the ANZAC approached the Gallipoli beach. Troops would also be woken so that by the first rays of dawn, they were in position and alert, in case of an enemy attack in the eerie half-light. The ANZAC day march has long been the centrepiece of ANZAC day. Marches were held during the Great War and became popular with veterans in the 1920s, to honour lost friends and publicly express comradeship. Only the person awarded or issued medals may claim those medals as his or her own wearing them on the left. Those who didn't earn the medals may honour the service of a relative by wearing the medals on the right. Rosemary is an emblem of remembrance. It is traditional on ANZAC day to wear a sprig of rosemary pinned to a coat lapel.

As shown throughout the essay, ANZAC day is one of the most important events for Australia. 25<sup>th</sup> April was the day where many Australians sacrificed their lives just to represent our country. Unfortunately, around 8,000 people didn't survive. ANZAC day is the day where we remember those who have fallen. Dawn services and the ANZAC day march are held for that day. People commonly wear poppies, medals and Rosemaries to help remember those who have fallen. Every minute and second of each day, we will remember those selfless people, doing our country a favour.

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