

ANZAC DAY

IN THE RIVERINA & CENTRAL WEST



*From the football field
to the battlefield ...*



25TH APRIL 2020

Commemorative booklet proudly presented by
Michael McCormack MP
Deputy Prime Minister of Australia
Federal Member for Riverina

*WE DID IT!
A contemporary
postcard stirring
passion and pride
in our Great War
victory.*



Australia's boys have fought –
Australia's boys have won,
Beside their British brother,
From the dawn to the set of sun.
And when the danger's past,
And our boys are home at last,
God bless them one, God bless them all –
Australia's Noble Sons!

READY! AYE READY!

COVER: There is no greater rivalry in Riverina sport than that between the two traditional football towns of Coolamon and Ganmain. Our main cover photograph, from the Fairweather collection, was taken well after World War II – the era in which our feature article in this year's commemorative booklet is set. Despite this, not much had changed from 1939–45 to the 1960s when this graphic image was captured – the famous Ganmain ground was unaltered, the respective jumper colours and unique designs were the same and the keen spirit displayed in contests between these very parochial communities was and is to this day just as fierce! The four black and white pictures are of two outstanding men, the subjects of our lead story – Mervyn Priest (the two on the left) and Norman Le Brun (the two on the right) in their local football gear and their military uniforms. Read all about these two fine Australians herein.

BACK PAGE: Attendees at last year's 75th anniversary of the Cowra Breakout mill around in the frosty early morning darkness for the re-enactment to begin at the internment camp site. See inside for coverage of this splendid event.

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ON THE MEND: World War I troops convalescing with the very best of care.

ANZAC SPIRIT NOW NEEDED

NOW, more than perhaps ever before, it is imperative that we stop and pause on ANZAC Day, reflecting on the sacrifice and service of past and present military and war-time medical personnel.

Our forebears have bequeathed us what we have – the lifestyle we generally enjoy – and we must never, ever forget how difficult it must have been for them. Remembering our Army, Air Force, Navy, doctors and nurses is especially important in 2020 – a year in which no outdoor ANZAC services will be commemorated across the Riverina and Central West.

Mass gatherings have been cancelled throughout the country due to genuine concerns about the spread of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) which has become a global pandemic, claiming thousands of lives.

Australia has not been immune to the disease and everything humanly possible is being done to avert a crisis of similar deadly proportions to the Spanish influenza of 1918 which affected ½ a billion people worldwide and killed 12,000 Australians.

No-one can accurately say how long COVID-19 will last and what toll it will take. However, Australians are being asked to do what they can to follow advice being given by the Chief Medical Officer and the Commonwealth Government to contain the spread and to save lives.

Let there be no doubt ... Australians have always been at their best when the situation confronting our nation and its people has been grim.

Every single time a crisis has taken hold – a natural disaster, 2½ times the tonnage of bombs being dropped on Darwin than on Pearl Harbor, a disease – Australians have risen to the challenge and won the day by helping each other through.

Be assured that is what is needed right now.

Reliving the ANZAC spirit ... resurrecting the ideals of Gallipoli!

Uniting as one to cope through, withstand and defeat any adversity.

Now is the moment to seize the day, invoke that war-time care and concern for each other and let's get through this together, better and stronger as a country for the experience. Lest We Forget.

Michael McCormack

THE HON.
MICHAEL McCORMACK MP
Deputy Prime Minister of Australia
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport
and Regional Development
Federal Member for Riverina



FROM THE FOOTBALL FIELD TO THE BATTLEFIELD ...

EIGHTY years ago two fine men – one a city lad and the other very much a boy from the bush – lined up against each other in a country football grand final which was one for the ages.

The clubs involved – neighbouring towns Ganmain and Coolamon – had not met in a decider for 32 years and so this contest would settle a lot of long-held scores.

Ganmain was led by Norm Le Brun who had played for more Victorian Football League clubs than any other player of his day.

Coolamon's best that afternoon would be Merv Priest who was able to hold his head high despite a crushing defeat.

As the traditional rivals competed at Ganmain,

seemingly half a world away yet in reality just on our doorstep for what would soon eventuate, a successful invasion took place which would mark another significant push in Japan's aggressive war effort – that of French Indochina.

Football foes Le Brun and Priest would soon be fighting for the same side – the Australian Army – as our fearless troops fought gallantly to turn back the Japanese advance in the Pacific.

This is their story ...

Norm Le Brun's life story belongs on the big screen.

Blockbusters have been made about less exciting people.

Le Brun's tale would need no Hollywood embellishment.

It is truly the stuff of legends.



MONUMENT: The Ganmain war memorial arch. The honour scrolls include only locals and, as such, Norm Le Brun does not feature. But suffice to say his name is still remembered and honoured in the town he once called home, albeit it for one memorable football season.



FORMIDABLE WOMEN: Maria Albrecht-Le Brun-James (right) who mourned the loss of her two sons in World War II with her mother, also Maria (centre) and sisters (from left) Rachel, Saraphina and Cecelia.

The grandson of a migrant from a group of islands off north west Africa, Le Brun carved a name for himself as one of the best footballers in Victoria followed by stints as a captain-coach in the Riverina at Griffith and Ganmain before doing his duty as a trooper in a cavalry commando squadron in World War II.

Sadly, Le Brun was taken too soon, killed in action when shot by a Japanese sniper, in 1944, in New Guinea during the fierce Aitape-Wewak campaign during the Pacific theatre of war.

Having twice been buried in foreign fields, he now lies in the Lae War Cemetery, established in the year of his death and which contains 2818 Commonwealth war graves.

Le Brun's life story is captivating ... he truly was a journeyman who made so many friends in so many places and all who knew him greatly mourned his passing.

He died for his country – a nation he loved so much and

for which he was prepared to give his life to protect.

Norman Stanley Le Brun was born at Richmond in Victoria on 22 April 1908, the second child of Francis Thomas Willemet (Frank) Le Brun and his wife Maria (née Albrecht), following the 1905 birth of his sister Rachel Frances.

Both parents would outlive the children of their marriage, as Rachel died on 20 August 1936 from valvular heart disease. A factory worker, she was just 31.

Maria was the fifth of 11 children of Antonio Albrecht who was born on Boa Vista, a desert-like island belonging to the Cape Verde Islands and his wife, also Maria (who had a Jamaican father and an Irish mother).

Frank Le Brun (born at Stawell in 1876) and Maria (Rye, 1886) separated when Norm, Rachel and a half brother, Arthur, were very young. Maria gave birth to Arthur Stanley Albrecht on 14 June 1904. She married Frank in 1905.

continued...



DIED IN CAPTIVITY: Arthur Albress who died as a PoW five days after turning 41.

Arthur also served in World War II and, like his half brother Norm, paid the supreme price, dying as a Prisoner of War in Borneo at the hands of the Japanese in 1945.

Maria remarried in 1915. Frank (who married twice more) died on 29 September 1952 at Heidelberg at the age of 76 and Maria, 66, passed away at Cheltenham the following month.

Maria's brother William (born 13 October 1897) was the first from the family to show footballing flair.

Born at Tootgarook on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula, he played eight games for Richmond in the Victorian Football League's 1917-18 seasons.

A wharf labourer for most of his life, Bill kicked two goals, both place kicks, on debut against Collingwood at Victoria Park on 21 July 1917.

Times were tough post-World War I as our heroic Diggers, many broken or wounded, were repatriated home.

Finding work was difficult. Significant in the context of the Novel Coronavirus 2019 afflicting the nation now, the Spanish influenza of 1918 took a deadly toll on Australia's health and economy, claiming 12,000 lives.

With even the most menial of jobs scarce, football ability proved a valuable asset. Norm Le Brun was playing with Richmond reserves in 1928 and supplementing meagre match payments (for wins only) with occasional brick-laying jobs when South Melbourne lured him to Lake Oval by offering senior selection.

He spent only one season with the Bloods but found it difficult to hold a regular place, making only three appearances.

Norm was not tall – 171 centimetres (5 feet 7 inches) – but was solidly built (weighing 76 kilograms or 12 stone) and renowned for his tenacity – a real goer.

He opted to try country football and played for Sandhurst in the Bendigo Football League in 1930. He had a stellar year, sharing the inaugural Michelsen Medal with four others including team-mate William Edward Cresswell "Micky" Crisp who was invited to Carlton the following season, later becoming a premiership player for the Old Dark Navy Blues and Victorian captain.

Sandhurst won the flag, its second of a record six in a row, then Le Brun returned to the VFL, lining up for Essendon where he spent two years and played 23 games – his most for any of the four Melbourne clubs he would represent in seniors.

Collingwood beckoned in 1933 and his two years with the Magpies yielded 19 games before a final VFL season with Carlton (five games) in 1935; taking his VFL tally to 50 games in which he kicked 31 goals.

Le Brun was rugged ... no question. He hit the headlines ... but not the deck as a lesser man might have ... when one of the wildest VFL games of all time was played at Victoria Park on 14 July 1934.

Le Brun kicked the opening goal after two minutes – one of his two for the game – after, according to *The Age*, "the umpire held up the game to allow the combatants to cool down". It would be that sort of match.

"The fierce clashes, venomous bumping duels and spiteful incidents which culminated in an unsavoury brawl ... electrified the air, holding the 25,000 spectators, alternately hooting and cheering, in a continual state of feverish excitement," the newspaper reported.

Police helped officials to break up the vicious third quarter brawl involving 20 players.

When the dust settled at game's end 10 players were injured, three Carlton players had been reported and, as it turned out, a goal umpire and two boundary umpires would be stood down for the remainder of the season because they, according to *The Argus*, "neglected their duty".

The suspended goal umpire, Percy Jory, had an eventful life. Jory played in St Kilda's 1913 grand final loss to Fitzroy and two years later was rubbed out for 12 games for elbowing an opponent. Whilst on active service with the Australian Imperial Force's 8 Field Artillery Brigade, Jory played in the famous war-time match in London in 1916.

The fiery 1934 Carlton-Collingwood affair, won by the Pies by five goals, even made the front page of Port Pirie's *The Recorder* in South Australia!

"Surrounded by flying fists the cooler players tried to hold their team-mates back from the fight," screamed *The Recorder*. "The umpires and police eventually quelled the unseemly brawl."

One of the players booked was Carlton's Harold Maskell, charged with striking Le Brun who had taken a chest mark.

At the tribunal hearing three days later, Maskell was suspended for six weeks for striking, despite Le Brun steadfastly adhering to the then player's "code of honour" – what happened on the field, stayed on the field.

After umpire Bob Scott gave evidence that Le Brun had been punched in the ribs with closed fists during the third quarter, Le Brun told the hearing: "We were all keen on the game, and all felt hot and bothered, but I only felt a hit on the shoulder. He was trying to knock the ball out of my hands."

Coincidentally, Maskell also served in World War II, qualifying for the elite 2/5 Commando Squadron in 1942 and fighting against the invading Japanese Army in New Guinea and the neighbouring islands.

In 1936 Le Brun headed to the New South Wales irrigation town of Griffith and led the club, its last year known as the Tigers, in the Leeton District Football Association's Kinloch Cup competition.

Griffith won five of its eight games to finish second on the ladder but despite Le Brun being the team's best player in both finals, bowed out after losing to Narandera (as it was then spelt) and then eventual premier Fivebough.

Le Brun continued his travels, captain-coaching South Warrnambool to the 1937 Hampden League finals before leading Wangaratta to the 1938 Ovens and Murray League premierships, topping the club's goalkicking with 43 along the way.

He stayed for another year before venturing to Ganmain for the 1940 South Western District Football League season.

Getting such a highly credentialled former VFL player was a big deal for Ganmain. At the halfway mark Ganmain was third and after a 15-point 7 July loss at home against Coolamon, the team strung together six consecutive wins to finish on top of the ladder.

Coolamon won the second semi-final clash with Ganmain by 10 points at Matong even though a protest was upheld because the second quarter was 10 minutes short.

The clubs would meet again in the grand final and Ganmain, playing at home, left no doubt in anyone's mind it was the best team, running away with the game to win by 68 points – 22.14 (146) to 10.18 (78).

"Norman Le Brun, coach of Ganmain, deserves credit for his team's success," reported *The Daily Advertiser*. "It could be seen that the players had received expert tuition in many departments of the game.

"The best man on the ground was Merv Priest, of Coolamon.

"Playing in the centre half-back position, he saved his side innumerable times with superb play and marked brilliantly throughout."

continued...



VFL NOMAD: Norm Le Brun in his (top to bottom) Essendon, Collingwood and Carlton colours.

GANMAIN FOOTBALL CLUB, PREMIERS S.W.D.F.L. 1940
PLAYERS AND COMMITTEE



*BACK ROW—O. WRIGHT, R. SIMS, R. PYNE, H. HETHERINGTON, J. CLARKE, W. SMITH, F. SMITH, W. WARRAN, E. MURPHY.
 2nd ROW—R. McLEAN, J. McPHERSON, S. HUBBARD, W. McPHERSON, J. MURPHY, F. CARROLL, F. CROZIER, W. H. LOGAN, H. McDONALD.
 FRONT ROW—C. HEATH, J. BUCHANAN, D. ALLAMBY, ERIC McLEAN (Manager), N. LeBRUN (Coach), G. LOGAN, B. McPHERSON.
 FOREGROUND—A. CROZIER, J. CROZIER.*

Mervyn Leonard Priest was born at Temora on 5 September 1918, the second of six children (five boys and a girl) of Norman and Hannah (née Allport).

Raised on the Rannock family farm, Merv grew into a strapping youngster and played football for that district's side which played in an association based around Aria Park and Temora from 1934-38 before joining Coolamon for the 1939-40 seasons.

In 1941 Merv tried his luck at Footscray but, unlike son Doug who would play 26 games for South Melbourne in 1966-69, missed senior selection.

Merv married Betty Holden at Coolamon on New Year's Eve 1941 and went into the Army (Citizen Military Forces) on 27 February 1942, transferring to the Australian Imperial Force on 7 December that year at Windsor, Victoria.

The first of their three children, Fay arrived before Merv was deployed. Their other children Marlene and Doug, were born after the war.

A sergeant in the 29th Infantry Battalion, Merv served on Bougainville and the Solomon Islands.

One of the fortunate ones to make it home, Merv settled back into life in the Riverina, resuming his football career with Ganmain as the South West competition resumed after its five-year war recess.

He was Ganmain's best in the emphatic 71-point 1946 grand final win against Narandera at Matong.

Merv then spent six years with the reformed Wagga club, the first two as captain-coach. In '47 players wore blue



ACTION MAN: Merv Priest ready to play for Coolamon.

and white jumpers on loan from the Royal Australian Air Force which had commenced operations at Forest Hill on 29 July 1940.

Two interesting anecdotes arose from the '47 and '48 seasons.

Priest's Wagga team was bundled out of the '47 competition in the preliminary final, beaten by Junece by 14 points at Bolton Park. The first quarter of the final lasted 43 minutes (instead of the usual 25) and, according to *The Daily Advertiser*, "the hot sun took much of the energy out of both sides for the rest of the match ... someone had removed the time bell, thus contributing to the general confusion."

In '48 the grand final ended in semi-darkness after the start was delayed until after 4pm because six Ganmain players were amongst 100 passengers who had to scramble to safety after the special grand final train went in flames near Rockview, a few miles from Marrar.

A big game performer, Merv was amongst Wagga's best that day when it went down to undefeated Ganmain in the grand final of the Wagga and District League at the Wagga Showground.

Jumpers were then acquired by Wagga from Richmond in 1950 and henceforth the club became known as Wagga Tigers.

Merv led Collingullie to the 1953 Central Riverina League grand final only to go down to Boree Creek by 32 points in the grand final at Milbrulong.

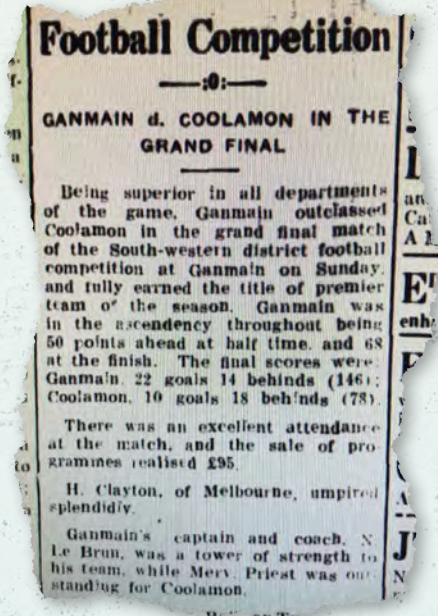
He returned to Wagga but a broken ankle ended his football career in 1954.

Merv lived to the age of 88, passing away on 18 April 2007.

Two of Merv's brothers, the eldest Robert as well as Lionel, also went to war with both enlisting at Rannock.

Both served with distinction and then lived full lives, Robert passing away in 2006 aged 90 and Lionel in 2008 in his 84th year.

The three Priest boys gave their all to protect their country in its darkest days and, like all who went before them and followed after, should be remembered for their service each and every ANZAC Day. *continued...*



BIG NEWS: The Narandera Argus of 24 September 1940.

*THEY SERVED: Rannock's Priest
brothers (from left) Lionel, Mervyn
and Robert who did the region proud
in World War II.*



The Priests survived the war but many of their mates did not.

Close-knit country centres were never the same after the Axis powers had tried to wrest control of the world.

The Allies won, but the human cost was enormous.

When someone as popular and as widely known as Norm Le Brun lost his life, the loss was especially felt.

Norm touched so many lives through his football and even though he did not spend much time in any one town, he was admired and liked long after he left.

At Ganmain, only the best are ever asked to coach the club – an institution in the district.

Originally called Boggy Creek, then Ganmain from 1894, this community 57 kilometres north-west of Wagga Wagga prides itself on its Australian Rules success.

That epic 1940 South West grand final was Norm's final game of club football.

He enlisted at Caulfield on 26 February 1942 – a week after the bombing of Darwin – and served as a trooper in the crack 2/10 Cavalry Commando Squadron.

To keep fit in far northern Australia, Norm played in the services alongside former Collingwood team-mate, the great Albert Collier.

“In this part of the world, where climate varies only from wet to dry, all forms of sport flourish and die together,” wrote an *Argus* reporter in April 1943, mentioning Le Brun and Collier.

Norm soon sailed from Townsville on HMAS *Katoomba* to New Guinea. He would never see his homeland again.

Katoomba began a period of escort duty to New Guinea on 28 June 1942, shepherding convoys between Townsville and Port Moresby, Milne Bay and Oro Bay. For the following two years the ship was in almost constant service, departing Queensland ports for the forward areas on 31 occasions, interspersed with anti-submarine patrols in New Guinea waters.

Merv Priest was also transported on the *Katoomba*, to Bougainville. Reminiscing many years later, he told daughter Marlene that they were one day out to sea when they were forced to turn around and hurriedly zigzag back to port because they were being followed by a Japanese submarine.

Norm, 36, was the first soldier from his unit to be killed in action. His patrol was unable to bring his body back, so he was buried in a makeshift grave and later reinterred at Aitape.

After the war his remains were moved again, this time to their final resting place in the Lae War Cemetery.

Norm's demise in late 1944 is eloquently yet sadly documented in Shawn O'Leary's 1975 book *To The Green Fields Beyond*...

On 15 November the squadron suffered 6th Division's first battle fatality in New Guinea. A patrol led by Short reached

Luain at first light, crossed the Danimul and explored Ikam Creek which flows into the Danmap.

It then pushed along the Danmap in an attempt to reach Balup some distance upstream where it was suspected there was a concentration of enemy. The going was heavy, the maps inadequate, and there was an absence of tracks, so that the patrol was constantly bashing its way through bush. It failed to reach Balup.

At 1pm it sighted four Japanese across the river and killed one of them. At 2.30pm it wounded another who succeeded in escaping. At 4pm a party of Japanese was seen near native huts, all of them carrying carbines. This force was engaged in a fire fight, which lasted three-quarters of an hour, in the course of which Trooper N. S. Le Brun was killed by a rifleman concealed among the roots of a large tree. Sergeant A. K. Kennedy fired and killed the Japanese a fraction of a second too late to save Le Brun. Lieutenant R. B. Cater at the same instant killed another who was aiming at Kennedy. Six of the enemy were killed, including the one who had been wounded early in the afternoon, before the Japanese withdrew to the east bank of the river from where they continued to fire on the patrol for another five minutes. Trooper N. J. Odlum, an artillery veteran of Libya, Greece and Crete, who had relinquished sergeant instructor's stripes at Camungra to join the squadron, a man who seemed at home in the jungle, led the patrol back to Suain by devious tracks.

Although the Japanese had suffered more than they had inflicted they had handled this action cleverly. They had placed two snipers behind the buttress roots of trees facing inward and a third in the top of a tree. These had opened fire from the rear as the Australians moved towards the huts. The country was too steep and the jungle too thick for the patrol to bring Le Brun's body back. He was carried a couple of hundred yards and buried in a small re-entrant. A large tree was blazed with his name and the date of his death. continued...



COMMANDO:
Norm Le Brun.



AT REST: Norm Le Brun's place of burial in the Lae War Cemetery in New Guinea. Norm's Army papers lists his birthdate as 24 April 1910, however, he was actually born on 22 April 1908 and therefore 36 when he died, not 34 as indicated on his plaque.

REGAN
KRUCK C.S.E.
LABATT C.
LAWRY A.G.E.
LEBRUN G.
LEITH J. N.S.
LEYSHON A.J.
LILES N.J.
LINKLATER A.F.
LINTON R.C.H.



In the Aitape sector is the Le Brun feature, a steep hill on the Danmap River and simply called Le Brun, named after our little hero.

Of Norm's comrades referred to in O'Leary's excellent account, only Lt Rex Bowring Cater, from Wellington in NSW, failed to make it home.

Like Norm Le Brun, he fell victim to a tree sniper during an attack on the heavily defended Kualigem in the Torricelli Mountains, New Guinea, on 2 February 1945. He was just 28.

Sgt Alan Kelvin Kennedy, from Elizabeth Bay in NSW and South Australians, Captain Leslie Thomas Short and Tpr Norman James Odlum, returned to Australia and were all discharged in 1945.

Norm Odlum, one of Le Brun's closest friends, paid a glowing tribute to his long gone but never forgotten mate the year before his own death, in 2003, at the age of 86.

Quoted in Jim Main and David Allen's 2002 book *Fallen. The Ultimate Heroes. Footballers Who Never Returned From War*, Norm Odlum said: "Everyone had the greatest respect for him and although he was older than most of us, he mixed in well, and I never heard anyone say a word against him."

When World War II finally ended people tried as best they could to get on with their lives.

Young men became veterans upon discharge. They coped as best they could.

The dead were honoured. They paid tribute to them then as they do to this day, especially on the commemorative days marking the Fall of Singapore (15 February), ANZAC Day (25 April), Victory in the Pacific Day (or Victory over Japan Day – 15 August), Remembrance Day (11 November) and others.

Norm Le Brun's name was added to the Roll of Honour in the Australian War Memorial alongside the 39,654 other Australians who gave their lives in World War II so others might live.

It's also painted on the honour board in the dressing room at the Ganmain ground – hallowed turf according to locals – where Norm's leadership, courage and determination were on display on that memorable afternoon in 1940.

Club stalwarts such as Barrie Logan and Jason Hamblin are all too aware of the magnitude of the history on that board ... of what it means to club and community.

"It is where we have been and what we are," says Logan.

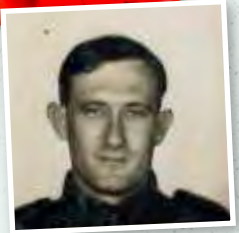
"We are proud of that we have achieved and the people who have made that possible," adds Hamblin.

Indeed.

Norm Le Brun was all that footballers at Ganmain are and what they aspire to be.

Gutsy ... inspiring ... selfless.

We owe him, Merv Priest and all who kept and keep our country safe a debt of enduring gratitude.



COMRADES: (Top left) Trooper Eric Charles Absalom has his gear checked by Captain Leslie Short before leaving on patrol at Babiang, New Guinea, in 1944. Capt. Short was with Norm Le Brun when the former Riverina footballer-turned Commando was killed in action. (Left) Trooper Norm Odlum. (Above left) Lieutenant Rex Cater KLA. (Above right) Sergeant Alan Kennedy.

BRONZED WARRIOR: Norm Le Brun's name with other fallen heroes on one of the many Roll of Honour panels at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

OdeG

TELEPHONE:
CENTRAL 3606.

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCE.

BASE RECORDS OFFICE,
VICTORIA BARRACKS.

In all communications registeral number,
full name, and unit of Soldier referred
to be stated.

Melbourne,

27th June, 1919.

Dear Madam,

I have much pleasure in forwarding hereunder copy of extract from Sixth Supplement, No. 31142, to the "London Gazette," dated 21st January, 1919, relating to the conspicuous services rendered by the undermentioned member of the Australian Imperial Force.

AWARDED THE MILITARY MEDAL.

"HIS MAJESTY THE KING has been graciously pleased to approve of the award of the Military Medal for bravery in the field to the undermentioned:—

No. 3015 Private (Lance-Corporal) S. McCLINTOCK.

The above has been promulgated in "Commonwealth of Australia Gazette," No. 61, dated 23rd May, 1919.

Mrs. J. McClintock,
West Wyalong,

Yours faithfully,

NEW SOUTH WALES

Major,
Officer i/c Base Records.

C.8221.

HERO (far right): Lance Corporal Samuel McClintock was awarded the Military Medal and a Bar to the Military Medal for his brave actions in France.

OFFICIAL (above): An official notice to Lance Corporal McClintock's mother regarding his Military Medal.

STATEMENT (left): A 1963 copy of Lance Corporal McClintock's WWI Statement of Service.

CONSPICUOUS SERVICES (below): A message to Mrs McClintock advising her of recognition of her son's conspicuous services.

21 - 8 NOV 1963

STATEMENT OF SERVICE
3015 LANCE CORPORAL SAMUEL McCLINTOCK MM and BAR

ENLISTED	AIF	12 September 1916
REMOVED	"APPLIED"	3 November 1916
DISMISSED	FRANCE	9 January 1917
TRANSFERRED	To 15 Training Battalion (FRANCE)	21 March 1917
TRANSFERRED	To 60 Battalion (FRANCE)	24 March 1917
APPOINTED	Lance Corporal.	4 October 1917

Mentioned in Corps Commander's
1 Amas Corps Routine Order 88 for gallant service 31 October 1917

*Congratulated for his marked ability
and good qualities of leadership during the attack*
1st Amas Corps R. Routine Order 25. 18 May 1918

AWARDED	Military Medal	11 September 1918
TRANSFERRED	To 59 Battalion	25 September 1918
AWARDED	BAR To Military Medal	2 November 1918
TRANSFERRED	To Aust Base Depot 2 (ENGLAND)	31 May 1919
DISMISSED	"RELEASE"	21 July 1919
DISMISSED	DISMISSED	30 September 1919
DISMISSED	From AIF	15 November 1919

NOTES
British War Medal
Victory Medal

Colonel
GEO Central Army Records Office

P.A/P.D. 1-8 NOV 1963

Dear Madam,

I have much pleasure in forwarding hereunder copy of extract from Routine Orders issued by Lieutenant-General Sir W.B. Birdwood, K.C.B., K.C.S.I., K.C.M.G., C.I.M., D.S.O., Commanding 1st Amas Corps, relating to the conspicuous services rendered by your son, No. 3015 Private S. McClintock, 6th Battalion.

X X X X
----- COMPENSATORY -----

*The Army Corps Commander wishes to express his appreciation of the gallant services rendered by the undermentioned soldier during the recent operations :-

No. 3015 Private S. McCLINTOCK.*

Digger's Mum 'SHELVED' DREADED TELEGRAM

THE delivery of a telegram to the family of an Australian soldier during World War I was always met with dread as it invariably contained tragic news that a Digger — a beloved son, father or brother — had been killed at the front.

It was never more so than in July 1916 following the Battle of Fromelles or in 1917 after the Battles of Bullecourt.

Combined, these 1916-17 bloody battles took the lives of about 5,000 of our Diggers.

So when a telegram arrived at the West Wyalong farmhouse home of Lance Corporal Samuel McClintock during the war his mother, Agnes, fearing it contained bad news couldn't bear to open it and put it on the mantelpiece.

Days later, one of her other boys found the telegram, opened it and was delighted to read the good news that Samuel had been awarded the Military Medal (MM) for bravery.

A relieved Mrs McClintock exclaimed: "Oh, is that all".

Sam McClintock was a 34-year-old farmer when he enlisted on 12 September 1916.

He arrived in France in March 1917 and was promoted to Lance Corporal six months after transferring to 60 Battalion from 15 Training Battalion.

Brave Sam McClintock was first mentioned in routine orders on 31 October 1917 for gallant services rendered. He was mentioned again on 30 April 1918 for showing marked ability in the organisation of the front line and exhibited good qualities of leadership at Villers-Bretonneux on the night of 26-27 April.

"His cool and fearless conduct impressed all men under his command," the citation said.

Sam's courage under fire only seemed to grow as the war went on.

His actions on 8/9 August earned him the Military Medal, awarded on 14 September.

The citation read: "*During operations this NCO commanded his section, then his platoon, displaying great courage and ability at critical moments. On the 9th, south east of Harbonnières, when the advance was held up by*

enemy machine gun fire, he took charge of the platoon after his platoon commander and senior NCOs were casualties, and led them forward, co-operating with forward flanking Lewis gun fire thus forcing the enemy to surrender and killing many. Through his quick action, bravery and initiative on the spot an awkward situation was disposed of and the advance successfully continued".

Sam's heroics did not end there.

Two weeks after being awarded the MM and five days after joining 59 Battalion, he was again in the thick of the action at Bullecourt, resulting in him being awarded a Bar to the Military Medal.

The citation for his bravery read: "*For conspicuous Gallantry, leadership and Devotion to duty. On 29th September near Bullecourt, when the enemy were bombing in on our left, this NCO led a party against them and showed the greatest bravery and coolness in directing the attack. When a tank came up he quickly took advantage of this support and made a good length of trenches and line. Throughout the day he continued to harass the enemy. His boldness, personal bravery and initiative were a splendid example of capable leadership".*

The danger in which Sam McClintock placed himself in the service of his country and his mates at the front might under different circumstances have resulted in his mother receiving one of those terrible telegrams, but he survived the war and returned to Australia on HMAT 41 *Bakara* on 15 November 1919.



JUGIONG ANZAC DAY 2019 IN PICTURES



PASSION: Brian Allen gives a passionate rendition of Eric Bogle's And The Band Played Waltzing Matilda during the commemorative service.



PROUD: Wes Leseberg, Kerrie Stewart and Joseph Roberts of the 7th Lighthouse – Gundagai Troop.



WINNING WRITER (left): St Patrick's Gundagai Primary School student Lillian McDonnell, then 11, read out her story at the Jugiong service which won a highly commended book prize in the 2019 ANZAC writing competition.



IN UNIFORM (right): Katelyn Leseberg is dressed for the occasion as (back, from left) Lucy Coggan, Amelia John and Samuel Elphick watch on.



REMEMBER: Wendy Ross marches proudly along Jugiong's Riverside Drive.



SOLEMN: Bugler Hayden Dalton sounds the Last Post.



SCHOOL PRIDE: (from left) Jugiong Principal Deb Main, Lucy Coggan, Katelyn Leseberg, John Elphick, Samuel Elphick (face partially obscured), Amy Manwaring, Alec Magnone, Gracie Elphick, NSW Police officer Steve Magnone and Olivia Leseberg.

COWRA'S INNOCENCE LOST

IT WAS in the heart of winter early on a Saturday morning when an event occurred of which Australia had never experienced and hopefully will never see again.

Cowra lost its innocence on 5 August 1944 and was thrust into a war zone which, until this moment, was confined to anywhere but here.

The Prisoner of War camp custodians – members of the Australian Militia's 22nd Garrison Battalion – were mostly older veterans and men who were deemed unfit for the frontline but here they were facing a dire situation.

More than 1,100 Japanese POWs in three groups stormed the boundaries of their confines with whatever weapons they could muster – knives, baseball bats, wire stiletos – each group attacking the wire fences on the northern, western and southern perimeters of the compound.

The breakout and the ensuing calamity claimed 231 Japanese soldiers and four Australian soldiers. It was a significant day in Australia's military history – the largest prison escape of World War II.

But it is the respect and honour to the fallen Japanese which the Cowra people have shown over the succeeding years which has developed an enduring friendship.

The Japanese War Cemetery is the only one of its kind outside Japan and the Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre is a beautiful testament to a relationship born from such a terrible wartime incident.

On 27 November 2019, the House recorded its remembrance of the 75th anniversary of the Cowra Breakout.



REMEMBRANCE: *The only known living survivor of the Cowra Breakout, Teruo Murakami, attends the 75th anniversary of the Cowra Breakout on 5 August 2019.*

My speech in the Federation Chamber commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Cowra Breakout.

Can anyone think of any wartime incident, any military event at all, occurring in regional Australia that, 75 years on, is still having such a profound impact internationally as the Cowra breakout?

Ordinary men, on both sides, did extraordinary things that fateful day of 5 August 1944.

War does that—digging deep into the very essence of a society, the core and conscience of humanity, and asking questions that demand answers, then and even now, many years later.

Rather than merely allowing what happened on that winter Saturday morning in the Central West of New South Wales to fade into the obscurity of history, it has been embraced to promote peace and understanding.

As a result, an indelible link has been forged between Australia and Japan, one which will never be broken.

Bonds of friendship have been established and families of those more than 200 Japanese men who lost their lives that day can be comforted, knowing their loved ones may be buried many thousands of kilometres away but are very much at home and very much at peace.

Residents of Cowra are proud of the goodwill that has developed, and the Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre is splendid testimony to that.

Even though our nations were bitter enemies during World War II, the fact that hatred and violence have now been replaced with cherry blossoms and harmony says a lot about the beauty and inner strength of the people of Cowra.

A triumph of the human spirit, for certain.

Knowing the full horror and atrocities in the Pacific theatre of war did not deter the good folk of Cowra from appropriately and respectfully honouring all of the breakout dead.

Over the decades that commitment has endured and led to something quite special.

United, Cowra stands to forever remember those who fell, on both sides, and to always promote the fact that the things which do unite the two countries are far greater than those which divide us.

To quote a well-known Japanese saying: *“Aame futte ji katamaru.”* It means, literally, “After the rain earth hardens,” or “Adversity builds character.” After a storm, things will stand on more solid ground than they did before.

JAPANESE WAR CEMETERY

Cowra led the way to friendship

ON 4 and 5 August 2019, Cowra commemorated the 75th anniversary of the breakout of more than 1,100 Japanese Prisoners of War from the camp which housed them just outside the Central West town.

Some 231 Japanese PoWs and four Australian soldiers died as a result of the escape attempt in 1944.

The then Director of the Australian War Memorial, The Hon. Brendan Nelson AO, delivered the keynote address at the 75th anniversary dinner, speaking of how Cowra has become a beacon of reconciliation between Australia and Japan after the war.

Here is an abridged version of his speech.

It is to the young whom I speak.

I'm 60 years of age now and I've come to learn that you don't realise what you're learning when you're learning it.

And the most significant ideas, concepts, and events that most shape and transform ... and challenge your thinking and attitude ... often come in random moments of quiet revelation when you really don't expect you're going to learn a great deal at all.

And the power is in the story.

*Thousands of years of happy reign be thine;
Rule on, my Lord,
till what are pebbles now
by age into mighty rocks will grow
whose venerable sides the moss doth line*

Kimigayo – the ancient poem which is the foundation of the Japanese National Anthem.

Australians all let us rejoice for we are young and free.

The first line of the Australian National Anthem.



INSPIRING (above): The Hon Dr Brendan Nelson AO delivers his speech for the 75th anniversary of the Cowra Breakout.

RESPECT (top): The Japanese War Cemetery at Cowra contains the remains of all Japanese Prisoners of War who died in Australia as well as other internees and those involved in the Battle of Darwin.

Those two anthems reflect a deep difference in culture, in history, in meaning to our two peoples.

The great paradox of life itself is that it's often those things that are most important to us in our lives, human beings that we are, we have a tendency to take things for granted

... the magic ... the vitality of youth ... you don't really appreciate it until it's gone ... forever.

Families who love us give meaning, support and context to our lives.

The transformative power of even a small amount of education.

To live as we do today, modern Australians and Japanese, in countries that give us political, economic and religious freedoms.

We live in societies where faith co-exists with reason; free academic inquiry, an independent judiciary and a free press.

We don't think about it much but what makes us Australians – what makes us Japanese – is not our constitution or our democracy, in our case given to us by the British, as important as they clearly are ...

It is our values, our beliefs, the way we relate to one another and see our place in the world.

We are shaped most by our triumphs, our failures, our heroes - those who we choose to honour, our villains ... the ways we as a people have been shaped, transformed and changed by adversity.

... And how we will endure the inevitable adversities that are coming, and respond to emerging, unseen and threatening horizons.

The events that bring us here this weekend, and this evening, changed us. They shaped and changed Australia and Japan.

They played a significant role in making us the people that we now are. And the nations that we have become.

The most devastating, damaging conflict and cataclysm that human-kind has ever known is the Second World War.

Sixty million lives lost. Including six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust. A life was extinguished every three seconds.

And yet for Australia, for Japan, for every country that was involved ... the world had changed. It would never be the same again. Human-kind had moved to a new age.

It is tempting, human beings that we are, to settle for headlines, broad-brushstrokes, popular imagery and mythology of our history.

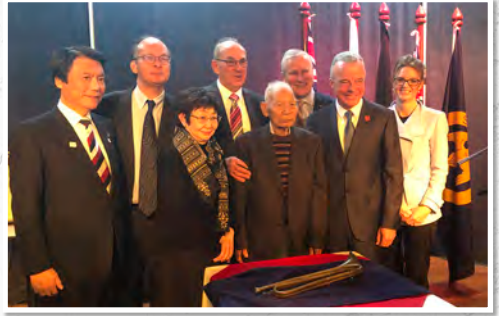
Our comfortable lives that we now live breed easy indifference to individual sacrifices made in our name, devotion to duty and to our respective countries.

When Mr Hagime sounded that bugle on 1.50am on 5 August, he would unleash not only a series of tragic events ... but a chain of events that which in the longer term would see Australia and Japan reveal our respective character.

One-thousand-one hundred-and-four Japanese Prisoners of War, here in Cowra, broke out. One-hundred-and-thirty-eight stayed in their huts. Huts were burned and they ran head long into machine-gun and rifle fire.

They threw coats and mattresses onto the barbed wire ... and many died on the wire. Some took their own lives and others asked their own Japanese, fellow Prisoners of War, to take their lives for them.

We know that four Australians were killed. Ben Hardy and Ralph Jones firing those two Vickers machine-guns ... realising that they were going to be overrun ... with great courage ... disarmed those machine-guns knowing they would be killed. In doing so, they knew that machine-



PEACE (left): With the bugle which sounded the call for the Cowra Breakout are, from left: Hiroshi Ogawa (Governor of Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan), Mr Reičiro Takahashi (Japanese Ambassador to Australia), Mrs Masako Takahashi, Councillor Bill West (Mayor of Cowra), Mr Teruo Murakami (former Cowra prisoner of war), Michael McCormack, Dr Brendan Nelson and Ms Stephanie Cooke MP (Member for Cootamundra).

guns would not be subsequently turned on the Australian soldiers. Both were posthumously awarded the George Cross.

And as we're also reminded, the Japanese soldiers were adamant that no Australian civilians would be injured. And we understand that this was most certainly the case.

And the power is in the story.

Mr Murakami was here in 2013 and he said this:

I never imagined I would ever see Japan again. When I finally got home my family said a ghost had returned from the war.

When he was asked why, despite the relative good treatment that was given to the prisoners, they would wish to escape. He said:

The prisoners didn't know how the war was actually going. But we had no doubt about the rule that Imperial Japanese troops must not allow themselves to be prisoners of the enemy. There was no alternative for us except to die. And we agreed to finish our lives that way. Yet because of a basic human instinct many of the men, including me, didn't want to die.

Australian soldiers captured Mr Murakami ... took him back to his fire damaged hut where he fully expected to be executed for trying to escape. To his astonishment, he was sent to work cleaning up the mess.

Masayoshi Yamada, in a 2004 oral history interview to the Australian War Memorial, said this:

I didn't expect to be alive after I had climbed over the fence. I thought I would be shot.

I feel personally that the way Australia treated the dead soldiers, and also the spirit of the dead soldiers, was very thorough and warm. I feel that their spirits are at rest.

I visited Cowra for the 40th anniversary ... the primary school band played the Japanese National Anthem. That really moved me. It was the first time I had heard the Japanese anthem played by Australian children. That was a very emotional moment for me.

continued...

For us, 75 years on, Australians and Japanese, our responsibility and our challenge is to imbue in young people the imaginative capacity to see the world through the eyes of others.

Almost all of life's pain, misery, and suffering come from people and nations making themselves the centre of their own lives or their own world.

To young Australians, to young Japanese, who risk surrendering your idealism to the belief that you can't make a difference to your community, to your country and to your world, look no further than Cowra.

From May Weir's extraordinary beneficence to those three Japanese escapees ... desperately looking for food, giving them tea and scones ...

Through generations of people here in Cowra, whether it's early World War II veterans, in an age where Australians were unforgiving to Japan of how many Australians had suffered during the Second World War, at the hands of Japanese soldiers when they were prisoners.

Here in Cowra, World War II veterans were tending lovingly and diligently to Japanese war graves.

The Cowra Breakout Association, Ken Nakajima's magnificent peace garden, the World Peace Bell, the hologram, through to Wayne Miles' sculpture, and almost 50 years of youth exchanges...

What you have taught us, you people of Cowra working with Japanese people, is the importance of us shedding the prejudices of our generation and of our country.

It happened in Cowra. And then it happened in Australia. And I will tell you one little story as I finish.

In 1998 I was the member for Bradfield in Sydney's North Shore. Three men of advanced years came to see me. They introduced themselves as members of the 2/30 Battalion Association. I am ashamed now to say I didn't know what that meant other than that they were World War II veterans. They said:

We've been through a lot in our lives. We were prisoners-of-war at Changi. Two of us were on the Burma-Thai railway. We're worried about young people and we want to pass on what we've learned to young people. And we also want to emphasise the importance of reconciliation.

They've done it in Cowra.

They asked if I could help them get an \$8000 grant from the Department of Veterans' Affairs. I said: "Guys, I love ya, but it would be easier to fight in a war again!" But we got the money.

About six months later a book arrived in my office, reflections of the 2/30 Battalion Association, called *Getting On With it*. It was in my briefcase for about a month before I had time to read it on a long flight.

There are two things these Australians said that stood out.

One said, "I suppose compassion means being prepared to listen to other people's point of view and respecting those."

Another said, "You might want to hate the Japanese for what they did, you might not ever be able to forget. But I can't hate another human being. I can't. I need to forgive. And it's the hardest test of all, but it's worth it, because I believe in myself and I value others."

That was motivated by what you did here.

You have led our country, and as I said, you led us in shedding prejudices long before others did in other parts of the nation.



WAR CAMP: The Cowra prisoner of war camp.

TAGS COME HOME TO FAMILY

MORE than 75 years after his death, the identity tags of Forbes World War II pilot, Flight Lieutenant Alwyn Kevin Fell (known as Kevin Fell), were reunited with his family.

At a ceremony at the Australian War Memorial on 3 February, the tags were presented to Flt-Lt Fell's half-sister, Gai Winter, and his half-brother and nephew, both also named Kevin Fell.

Born on December 13 1912 and raised in Forbes, Flt-Lt Fell's Halifax bomber was shot down in eastern France on 15 March 1944 after taking part in a massive raid on Stuttgart, an important German industrial city.

Gendarmes in the town of Hericourt, near the Swiss border, salvaged objects from the crashed plane, including identity tags, while Flt-Lt Fell's remains and those of his six Royal Air Force crew were buried.

Described as a brilliant pilot and a "smart, energetic young man who laughed a lot", Flt-Lt Fell was mourned by his grief-stricken family, including his young widow Elsie, while the whereabouts of his identity tags remained a mystery until 2019 when a house in France

which had served as a local headquarters for the Red Cross was sold and the tags carrying his service number 413112 were discovered inside.

Last July, the French Remembrance Committee in Hericourt contacted the Sir John Monash Centre at Villers-Brettonneux with the aim of finding Flt-Lt Fell's descendants and reuniting them with the artefacts.

In August last year the Office of Australian War Graves, through the Department of Veterans Affairs, found Flt-Lt Fell's descendants and they were invited to the ceremony to receive the tags from the Minister for Veterans' Affairs Minister for Defence Personnel, The Hon. Darren Chester MP.

Having been told initially his son was missing, the proprietor of the *Forbes Advocate* newspaper, Jim Fell, wrote to the Secretary of the Department of Air on 31 March 1944 asking for an address to which letters to his son might be sent should he still be alive.

"In any event, I would like to give the writing of such a letter or letters a go trusting for its earlier receipt by my boy if the worst has not happened," Mr Fell wrote.

Sadly, Flt-Lt Fell was never to receive the letters.



FAMILY TREASURES: Kevin Fell holds a photo of his half-brother and the identity tags.

CORPORAL POWDERLY

HIS likeness, cast in bronze looks over the tree-lined streetscape of Boorowa Street in Young as a lasting beacon of the town's important role in past conflicts.

While the businesses and the cars using the thoroughfare have changed significantly throughout the years, the sculpture of Corporal Everard Christopher Powderly – known to those close to him as Eb – has stood tall as a reminder to residents, past and present, of the sacrifices made by those in the region.

Since the war memorial clock tower atop the Young Town Hall, which was unveiled to the public on 31 May 1924, the building's façade has remained the same except for a fresh lick of paint.

Corporal Powderly was born in Young in 1889 and worked on the family farm in the region until he was enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in November 1915 – a month shy of his 26th birthday. He embarked for overseas duty in May the following year and served in the 107th Australian (Howitzer) Battery as part of the 7th Australian Field Artillery Brigade.

Cpl Powderly was recommended for a Distinguished Conduct Medal on 1 May 1918. The following was printed on the recommendation:

“This N.C.O. (Non-Commissioned Officer) was in charge of ammunition wagons coming to the Battery position near Méricourt-l'Abbé during the heavy bombardment on the morning of 24-4-1918. His coolness and initiative was responsible for saving many casualties amongst men and horses. He placed wagons in sheltered places, and brought

them along one at a time by various routes, selecting the routes across country where the shelling was lightest. During this operation Cpl. Powderly was continually under heavy shell fire, but by his wonderful coolness, determination and ability, he succeeded in successfully reaching the guns with ammunition.

“He set a fine example of courage and initiative to the men under his command as well as to those at the Battery.”

Cpl Powderly was awarded a Military Medal on 10 May 1918.

Cpl Powderly's military life came to an end after being admitted to Weymouth military hospital in France with trench fever in June 1918. He made his way back to Australia in July 1919.

Mr Powderly settled into civilian life where he married Annie May Powderly (nee Smyth) in 1926. They had three sons. Everard lived to the age of 91 and died in 1981.

The Powderlys are not strangers to extraordinary circumstances.

Everard's grandfather William was a proprietor of a hotel in Young when Everard's father was born.

According to an article published in *The Albury Banner* and *Wodonga Express* which reported on the death of Everard's father, Christopher, bushrangers visited the hotel on the night Christopher was born.

One of the outlaws was looking down the barrel of his gun when the weapon exploded unexpectedly, “blowing off the man's head”.

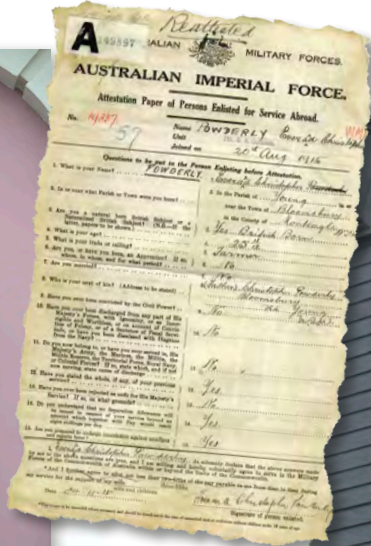


AT WAR: A group portrait of the 107th Howitzer Battery of Australian Field Artillery at Baillieu. Cpl Everard Powderly is in the second row, fourth from the left.

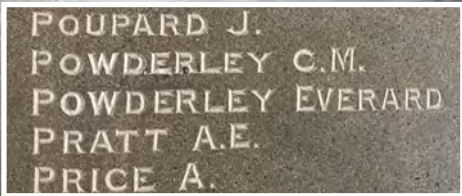
STANDS TALL IN YOUNG

The sculpture of Cpl Powderly was commissioned and paid for by the Steel Caldwell family of Eurabba to commemorate all locals who served in the war, including their youngest son, Anthony Caldwell, who was killed in an accident in England during training in the British Flying Corps in May 1917 at the age of 26.

Around 700 men and women in the region volunteered for service during World War I, with 64 making the ultimate sacrifice.



TOP HONOUR (main): The soldiers memorial tower in Young.
BRONZED (above left): The sculpture of Cpl Everard Powderly.
SIGNED UP (above right): Cpl Everard Powderly's enlistment papers.
ETCHED (below): Cpl Powderly's name on the roll of honour in the Young Town Hall foyer. Cpl Powderly's name is spelt Powderley on the roll of honour.



ONLY DEATH SEPARATED JUNEE MATES

THEY grew up playing cricket and footy together in Junee backyards and playing fields and in the end only death on the battlefield could separate them.

Privates Reginald Angus Humphrys, Matthew Mark (Joe) Charlton and Stephen Frederick Paul White (who went by the name of Paul) signed up early and young – all were 19 – to serve their King and Country in World War I.

The trio enlisted in August 1914 soon after the outbreak of war and were assigned to A Company in the fledgling Australian Imperial Force's 3rd Infantry Battalion.

So close were the mates they even asked to be billeted in the same tent – a request which was granted.

“For several weary months they worked together until fit at last they, in grim determination, set about a sterner battle, the rudiments of which were learnt on the school ground,” said an article in *The Daily Advertiser* on 9 October 1915, perhaps referring to the local cadets in which at least Reg was involved for five years.

Many young men went off to war thinking it would be a great adventure.

We don't know if Reg, Joe and Paul felt this way, but the realities of war were soon driven home after they landed at Gallipoli in 1915.

“Through close on a dozen engagements they fought shoulder to shoulder and then each wrote home telling of the other's bravery, but modest in regards as their own valour,” the article said.



MEMORIAL: *The Junee War Memorial containing the names of Joe Charlton and Reg Humphrys.*

August of 1915 was a deadly month for the Australians on Gallipoli and the Battle of Lone Pine brought a tragic end to this special Junee mateship.

“They were again to do or die, but never faltered,” the *Advertiser* reported of the trio's involvement in the famous ANZAC battle.

“They charged together, and Reg Humphrys falls with a bullet in his brain.



LEST WE FORGET: *The sacrifices of 77 Junee lads, including Reg Humphrys and Joe Charlton are forever remembered in their home town.*

“Two comrades are at his side in an instant and a few minutes away later a brave soldier's spirit passes away.

“Only a few short hours later and a bullet finds a billet in the shoulder of Comrade Joe Charlton.

“The sole survivor of the trinity of friends is there and he carries his mate to the hospital ship.

“A burial at sea is the closing scene in the career of the second of the life-long comrades.

“Private Paul White in a letter this week to the relatives of the two dead soldiers in Junee relates a story of simple heroism in the lives of the fallen – but never a word of himself beyond a wish that he too 'might have gone with them'.”

Joe had been promoted to Lance Corporal on 14 August, three days before his death, and actually suffered a fatal gunshot wound to his neck, not his shoulder. He was buried at sea from *SS Rewa* on 17 August.

Sadly, Reg Humphry's body was never officially identified. A permanent headstone was erected in the Lone Pine Cemetery with the inscription “believed to be buried in this Cemetery”.

Pte White wrote home that only he and one other soldier remained of the 120 men in A Company after Lone Pine.

Paul White went on to have distinguished service on the Western Front.

He was promoted to Corporal in August 1915 and eventually attained the rank of Captain in 1917.

He was wounded at least once – a gunshot wound to the thigh in July 1916 – but survived the war and returned to Australia on the *City of Poona* on 14 May 1919.

Hubert Richard William Meager WAS A DARDANELLES HERO

HE WORE a cheeky grin as his photograph was taken holding a periscopic rifle in a front line trench at Gallipoli in August 1915.

The photo belied the tension in the air and ever present dangers which sadly took 31-year-old Lieutenant Hubert Richard William Meager's life a few days later during the Battle of Lone Pine, but it captured the derring-do attitude of the Wagga Wagga soldier which he carried to his death.

English-born Hubert Meager (also spelled Meagher in some records) enlisted with the 3rd Battalion (C Company) 1st Brigade Australian Infantry Force on 20 August 1914, having had previous military service with the Regular Army in England.

Married to Maude Mary and a young father, Hubert was soon promoted to Colour Sergeant and then Second Lieutenant on 1 May 1915 before being promoted to Lieutenant on 4 August – just two days before his death.

He was among the first ANZACS to land at Gallipoli and received special mention for acts of gallantry or special services between 25 April 1915 and 5 May.

Lt Meager was among nearly 2,300 Australians killed or wounded at Lone Pine between 6 and 10 August.

His body was never recovered, but some of his Battalion colleagues saw him fall and later wrote about him.

An article published in *The Daily Advertiser* on Saturday 16 October 1915 included excerpts from a letter written to Mrs Meager by fellow officer, Lieutenant AF Barrett.

The article carried the headline:

How He Died

A Dardanelles Hero

Lt Barrett wrote:

"Poor Bert lived, fought and died a model of pluck and bravery, self denial and thoughtfulness.

"His military knowledge gained for him a high place in the esteem of all, and I am certain had he been spared he would have risen to a high position in our small but deathless little army.



A DARDANELLES HERO: Lt Hubert Meager in a front line trench with a periscopic rifle.

"To have gained the confidence of the men as he had done is in itself sufficient proof of his ability and courage.

"His fairness and frankness were qualities which earned for him a soft corner in the hearts of all.

"Mrs Meager, I knew him as a soldier and a man. We would often sit and laugh – his same old happy laugh.

"He would pull out a photograph of his little baby, and together we would laugh and talk about the poor little kiddie.

"I last saw him an hour before our charge. He was hit by a bullet about 20 yards from the Turkish trench. He just rolled over and said: 'Go on boys; don't mind me.'

"These words, spoken as he was dying, are glorious words that tell of the stout hearts of true British, courageous and self sacrificing men.

"I believe he died soon after."

Another soldier, Private Clifford O'Regan, wrote:

"Poor Hubert Meager was right near me in the attack when he was killed.

"I saw him fall.

"He knew at once that his wound would prove fatal, but he just called out to us not to bother about him but to put a heavy fire into the Turks, who were only a few yards away.

"He was indeed a brave man, and very popular."

Lt Meager's name will be projected onto the exterior of the Hall of Memory at the Australian War Memorial on 16 June and on 31 August.

SANDAKAN CLAIMED LIVE



FIVE sons of Parkes were among the nearly 2,000 Australians who died on the notorious Sandakan death marches in British North Borneo as the tide of World War II turned against the Japanese in early 1945.

They were:

- Private Thomas Westley Tindall Cole NX72771 of 2/18 Australian Infantry Battalion 8th Division on 7 June 1945
- Private Colin Cyril (Matey) Asgill NX 54534 of 2/30 Australian Infantry Battalion 8th Division on 17 July 1945
- Corporal Patrick Colin Campbell Humfrey NX31680 of No 1 Company Australian Army Service Corps 8th Division on 23 May 1945
- Private Horace Norman Hansell NX55773 of 2/3 Motor Ambulance Convoy 8th Division on 27 February 1945
- Corporal John Charles Harpley NX52259 of 2/20 Australian Infantry Battalion 8th Division on 20 July 1945.

Pte Cole enlisted on 8 April 1941 and embarked for Malaya. He was commanding Bren guns when attacked by the Japanese. All his men were killed by the enemy and Pte Cole's heel was shot away. After being taken prisoner of war, Pte Cole was imprisoned firstly in Changi and then in Sandakan on 18 July 1942. He survived almost three years. Pte Cole was the son of Westley Walter and Myra Valerie Cole.

Pte Asgill was one of eight siblings who served either in the military or in civilian war work – six brothers served during the war, one sister served in the Australian Women's Army Service and another sister worked in a wireless factory. Pte Asgill joined the 54th Battalion in 1939 but was too young to serve overseas when war broke out. But on 25 June 1940 he obtained his father's permission to enlist – and to marry. He was captured in 1942 and died when he was 25 years old three years later. He was the son of Ernest and Mary Asgill and the husband of Pearl Mary Asgill.

Cpl Humfrey enlisted at Paddington on 2 July 1940 and was imprisoned at Sandakan in July 1942, dying on 23 May 1945. He was the son of Colin Beauchamp Henry and Anne Lavina Humfrey and the husband of Gladys Ray Humfrey.

ES OF FIVE PARKES SONS



Corp Patrick Humphrey.



HUSBAND: Pte Horace Hansell.



PRISONER: Corp John Harpley.

Pte Hansell also survived the horrors of Sandakan for nearly three years before he died on 27 February 1945, aged 43. He was the son of George Edward and Angelenia Jane Hansell and the husband of Esther Eleanor Hansell.

Cpl Harpley was one of 500 Australian and 500 British PoWs who made up E Force and arrived at Sandakan on 5 June 1943. The son of Arthur John and Gladys Ivy Harpley, he was 28 when he died.

Only six men – all Australians – survived from the Australian and British prisoners of war forced to march the 260 kilometres from the Sandakan prisoner of war camp to Ranau to the west as the Japanese retreated from advancing Allied forces.

Between 1942 and 1945, PoWs were taken to Sandakan and ordered to build an airstrip.

Nine hundred died there; given little food by their Japanese captors many succumbed to disease. Others were brutally executed.

For those who survived, worse was to come.

Fearing attack by the Allied forces towards the end of the war, the Japanese decided to move the surviving POWs inland to Ranau at the base of Mount Kinabalu.

Between January and June, 1945, there were three death marches, our sick and emaciated Diggers forced to march through jungle terrain, carrying huge hessian sacks around their necks which contained Japanese ammunition and other supplies.

Few had boots or other footwear and within miles of leaving Sandakan most were beset by leeches.

Those who could walk no further were bayoneted to death on the spot.

For those Diggers who reached Ranau, there was no respite. They immediately had to turn around and begin the march back in the direction of Sandakan, carrying supplies for the Japanese officers on their way inland.



Mark Fitzgerald's GREAT ESCAPES



"IN THE event of my death please send this diary to my father Mr E.F. Fitzgerald snr 'Gleneda' Wamboyno Via West Wyalong NSW Australia."

This chilling introduction to the World War II diary of Flying Officer Mark Fitzgerald almost came to pass on many occasions for this brave pilot, who left the family farm to enlist in the Royal Australian Air Force on 16 September 1940.

Joining 223 Squadron in Egypt on 29 January 1942 and flying light bombers, such as the Martin Baltimore, 29-year-old Flg-Off. Fitzgerald laid his life on the line regularly over the next 15 months and recorded in his diary distress at losing mates such as Stewart (Squizzy) Tailor, "Spud" Downing, Hugh "Horse" Field and Bob Ash during furious bombing raids.

A copy of Flg-Off. Fitzgerald's 1942 and 1943 diaries is proudly kept by the Ungarie Sub-Branch of the RSL and makes, at times, for hair-raising reading as he recounts sorties against German air bases and other enemy targets, lives snuffed out in a violent instant and determination to fight and fly for his country.

JUNE 8TH MONDAY (1942)

"... Two hours later we arrived over Barce and made our run on the target, which was enemy aircraft on an aerodrome, just as we dropped the bombs and I was staring down over the bottom guns to watch them hit, there was a terrific explosion which seemed to be right in my ear, something hot shot past the back of my neck and the plane lurched violently. At almost the same time one of our planes came hurtling into view, just a mass of flames & it spiralled down to earth. Naturally I thought ack ack for a start, but as I could see no other bursts below, and the top gunner could not see any fighters I came to the conclusion that one of the plane's own bombs must have blown it up, and we received the shrapnel. As we were now over the target I took a quick look around the kite for damage & found that a common shell had burst

PILOT: Some of Flg-Off. Mark Fitzgerald's diary entries are hair-raising.

just at the back of my head, making a hole in the starboard side and going out the port, right through the control wires and rods. Brendan had been wounded, just above the knees, but not seriously. Les also called out that there was a big hole in the main phone. However, the machine was flying O.K so we made for home. It was only then that I discovered who had gone down. It was Saunders & crew..."

JULY 5TH SUNDAY

"Did another raid on the enemy lines. My 13th in this blitz, which we are putting up.

It was an easy raid bombing dug in troops and there was only one burst of ack ack fire. We were with the Boston 18 A/C in all with fighter escort.

It did a lot to restore my jaded nerves. I have been more shaken than I thought by being shot up three times in such a short time.

"There is no doubt we are giving the Hun a terrible pounding, at least 7 times each day. Twenty bombers go over and drop 30,000lbs of bombs a trip on the enemy lines, besides which six of our fighter escort each drop a 250lb bomb on every trip."

SEPTEMBER 19TH SATURDAY

"We got up at 6am & got ready for the big show. Our squadron was to put up 3 boxes of six A/C each in formation; we were to fly no3 and S/L Wallace in no2 box. Feeling excited about such an easy outing, we took off at 09.20, and we got into formation quickly ...

It happened in an instant and OH God I will never forget it. As Isaacs came up F/Sgt Ball slid out from the back. Vic Isaac's plane cut the tail clean off Ball's machine & it turned a complete loop and tailless spin into the deck. In four seconds from the time it collided it burst in a mass of flames on the ground killing & burning five occupants. Of course we carried on, but we were all sick at heart.

What a rotten way to die, not even killed in action.

We picked up with the other bombers, 34 Baltimores & 36 Bostons, it was a marvellous sight, those 70 bombers in formation plus 70 fighters hovering above. Such a sight has never been seen before & may never be seen again in the Middle East.

I had a wonderful view of Cairo & the pyramids as we went over twice at 2,000ft. We were glad to be back though: It was too dangerous with so many A/C.

There was another show of 48 bombers & 60 fighters over Alex in the afternoon, but we did not go as we were reserved."

OCTOBER 28TH CONTINUED

"What a day, I never want another one like it. We set out at 11am to bomb an aerodrome L.G/20 near Daba. 12 Baltimores and 6B25s. We were leading the tail end Vic of three. Went over the Med, and attacked from the sea. As we crossed the coast we were met by the greatest concentration of ack ack I have ever struck, right into it we came diving & twisting as we dropped our bombs. We were only 4,000 ft when we pulled out & they were throwing everything at us. The tracer was crossing in front of my face so I thought the end had come. Thinking it was best to go down fighting I started to strike from the bottom & gave the gun posts everything I had. I saw Flg-Off. Marines & crew crash in planes & S/LDR Joel's observer got his arm shot away, but made home. Fighters attacked on the way back, but we made it O.K."



BALTIMORES: Baltimore light bombers similar to the ones flown by 223 Squadron on a Middle East base.



MEDALS (above): Flg-Off. Mark Fitzgerald's decorations. **222 SQUADRON (below):** Members of 223 Squadron.



After competing his 50th mission on 20 March 1943, Flg-Off. Fitzgerald notes in his diary he could ask to be sent to Kenya or some operational training unit (OTU), comparatively safer than the combat operations he was flying.

"But I am not going to ask for that, I want to stick till this campaign is over and then I know I will be sent whether I like it not," Flg-Off. Fitzgerald wrote.

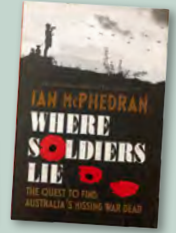
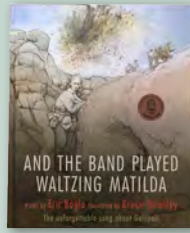
"Of course, some are saying why don't you pull out you fool, but I guess they would feel as I do if they had been on this squadn for fourteen months."

But on 23 April Flg-Off. Fitzgerald wrote: "The blow has fallen and at last I must say goodbye to 223 Squadron," telling how his heart sank as he was summonsed to the operations rooms and told by the Commanding Officer he and two mates were being sent to an OTU, on rest.

"In vain we protested that we did not want a rest and that we wanted to see the North African campaign through. He only smiled and said, I'm proud of you for wanting to keep on operating but it is your duty to go and train new crews so you must go," Flg-Off. Fitzgerald wrote.

Flg-Off. Fitzgerald survived the war and was discharged on 19 January 1945.

"A glance at the casualty list in this book will give an idea of the dark days and when I think of all those good friends who paid the price I thank God for His goodness to me," he wrote shortly after leaving 223 Squadron behind.



POPIES TO REMEMBER

POPIES to remember
The soldiers that fought in war
They battled for our freedom
To save us all.

All of the soldiers
Who fought for our land
And the nurses
Who gave them a helping hand.

Remember them all
The women and men
That died for our country
So we can now stand.

The families who waited
For their loved ones to return home
Some would make it
And others were remembered in poem.

We all have ANZAC
In our heart
By remembering the soldiers
Who did their part.



WINNER: Marley Paton,
Year 6, 11, Bogan Gate Public School.

RIVERINA AND CENTRAL WEST WRITING AWARDS

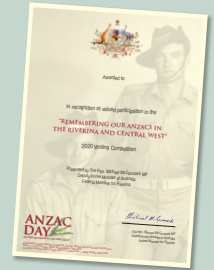
STUDENTS from across the Riverina and Central West continue to impress with the quality of their writing skills in the 2020 ANZAC writing competition.

This is the 10th year the competition has been held and 680 entries were received from 34 schools across the electorate. Every student who wrote a piece will receive a signed commemorative certificate.

Entries were categorised into primary and secondary schools with the Riverina electorate divided into North, South, East and West divisions.

Thank you to every one of the students and teachers who put the time and effort in to submit entries. Congratulations to the winners and highly commended – your writing was an absolute pleasure to read.

As services this year have been cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic, it is now more important than ever for us all to remember our ANZACs.



NORTH

THE BOY FROM MIRROOL

“1916 AUGUST 23rd, last night is a night I will remember for all eternity! The Fritz were overhead, dropped six bombs on the hospital killing six, wounding eleven. A mile away in another hospital, four nurses were killed with patients yet to be counted. Am I ever going to get out of here, back to my home town of Mirrool? I miss it dearly.”

I place my Great Great Grandfather's war diary on my bedside table and jump out of bed. I feel thankful to be alive in 2020. I wonder, will I ever know what it's like to hear a bomb drop or to see my neighbour die in the paddock beside me? Thank God I've never experienced war.

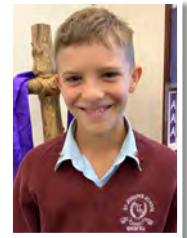
“1917 January 18th, I've been here well over a year. We marched for hours, single file, the mud feet deep, every step a battle. The ground is all blown up but all is well, I'm as happy

as I can be.”

Will I ever be as extraordinary as him, making the best of every situation, even knowing he was facing death? It's August 16th 2020, as I walk out onto the Aussie rules ground, surrounded by my mates, ready to do battle but shaking with nerves. Is this what war must have felt like, every minute of every day?

“1917 February 9th, arrived in Mirrool. Home at last. A different man to the one that left, but home.”

2020 April 25 We will remember you. Thank God you came home.



HIGHLY COMMENDED:
Hamish Gibson,
Year 6, 11, St Joseph's Primary School, Grenfell.

SOMEONE'S BROTHER, SOMEONE'S SON

THERE he stands, just a boy
Not a man, just a boy
Rifle in hand, spirit intact
Courage was all he lacked.

The generals sat down to ponda'
A shot of rum, bonza!
Over the top, they lost the lot
The war is far from over.

Private after private
Row after row
Over the top, that's where they go
That's where they lay, as time goes slow.

He's someone's brother, someone's son
Over the sandbags as they yell "run"
He runs with rage, he runs with pride
He takes his honour with his last stride.

Grenade explosions ring, shells glide
The boy and the bullet soon collide
The pain is absorbed by his chest
This was it, the final test.

Crawl to the shell hole, to wait for help
As his vision fades out, he lets out a yelp
Silence, they were gone
The last of his battalion were surely torn.

Memories of home, bounce into frame
Knowing that he will never be there again
He yearned for the flats, the creeks
His home in which he seeks.

The woman he admired most,
She is now but a ghost
The light begins to fade
As death called, he obeyed.

His battle was over, it was done
He let go, under the setting sun
His body lay still, upon the dusk
His death being rather brusque.

He is forgotten, given his own life
He endured all the battles and all the strife
He gave all, he faced the threat
Forever gone, Lest We Forget.



WINNER: Alexandra Davis, Year 11, 16, Red Bend Catholic College.

WRITING TALENT RUNS IN FAMILY

TRUNDLE has been hit by the drought as badly as any local community has.

But they breed them as hard as they come.

It also is apparent that at least two students in the region have brilliant writing skills.

Thirteen-year-old Charles Anderson – studying in Year 8 at Trundle – has taken out this year's highly commended award for the secondary schools northern division.

Charles's twin sister, Maggie, earned a highly commended book prize in the 2018 ANZAC Day commemorative booklet as a Year 6 student at Trundle's St Patrick's Parish School. Charles also wrote a piece that year and Maggie entered this year's competition with another superb poem.

The Andersons are not the only students who have entered on numerous occasions.

Gundagai High School student Laci Bower, who has won the secondary schools book prize in the eastern division, has previously been awarded a highly commended prize as a primary school student in the 2017 edition of the booklet.

It is heartening to see students continue to develop their writing skills as they keep sending their submissions in each year and I hope they continue to nurture the clear talent which so many students have throughout the Riverina and Central West.

COMING HOME

AS YOU march to the front as brave as could be
I keep wishing you were here with me.
We're shearing silently in the barn
Still working hard to save the farm.
By the end of the week, we're selling stock
Not getting much return for the flock.

We feel like we are in a struggle
It's winter now, so cold, we huddle.
We're losing money, it's not much fun
All we afford is half a warm bun.
Everything's dull and black as the moon
I'm missing you Dad, I'll see you soon.

I hope you return to the great Central West
And I sure know you ANZACs are the best.
I know the gunshots must be so loud
I want you to know you've made us all proud.
The drought has come and ravaged our home
The red dust covers everything we own.

From the lush grain fields you all came
Our own brave ANZACs the very same.
The crops are growing again in the fields
But war is mounting on the deadly battlefields.
No braver soldiers has anyone met
We line up and venerate – "Lest We Forget".



HIGHLY COMMENDED: Charles Anderson, Year 8, 13, Trundle Central School.

THE DARK TIMES MY DAD WENT TO WAR



*HIGHLY
COMMENDED:
Riley Murphy, Year
5, 10, Yerong Creek
Public School.*

I STOOD and watched the boat float
away
And couldn't stop thinking about him
all day.

The letters I received from him were
heartfelt
And on the floor, next to my bed, I knelt.
Praying for him to survive the war,
And come bursting through the crooked
creme door.

I sat at the table, not saying a word,
Letting my cereal go soggy, this war was
absurd!

A week past and I had heard nothing,
Until my Mum came in my room with
something.

A box labelled "To my dear Mary"
And down at the bottom was a carved
fairy.

And a note that read "I carved this
myself"
So I put it on up my top shelf.

Six years had passed and
I saw afloat
About 73 000
soldiers on a boat.

My Dad jumped off
and ran to me.
It was him I was so
happy to see.

We hugged each
other with tears of
joy in our eyes
Him coming home was the best ever
surprise!

He came home from Britain and from
Greece,
North Africa, Singapore, Indonesia,
Burma and the Middle East.

Although 27,000 of his mates died,
I am proud that my Dad survived.

We walked home, hand in hand,
Laughing as our feet got burnt from
the sand.

**GRAVE OF
GREAT**

ALONG the graves, the
flowers grow, for what was
once alive and fighting foe.

They sat and cheered every
victory, but soon they feared
every growing enemy.

The ground shook and
trembled, every gunshot
enemies feared.

Some sat and cried, while
others, soon to die.

They lay and wait, a terrible
fate.

I sit at home and await his
arrival date.

I think and wonder, will he
ever be the same father?



*WINNER: Imogen
Patterson, Year 5, 10,
Turvey Park Public School.*

HOME

EVERY night I knelt beside my bed and
said my prayers. Most of them were about
the soldiers and my father. I hope he will
return soon from the war.

When I get up in the morning, I immediately
look out of the window expecting my father
to be walking up the driveway.

I was about to walk away for breakfast when I
saw a man. He had a walking stick in his left
hand and a small piece of paper in his right.

I called for my mother. All flustered she
appeared from the kitchen. She had spilt some
egg on her apron, she untied it, hung it on the
back of her chair at the table. She looked at
me with worried eyes and flung open the door.

As I watched my mother march down to greet the man, I was confused. Mother met
him halfway up the path, he shook her hand, passed her the paper and began his
journey back.

My mother returned later, walked me over to the living room. With tears in her eyes
she sat down on Father's armchair and put me on her knee. She took a deep breath
and tried to hold back her tears. She opened the telegraph and begin to read.



*WINNER: Freya Howard, Year
8, 13, Wagga Wagga Christian
College.*

ANZAC DAY

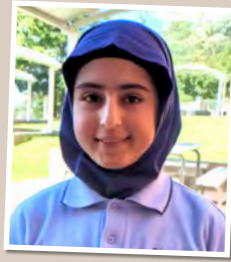
AS I closed my eyes for one-minute silence I could imagine millions of brave men who went to war. I could imagine these brave men waving goodbye to their families, friends and loved ones, but not knowing when they'd see them back.

National day. A national day of remembrance held in Australia and New Zealand on April 25th every year. A day for respecting the soldiers who served and died in Gallipoli in World War I. Over 8,000 soldiers were killed. The 25th of April is a day on which Australians remember the sacrifice of those who died in war.

Zealous soldiers fighting to save the country. As more new soldiers trained to fight in a dangerous war. Zoom go the bullets. Our country full of danger and darkness.

Angry, sad, scared families waiting for their sons and men to come back. Men who left their mothers, sisters, wives and children. Soldiers were sad for leaving their families but happy to save their country and bring it freedom. Many soldiers died and when some came home their lives were not the same. ANZAC Day is a day that many brave men passed away.

Courageous armies bravely went to war. They prayed to God for a peaceful world. They fought day and night, hot and cold to save the country. Now we march on ANZAC Day for those who died saving our country. Side by side we fought and won the battle. We are proud. We are Australian, but for now, Lest We Forget.



HIGHLY COMMENDED: *Tabira Roshan, Year 7, 12, Wagga Wagga High School.*

FOREVER ALONE

Lola (wife of Joe)

I CRY until I have no tears left to cry,
I watch my husband be shipped off into the unknown.

I walk home knowing that he may never return,
I may be forever alone.

He travelled great distances over the sea
God, oh God take care of him please.
If I were a soldier I would carry in my pocket,
A little good luck token, for you and for me.

When I receive my first letter off him,
I hear of all the broken bones.
Now I know that,
I might not be forever alone.

Joe (husband of Lola)

As the allies shoot into our trenches.

I catch in the corner of my eye,
A young man lying flat on the ground,
He could be about to die.

I ran over to him,
And slowly close his eyes.
And in Flanders Field,
A young man just died

I write to my dear Lola,
I wear the old jacket,
That Lola sewed
I hope she writes back soon,
She will not be forever alone.



WINNER: *Sadie Eccleston, Year 6, 11, St Patrick's Primary School, Gundagai,*

EAST

ALL I THOUGHT ABOUT

MS ROBERTS tried to play it off as if everything was fine. But we all noticed it. The empty seat in the middle of class. Jack's seat. But Jack wasn't sitting in year 11 English, he was on the other side of the world fighting men twice his age.



HIGHLY COMMENDED: *Nicholas Tait, Year 6, 12, Gundagai Public School.*

He wasn't laughing with his mates or answering questions, instead the 17-year-old boy was hiding his emotions in front of the other soldiers and taking orders.

"I remember last year when we played Wagga Wagga

in cricket and Jack scored 50 to win us the game," said one of the boys, as they reminisced at lunchtime.

They all became much more grateful for their food when they found out that their friend was eating bully beef and hardtack for a meal.

It was six months later when they held an impromptu school assembly to break the news.

"Unfortunately, your classmate, Jack Roberts has unfortunately passed away," Ms Roberts shed a tear as they talked about her only son.

The next day Jack's seat was no longer empty. There was a hat on his chair. Jack's hat. Along with the tragic news of his passing they sent home his Gallipoli slouch hat. We didn't do any work that day. Ms Roberts let us talk the whole lesson. She just sat there. She tried to disguise her pain and struggle, but we all saw the immense devastation in her eyes.

Jack is all I thought about that day.

MY ANZAC

THE sky is pale pink as we stand in the crowd.
The early morning air is cold on my face.

There are wreaths for those who have given the most,
I close my eyes as they play the Last Post.

My dad stands beside me, but is in another place.

Dad was a soldier in the third Battalion RAR.

He deployed in '99 on the HMAS *Jervis Bay*,

Tasked with keeping the peace in East Timor,
Dad doesn't speak of the things he did or saw.

While back home in a small country town, Nan would pray.

No warm cosy bed on those cold wet nights.

No place to lay your head when you're tired and weary.

Home for now is a cold, dark, crowded trench.

With no showers, no toilets, there is a terrible stench.

At times thoughts of loved ones make a grown man teary.

Many wars over many years, you all battled so bravely.

I thank the soldiers I know and those I have never met.

Dad is one of many soldiers who throughout the years,
Have fought with courage, blood, sweat and tears.

On this day we will remember them, Lest We Forget.



HIGHLY COMMENDED:
Poppy Starr, Year 8, 13, St Raphael's Catholic School, Cowra.

EAST

HENRY BRIGGS

TODAY is the day my brother Henry will finally be reunited with us once again.

It only feels like yesterday my brother was taken away from our little home in Gundagai. And was left with no choice but to fight for our county Australia. He had just turned 18 and had his whole life planned for himself.

Mum was torn when she found out that he had been drafted, he was always mum's shoulder to cry on when things would get hard since our father walked out on us. Henry is the type of person to help when no one else would no matter what. He doesn't deserve risking his life in a war he didn't start. I love my brother with my entire heart and I pray that nothing cruel has happened to him.

I was making my morning cup of tea and Vegemite on toast when I heard a knock at the door, thinking in my head "who could that be?" As I approached the door I could see that they were wearing an army uniform, so I bolted to the door knowing that it would be Henry.



WINNER: *Laci Bower, Year 9, 15, Gundagai High School.*

I jerked open the door but as it came to my attention it wasn't actually Henry. It was an officer and I knew what he had come for. My eyes filled with tears knowing that my poor beloved brother had not made it back.

WEST

WAR

BOMBS are falling from the sky
You better watch out or you might die
Houses are falling so don't get trapped
Broken windows, fabric flapped
Black rain falls, blood on the floors
Let's give the ANZACS a round of applause
I will be wearing a poppy and I hope you copy
Shout out to the ANZACS who saved our country from dying.

HIGHLY COMMENDED:
Charlie Sutton, Year 6, 11, West Wyalong Public School.



IMAGES OF ANZAC DAY

ALL the young soldiers, right across the land,
Some still with their feet in the woeful sand,
You hear them fight,
The awful sight,
Of blood and terrible wrong-doings.

Now digging up the ancient soil,
Bullets of the enemy to foil,
Ducking, weaving,
Awful bleeding.
Nurses taking a brew to those hit by a bullet or two.

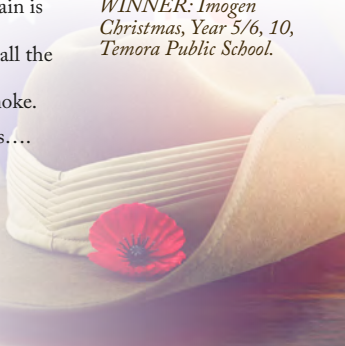
Back at home, children beg to see their dad again.
A goose is let go to seek her own food.
Back at Gallipoli, rude words shouted, when pain is
going straight through them.
You'd think a bear had killed them, because of all the
gashes and bruises.
A soldier loses his gun in the smog and the smoke.

When soldiers return, so many broke into tears....
So many fears,
of not having them around.
A little girl,
Remembering something important,
While staring at her father's geese.
Rest in Peace.

Lest We Forget.



WINNER: Imogen Christmas, Year 5/6, 10, Temora Public School.



REMEMBERING OUR ANZACS IN THE RIVERINA AND CENTRAL WEST

THE RAIN pours and the bullets fly as your best mates lay side by side,
A mixture of blood, sweat, and tears run down their sand-covered faces.
CRACK! Another falls, another man down, lost on the shores, nowhere to hide,
The man who fights on is haunted by death, it is the peace he forever chases.

Running quickly across the beach my best mate looking back at me.
Men fall as the bullets hail I look back to see where he's at.
Nowhere to be seen, check the fields, there he is, eyes on me
A blank expression no life within, now with God, how can I live with that?

My best mate is gone, my heart breaks there is no time now to think of that.
We dive into bunkers, dodging bullets, a ceasefire brings calm about.
Too many to count, too many have fallen, too many graves to lay out flat.
I sit in the mud and think about what to do as the tears begin to run out.

Dear Mrs. Smith is etched with my pen
Your son has fallen, it was quick and he did not feel any pain.

A letter was written, many times, many dead sons, all without a happy end.
The Great War, what is so great?
Caused so much destruction and no given gain.



HIGHLY COMMENDED: Joshua Daly, Year 8, 13, St Anne's Central School, Temora.

THE STRUGGLE

THE poppies lit up in the morning, sunrise birds were whistling as I looked out reminiscing of good times at home with my family, then life started to fade back to reality.

Days dragged on, the food taste-less, air felt stale. It was like I was drowning in my thought, but I knew I had to get through this.



HIGHLY COMMENDED: Jaydah McDonnell, Year 8, 13, West Wyalong High School.

The idea that I may be home someday gave me hope, re-reading old letters as I waited for new ones to be delivered so I could get updated on how the family was doing and how they were adapting to caring for the farm whilst I was gone.

The war was at an end but once I arrived home, I never realised life wouldn't be the same. It was a struggle to act like everything was okay, the visions blurring my thoughts making it hard to think of anything else.

I felt there was a standard to act like a strong man not to show emotion; this was a challenge. After months of sleepless night my family started to catch on, they tried to get me to talk about it but any chance I got I ignored the subject.

I spent countless hours doing chores on the farm to keep my mind busy. But then I found an easier way to block out the pain by drinking. Months later down the track I was spending the majority of our earnings on alcohol sitting in silence waiting for the pain to go away.



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