

# THE FURPHY

ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

*February 2025 Edition*



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General Meetings:                      Second Sunday of the month at 1030hrs

Annual General Meeting:              Second Sunday of September

## Committee Positions

<b>Armadale Sub-Branch Committee</b>	
President	Mr Mike Fairweather
Vice President	Mr Geoff Scott
Secretary	Ms Carol King
Treasurer	Mrs Cheryl Cowie
Warden	Mr Graeme Cowie
Warden	Mr Mick Quinn
Membership Officer	Mr Tom Rynn
Committee	Mr Bob Giles
Committee	Mr Ken Hepburn
Committee	Mr Keith Northcott
Committee	Mr Robert Smith
Advocate / Welfare Officer	Mr Brent Errington
Bar Manager	Mr Mike Fairweather

## **ADVOCATE / WELFARE**

**Brent Errington “Erro” is available as follows:**

***At the Armadale RSL Sub-Branch:***

***Monday: by appointment only***

***Thursday: between 0900 - 1400hrs***

**Weekday Contact Details:**

***Mobile: 0407 449 150***

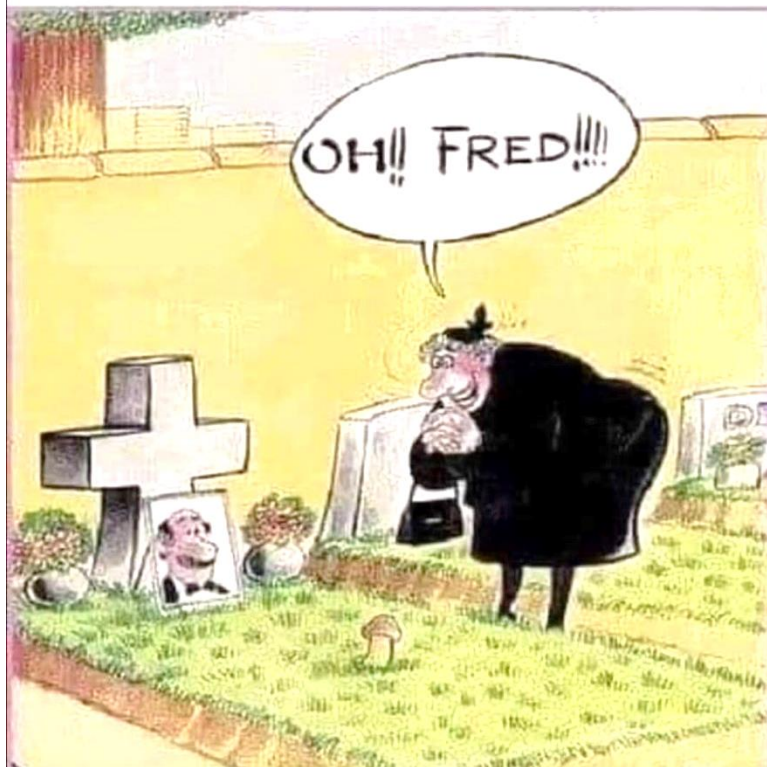
***e-mail: welfare2@armadalersl.com.au***

# Diary Dates for February

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Time</i>
Sunday	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Social Committee Meeting	1100
Tuesday	4 <sup>th</sup>	Management Committee Meeting	1100
Sunday	9 <sup>th</sup>	General Meeting	1030



For Heaven's Sake  
Will Someone Tell Her  
It's A Mushroom





*EXTREMELY RARE PHOTO US soldiers hit the beach at Omaha June 6 1944. If you look closely you can see shell smoke, dead men AND WASHED UP DD TANKS*



*Medical details of the 45th Battalion sheltering in a trench at Anzac Ridge, in the Ypres Sector" (Official caption). 28 September 1917*

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hi Members,

I advise that Mr Geoff Tooth recently submitted his resignation from the Committee for personal reasons. Thanks, Geoff for the commitment you've shown during your time in the role.

In December, at a morning tea which both the Secretary and I attended on behalf of the Sub-Branch, Dr Tony Buti advised that there was a possible Grant opportunity available to assist with maintenance issues. We were informed that a decision would be made late 2024 and as we had received no further communication had to assume that we had missed out. The Secretary received notification this week that our application had been successful, and she will include details in her report.

We will hold our first General Meeting of the year on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> February and hope you will stay on after to support the kitchen which is now open.

Cheers for now,

*Mike Fairweather*

President

*Returned Services League Armadale Sub-Branch*

*Ph: (08) 9497 1972. M: 0403 980 290*

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*e-mail: [president@armadalersl.com.au](mailto:president@armadalersl.com.au)*

# Secretary's Notes

*Hi Everyone,*

*A busy month with organising all things ANZAC at the moment, but everything seems to be going very well.*

*As the President stated, in December we applied for a Grant through the state minister for Armadale. We have received notification that our application was successful as follows:*

*Effect a permanent repair to external plumbing: \$5,560 and Carpet replacement in the hall of \$26,935, a total of \$32,495 but these funds are conditional on the State Labor government being returned after the March 8 election.*

*We held an Australia Day event on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January which went really well. Thanks to everyone who was kind enough to purchase raffle tickets on the day, your support is sincerely appreciated. It was great to see how many people embraced the spirit of the day by dressing up.*

*The Stall Rosters for our ANZAC Appeal are now on the board. The dates are 21, 22 and 23rd April, please help out if you possibly can.*

*That's about all from me for this edition.*

*Carol King*

**Sub-Branch Secretary**

**e-mail: [secretary@armadalersl.com.au](mailto:secretary@armadalersl.com.au)**

**MY FRIEND TELLS ME SHE  
WRITES SONGS ABOUT  
SEWING MACHINES.**



**SHE'S A SINGER SONGWRITER  
OR SEW IT SEAMS.**

# Membership Update

*As at 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2025:*

<b>Service Members:</b>	<b>158</b>
<b>Affiliate Members:</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Social Members:</b>	<b><u>54</u></b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b><u>264</u></b>

The figures above are incomplete insofar as Service and Affiliate Members are concerned as RSLWA have not informed us as to how many have paid direct to them.

No information has been received regarding payment or otherwise of the following:

Service Members	100	Affiliate Members	22
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30 Social Members did not renew through the Sub-Branch by 31<sup>st</sup> January.

Unfinancial members will be removed from the Sub-Branch Members Club Rewards program at the Committee Meeting in February.

All members who paid via the Sub-Branch to myself will have been provided with a receipt and I recommend that the receipt is maintained in view of the message below from RSLWA.

Any queries to Membership Officer Tom Rynn.

*Tom Rynn*

Tel: 0439 934 285

e-mail: [tomrynn@bigpond.com](mailto:tomrynn@bigpond.com)



## MESSAGE FROM RSLWA

*Dear Members,*

*We regret to inform you that there will be a delay in issuing membership cards. A system outage late last year has affected our card printing machine. Until we get the machine fixed, please be patient as there is a backlog of cards to print. It will take some time to get these mailed out.*

*We are working on a "Plan B" to expedite the process and ensure the cards are sent out as soon as possible. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your patience.*

*Wishing you all the very best for 2025.*

*Best Wishes,  
The Membership Team  
Perth Office*



***French Trench Raiders (257<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment) post with their weapons and gas masks in the Bezange Forest, Lorraine, France (1916)***



**February Service Members:**

Caldwell	Mr	Wayne	25/02	Halliwel	Mr	Graham	14/02
Henderson	Mr	Keith	17/02	Hepburn	Mr	Kenneth	17/02
Kang	Mr	Damon	09/02	Kostin	Mr	John	25/02
Mahoney	Mrs	Wendy	14/02	McGough	Mr	Victor	25/02
Phillips	Mr	Leslie	17/02	Weekes	Mr	Garry	08/02

**February Affiliate Members:**

Higham	Mr	Dale	23/02	Welch	Mrs	Margaret	20/02
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**February Social Members:**

Beard	Mr	Trevor	21/02	Cook	Mr	Luke	03/02
Darlington	Mr	Jim	17/02	Fowler	Mrs	Marion	22/02
Fowler	Mr	Glen	01/02	Mathieson	Mr	David	27/12
Rynn	Mrs	Glynes	15/02				

*If anyone has been missed off the list, please advise  
Tom Rynn (Membership Officer)*

*These members may collect a free drink of their choice  
during the month*

*We hope you have a very special Birthday*



*Checkpoint Charlie, then and now*

# *Bar Manager's Report*

*G'day All,*

*Well. the price of alcohol has again increased. I am trying desperately to hold the prices for now but am not sure how long we can do this.*

*I will be going through the Loyalty Cards during the month so if you have not yet re-joined your card will be made inactive.*

*Bye for now,*

*Stormy*



# Australia Day 2024



*Our Finalists in the "Dress Like an Ocker" competition  
Lois, Stormy, Hank and Graeme*



*And the Winner Was..... Hank*

# ***MIDNIGHT ANGEL DUO***

*are returning to the*  
***Armadale RSL***



**Sunday, 2nd March 12:30pm**

*Get a group of friends together and join  
us for a great afternoon of musical  
entertainment*

**Free Entry**

# BESTIE BURGERS



**Now Open at Armadale RSL**

**Each Sunday**

*12 noon – 2:00pm*

## REMINDER

*All Members and Patrons are reminded that no BYO Food is to be consumed on the premises whilst the Kitchen is open*

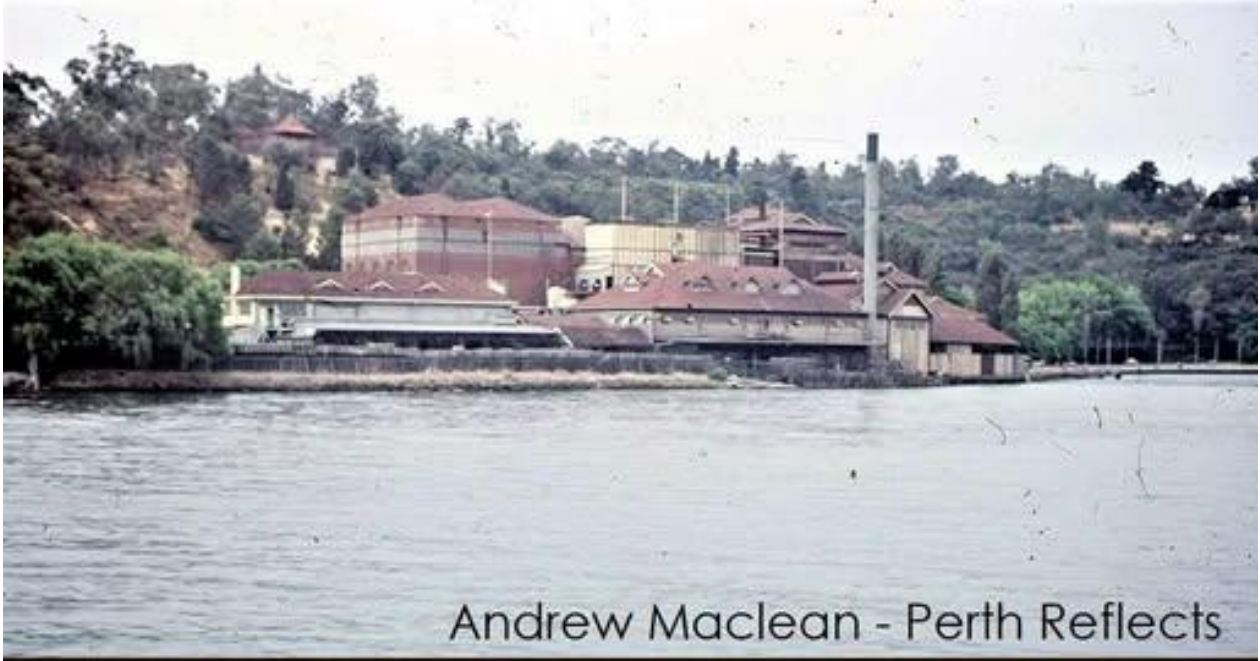


***09 January 1996  
HMAS CANBERRA, (guided missile frigate), left Sydney to be permanently base-ported at  
HMAS STIRLING, WA***



***A great photograph of a Dornier Do 335 cockpit. This aircraft was fitted with an ejection seat powered by compressed air... In addition, explosive bolts blew off the rear propeller and tail fin so the pilot wouldn't impact them upon leaving the aircraft***





Andrew Maclean - Perth Reflects



Swan Brewery Lights for Lost Perth

*The Swan Brewery buildings have been there for 145 years since moving from Sherwood Court, that's 75% of the time since settlement.*

*Of course what is well remembered would be the fixed and festoons of lighting representing several things in our time in a nautical theme.*

*So many childhood memories wondering what ship or boat would be illuminated when we could see the lights from the back of the family car from the freeway.*

# Byford Rail Extension – Update

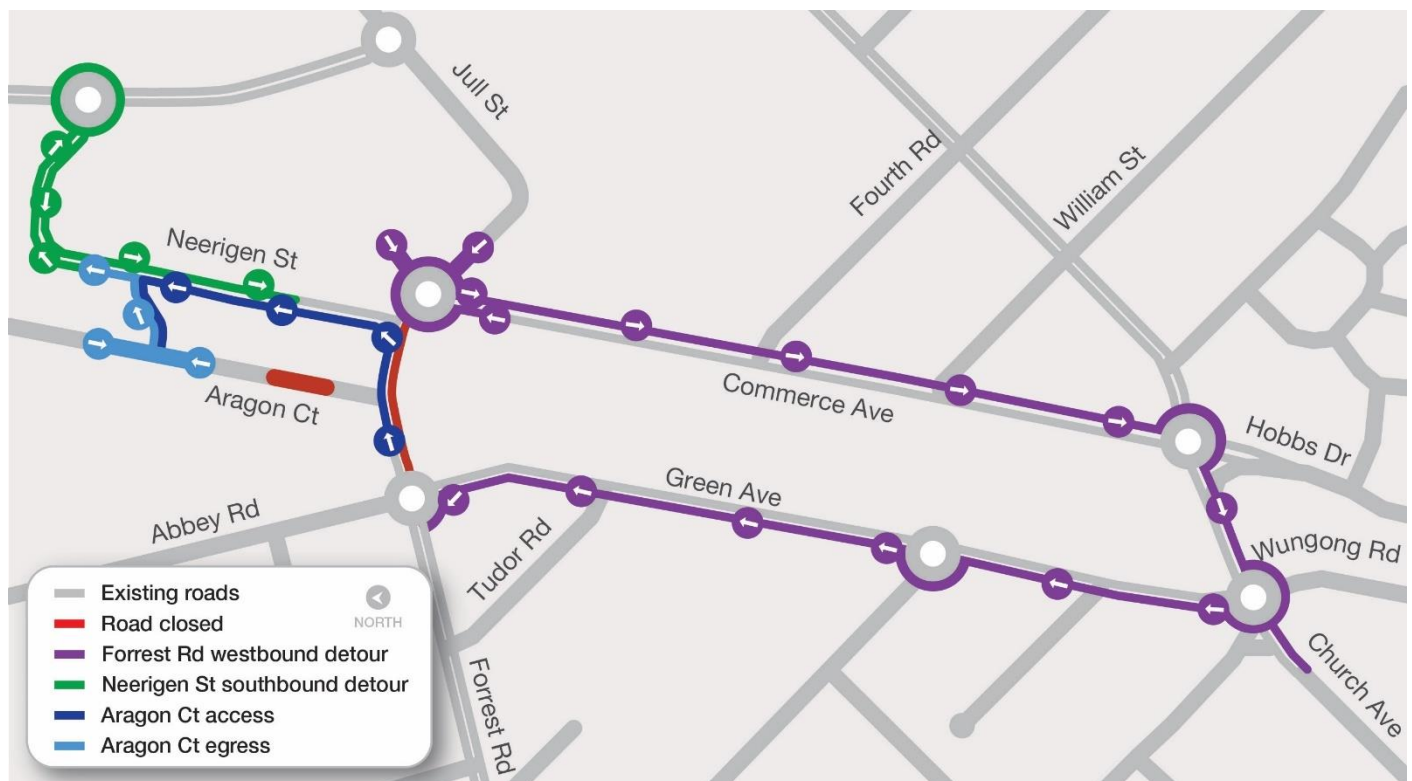


To facilitate works to rebuild Forrest Road, the westbound lane between Green and Commerce avenues will be temporarily closed from **Monday 20 January until late-April 2025**.

This section of Forrest Road will be rebuilt in two stages, with no westbound access throughout the works. Pedestrian and local resident access will be maintained at all times.

Works will be ongoing throughout the closure, with pedestrian and traffic detours in place – please plan ahead.

The traffic detour map for stage one of the works can be found below.



# Snapshot 1: Australians in War and Conflict

Australia's service history is much more than a series of military events. It is a rich tapestry of personal stories to tell and retell. The experiences of people in wartime over more than 100 years create and enrich a shared learning about our past.

These stories brought to life by real anecdotes, reflect the experiences of veterans and other Australians. They begin with the First World War and include personal records from wars, conflicts and peace operations.

Until the 1970s, communication from overseas to Australia was slow and unreliable during most conflicts. Family and friends back home waited months for news. The letters they received were cherished. Some letters became important records of wartime experiences. Postcards and a few posted photographs gave a visual glimpse of service life.

Through a total of 24 topics, we follow people's contributions to Australia's war and peacekeeping efforts. Each story reflects today's Australian Defence Force values of service, courage, respect, integrity and excellence. Due to available space in our Furphy newsletter, we will be publishing 6 of these in the each Furphy over the next 4 editions.

We continue to remember those who served, those who continue to serve and those who died as a result of their service. This collection honours them and their families. Lest we forget.

## **1: Underage Volunteers**

The assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 sparked a chain of events that escalated quickly across Europe and further afield to become what was known as The Great War. In early August that year, Germany marched into Belgium, and in response, Great Britain declared war against Germany. Australia, as a dominion

of the British Empire, willingly joined the war, with recruitment offices quickly opening across the country.

Australian men between the ages of 21 and 38 were encouraged to enlist. Men aged 18 to 21 years required written permission from a parent or guardian. Thousands of men swamped the recruitment offices, ready to do their part for 'King and Country'. Many enlisted for the adventure, the escape from their normal life or because of the appeal of a regular wage. Some younger Australians, with similar motivations, were also hatching their own plans to enlist.

James (Jim) Martin was one of the 'boy soldiers'.

Born in Tocumwal in New South Wales (NSW), Jim was a tall and physically fit teenager when the First World War began. Keen to fight for the British Empire, he presented himself to a recruitment office to see if he could enlist. After talking to one of the officers and lying about his age, Jim was told he could join up and go to war.

Understandably, his mother was less enthusiastic, so Jim threatened to run away and join up elsewhere under a false name. His threat worked, and his mother reluctantly agreed to provide her written permission. Jim was 14 years and 3 months old when he enlisted.

After completing operational training, Jim sailed for Egypt in June 1915 with the 21st Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and eventually to Gallipoli. Life in the trenches was extremely difficult. By the time Jim's battalion arrived on the Gallipoli peninsula in September, the autumn weather was becoming colder, and the Turkish forces were well established in their positions. No one expected the Gallipoli Campaign to last as long as it did. Reduced rations and sickness from diseases took a great toll on the Australian troops.

It was October that year when Jim fell ill with enteritis. He was soon too sick to remain in the battle and was evacuated to a hospital ship in the waters off Gallipoli. The medical staff did their very best for Jim, but he was too sick, and he died barely 2 hours after arriving onboard. Jim was less than 3 months short of his 15th birthday when he died. He was buried at sea and is remembered on the Lone Pine Memorial at Gallipoli.

Whilst it is impossible to pinpoint the exact number of underage volunteers who enlisted, it is believed that hundreds of young Australians enlisted and will be forever known as 'boy soldiers' or 'boy sailors'. Historians at the Australian War Memorial have identified 235 underage volunteers from the First World War, including Private Frank Samuel Augustus Taylor.

Frank grew up in Bendigo, and after finishing school, he worked for Bendigo Pottery and then the local grocery store. He was a keen Australian Rules football player when he enlisted in 1914. Sadly, Frank was killed on 3 May 1915 and is buried at Anzac Cove, Gallipoli.

It was not just the boys who wanted to do their part in the war. Young Maud Butler from Kurri Kurri in NSW wanted desperately to become a nurse. She was refused at the Red Cross Depot and Victoria Barracks due to her lack of experience.

She took matters into her own hands and, at 16 years of age, bought a uniform, cut her hair and hid in a lifeboat on HMAT *Suevic*. Maud was discovered after 2 days out at sea. Upon realising she was a girl, the captain transferred her to a passing ship bound for Australia.

Within months, Maud again attempted to stow away, this time on board HMAT *Star of England*. Despite her best efforts, she was discovered when the name on the dog tags she had made didn't match the ship's records, and she was taken off the ship before it left the port. Maud abandoned her attempts to get overseas and instead turned her efforts to helping where she could in Australia.

During the First World War, men and women served for many different reasons. For many, the motivation was strong and was not limited to those over the age of 18 years. May we continue to remember and honour those who are forever young.



*Reginald Garth at sea, c May 1915*

## **2: Periscope rifle**

William Beech served for just 6 months in the Gallipoli campaign during the First World War, but his impact in that time was immense.

Born in England in 1878, William served for 5 years as part of the Shropshire Yeomanry Cavalry and for 2 years in South Africa as part of the Volunteer Field Artillery before emigrating to Australia in 1910. Shortly after the war broke out in 1914, William enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF).

At 36 years of age, William was older than many of the men he served with. His considerable military experience prompted his rapid promotion to Lance Corporal and then to Sergeant in 1915. William's foremost contribution came from the combination of that military experience, along with the know-how derived from his civilian job as a builder.

By May 1915, the campaign against the Turkish on the Gallipoli peninsula had ground to a standstill. Soldiers on both sides were fighting from deep, narrow trenches. Those trenches afforded the only refuge from danger, yet they also kept the men in them from seeing the enemy. Snipers were vigilant at spotting and then targeting any head or limb that appeared above a trench.

William knew just how effective those snipers were. When he came upon a trench that had been recently attacked, 5 of his colleagues lay dead, each of them shot by Turkish snipers. William picked up a periscope and used it to look over the trench wall and saw that some Turks were in the open.

'Had we attempted to aim over the top [at the Turkish]', wrote another soldier, later, 'we would have exposed our head and should have immediately followed our dead pals'.

According to this account, William began crying from grief. But he was also frustrated. In his despair, he hit upon a solution: 'It's hell to see this mass of Turks, and not being able to bomb or aim at them. With a periscope fixed to a rifle, it would be possible to fire accurately, without personal danger'.

In the days that followed, William tried to build such a rifle. 'One day, I faked up a sort of thing with an old biscuit box and broken pieces of mirror', he said later.

Major Thomas Blamey, touring the trenches, saw William and another soldier wrestling with this rudimentary device. One of the 2 explained what they were doing: if the periscope were fitted just so, a sniper standing in the safety of the trench would be able to look into the

lower glass and see in the reflection of the upper glass the rifle's sight. Without ever exposing himself to danger, he could aim it and fire.

Periscope rifles were not wholly new inventions. Soldiers in other theatres of the war were grappling with the same problem and coming to the same solution. But William's creation was independent and immediately effective.

Tests showed that it was accurate up to 300 yards. Major Blamey, sensing its value, had William brought to headquarters to begin creating periscope rifles en masse. They were sent to Quinn's Post, one of the most dangerous places on the peninsula, a few metres from enemy trenches and covered by Turkish snipers. Thus equipped, the garrison that had been almost unable to fire a shot for fear of being killed was now able to fire at the enemy with less risk to themselves.

'It became possible to fire from the loopholes and even, for a few seconds at a time, to look over the parapet', wrote correspondent Charles Bean later.

It was a simple device but a clever one, and William's superiors made sure to reward him for it. 'From my personal observations', wrote William Birdwood, commander of the Anzac troops at the time, 'I am able to speak of the considerable value of his device to our troops in Gallipoli, and I may state that every Battalion that we had with us very greatly appreciated Mr Beech's device then'.

William was later awarded £100 in recognition of his ingenuity. By then, the war was long over. William had been invalided out in October 1915, falling ill with sciatica and neurasthenia, and upon his discharge, he continued to serve as a recruiting sergeant in Condobolin. Resuming work as a builder, William died in 1929, aged 51.





*Two soldiers using a periscope rifle in a trench at Gallipoli, Turkey, 1915. The soldier in the background with a periscope is the spotter, while the soldier in the foreground has the periscope rifle*

### **3: Bully beef for the Turks**

Located on the northern edge of the main Anzac line on the Gallipoli peninsula, Quinn's Post was a battlefield area consisting of trenches and tunnels. It was the site of some of the most intense events seen during the Gallipoli campaign in the First World War. Over several months in 1915, Major Leslie George Fussell, with the 17th Battalion, fought hard to hold Quinn's Post.

Charles Bean described the holding of Quinn's Post as one of the Australian Imperial Force's (AIF) finest feats. It was believed that if it had fallen to the Turkish forces, they would have broken into the core of the Anzac position, and the entire Anzac front could have been lost. A strategic location, Quinn's Post was also the site of a unique moment between Turkish and Australian Forces.

On an unusually quiet October day, Major Fussell took the opportunity to instruct his men on the correct technique of bomb throwing. Prior to 1915, bomb-throwing was a relatively new skill for Australian soldiers. It was not until August 1915 that Allied troops were issued with hand grenades (known at the time as bombs). Before the use of specially made hand grenades, Australian troops made their own bombs. Assembled from old food tins and barbed wire, the troops called these 'jam tin bombs'.

The fighting conditions on the Gallipoli peninsula, with the Allies and the Turkish forces bogged down in their trenches, accelerated the need for hand grenades. During Major Fussell's bomb-throwing demonstration, he picked up the nearest object – a can of bully beef.

Whilst explaining the technique, Major Fussell launched the can in demonstration. The bully beef can landed accurately in the Turks' trench. What happened next? Did the Turkish soldiers eat the beef or throw it back? Major Fussell's bomb-throwing lesson led to an unanticipated response.

In the Turkish trench, this unexpected item was greeted with joy and surprise. A short time later, a package was thrown into the Australian trench. The package contained tobacco with a note written in poor French. The letter read:

*My dear Australian friends, we have taken your gift of preserved meat, and we are delighted. It is an excellent gift. We ask you for a souvenir, and in the place of your souvenir we shall give you another one. Please accept our compliments now, and in return for your gift of preserved meat we are sending a piece of tobacco. – Your fellow soldiers, Turks.*

A postscript asked the Australian soldiers for a good knife.

In a letter to his father, Major Fussell explained that with assistance from a private, he sent a less friendly reply to the Turks. Nevertheless, more souvenirs and notes were passed between the trenches. These exchanges continued until senior officers heard of the activities and stopped the Australians. During this moment in time, enemies at war

put down their weapons and exchanged gifts, all the while improving their bomb-throwing skills.



*Soldiers make hand grenades from empty tin cans, barbed wire cuttings and other materials they could find, Gallipoli, Turkey, 1915*

#### **4: Gallipoli truce**

On 24 May 1915, Australian and Turkish soldiers fighting at Gallipoli put down their weapons and met in 'no man's land' to bury their dead. It was the only ceasefire to have official agreement during the First World War, and it marked a brief moment of goodwill on the battlefield.

Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) troops landed in the Ari Burnu area of the Gallipoli peninsula on 25 April 1915. The Anzacs were part of an Allied force that aimed to force the Ottoman Empire out of the war. Other Allied troops landed at nearby Cape Helles.

The first weeks of the Gallipoli campaign were brutal and resulted in thousands of Allied and Turkish deaths. Many bodies lay out in the sun on the hillsides, attracting flies. Snipers, shelling and machine-gun fire prevented their recovery or burial. The smell became unbearable, and there were concerns about an outbreak of disease.

The Turks proposed a truce to bury the dead. Australian Imperial Force (AIF) commanders, wary of a surprise attack, resisted at first. A few days later, a blindfolded Turkish officer was led along the beach to Anzac headquarters, where an agreement was reached.

Whistles were blown to announce the start of the ceasefire at 7:30 am. Men climbed from the trenches, some carrying white flags and others with shovels, to perform the unpleasant but necessary task.

AIF medical officer Dr Charles Ryan supervised the Australian stretcher-bearers as they worked. Dr Ryan had an interesting past: he had served as a member of the Turkish army in wars against Serbia and Russia in the 1870s. In recognition, he had been decorated by the Ottoman Sultan for his gallant service.

During the ceasefire, Dr Ryan was accused of taking medals from dead Turkish soldiers. He spoke to his accusers in fluent Turkish, explaining how he had earned the medals and was warmly embraced by those who were now his country's enemies.

Other Australians had friendly encounters with Turkish soldiers, exchanging greetings, chocolate and cigarettes. It was, for most men on both sides, the first time they had seen their enemy face-to-face.

The scene, according to one chaplain, was of 'utmost courtesy' between foes.

The truce continued until 4:30 pm. It had been an opportunity to learn more about the other side, including making covert notes on their positions. It was also a welcome break from the fighting and an important health measure that reduced illness.

The Gallipoli truce on 24 May 1915, which was called for health reasons, has never been repeated. No other war or conflict has seen a truce like it.

In late December, the Anzacs were evacuated from the peninsula with very few casualties. By 20 January 1916, all Allied troops had been withdrawn.

Gallipoli was a failure for the Allies, with some 44,000 soldiers killed (from Great Britain, France, India, New Zealand and Australia) in an attempt to take the peninsula from the Ottomans. Australian losses amounted to more than 8,700 dead and almost 18,000 wounded. Victory came at a high price for the Ottoman Empire, which lost at least 85,000 men during the campaign.

The contribution of these original Anzacs is commemorated each year on 25 April.



*Gallipoli peninsula, Turkey, 22 May 1915. Captain Sam Butler, holding the white truce flag, leads the blindfolded Turkish envoy Major Kemal Ohri back to the Turkish lines. Major Ohri was representing the Turkish army in negotiations to arrange an armistice*

## **5: Female medical practitioners determined to serve**

On the night of 29 May 1918, German zeppelins were spotted in the skies near a British hospital camp at Abbeville, France. German planes had spied the camp earlier in the day, and now, in the dead of night, the Zeppelins used the light of a burning lorry to drop 3 bombs and spray machine-gun fire into the camp.

One of the bombs struck a trench in which some forty female members of the Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps (QMAAC) were sheltering. Eight of the women were killed outright, and more were wounded. One more later died of her injuries.

The Australian doctor Phoebe Chapple was among the women in that trench. Trained and registered in Adelaide, Phoebe had been eager to serve when war broke out in 1914. Her attempts to enlist were refused by the Australian Army, which would not approve women doctors serving. Phoebe, therefore, pursued the only other option available to her – she went to Britain at her own expense to aid the war effort directly. 'I felt that the larger duty did call me overseas', she said later.

Phoebe's frustration was not unique. There were 129 women practising as doctors in Australia in 1914. This low number was in part due to societal expectations and in part due to the restrictions on the admission of female medical practitioners, that had only been removed in 1881. None of those 129 female doctors were given permission to join the Australian Army. This resulted in 15 of them travelling overseas to serve in the medical corps of other countries.

Phoebe, for example, enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) in February 1917 and was appointed house surgeon to Cambridge Military Hospital, in Aldershot, with the honorary rank of captain and then major. The work was unrelenting. 'The convoys arrived continually from France, and more than 1,000 patients were accommodated at this busy centre', she recalled.

There were still prejudices to overcome. The female doctors were often treated akin to nurses. Phoebe and doctors like her were not formally recognised as officers, even though they were entitled to be. While the British Army was also the same, war forced that to change.

In November 1917, Phoebe was sent to France and confronted firsthand the 'terrible pitch' of the fighting. Air raids were frequent, and she and her colleagues often felt helpless to protect their patients. But Phoebe also denied feeling afraid:

*I did not feel it so, simply, I suppose, because there was so much to do. You just felt that you were in God's hands, and if you were killed while fulfilling the duty of the moment then it could not be helped, and was no more than those wonderful soldiers were doing incessantly.*

During the attack on 29 May 1918, Phoebe immediately attended to the 'duty of the moment'. She began to work her way through the trench, tending to the wounded even as the German assault continued. 'There was much work to be done, then, with limited means, to relieve the sufferers. Even telephone communications with headquarters were temporarily cut off'.

It was 2 o'clock in the morning when the attack ended.

Dr Phoebe Chapple was later awarded a Military Medal for her gallantry and devotion. She was the first female doctor to be awarded the medal, but some women, while praising Phoebe's actions, were critical that she had not been awarded the Military Cross, as she would have been entitled to, had she been a man: '*Sex qualifications in the winning of such decorations are both illogical and unfair*'.

Criticism like this, as well as recognition that women were just as able and willing to serve as men, would cause the slow evolution of how women were treated in the military. During the First World War, the British army eventually relaxed their restrictions and allowed female doctors. Australia, on the other hand, did not appoint a female doctor until 1943. Phoebe's example was salutary in this. She was the first Australian female doctor to be awarded the Military Medal, and in fact, the last until 2005, when Captain Carol Vaughan Evans was decorated for gallantry in Rwanda.





*Australian doctor and army surgeon Dr Phoebe Chapple MM, London, United Kingdom, c 1917*

## **6: Ghosts of Gallipoli**

The Gallipoli Campaign of the First World War stands as a testament to the human cost of conflict, and the enduring legacy of those who fought and died on its shores. Among the cliffs and rocky terrain of the Gallipoli peninsula, tales of the ghosts of fallen soldiers continue to echo through the records of history. This story tells of the haunting legacy of Gallipoli and the impact of war on the collective memory.

Gallipoli, located in present-day Türkiye, was the site of one of the hardest and most futile campaigns of the First World War. From 25 April 1915, soldiers from Australia, New Zealand, Britain, France, and other dominions, fought the Ottoman Empire for control of the Dardanelles Strait, with the Anzacs leaving in December of that year and the British departing in the following January. The unforgiving landscape, scarred by trench warfare and bloodshed, became the final resting place for thousands of soldiers from both sides.

Legend has it that the spirits of those who died on Gallipoli continue to haunt the battlefield. Stories from soldiers serving on Gallipoli reported sightings of ghostly apparitions believed to be the spirits of fallen comrades. These apparitions were said to appear at night, walking among the trenches and battlefields. Their voices carried on the wind like echoes of a bygone era. It was said that the spirits sometimes offered comfort or guidance to the living soldiers. Many people attributed them to the emotional and psychological toll of the war. Some soldiers believed that the spirits of their fallen comrades were watching over them. Others saw the apparitions as a manifestation of their own fears and anxieties.

Despite the horrors of war, these ghostly sightings provided a source of comfort and connection for the soldiers. They reinforced a sense of camaraderie and shared experience. The 'Ghosts of Gallipoli' have since become a part of Australian military folklore. They symbolise the bond between soldiers and the impact of war on the human psyche.

As we reflect on the legacy of Gallipoli, may we strive for a future where the echoes of war are replaced by the harmonies of peace.

Despite facing unimaginable hardships, the Anzacs displayed bravery and solidarity in the face of adversity. Their sacrifice has become a cornerstone of our national identity, commemorated annually on ANZAC Day.

Each year, on 25 April, Australians and New Zealanders gather to honour the Anzacs and pay tribute to those who died at Gallipoli.

Dawn services, wreath-laying ceremonies, and moments of silence serve as solemn reminders of the impact of war. Whether or not you believe in the ghosts of Gallipoli, they remain part of the Anzac experience and are another haunting reminder of the sacrifice of those who died during the ill-fated campaign.



*A soldier pays his respect at Lancashire Landing Cemetery, Gallipoli peninsula, Turkey, 1915*



# **RETURNED SERVICES LEAGUE ARMADALE SUB-BRANCH**

*Your RSL*