

HELLENIC ANZACS



Greeks and Anzacs WW2

From the

Australian Hellenic Council NSW Inc.

ANZAC DAY and HELLENISM

Australians all around the world mark 25 April as an unofficial national day. They remember all those who served in defence of Australia and its allies, in time of war and of peace.

As Australian Hellenes, it is our fourth national day, of equal importance to 25 March (Independence Day), 28 October (OHI Day) and 26 January (Australia Day).

Setting aside the mythology that has been built up around the events of 25 April 1915, every year Australians gather to remember the sacrifices of men and women across the last twelve decades. Since the South African (Boer) War of 1899-1902, Australians have served in conflicts in every corner of the world.

Many of them were our compatriots, Australian Hellenes.

It was war that led to the birth of the Australian Hellenic community in 1829. Seven freedom fighters from the War of Independence were deported to Sydney Cove, convicted of piracy. Whenever Hellas, Cyprus or Australia sounded the call to arms, Australian Hellenes answered.

When the Hellenes of Epiros, Macedonia, Thrace and the eastern Aegean Islands appealed for liberation during the Balkans Wars (1912-1913), Australian Hellenes crossed the world to serve.

When Australia responded to Great Britain's call for troops to go to knock the Ottoman Empire out of the war, Australian Hellenes were there.

SOME AUSTRALIAN HELLENES AT GALLIPOLI

Private Constantine Aroney 24 Battalion (born Kythera)

Private George Cretan 3 Battalion (born Crete)

Private Robert Alexander Krokos (Crococ) 10 Light Horse

Private Arthur Halkas 27 Battalion

Private Leonidas Manus 4 Battalion (father from Lesvos)

Corporal Jack Mark 3 Battalion (born Kephallonia)

Private Georgios Pappas DCM, 13 Battalion

Private Peter Rados 3 Battalion

Private Roy Ralph 5 Battalion (born Ithake)

Private Anastasios Rebea 27 Battalion (born Kogaga, Macedonia)

Lance Corporal John Zavitsanos 18 Battalion

Australian Hellenes honour the Second Generation ANZACs who fought to defend Hellas against Nazi aggression in 1941. Time and again, in conflict after conflict, before and since 1941, Digger and Pallikarri have served the same master: FREEDOM

Australian Hellenes remember the prisoners-of-war who witnessed the Hellenic, Armenian and Assyrian Genocides during World War One, the ANZACs who contributed to the relief efforts for the genocide survivors, the ANZACs who evaded the Nazi occupiers in Hellas, the Australians who rescued refugees during the Hellenic Civil War, the ANZACs who served with Hellenes in Korea, the ANZACs who served in Vietnam, the Federal Policemen who have served on Cyprus since 1964, the ANZACs and Hellenes who have served in the Persian Gulf.

Setting aside the mythologising about ANZAC Day, Australian Hellenes remember that it is thanks to the sacrifice of those who served that we have the Australia we live in today.

Αιώνια τους η Μνήμη - Lest We Forget





AUSTRALIA HELLENIC MEMORIAL

Anzac Parade, Canberra

The Australia Hellenic Memorial stands at the top of Anzac Parade in Canberra, close to the Australian War Memorial. It is one of many memorials set along this major ceremonial avenue, each recognising a facet of Australia's military history. Each year on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, these memorials become the setting for the gathering of thousands of visitors who come to the national capital to pay tribute to the courage and commitment of Australia's servicemen and women.

Dedicated in 1988, the Australia Hellenic Memorial commemorates all those who died in the Allied campaigns in Greece and Crete during 1941. The Memorial takes the shape of an amphitheatre in which a Doric column symbolizes the birth of civilization. The column is embossed with the cross of the Greek Orthodox Church, representing a hero's grave and epitomizing classical sophistication, in harsh contrast to a nearby bomb-damaged steel fragment representing the destructive forces of war. These elements stand on a mosaic-covered pavement, which is a graphic interpretation of the Greek mainland and outlying islands, with a jagged

flintstone rock outcrop representing the rugged coast of the Peloponnese.

Inscribed on the Memorial in Greek and English is the following text:

This Memorial commemorates all those who died in the Greek Campaign of World War II particularly during the battle for Crete, those who died at sea while serving with the Royal Australian Navy and the Merchant Marine in the Mediterranean Sea, members of the Royal Australian Air Force, women of the nursing services, special covert forces, Greek civilians who risked their lives in helping Australian and other Allied soldiers to safety, together with those who died on Greek soil during World War II.

