

25TH APRIL 2013

Commemorative booklet proudly presented by
Michael McCormack MP
Federal Member for Riverina



ARDLETHAN GALLANTRY

PEOPLE knew where they stood with James Verdon.

He had fair hair and blue eyes, was as brave as anyone but also a bit of a larrikin. A labourer from Ardlethan, he went to The Great War as a private, gained three promotions yet had his pay docked twice for being absent without leave, the second time for missing a church parade!

When it mattered most though, he was right amongst the thick of things and his comrades felt safe knowing he was alongside fighting with them.

Wounded in the left thigh during the 56th Battalion's attack on Villers-Bretonneux on 24 April 1918, Lance Sergeant Verdon was evacuated to the 10th General Field Hospital at Rouen, France, where he died three days later, aged 26.

He was buried in the nearby St Sever Cemetery, a man of courage ... taken way too early.



DIED OF WOUNDS: L/Sgt James Verdon

ANZAC LEGEND LIVES ON

ON 25 April each year Australians traditionally pause to pay respect to those who have served – especially those who died doing active duty.

ANZAC Day marks the first day of landings at Gallipoli 98 years ago when our best and bravest young men of the era disembarked from boats and waded ashore amidst a deadly hail of bullets from Turkish defenders.

This annual commemoration – our most significant national day – means different things to different people.

For ex-servicemen and women it is a chance to catch up with former colleagues and reminisce about days spent together training here and in conflicts abroad.

For people right across the country it is an opportunity to honour those – particularly the fallen – who sacrificed so much in the fight for freedom.

For families who have lost loved ones in conflicts – either in the distant past or more recently – ANZAC Day is a time to mourn and to remember.

For all of us ANZAC Day is an occasion to be grateful – to say thanks to the military personnel, indeed all those who played their part in keeping Australia

safe and also helping to make the world a more peaceful place.

The legend began in 1915 with the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps and continues to this day through to the men and women who proudly wear an Air Force, Army or Navy uniform.

This ANZAC Day, South West Slopes communities of the Riverina will again come to a silent standstill, paying solemn tribute to the Australians who paid the ultimate price of peace – their lives.

Increasing attendances, particularly of children, at regional ANZAC Day services shows the importance of ANZAC not only endures, but grows.

The ANZAC spirit will last the ages as will the enormous admiration and gratitude Australians share for those who went to war, many of whom did not make it back to the land and the people they loved so dearly.

Michael McCormack
MICHAEL McCORMACK MP
Federal Member for Riverina



REMEMBERED:
Victor Frewin's name liveth forevermore at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.



TEMORA TEACHER MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

VICTOR Joseph Frewin was the complete soldier.

They did not come any braver or tougher.

The Great War killing fields of the Western Front were far removed from the little classroom at peaceful Temora where this outstanding Australian taught country schoolchildren, but that is where he ultimately met his sad fate.

Tragically, it was an awful end to such a life of promise, with this gutsy 28-year-old being killed in action at Hangard Wood, south of Villers-Bretonneux, on 15 April 1918.

Poor Victor had been wounded in battle in France three times.

He suffered a compound fracture of his right humerus and a chest wound on 11 May 1916 and a bomb wound to the head and left arm at Butte de Warlencourt in the Somme on 22 February 1917; being transferred to hospital in England to recover both times.

Returning to France and promoted to Lieutenant, he was then unluckily wounded a third time, on 6 October 1917, yet pluckily remained on duty.

Gosford-born Victor had three brushes with death, each time living to tell the



VALLANT: Lt Victor Frewin

tale but this courageous and patched-up Digger finally fell during a push by his famed 18th Battalion which proved both costly and unsuccessful.

The men of the 18th regrouped and before the year was out made significant contributions to winning the war at Morlancourt and the Beaufort Line near St Quentin Canal.

Alas, however, Victor was gone and his parents Joseph and Harriet wept bitterly for their precious son and the children of Temora very much missed a man who was taken too soon.



TROOP SHIP: The 10,392-ton HMAT A8 Argylshire upon which Lt Victor Frewin sailed to do his war duty.

ILLABO'S BRAVERY

ILLABO'S contribution to The Great War effort was considerable with 73 from the district having their names remembered in the park on the corner of the Olympic Highway and Layton Street.

Of those valiant men, 14 paid the ultimate price for doing their duty ... their names inscribed on the village's stone obelisk memorial (pictured).

Labourer Donald MacKenzie, husband of Annie, unusually went to war twice, sailing with the 1st Infantry Battalion on HMAT *Afric* on 18 October 1914 but was discharged as medically unfit and sent home the following April. He signed on again and headed back to Europe with the 35th Battalion on HMAT *Multitudes* on 2 August 1917 but, sadly, was shot and killed by a sniper east of Villers-Bretonneux on 4 April 1918.



COVER: The Robinson family of Junee (from left) Kelly with her grandmother Maisie and parents Wayne and Lorraine at the Junee Reefs ANZAC Day service last year. Maisie lovingly holds a photograph and other war-time memorabilia of her uncle, Private Charles Mills, who died of wounds at Gallipoli in 1915. See feature story, centre pages.

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WAR HURT FAMILIES

COUNTRY towns particularly felt the ravages of World War I, losing many men from all walks of life.

Labourers and lawyers alike enlisted for active service ... they ate the same rations, wore the same uniform and the enemy's bullets, disease and shells were indiscriminate.

Outdoor workers were buried alongside those who had worked in offices in what became Europe's "silent cities" – the vast military cemeteries.

The war cut a dreadful swathe through communities across the young Australian nation, federated just 13 short years before the bloodshed began.

No family was spared from the heartbreak.

Temora teacher Victor Frewin's family members were still coming to terms with the shock of his loss when news filtered through that his cousin, Sapper Stanley Muddell of the 2nd Field Company Engineers, aged 31, died of dysentery at Damascus on 14 October 1918, less than a month before hostilities ceased.



MEMORIAL: Lt Victor Frewin is also immortalised on Temora's cenotaph.



LESLIE BLACK KIA



JOSEPH BROWN KIA



MARTIN DILLOW KIA



ALLEN HILLAM KIA



PETER KAHLEFELDT KIA



CHARLES MILLS KIA



JOHN O'DONNELL
MM WIA



ALBERT WHILES DOD



'THEY SHALL GROW NOT OLD, AS WE THAT ARE LEFT GROW OLD'

THE Great War sacrifices of the mighty men from Junee Reefs may have been made in the distant past yet still evoke strong feelings of admiration and respect each ANZAC Day at the splendid soldiers' memorial at the district hall.

Many of the locals who attend the moving service have close blood ties to those who went away to serve their nation.

Sadly, too many who took up arms did not return; their names chiselled into the granite monument upon which an impressive marble sentinel stands guard.

A wooden honour board (pictured left) inside the 1926-built hall lists names of the 30 public school pupils who did their duty; seven of whom lost their lives.

Junee Reefs counts amongst its finest John O'Donnell who enlisted at age 23 on 19 November 1914, undertook initial training in Sydney then sailed for Egypt before landing at Gallipoli on the afternoon of that historic first day – 25 April 1915.

Twice wounded in action, a gunshot wound to the shoulder at Gallipoli and a shell in the face in France in 1916, he

earned a Military Medal in 1917 and returned home with the rank of Sergeant the following year.

One of the saddest Gallipoli stories was that of the Alice and John Hancock's sons Thomas, 20, and Vivian, 25 – both Privates, both killed in action at Lone Pine between 6 and 9 August.

News of their deaths must have been shattering to the Barellan couple.

The Hancocks were cousins of Martin Dillon, a 21-year-old nephew of John O'Donnell, also killed at Gallipoli in August, the deadliest month of the whole campaign. Pte Dillon's official papers were marked "one of the many of whom no trace has ever been found".

Pte Gordon Davis, 31, was the first from the district to perish on the ill-fated peninsula, dying of wounds on May 3.

Pte Joseph Brown, 22, from Winchendon Vale was another to fall in the Lone Pine offensive, the same day as Pte Charles Mills, 20.

Boer War Veteran Pte Alfred Robbins, a 35-year-old farmer and horse breaker, died of his Gallipoli wounds

in the Greek hospital at Alexandria whilst Pte Albert Whiles, only 19, died of pneumonia at sea in 1915 en route to the war.

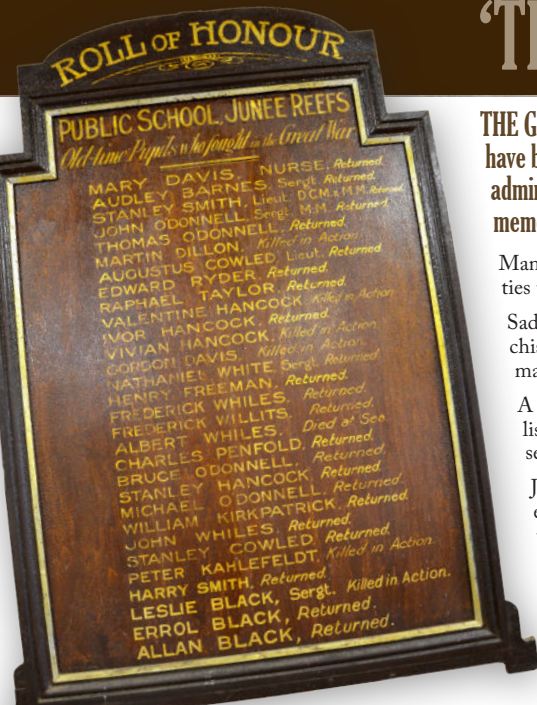
Junee Reefs lost five on the bloody battlefields of the Western Front: Pte Eric Ball, 23, at Villers-Bretonneux in 1918, Sgt Leslie Black, 27, near Fleurs in 1917, Pte Allen Hillam, 31, in France in 1918, Lance-Corporal Peter Kahlefeldt, 28, in France in 1918 and Pte John Moore, 24, at Lagnicourt in 1917.

The close-knit community mourned then and still remembers now.

(Above) PAYING TRIBUTE: Shane Logan plays the Reveille as the Australian flag is proudly hoisted by Don Walker at the 2012 ANZAC Day service at Junee Reefs-Ivor Hall. Chairman of the Hall Trust, Glenn Curry, is at the far right.

A wooden honour board (pictured far left) inside the hall lists names of the 30 Junee Reefs Public School pupils who did their duty; seven of whom lost their lives.

KEY: DOD Died of Disease, KIA Killed in Action, MM Military Medal, WIA Wounded in Action.





ON DUTY AT ARIAH PARK

HE KEEPS watch over Ariah Park ... a Great War Australian infantryman in resplendent white Carrara Italian marble.

More importantly, he stands guard over the revered names of the 290 from the district who served in the two World Wars and Vietnam.

The monument (pictured below) indicates 35 of the 139 locals who went to The Great War died on active service.

This fine memorial, on the intersection of Coolamon and Pitt Streets and Mary Gilmore Way was unveiled on 15 October 1919 by Chaplain Major William McKenzie.

His reputation as a dedicated and fearless Salvation Army officer grew during his time at Gallipoli, earned him the nickname "Fighting Mac" and (unusually for a Chaplain) the award of a Military Cross.

The names of the nine Ariah Park women who served in World War II are also listed.



WEST WYALONG SOLDIER LOST AT SEA

OF THE many tragic tales of World War II, amongst the saddest was that of the Japanese ship *Tamaboko Maru*, the sinking of which cost gallant West Wyalong soldier William Smith his life.

Private Smith had been taken Prisoner of War and was with hundreds of men being transported to Nagasaki aboard the 6700-ton vessel in a convoy comprising a dozen ships escorted by two Corvettes, a minelayer and a whaling ship.

Just 10 minutes before midnight on 24 June 1944, about 40 miles south-west of their destination, those on board the *Tamaboko Maru* were abruptly awoken by the sound of an explosion.

A ship in the fleet had been torpedoed by an American submarine and within seconds another torpedo pierced the *Tamaboko Maru* just forward of the bridge on the starboard side, blowing the covers off the hatches.

This explosion must have killed many men who had been sleeping on the hatches and numbers of others on deck were struck by falling debris.

The strike left two large holes in the deck of the hold and many men, rushing for the ladders which had been blown away, would have fallen into the cargo.

Other men fled towards the life belts and were trapped.

Escape by those below was made via the iron ladders under the hatches, or, for the most part, by being washed out by the sea.

The ship disappeared within two minutes.

Of the 267 Australians from Java and Timor sent to Japan via Singapore and Takao, in Formosa, on the *Tamaboko Maru*, only 73 survived and were taken to Nagasaki.

Born at Wyalong on 14 January 1920, William Edward Smith enlisted at Paddington on 19 September 1941 - a fresh-faced 21-year-old seeking to do his duty for his country.

He was posted to the 3 Reserve Motor Transport Company at the time of his capture and death.



BRAVE: PoW William Smith

IN REMEMBRANCE: The Memorial Arch and avenue of trees honours West Wyalong's fallen.

2013 ANZAC DAY SERVICE TIMES AND VENUES

SOUTH WEST SLOPES:

ARDLETHAN (Includes Beckom)

11am Service at Memorial Hall, Ariah St.

ARIAH PARK (Includes Quandary)

10am March along Coolamon St from Bowling Club to cenotaph for main service.

BARELLAN (Includes Binya, Moomboodool)

2.45pm Meet at the Barellan & District War Memorial Club, 62 Bendee St.

3pm Service at cenotaph on corner of Boree and Mulga Streets.

BARMEDMAN

10.45am March commences along Queen Street to Memorial Park.

11am Service at Memorial Park.

BETHUNGRA (Includes Frampton, Illabo)

6.30am Dawn service at Bethungra Memorial Park, Baylis Street/Olympic Highway. Catafalque party will be in attendance. Special service for 20th anniversary will feature Lighthorse group from the Integrated Servicepeople's Association. In the event of wet weather the service will move to St Augustine's Church.

JUNEE (Includes Illabo, Wantabadgery)

5.45am Dawn service in Broadway.
10.30am March from Memorial Park, Peel Street to Railway Square, two-minute ceremony at plaque on Broadway. March finishes at cenotaph, Broadway.

10.45am Ceremony at cenotaph, Broadway.

JUNEE REEFS

3pm Wreath laying conducted by Junee RSL Sub-Branch at Junee Reefs-Ivor Hall, Junee Reefs Road.

MIRROOL

9am Service at cenotaph in Ariah St.
9.45am Morning tea in Ariah Street.

SPRINGDALE

9am Introduction by Colonel Pat Thorne AM RL at cenotaph, Burley Griffin Way.

9.10am Guest speaker senior RAAF representative.

9.15am Fly-over by Australian-built World War II plane Wirraway.

9.20am L/Cpl Peter Kahlefeldt Scholarship Speech: Tom Reid of Temora High Year 10 about WWI Digger Pte William Reid. Musical interlude.

9.30am Morning tea.

TALLIMBA

3pm March along Pope Street. Service to follow in Tallimba Hall.

TEMORA (Includes Reefton)

6am Dawn service at cenotaph,

Callaghan Park, Loftus Street.

10.50am March from opposite Courthouse.

11am Service, cenotaph, Callaghan Park.

UNGARIE

6am Dawn service, RSL Park, Ungarie Street.

9am Service at Cemetery at graves of ex-servicemen and women.

10.30am Assemble "Pink Shop" Wollongough Street, walk to RSL Park.

11am Service. Flag raising. Last Post.

WAGGA WAGGA

5.45am Dawn service arranged by Legacy at the cenotaph, Victory Memorial Gardens, Baylis Street.

6.30am Pilgrimage to Wagga Wagga War Cemetery, Kooringal Road.

10.30am Baylis Street march begins.

11am Wreath laying at Victory Memorial Gardens cenotaph. Address by WWII Veteran Jack Calder, a Rat of Tobruk and PoW

WEST WYALONG (Includes North Yalgogrin, Wamboyne, Weethalle, Wyalong)

6am Dawn service at Services and Citizens' Club Cenotaph.

8.45am Wreath-laying ceremony at cenotaph at Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Neeld Street, Wyalong.

10.15am March, Main St, West Wyalong.

11am Wreath laying at S&C Club.

CAPITAL CITY SERVICES: CANBERRA

5.30am Dawn service at the Australian War Museum (suggested arrival from 4.30am onwards).

6.30am The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander commemorative ceremony at the Aboriginal Memorial Plaque on the side of Mount Ainslie.

10.15am National ceremony at the Australian War Memorial and Veterans' march (suggested arrival 9.45am).

SYDNEY

4.15am Dawn service at the cenotaph, Martin Place.

8.30am Wreath-laying ceremony at the cenotaph, Martin Place.

9am ANZAC Day march starting at Martin Place/George Street/Bathurst Street/Hyde Park.

12.30pm Commemorative service, ANZAC Memorial Park, Hyde Park South.

1pm Aboriginal ANZAC Day march in Redfern.

5pm Sunset service at the cenotaph, Martin Place.



ANZAC'S 1ST ANNIVERSARY

THIS magnificent old photograph (above) is captioned "ANZAC Day Sydney 1916" and shows a huge throng of people lining the street straining to get a glimpse of the brave soldiers marching by.

Flags of Allied nations hang proudly as these volunteers file past, no doubt soon to board a troopship to take them to war.

The 25th of April was officially proclaimed ANZAC Day in 1916.

Marches were held across Australia and in Sydney convoys of cars carried wounded soldiers from Gallipoli, with nurses in attendance.

PLEASE NOTE: All times and venues have been supplied in good faith by various RSL Sub-Branch officials and were correct at the time of publication. Every care has been taken to ensure as many services as possible have been included. For verification of other services please contact your local RSL Sub-Branch.



RECORD WRITING ENTRIES

BY FAR the most entries for the Riverina school students' ANZAC Day writing competition were received this year. Hundreds of poems and short stories were submitted from right across the region in the third annual competition.

Authors of the best secondary and primary entries received book prizes from the Australian War Memorial with Ross Coulthart's superb *The Lost Diggers* on offer for the senior students and the splendid picture book *A Day to Remember* by Jackie French with illustrations by Mark Wilson presented to the younger winners.



Each student who sent in an entry will receive a commemorative signed certificate. Winning entries from the South West Slopes feature below.

WEETHALLE WARRIORS

THERE are 99 names on Weethalle Memorial Hall's two honour boards (pictured below) commemorating locals who served in World War II.

Of those, six lost their lives, amongst them courageous Sapper Lance Boardman, killed in action aged 25 in Java on 4 March 1942.

Ganmain-born Boardman is also remembered on the Singapore Memorial, in the Kranji War Cemetery, where the names of 24,000 Allied airmen and soldiers, who have no known grave, are recorded.

Private Walter Bedford, 22, died as a Prisoner of War in the Thailand Camp on 26 September 1943.

Pte Robert Paginton, 33, had been in the Army less than a year when he died on 22 June 1941 and was buried in the Tobruk War Cemetery.

Lieutenant George Parkinson, 25, died on 16 August 1943 and was laid to rest in the inland New Guinean village of Soputa, his remains later exhumed with others buried there and re-interred in the Bomana War Cemetery, Port Moresby.



PRIMARY WINNER: Jack De Britt, 12, Year 6, Wyalong Public School

ANZAC DAY

Australian citizens are brave to sign up.

New Zealand was a small country brave to enter the war.

Zephyrs blew through the poppies as we remember the lost.

Appreciate men that have fallen, lost their families young and old.

Create peace and experience for our children, let us never go back to war.

Do them good for they have fought for us, remember all the lost.

Ammunition strayed through our fellow men and allies from the enemy side.

Youthful men held their nation's ground, saved the young and old to keep our faithful land.

MEMORIES

IT'S the breaking dawn of another ANZAC Day morning. I sit rocking slowly on my old, wooden chair, looking back on my life with a red poppy in my hand.

I remember how I would sit with my father and watch my brothers playfully wrestle on the grassy banks of the Murrumbidgee River.

Later, we would build cubbies and catch yabbies. The river was an important part of so many wonderful memories.

I remember the saddest time of my life. Waving goodbye to my eldest brother who was off to war, with his shiny, new uniform, polished boots and a big smile. He was a young man off to explore foreign lands. A short time later, a letter would arrive to say he would never be coming back.

Lost in my grief, I spent hours in this chair overlooking the river. My much-loved brother was gone forever; such a waste of a young innocent life.

Time passing helped heal my broken heart. Eventually I had a family of my own. Once again, I felt happiness and joy as I watched my family grow by the river, just like my brothers and I did many years ago.

I'm an old lady now. I spend my days in this trusty old chair watching over my friend, the Murrumbidgee. Remembering, dozing peacefully, feeling the breeze gently blowing my hair.

I've seen the best and worst of what life can offer. Lest we forget.



SECONDARY WINNER: Reagan Hetherington, 13, Year 8, West Wyalong High School