



25TH APRIL 2011

Commemorative booklet proudly presented by

Michael McCormack MP

Federal Member for Riverina





REGION GAVE IT'S ALL IN WAR TIME

WHEN the call came in our nation's greatest hour of need, the mighty men – and women too – from the Snowy Mountains region of the Riverina responded magnificently.

They enlisted in their hundreds – patriotically, voluntarily and most of all enthusiastically. Willing to do their bit. Ready to serve. Prepared to die if necessary.

They boarded ships which took them to faraway lands where they fought with vim, vigour and valour.

Many, sadly, did not return. They were buried in foreign fields, often where they fell... some with markers over their hastily dug graves, many without.

The names of those brave souls who paid the ultimate price and lost their lives are chiselled into monuments both here and abroad – their sacrifice made, their duty done, their memory eternal.

Gallant sons and daughters of Adelong, Batlow, Coolac, Gundagai, Rosewood, Tooma, Tumbarumba, Tumut and surrounding districts who went to war to uphold the noblest quest of all – freedom.

Freedom for people overseas who desperately needed help, whose countries had been taken by force and whose lives were at risk.

Australians have always put service above self in the pursuit of peace.

It is the just and right thing to do. It is the way of the Digger... the ANZAC spirit.

This booklet commemorates that remarkable sense of courage and responsibility which courses through the veins of all who have worn an Australian military uniform and those who continue the proud tradition today.

On April 25 each year – the anniversary of the 1915 Gallipoli landings by the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps – communities large and small appropriately and respectfully mark our most important national day by conducting services and marches.

Times and venues for local ANZAC events are included in this publication as well as two moving pieces by local schoolchildren who have eloquently written about what ANZAC Day in the Riverina means to them.

Michael McCormack

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Federal Member for Riverina



GUNDAGAI REMEMBERS

GUNDAGAI'S many monuments will ensure for all time its military men and women will never be forgotten.

The town is dotted with memorials including the one (pictured) at the intersection of Sheridan and Virgil Streets and Railway Parade.

This large red and grey granite and concrete obelisk contains 1133 names of those who fought in the two World Wars, Korea and Vietnam.

Its foundation stone was laid by Major-General Charles Cox on 24 May 1928.

Gundagai's main street also has a Boer War monument while near the town's famous Rugby League field, appropriately named ANZAC Park, there is an impressive dedication to locals who served.

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL WELL WORTH A VISIT

"HERE is their spirit, in the heart of the land they loved; and here we guard the record which they themselves made."

This is what Charles Bean, who played an essential role in the creation of the Australian War Memorial, had to say about the national military shrine in 1948.

Bean's idea was to set aside a place in Australia where families and friends could grieve for those buried far away and difficult to visit – a place which would also serve to contribute to the understanding of war itself.



The iconic Canberra museum was opened in 1941 and today welcomes nearly a million visitors, a quarter of those children, annually.

Entry is free (donations welcome) and the museum is open 10am-5pm every day except Christmas Day.

Visit www.awm.gov.au for more details.

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A SILENT SENTINEL, HE STANDS STONY-FACED... ALWAYS ON DUTY... FOREVER ON GUARD.

NIGHT DUTY:

The rescued soldier commemorates the service of those from Grahamstown and Shepardstown.

EVER-WATCHFUL:

Adelong's other sentry stands atop a plinth honouring the town's war heroes in Memorial Park.



BRAVE BOY FROM BATLOW

FIVE Batlow-born soldiers went to the Vietnam War but sadly only four survived the conflict which for Australia lasted from 1962-73.

Maurice George Beasley, Alan George Gardner, Paul Anthony Gow and Mitchell Ross Oddy all returned to loved ones after their duty was done.

Trooper Albert Lesley Casey, however, was killed in action aged 20 a week short of just three months in the B Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps.

He is remembered on the honour rolls on his hometown War Memorial (pictured) as are the 17 Great War and 12 World War II locals who died serving their country and community.

From the time of the arrival of Australia's first military personnel in July 1962 almost 60,000 Australians, including ground troops and members of the Air Force and Navy, served in Vietnam; 521 died as a result of the war and more than 3000 were wounded.

ON GUARD AT ADELONG

PERHAPS it is no coincidence he looks over Adelong one way with the small town's other marble sentry facing him, albeit several streets away in Memorial Park, as if they are watching over the good folk who live there from both directions.

The main street statue (which features on the cover) is on a pedestal with four white columns and the names of the 72 brave men from Grahamstown and Shepardstown engraved into dark grey granite tablets and highlighted in black.

Just how this magnificent monument came to take up residence in Adelong is a remarkable tale combining all the elements of community spirit, loss, survival, perseverance and, most of all, the true essence of ANZAC Day... remembrance.

The memorial, without its soldier, was first erected at Grahamstown in 1921 to honour the district's finest who went off to fight in The Great War, 14 of whom never returned.

William Patrick Daniel O'Brien, a former Tumut Mayor, rallied people for subscriptions to the original memorial.

Doubtless he was driven by the sadness of having lost two sons, Orlando in the Battle of Messines in Belgium in 1917 and lighthorseman Assal in Palestine just nine months later.

Master sculptor Francis Rusconi of Gundagai built the memorial which was located in the Shepardstown school grounds and was officially opened by Mr O'Brien amid solemnity yet fanfare for it was an important occasion.

Those in attendance immediately set about fund raising for a statue to adorn the monument and Mr Rusconi was again commissioned for the project which was completed in 1922 with Mr O'Brien doing the unveiling honours once more.

The soldier stood proudly until 1968 when the school closed and with the site sold, the monument was dismantled and taken

to Adelong with plans to re-erect it in Memorial Park. Instead, it remained in pieces for a couple of years until shifted to the Adelong Shire Depot where a council worker placed the base in a corner of the yard and, keen to practise his gravedigging skills, laid the soldier to rest "six feet under" nearby.

Local historian Alan Turner, whilst researching Grahamstown's World War I contribution in 2001, became fascinated by the monument's disappearance.

An article was published in the *Tumut and Adelong Times* and soon after the long lost soldier was exhumed, minus his gun.

A matching rifle was sourced in Europe and Kell and Denson stonemason Andrew James painstakingly restored the soldier and the monument to its present glory in time for its latest tour of duty alongside the Adelong Services and Citizens and Bowling Club, carried out after the official re-unveiling on ANZAC Day 2008.



RECRUITS: The Wagga Wagga Kangaroos before they set off on their march which would lead them to Europe's battlefields. John Ryan is in the back row, fourth from the left. Photograph courtesy The Kangaroo March by Sherry Morris and Harold Fife.

SALUTING PRIVATE RYAN



(Above) REMEMBERED: The memorials in Richmond Park, Tumut, where Pte John Ryan VC is honoured.

(Left) FOR VALOUR: John Ryan's Victoria Cross.

HE IS Tumut's greatest hero. Unmistakably so.

A man unafraid to do more than his duty who unflinchingly risked his life in an act of remarkable and selfless bravery.

A recipient of the nation's highest honour – the Victoria Cross – and deservedly so.

Edward John Francis Ryan, known as John or even more sentimentally as Jack, was the right man in the wrong place at the right time.

His calm, cool temperament, ability to rally and lead others and derring-do turned a desperate situation into a victorious one and earned Pte Ryan a place in the pantheon of Australia's greatest soldiers.

Certainly his VC is proudly on display in the Australian War Memorial's Hall of Valour where it belongs – alongside those awarded to other Diggers who by their actions earned an honoured place in history.

John Ryan was just an ordinary man who performed extraordinary feats in the heat of battle. He neither sought benefit nor gained any later in life from the military fame he achieved on the afternoon of 30 September 1918.

His decoration was earned during an assault on the famous Hindenburg Line as the 55th Australian Infantry Battalion attacked near Bellicourt, France.

Pte Ryan's VC citation best describes his bravado:

"In the initial assault on the enemy's positions, Private Ryan went forward with great dash and determination and was one of the first to reach the enemy trench.

"His exceptional skill and daring inspired his comrades and, despite heavy fire, the hostile garrison was soon overcome and the trench occupied.



"The enemy then counter-attacked, and succeeded in establishing a bombing party in the rear of the position.

"Under fire from front and rear, the position was critical, and necessitated prompt action.

"Quickly appreciating the situation, he organised and led the men near him with bomb and bayonet against the enemy bombers, finally reaching the position with only three men."

Although outnumbered, the party gained the upper hand before Pte Ryan alone rushed the enemy with bombs, forcing a hurried retreat by the Germans who suffered heavily as they fled across No Man's Land.

His action enabled the moment to be seized and the trench to be retaken.

By then, however, Pte Ryan had been badly wounded, having sustained a machine-gun bullet in his right shoulder.

"A particularly dangerous situation had been saved by this gallant soldier, whose example of determined bravery and initiative was an inspiration to all,"

according to his citation which appeared in the *London Gazette* on Boxing Day 1918.

Hospitalised for five weeks in Trouville, France, Pte Ryan recovered sufficiently to get "Blighty" leave in England for Christmas where he read of his VC decoration.

Imagine how honoured this humble Riverina labourer felt when on 22 May 1919 he received his VC medal from King George V at Buckingham Palace.

He headed back to Australia aboard HMAT *Euripides* in early September that year and was discharged from the Australian Imperial Force on 10 January 1920.

Described by *The Sydney Morning Herald* as "a thin lithe man with a smiling face", John Ryan had performed the greatest of deeds in the worst of wars.

Born at Tumut on 9 February 1890, John Ryan was the second son of Michael and his wife Eugenia.



He enlisted on 1 December 1915 at Wagga Wagga and marched out that day with 87 others, known as Kangaroos, passing through Harefield, Juneec, Illabo and on to Sydney, arriving on 7 January. By then their ranks had swollen to 213 members with *The Daily Telegraph* hailing them as "men of firm purpose and steady resolve".

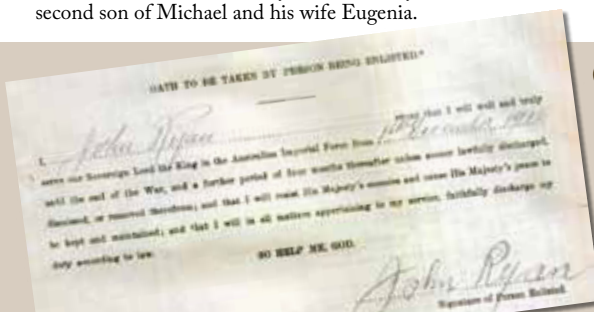
Pte Ryan sailed for France, leaving Sydney on 14 April 1916 on HMAT *Ceramic*.

His younger brother Malcolm served as a Trooper with the 6th Light Horse in the last year of the war.

Unfortunately, the post-war years were not kind to John Ryan and on 16 August 1935 *The Age* ran a story that, carrying a swag, the VC recipient had walked into a Mildura office and asked for work, explaining that he had hitch-hiked from Balranald and that he had been on the road for the past four years.

He was hired by the local council before more permanent work was found for him in a Melbourne insurance company.

He died of pneumonia aged 51 in Royal Melbourne Hospital on 3 June 1941 and was buried with military honours in the Springvale Cemetery. His sister Phylis Grant of Yass presented John Ryan's VC to the Australian War Memorial in November 1967.



(Top Left) **VALLANT:**

Tumut's VC recipient John Ryan, a hero for the ages.

(Left) **OATH:**

John Ryan's enlistment where he signed up to do his duty.

(Top Right) **OFF TO WAR:**

John Ryan sailed to Europe on HMAT Ceramic.

(Bottom Right) **SAILING HOME:**

He returned aboard HMAT Euripides.



TUMBARUMBA'S COMMITMENT

TUMBARUMBA'S dedication to its nation's military efforts has been extraordinary.

The splendid monuments in the park on the corner of Bridge and Winton Streets commemorate the loyal service given.

Names of the 245 Great War locals are inscribed in gold lettering in black marble (pictured) including 49 who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Of those, five Diggers: Colin Cramond, John Downie, Ralph Lees, James McAulay and Gordon Squire, lost their lives at Gallipoli in 1915.

A total of 414 members of the military had Tumbarumba connections in World War II, Korea and Vietnam and of those, 17 perished.

Across the street is the town's Returned Soldiers' Memorial Hall, established in 1936.



(Above) *DOG FIGHT: Aerial combat over the English Channel as depicted in RAAF Saga (1944).*

(Right) *BRAVE: Fresh-faced Arthur Roberts wears his uniform proudly.*



COOLAC'S TOP GUN

ARTHUR Donald Roberts was a dashing, handsome, young airman who fitted every bit into the Top Gun mould.

He was only 19 years of age when he enlisted with the Royal Australian Air Force in Sydney just four days after ANZAC Day in 1940.

Born at Greenwich on Sydney's lower North Shore, he was the son of Dudley and Ida Roberts.

He was living at the time at Beecroft in northern Sydney when he joined the RAAF.

World War II was still in its first year when this wide-eyed teenager signed up for what he hoped would be the adventure of a lifetime.

No doubt this fine individual, whose profession was a clerk, also answered his country's call out of patriotism and a sense of duty for the greater good – the desire to ensure freedom was restored to

a troubled Europe and the protection of Australia.

Once posted overseas, Roberts was seconded to the Royal Air Force's famed 615 Squadron, a fighting force which became popularly known as "Churchill's Own".

The squadron's Honorary Air Commodore was none other than the British wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

You had to be among the best of the best to fly with this unit which took part in the early actions of the Battle of Britain.

Pilot Officer Roberts, flying a Hurricane, was not seen again after being shot down in combat over the English Channel on 27 September 1941.

His death was listed as "officially presumed".

At the time of his death PO Roberts was based out of the airbase at RAF Northolt, established in 1915 and which operates to this day.

The base is located about 10 kilometres north of London Heathrow Airport.

His devastated Dad donated the gates leading to the Coolac Memorial Hall, with a black granite panel set into one of the brick piers recording PO Roberts's sacrifice.



MEMORIAL: Airman Arthur Roberts is honoured at Coolac Memorial Hall.

2011 ANZAC DAY SERVICE TIMES AND VENUES

ADELONG

9.45am Pilgrimage to Adelong Cemetery to lay flowers on graves of recently deceased servicemen and women.

10.45am March.

11am Wreath Laying and Service, Memorial Park Cenotaph.

11.45am Small Service at Grahamstown-Shepardstown Monument, Tumut St.

BATLOW

6am Dawn Service at Cenotaph.

3pm March from RSL to Cenotaph.

3.15pm Service.

GUNDAGAI (Includes Coolac, Mount Horeb, Tumbalong)

6am Dawn Service, ANZAC Walk.

6.20am Dedication of new World War II Monument.

10.30am March from Family Hotel, Sheridan St.

11am Main Service, Cenotaph, intersection of Sheridan and Virgil St's and Railway Pde.

NANGUS

10.30am March and Service at park.

TALBINGO

6.30am Dawn Service, Cenotaph in Miles Franklin Park.

TUMBARUMBA (includes Jingellic, Khancoban, Rosewood, Tooma)

6am Dawn Service, District War Memorial, cnr of Bridge and Winton St's.

6.20am Travel to cemetery, lay wreaths on graves of ex-servicemen who have died during past year.

10.30 March.

11am Main Service.

TUMBLONG

9am Service.

TUMUT (Includes Brungle, Lacmactalac)

6am Dawn Service, Cenotaph in Richmond Park, cnr of Russell, Capper and Robertson St's.

10.30am March from Wynyard St.

11am Main Service.

WAGGA WAGGA

5.45am Dawn Service, Cenotaph in Victory Memorial Gardens, Baylis St followed by Service at Wagga Wagga War Cemetery, Kooringal Rd.

10.30am Baylis St March begins.

11am Wreath Laying, Victory Memorial Gardens Cenotaph.

CAPITAL CITY SERVICES: CANBERRA

5.30am Dawn service at the Australian War Memorial (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 (suggested arrival 9.45am).

SYDNEY

4.15am Dawn Service at the Cenotaph in Martin Place.

8.30am Wreath-Laying Ceremony at the Cenotaph in Martin Place.

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

12:30pm Commemorative Service at the ANZAC Memorial in Hyde Park South.

1pm Aboriginal ANZAC Day March in Redfern.

5pm Sunset Service at the Cenotaph in Martin Place.



BISCUITS TO KEEP 'EM SOLDIERING ON

THE famous ANZAC Biscuit came about, so legend goes, because mothers, wives and girlfriends feared their men overseas were not getting sufficient nutritional value.

Food supplies had to be shipped to Great War battle-fronts and naval transportation was slow, so a recipe was formulated for a biscuit which would last the distance and pass the taste test.

Ingredients

- 1 cup each of plain flour, sugar, rolled oats and coconut.
- 115 grams (4 oz) butter.
- 1 tablespoon treacle (golden syrup).
- 2 tablespoons boiling water (add a little more water if mixture is too dry).
- 1 teaspoon bi-carbonate soda.

Method

1. Grease biscuit tray and pre-heat oven to 180°C.
2. Combine dry ingredients.
3. Melt together butter and golden syrup. Combine water and bi-carbonate soda – add to butter mix.
4. Mix butter mixture and dry ingredients.
5. Drop teaspoons of mixture onto tray allowing room for spreading.
Bake for 10-15 minutes or until golden. Allow to cool on tray for a few minutes before transferring to cooling racks.

*Makes about 35 biscuits.

Recipe provided by Bob Lawson, an ANZAC at Gallipoli. Source: Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au

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.



SCHOOLCHILDREN'S THOUGHTS

RIVERINA primary and secondary school students were invited to enter a writing competition "What ANZAC Day in the Riverina means to me."

Hundreds of entries were received with the ones judged most outstanding reprinted on this page and their authors receiving ANZAC-related book prizes.

All who submitted an entry will receive a commemorative certificate.

EARLY START TO SPECIAL DAY

LONG before the Sun's up we rise and shine, an early start to the day.

A brush of the hair, a "Come on" from Dad, in our car and on our way.

We head into Tumut for the Dawn Service, the cold air hits our face.

There are many people paying respect, this is a special place.

We return to Adelong to march with the school, we end up at the park.

Nearly everyone in town is there, for this is a special day you should mark.

We lay our school wreath and pay our respect for those who served in the war.

For those who stand around us and those who didn't come home, they remain in our thoughts for evermore.

Let We Forget.

*Holly Uhr, age 11, Year 6
Adelong Public School*



PAYING RESPECTS

ANZAC Day is a special and sad day to remember the soldiers who fought in the war.

It means a lot to me because my great uncle Sam fought in World War II. He's a hero to me, and made me proud.

I'm more than happy to go down to the War Memorial to pay my respects to the soldiers and to give my thanks. I also lay a wreath and I enjoy the barbecue lunch.

*Nicholas Radford, 13, Year 7,
Tumbarumba High School*

EVENT WITH REAL MEANING

EVER since I have started going to school when I was 5 years old, I have continuously been asked: "What does ANZAC Day mean to you?"

Until now, I have never actually stopped to put thought into what ANZAC Day is really about – its real meaning.

To some people, ANZAC Day is just a day of a minute's silence on 25 April, topped off with a snack of ANZAC Biscuits.

But from my point of view, I see ANZAC Day as a very emotional event – a day to remember all who fought in the Army.

I see ANZAC Day as a day which will always be remembered, for its significance, history and tradition.

It makes me proud to think of all the Australians and New Zealanders who were brave enough to go through the gruesome wars, with their lives at risk, just to battle for their countries.

Year after year at ANZAC ceremonies, I can always see the great amount of respect that goes towards the thousands of men and women who gave their service.

As I get older, I seem to understand the true meaning of ANZAC Day more and how emotional the event can be for different families.

Whether it was a loss of a grandparent, parent, brother or sister, loss of a loved one back in war is like losing a loved one now – death could come around the corner anytime.



I believe ANZAC Day is more than just a memory of those who have fallen during wartime in support of their country; I see it as a day of peace.

In conclusion, next time someone asks me: "What does ANZAC Day mean to you?" I would say:

"ANZAC Day means a time of remembrance to me. I think of ANZAC Day as a day of remembrance and thanks to all the brave soldiers in the war who protected not only me, but Australia and New Zealand."

So I am proud to be living in a country where I am protected by the brave people from the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

*Esther Hampton, (Above) 13, Year 8
McAuley Catholic Central School, Tumut*



BOOK PRIZE:
Riverina MP Michael McCormack presents the primary age winner Holly Uhr, 11 with the book Simpson and his Donkey as Adelong Public School pupils Blake Maber and Raymond McDonald, both 10, proudly hold their certificates and retiring Principal Ted Conroy looks on.