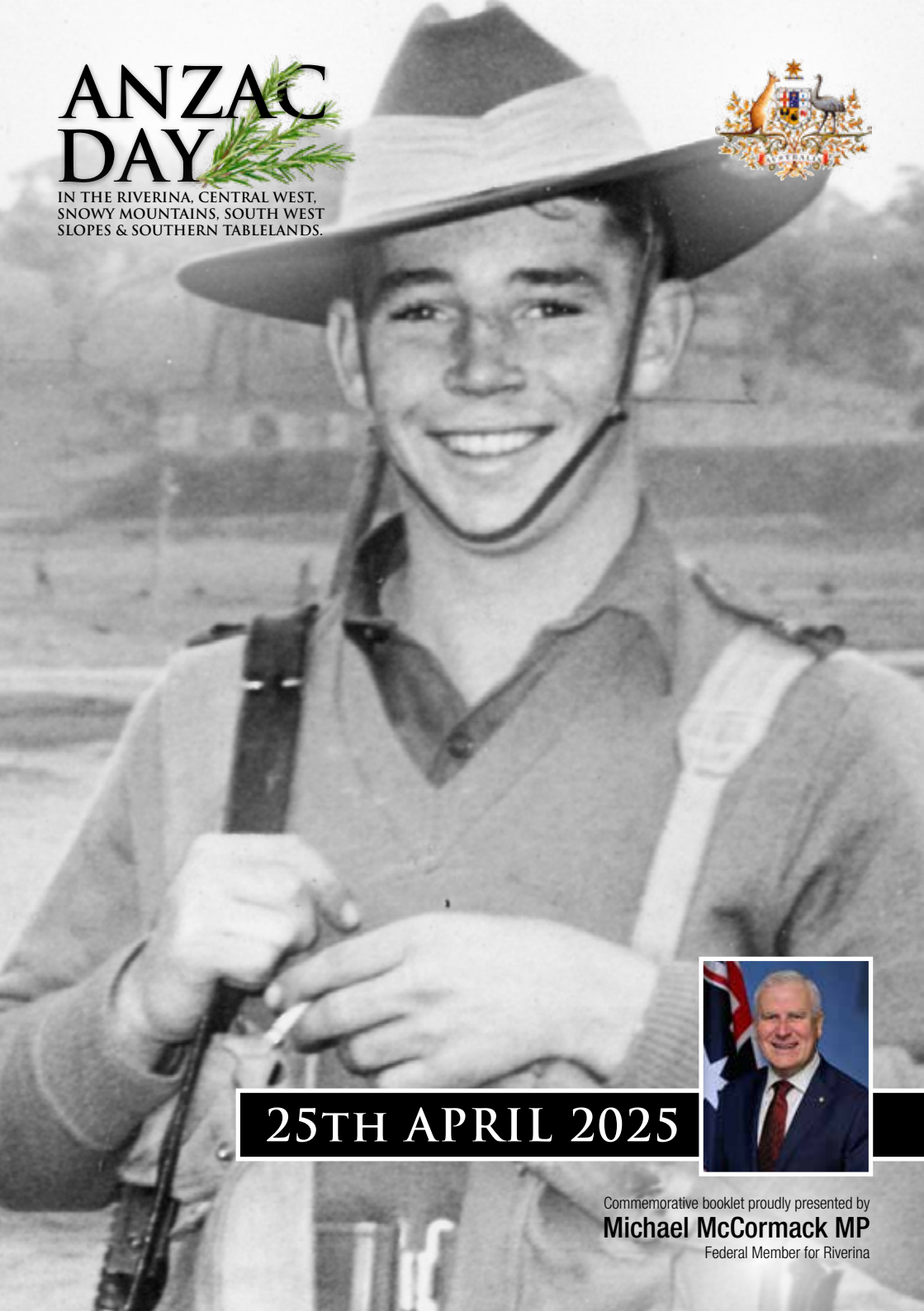


ANZAC DAY

IN THE RIVERINA, CENTRAL WEST,
SNOWY MOUNTAINS, SOUTH WEST
SLOPES & SOUTHERN TABLELANDS.



25TH APRIL 2025



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



HEROES ALL: Riverina VCs (from left) William Jackson, John Ryan, John Edmondson, Reg Rattey and Richard Norden.

RIVERINA'S FAMOUS FIVE

RIVERINA'S proud military heritage was enriched on Remembrance Day 2024 when Gundagai's Richard Norden was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for Australia.

In history, only 102 Australians have been awarded the nation's highest military honour.

Calls for his Distinguished Conduct Medal awarded for conspicuous bravery and valour from actions in the Vietnam War to be upgraded had intensified in recent years.

Halls and cenotaphs across the local region memorialise those whose service and sacrifice will never be forgotten.

Amongst those names immortalised on wooden boards and in bronze on monuments are many whose lives were cut cruelly short protecting others.

Richard Norden is one of those and whilst he did not die wearing the uniform of his country, he lost his life at just 24 years young as a serving Police officer on active duty, just four years after his battlefield deeds.

Doing the right thing and putting others first were the hallmarks of this courageous man.

Now he is in the pantheon of this nation's finest, where he belongs.

Our district has proudly produced five VC recipients: Australia's youngest ever awardee Corporal John

William Alexander Jackson, aged 17 at the time, of Gunbar, for gallantry near Armentières in France in 1916; Private Edward John Francis Ryan, 28, Tumut, Hindenburg Defences, France, 1918; Corporal John Hurst Edmondson, 26, Wagga Wagga, Tobruk, Libya, 1941; Sergeant Reginald Roy Rattey, 26, Barmedman, Buin Road in South Bougainville, 1945; and now Private Richard Leslie Norden, 19, Gundagai, Biên Hòa, Bình Du'ong Province, South Vietnam, 1968.

Riverina residents always attend ANZAC Day services in large numbers and this year's commemorations will be especially poignant and special given Pte Norden's recognition.

Deserved as Pte Norden was for this great acknowledgement, knowing his humility and country lad demeanour, he would be truly embarrassed by all of the fuss now being appropriately made ... and not before time.

Every patriot who fills with pride each 25 April will delight in reading Pte Norden's story in this publication, my 15th annual ANZAC booklet, but be equally saddened by his tragic demise.

Now, more than ever before, as trouble and turmoil threaten world peace, we need heroes of the calibre of Pte Norden to come to the fore and we are truly blessed the Australian Army's Blamey Barracks and Royal Australian Air Force Base Wagga (in conjunction with the Royal Australian Navy based there) continue to recruit and train the best of the best to serve our interests on land, in the skies and at sea.

Very much at the heart of our democracy is the fact the price of liberty is eternal vigilance.

Central to that tenet of defence being paramount is how we acknowledge and respect those who, for our tomorrows, gave their todays ... Lest We Forget.

Michael McCormack

THE HONOURABLE
MICHAEL McCORMACK MP
Federal Member for Riverina
Shadow Minister for International
Development and the Pacific



INSIDE:

- 3-11. Richard Norden, Gundagai's greatest honoured ... Our boy soldier who won a VC
- 12-19. Thomas Blamey, our top military man a son of Wagga Wagga
- 20-23. The tragic tale of courageous Colville
- 24-29. 2025 ANZAC Day Riverina service times and venues
- 30-35. Riverina school students' ANZAC writing awards
- 36. The Victoria Cross

GUNDAGAI'S GREATEST HONoured



WARRIOR: *On the eve of his 20th birthday, an injured Richard Norden DCM made it home to Gundagai, albeit on crutches. Picture: The Daily Advertiser*

OUR BOY SOLDIER WHO WON A VC

LETTERS written from Australian Army bases and Vietnam and sent to Gundagai, with excerpts published here for the first time, tell a warm tale of a boy soldier and future Victoria Cross for Australia recipient's deep love and respect for his mother.

Dozens of pieces of hand-written mail from the 1960s, mostly two pages, were lovingly kept and stored away by Richard Norden's mother Rita.

They reveal a quintessential country boy, away from home, reassuring his Mum he was doing just fine and not to worry unnecessarily.

In a five-page letter dated 7 April 1966, Richard wrote of his arrival at 1st Recruit Training Battalion (1RTB), Kapooka, mentioning a welcoming lecture delivered by Base Commander, Colonel Donald Beaumont Dunstan* (see Page 11).

"You don't have to worry about me getting cold," Richard would later write from Kapooka. "We have three blankets and the barracks a big three storey building and the rooms are very warm."

In the same letter he described the physical demands thus: "The training here is pretty tough and most of the blokes are stiff as boards, but you can feel it doing you good."

Later in the same correspondence he told his Mum he would call her, adding: "I don't know for sure what night or what time I could ring up because there are only 3 phones here between 1500 blokes so they are a bit crowded most times, however if I find out for sure I will let you know."

On 5 May he reported from Kapooka: "I haven't slept any later than 6 o'clock yet and I woke up at 20 past 5 this morning just in time to get ready for inspection. I have to go now. Will write a better letter soon. Write and tell me how everyone is at home. Love, Richard."

In another letter, on a day he said it had rained at 1RTB non-stop, he said: "We have been having big fogs of a morning but only one really big frost ..."

IN THE BLOOD

Richard Norden was destined to serve. It was the family thing to do.

Richard's grandfather Frederick Carl Norden was a special man.

Born on 25 October 1895 in Sydney, Fred Norden was the second of seven children born in 12 years to Swedish immigrant John Carl Norden and his Armidale-born wife Alice Laura (née Alderman).

Their six other children, all born in Sydney, were: Lilian May (born 1894-died before 1984), Frank George (1898-1974), Conrad Rignold (1899-1957), Violet Alma (1902-89), Hannah H (1903-04) and Jack Norman (1906-71).

Fred's parents both died young.

His father passed away at Helensburgh on 11 December 1909, aged 46, and was buried at Garrawarra Cemetery, Wollongong.

continued ...

His mother was a tragic figure in her final years. An invalid, she suffered from cancer and had a leg amputated seven months before she died at just 39, on 28 December 1911, at Alexandria, Sydney.

Enlisting as a 19-year-old on 14 September 1914 and signing his official documentation as Carl Norden, he noted he was still serving with the 25th Infantry (New South Wales Militia) as he had done for the past two years.

He left behind a son, John (Jack), born at Narandera** (see Page 11) on 6 February 1914 and listed his eldest sister Lilian (Mrs Frederick Charles Williams) as his next-of-kin when he joined at Rosebery Park.

The examining medical officer who passed Carl Norden fit for active service was the renowned Doctor Spencer Smithson Dunn, a Veteran of the 4th Imperial Bushmen in the Second Boer War (1899-1902) in which he served as a surgeon.

Carl Norden was described as five feet, four inches (162.5 centimetres) tall, weighing eight stone, 10 pounds (55.3 kilograms), with chest measurements of 32" (81cm) and 33½" (85cm).

In 1914, interestingly, recruits had to be a minimum 5'6" (167.6cm) tall with a chest measurement of at least 34" (86.3cm), yet Carl's papers were marked "special duty" so that was that. He was off to war.

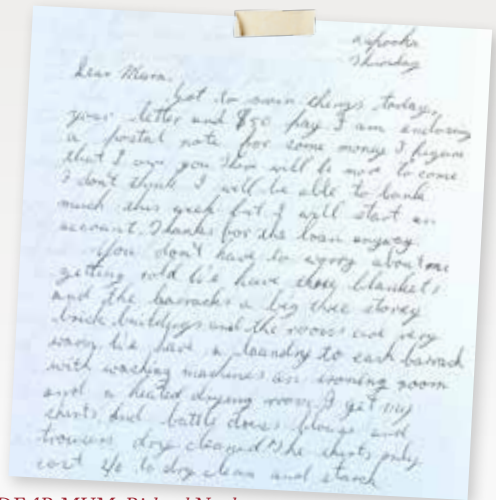
He had a fair complexion, blue eyes and brown hair.

Whilst there was not much of him, Carl "was known as a boxer", *The Gundagai Independent* reminisced after his 1984 death.

There was always plenty of fight in him and he would need every ounce of it when thrust into the deadly chaos of Gallipoli where 8,709 Australians lost their lives.

Private Norden, Service Number 441, sailed on the 12,531-ton steamship HMAT *Suevic* A29 out of Sydney four days before Christmas in 1914.

He was one of the 159-strong 2nd Light Horse Brigade, 6th Light Horse Regiment, "C" Squadron.



DEAR MUM: *Richard Norden penned many letters to his beloved mother.*

Amongst the ranks were a dozen Riverina boys, including himself, with four from Ardlethan: Sergeant Stuart Archibald Tooth, the Burns brothers Leslie and William, both privates, and Private Charles Clark.

They, as well as Private Francis Maitland Woods from Ariah Park, Corporal Allan Woodbain Stevens (Coolamon), Private Sydney James Ellis (Parkes), Grenfell pair Private David George Hampton and Private Arthur John Smith, Private Augustus William Roach (Ganmain) and Private Arthur James Stuart (Galong) all lived to tell the tale.

GALLIPOLI

Every Australian knows about Gallipoli and the significance of Lone Pine.

Carl Norden was intrinsically associated with both.

He headed for the famous 600-metre beachline, now known to history as ANZAC Cove – bounded by the headlands of Ari Burnu to the north and Little Ari Burnu (Hell Spit) to the south – on 15 May 1915 on HMT *Lutzwow*, a German passenger ship seized by the British in 1914 and used as a Gallipoli troopship.

Pte Norden served on the ill-fated peninsula from 20 May until he was wounded in the right shoulder and left leg on 11 July.

Like his mother, later in life he would have to have a leg amputated.

Pte Norden sustained gunshot wounds at Lone Pine, before the lethal battle which took place there between 6 and 10 August when an estimated total of nearly 10,000 men from both sides (including 2,277 ANZACs) lost their lives.

EVACUATION

Boarding Hospital Ship *Gascon*, Pte Norden left Gallipoli on the day he was wounded and arrived on the island of Malta a week later.



WAR MEDIC: *Dr Spencer Smithson Dunn*

At the beginning of the Gallipoli campaign, the wounded ANZACs were evacuated to Egypt, but it was immediately apparent facilities there could not possibly cope.

A week after the initial Gallipoli landings, at the start of May, the first convoy of casualties arrived at Malta and by the end of the month more than 4,000 ill and wounded were being treated on the island.

In 1915, 57,950 servicemen from the Gallipoli force were taken to Malta and, during the last three months of the year, the sick and wounded continued to arrive from the Dardanelles at a rate of about 2,000 weekly.

In one week during December, 6,341 were landed at Malta.

Malta is the largest and most populous of the three major islands constituting the Maltese Archipelago. When war was declared in August 1914, just four military hospitals existed on the islands, yet within a year there were 21, as well as seven convalescent depots and homes, earning Malta the soubriquet of Nurse of the Mediterranean.

Pte Norden was admitted to Malta's Tique Hospital on 18 July and transferred to All Saints Hospital, also on the island, on 11 August.

His wounds were described as "slight", yet required a recovery of almost seven months.

Declared fit to resume active service, he left Malta for Cairo on HMT *Megantic* on 4 March 1916.

Megantic, owned by the Oceanic Steam Navigation Co. (White Star Line), which had put RMS *Titanic* to sea, was called into service as a troopship in 1915.

She had a lucky and narrow escape on 30 May 1915 when westbound from Liverpool to Montreal; an enemy submarine chasing her off the south coast of Ireland. The liner safely outpaced the submarine.

In Cairo, Pte Norden's shoulder caused him further issues and he sought treatment at No. 3 Australian General Hospital, finally rejoining his regiment, the 6th Light Horse, at Romani on 21 May 1916.

But on 23 September he was back in hospital and a week later, at Port Said, diagnosed with malaria.

BACK IN ACTION

A month later he was taken on strength with his regiment at Moascar camp, once described by Australia's official war artist George Lambert as: "Miles and miles of tents and desert, thousands of sweating, sun-bronzed men and beautiful horses."

On 24 March 1917, Pte Norden rejoined his unit from a signalling course at the School of Instruction at Zeitoun.

Whilst a true and brave soldier – one you would like to be in the trenches beside – Pte Norden never claimed to be perfect.

On 5 May he was punished for being Absent Without Leave from 1100 hours on 29 April to 1400 hours the following day.

Under Royal Warrant, required for pay to be docked, Pte Norden forfeited two days of pay (10 shillings).

Sick on 10 November 1917, Pte Norden was admitted to the 14th Australian General Hospital at Abbassia, suffering septic sores, being transferred to a rest camp at Port Said on 4 December.

He returned to duty four days later and spent time at Moascar, Wadi Hanein, Latron and Jericho.

On 25 May 1918, Pte Norden was in trouble again, failing to keep watch at night and losing 168 hours of pay "after being duly warned by his troop Sergt for Stable Picquet at 0300. Neglected to do it."

Another hospital visit, this time to the 31st General Hospital, also in Abbassia, was necessitated by a recurrence of malaria, keeping him out of action for nearly a month.

HOMEWARD BOUND

Three days after war's end, Pte Norden marched out to Suez to board HT *Port Darwin* for return to Australia, arriving on Boxing Day and receiving his discharge from the Australian Imperial Force (AIF) on 24 February 1919.

Carl reunited with his sweetheart Ada Belle (née Hanby) and their son Jack (1914-77). They would have another five children including Walter Rodger (1922-2012), whose second son Richard would eventually earn Australia's highest military honour – a VC.

Other children of Carl and Ada's marriage were Fredrick George (1920-2004), Edward John (1921-2003), Ruth (who died in her infancy, at Leeton, in 1925) and Ada Marjory (1924-2018).

Whilst he signed his enlistment papers as Carl, everyone who knew him post war called him Fred.

Australian Electoral Rolls show Fred moving about upon his return from overseas.

For most of the 1930s he was at Narandera: living on Audley Street and working as a labourer in 1930, at Pine Hill as a labourer in 1933, '34 and '35, on Elwin Street as a "hotel useful" in the 1936-37 rolls and in 1939 as a labourer at 35 Darlington Road, Darlington.

By 1943 he was a lineman (with the Postmaster-General's Department) whose residence was 145 Underwood Street, Paddington, and it was this East Sydney suburb which was his address until at least 1958.

continued ...



ANZAC COVE: Gallipoli, where Carl Norden landed in 1915.

The 1963 roll showed he and Ada at 22 Luke Street, South Gundagai, where they were listed in subsequent rolls of 1968, 1977 and 1980.

Rodger Norden remembers his grandfather bearing the scars of Lone Pine – shrapnel marks which covered his back.

On 28 June 1984, *The Gundagai Independent* headlined the sad news of the burial that day of Fred Norden, 89: "Gundagai's last ANZAC dies".

"Fred Norden, Gundagai's last link with the heroic days of Gallipoli, was buried this afternoon," the newspaper mournfully reported.

"Fred Norden's death severs a link with the original ANZACS, the men who won imperishable fame, and carved themselves a prideful place in their nation's history.

"On the outbreak of the First World War, Fred Norden enlisted in the Light Horse.

"They fought as infantry in the hell that was Gallipoli.

"Fred Norden was an active RSL member ever since returning from the Kaiser's conflict.

"Despite advancing years, his brain remained active and alert.

"He showed the same courage displayed as a young soldier, when five years ago he was forced to have a leg amputated.

"That disability did not really handicap him, and he still lived a very full life.

"The Last Post sounded this afternoon, when his funeral took place at South Gundagai Cemetery.

"Reverend Father Maurice Hasler officiated at the graveside, and Digger Jack Pollack recited the Ode.

ORIGINAL ANZAC: At 89, Frederick Carl Norden pays his respects at the 1984 Gundagai ANZAC Day service. He died later that year.



PICTURE: The Gundagai Independent

"Returned men formed a guard of honour for Gundagai's last ANZAC.

"There are now only two World War I veterans surviving in Gundagai, Jim Slater and Bill Stafford."

William Stafford died on 19 May 1987 aged 94, whilst James Slater passed away on 24 July 1992 in his 96th year ... Gundagai's last Great War Veteran.

Both are interred in the North Gundagai Cemetery.

Ada Norden was a widow for four years, passing away on 8 September 1988, aged 87.

The inscription on her headstone reads: "An indomitable spirit. At rest."

FOUR SONS AT WAR

All four sons of Fred and Ada – Jack, Wal, Fred and Edward – saw active service overseas with the Australian Army in World War II with the quartet enlisting at Paddington.

Between them, the four served about a month shy of 20 years ... including nearly 11 years in action overseas.

Such dedication! Such family patriotism!

Edward (Service No. NX15175) was first to answer the call, on 16 May 1940, putting his father as next-of-kin.

Frederick Carl and Ada were then living on Darlington Road.

Sent to the Middle East, Edward spent nearly 18 months there before two stints in New Guinea.

Returning to Australia, he married Brisbane-born orphan Geraldine Irvine, aged 18, in Sydney on 21 October 1944 before being sent to Morotai for the Borneo campaign via Townsville on the *Howell Lykes* as a Private with the 2/33rd Australian Infantry Battalion.

He then fought in Balikpapan before boarding HMAS *Kanimbla* to return to Brisbane once the war was over and be discharged "on account of demobilization" on 19 November 1945.

Fred (NX33498) had his wife of less than 12 months, Clara Daphne (née Batson) (1922-94), as next-of-kin when he enlisted on 21 June 1940. At the time, the couple lived at Darlington, a small, inner-city suburb of Sydney.

At 5'9½" (176.5cm), Fred was the tallest of the four boys – 1½" (3.8cm) higher than Jack, 2½" (6.3cm) over Edward and 5½" (almost 14cm) taller than Wal.

The following month, Fred was assigned to the newly formed 2/20th Battalion, with which he would be captured by the Japanese at the Fall of Singapore.

CAPTURED

As the Australian War Memorial outlines: "The 2/20th Infantry Battalion opened its headquarters at Wallgrove Camp, west of Sydney, on 15 July 1940. The battalion's recruits were drawn principally from Sydney, Newcastle, and the NSW north coast. It trained at Wallgrove,



BROTHERS-IN-ARMS: The Norden brothers (from left) Edward, Fred, Jack and Walter.

Ingleburn, and Bathurst before embarking for Singapore, as part of the 22nd Brigade of the 8th Australian Division, on 2 February 1941.

“Upon arriving in Singapore on 18 February, the 2/20th moved to south-west Malaya, where it would train for service under tropical conditions. It spent most of its time operating around Port Dickson but was based at Seremban during April. At the end of August the battalion redeployed to the port of Mersing on the east coast. Connected to Singapore by a surfaced road, Mersing was a potential landing place for an enemy force and with war with Japan increasingly likely, much of 2/20th's energy was devoted to preparing defensive positions.

“The 2/20th stood to arms on the night of 6 December 1941, but over a month would pass before the first of its men were in action. On 7 January C Company was detached to form half of a special force that was deployed to delay the Japanese approach to Endau, a town further north along the coast. It clashed with the Japanese on several occasions from 14 January, until it withdrew to rejoin the battalion on 26 January. In the meantime, Japanese troops had also been engaged in the vicinity of the 2/20th's main positions around Mersing, which were also heavily bombed. Once rejoined by C Company, the 2/20th withdrew from Mersing and on 31 January arrived on Singapore to take up a position on the northern flank of the 22nd Brigade's sector on the island's west coast.

“The wide frontage it was required to cover, however, meant its platoons and sections had to be widely dispersed. When the Japanese launched their invasion on the night of 8 February the 2/20th was readily infiltrated, although the Australians were initially able to inflict heavy casualties on the invaders. Despite the confusing fighting, most of 2/20th was able to withdraw in reasonably good order, to form a north-south defensive perimeter along Lim Chu Kang Road. It soon became apparent, however, the 2/20th would be overwhelmed in this position. It was ordered to withdraw along the road to the south, in which the battalion was scattered and never fought as a formed unit again. In parties of varying sizes, its troops fought in the desperate fighting retreat towards Singapore city that ended with surrender on the night of 15 February.

“Initially imprisoned in the sprawling Changi Prisoner Of War camp, it was not long before members of the 2/20th were allocated to external work parties. The first parties were dispatched around Singapore and

southern Malaya, but members of the 2/20th later found themselves members of parties bound for the camps along the Burma-Thailand Railway and in Borneo, Japan, French Indochina, Java, Sumatra, and Malaya. These men endured the worst horrors of Japanese captivity and many died. The surviving prisoners were liberated in late-August 1945 and began returning to Australia almost immediately. The 2/20th Battalion was formally disbanded later that year.”

Fred was one of the fortunate ones.

Having been officially listed as missing in Malaya on 9 April 1942, it was not until 8 September 1945 – six days after the war ended – that he was as his documents attested: “Recovered from Japanese at Changi PW Camp.”

He had suffered from a “chronic ulcer” on his left leg. Embarking HMT *Arawa* at Singapore, Fred made it home and was discharged on “compassionate grounds” on 3 January 1946.

WAR-TIME LOVE

The eldest of the Norden boys, Jack (NX52802), listed his fiancée and soon-to-be bride, Alice May Hoare (1920-2010), as next-of-kin when he signed up, on 4 July 1940.

On 10 August, in Saint Mel's Catholic Church, Narandera, the two were wed; *The Narandera Argus* reporting: “As the bridegroom, who is in camp with the AIF at Ingleburn, had only a few days' leave, only a short honeymoon was possible.”

Leaving Sydney on Boxing Day 1940, Jack arrived in the Middle East on 1 February and was with the 7th Australian Division Cavalry Regiment.

In January 1942, the Australian 7th Division was sailing home from the Middle East. Initially these troops were to be deployed to the Netherlands East Indies, present-day Indonesia, to assist British troops create a defensive line against the Japanese advance.

The following month, as Singapore fell and the Japanese military prepared to invade Papua New Guinea, the 7th Division was on its way from the Middle East back to the Pacific.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill insisted the 7th Division should be deployed to Burma whilst Australian Prime Minister John Curtin correctly argued they should return immediately to defend Australia.

continued ...

A diplomatic feud ensued, but Mr Curtin brought our troops home, adding momentum to Australia's realignment of its foreign policy towards the United States of America rather than traditional partner Great Britain.

Jack served two stints in New Guinea, in 1942 and 1943-44, in between a couple of bouts of malaria necessitating hospitalisation.

By 4 January 1945 – when he was discharged as he was “required for employment in an essential occupation” (farming) – Jack had attained the rank of Corporal and was in 7 Carrier Company.

KOKODA TRACK

Wal came into the world at Narandera on 27 September 1922 when his father, Frederick, was 26 and his mother, Ada, was 21.

Young Wal was a talented schoolboy, winning a prize at the Narandera Spring Flower Show in October 1930, taking out the handwriting section for children under eight years of age from Dawn Sheah.

He also won a class 4A school medal in December 1933 and was presented with an R H Hankinson Medal for gaining the highest marks in the primary final examination for his 6B class at Narandera East School in 1935.

Wal (NX44131) also had his father (living at 37 Sutherland Street, Paddington) as next-of-kin when he put pen to paper for the Army on 2 September 1941 and, like Edward, was part of the celebrated 2/33rd Battalion, serving until his discharge as a Lance Corporal on 21 January 1946.

Richard Norden VC's older brother Rodger speaks proudly of how Jack and his own father Wal fought alongside one another against the Japanese in decisive actions on the formidable Owen Stanley mountain range including its treacherous Kokoda Track.

Wal had three tours of duty – to Papua, New Guinea and Borneo – between 1942 and '45.



PREPARED: Boy Scouts Richard (right) and his brother Rodger Norden in the mid-1950s.

During the war years, Wal wed local girl Rita May Crane, born at Gundagai on 10 August 1923, the only daughter of Walter Francis Crane (1891-1974) and Mary Ellen “Nell” née Venables (1892-1959). Rita had four brothers: Herbert Goulburn “Bert” (1916-2008), Claude Edward Joseph (1921-2004), Leslie Walter (1926-2006) and Arthur Allan “Artie” (1928-2006). Her parents Walter and Nell also raised Rita's first cousins Frederick (born 1914), Jean (1919), Reginald known as Rex (1927) and Trevor (1930), following the death on 14 June 1932 of their mother Catherine Maria “Kit” Crane (née Venables), after a miscarriage. Kit, Nell's sister, was married to Great War Digger Reginald Joseph Crane, Walter Crane's brother. Two brothers had married two sisters. Claude (NX113802) (N200745) was a Trooper in 1 Armoured Regiment during World War II and served from 1942-46.

The Narandera Argus front page of 28 March 1944 described Wal and Rita's 11 March nuptials at St Matthias' Church, Centennial Park, Sydney, as “a very pretty wedding” with the bride and bridesmaids placing their bouquets on the Cenotaph, Martin Place, in remembrance of the boys' comrades of the 2/33rd Battalion.

Wal contracted malaria in 1943 and fractured his right radius in 1945 during his service and his papers at war's end were stamped: “Discharged on account of demobilization. Discharged being medically unfit for further service.”

He headed home to Wagragobilly, via Gundagai.

The four Nordens were plucky fellows, built tough by their regional roots and their family pedigree.

Edward, Jack and Wal all had “run-ins” with authorities during their days in uniform but in the darkest days of World War II when the Second Australian Imperial Force and the nation needed its men to step up, the Norden boys were amongst the first to do so.

NEXT GENERATION

Wal and Rita Norden's marriage produced four children: Rodger (born in 1947 and who still lives in Gundagai), the late Richard (1948-72), Robyn known as “Nicki” (Mrs Len Gaffey) (1951, Wagga Wagga) and Robert (1952, Jugiong), who also served in Vietnam.

On the plaque on Wal Norden's Gundagai grave, where he lies in eternal rest beside his beloved Rita, under the Army's Rising Sun badge and his name and life details, it states: “May the journey on your



TIGERS: Gundagai's undefeated Collison Cup-winning under 16 team from 1963: (back, from left) Ian Murdoch, Bob Ballard, George Castrission, James Crane, Rodger Norden, Daryl Clarkson, Ron Dickinson, coach Roger Ludkin, Bob Lindley, Richard Norden; (front): Brian Manton, George Skeers, Ian Harpley, Ian Sheather, Peter Freestone and Joe McKinney. Gundagai defeated June 26-2 in the grand final at ANZAC Park, Gundagai.

next adventure be as joyfilled as your time with us.
So dearly loved – so sadly missed.”

Wal passed away on 10 October 2012, aged 90.

Rita outlived him only by a little more than four years, passing away at South Gundagai on 9 February 2017 in her 94th year.

Both lived long and fulfilling lives but how sad it is they were not afforded the rare privilege of seeing their boy awarded a much-deserved VC.

Youngest son Robert's Vietnam War service record has him as a Private with the Royal Australian Infantry Corps, Service No. 220086.

He was with 1 Australian Reinforcement Unit from 16 December 1970 to 16 March 1971 and then at Headquarters, Australian Force Vietnam (Army Component), from 17 March 1971 to 16 December 1971 which, coincidentally, was his 19th birthday.

LEGEND IS BORN

Richard Leslie Norden first saw the light of day at Gundagai on 24 August 1948.

Just out of school, Richard volunteered to enlist in the Australian Army on 27 April 1966.

He was allocated Service No. 2412437 with the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and his Vietnam War service began with combat training with 1 Australian Reinforcement Unit from 5 December 1967 to 30 January 1968.

After this he was assigned to the 7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (RAR), from 31 January 1968 to 9 April 1968 before transferring to 1st Battalion, RAR from 10 April 1968 to 13 August 1968.

In one of his letters to his mother from Vietnam, dated 7 February 1968, Richard wrote: “There has been a lot of trouble over here during the ‘Tet’ period and 3 blokes that I went through training with have been killed as well as about 4 or 5 wounded.”

In late January 1968, during the Lunar New Year (or “Tet”) holiday, North Vietnamese and Communist Viet Cong forces launched a co-ordinated attack against a number of targets in South Vietnam and heavy losses were incurred before the enemy assault was repelled.



TRAINING: Richard Norden (standing, sixth from left) in his Australian Army days, at Holdsworthby.



READY: Richard Norden (back, left) with 1st Royal NSW Regiment's Commandos undertaking the 17th unarmed combat course for 1967.

On 12 May 1968, Australian and New Zealand forces set up Fire Support Bases (FSBs) Coral and Balmoral in Biên Hòa. As part of the daily routine at FSB Coral, Richard took part in infantry patrols. The soldiers ventured kilometres from the base, doing reconnaissance and seeking contact with the enemy.

On 14 May, Richard's platoon sustained heavy fire during one of a series of contacts outside the FSBs. These contacts were part of the larger Battle of Coral-Balmoral. Using his pluck and showing care for his mates, Richard rescued a wounded soldier and recovered the body of another, with little cover and under intense enemy fire. The rifleman's audacious actions prevented further casualties.

Army headquarters announced the names of Australian casualties in the “Biên Hòa reconnaissance” with *The Canberra Times* reporting Richard as wounded but in a satisfactory condition.

Amongst the many 1RAR wounded that week, but in a “very satisfactory” condition, were two of local interest: Private John Milton Rands, 21, single, of Temora and one Second Lieutenant Timothy Andrew Fischer, 22, single, of Boree Creek ... later Australia's 10th Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr Fischer's widow Judy Brewer earlier this year recalled the fact her late husband and Richard were in different platoons but still good mates.

When Richard returned to Australia, he continued serving with the Australian Army.

Richard, 19 years young, was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal on 20 August 1968 for actions on 14 May 1968. For an other-ranked soldier, the DCM ranked second only to the Victoria Cross, the highest possible award for courage and devotion to duty in the face of the enemy.

The full citation for his DCM reads:

“Private Norden, a member of the leading section, asked for covering fire and ran forward – under heavy enemy fire – to the wounded section commander. He killed one Viet Cong while moving forward and, having expended his ammunition, recovered the enemy's automatic weapon which he used against further Viet Cong while assisting the wounded section commander back to the section. Due to this initial action the life of the

continued ...

section commander was saved under intense enemy fire. Although wounded in his initial move forward, Private Norden again advanced to the forward scout.

He was fired on by an enemy soldier but pressed forward and reached the scout, killing the Viet Cong who had been using the scout as a shield. Private Norden, having determined that the scout was dead, returned to the section, collected grenades and cleared the area so that the body of the scout could be recovered.

His three attacks into the enemy position on his own resulted in the enemy position being secured. Private Norden showed a complete disregard for his own personal safety, and by his courage and devotion to duty ensured the evacuation of a wounded man and the recovery of the body of the forward scout."

Richard attended an investiture by NSW Governor Sir Roden Cutler VC, AK, KCMG, KCVO, CBE, KSJ at Government House, Sydney, in September 1969 with his wife, Gundagai girl Robynn (née Lenon), and mother Rita.

Upon his own request, Richard discharged from the Australian Army with the rank of Private in April 1969 after three years of service.

He returned home and pulled on the boots for his beloved Gundagai Tigers Rugby League Club, helping, as a prop forward, his town to three memorabilia wins in the prestigious Maher Cup challenge in May 1969, including an epic 18-17 victory at Temora which went down in the annals of the competition.

Richard married Robynn at St John's Church of England, Gundagai, on 21 June 1969, and they settled in Canberra.

"The lovely dark-haired bride, radiant in a beautiful classical white gown, fur-trimmed and made of self-embossed satin, sent to her by the groom while on active service in Vietnam, was escorted to the altar by her father (Jack)," the local press report of the wedding read.

Richard was sworn in as a recruit at Australian Capital Territory Police headquarters on 9 February 1970.



CONGRATULATIONS: A beaming Private Richard Norden with his Distinguished Conduct Medal on his jacket lapel at Government House, Sydney. Shaking his hand is Arthur Robinson DCM, also of Gundagai, with his son Kane whilst Richard's mother Rita and wife Robynn look on. Picture: Gundagai Goes to War

He remained active in the Veteran community. Richard was also a member of the Gundagai RSL Sub-Branch in his hometown.

TRAGEDY

Tragically, Constable Richard Norden came off his motorcycle on Hindmarsh Drive, in the Canberra suburb of Red Hill, whilst on duty on 26 October 1972.

He lingered for four days before succumbing to his severe injuries in Canberra Hospital.

Grief-stricken soldiers who had served with Richard and members of both the Gundagai RSL Sub-Branch and the RSL (ACT Branch) attended his funeral at St John's Anglican Church in Reid on 1 November.

Richard was buried in the Anglican section of the Canberra General Cemetery (now Woden Cemetery) with full Police and military honours.

Richard was survived by his wife Robynn and their infant sons, Scott and Shane.

In 1991, the Duntroon other-ranks tavern in Canberra was formally named as the Richard Norden DCM Club in his memory.

That club now needs a name change!

On Remembrance Day 2024, after years of exhaustive efforts by many who felt Richard's DCM, whilst a great honour, should have been a VC, the words his supporters had waited so long to hear were uttered.

Governor-General Sam Mostyn AC, in a media conference including Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Chief of the Defence Force Admiral David Johnston AC, Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel Matt Keogh, Federal Member for Riverina Michael McCormack and the Australian War Memorial's Chairman Kim Beazley AC and Director Matt Anderson PSM, announced Richard Norden would at long last be posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia.

The news came more than two years after the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal recommended Richard receive the VC and followed approval for the award by King Charles III on 1 November 2024.

The full citation for his VC reads:

"For most conspicuous acts of gallantry in action in the presence of the enemy in the 'AO Surfers' Area of Operations in Biên Hòa province, Vietnam, on the 14th of May 1968 during the Battle of Fire Support Base Coral. During Operation Toan Thang the 5th Platoon, Bravo Company of the 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment, were ambushed and came under heavy fire from an estimated squad of seven to ten North Vietnamese army regular soldiers. Private Norden, a member of the leading section, ran forward under heavy enemy fire to the section commander and the forward scout who were wounded during the initial contact. Private Norden killed one North Vietnamese enemy soldier whilst moving forward and having depleted, expended, his ammunition, recovered that enemy's automatic weapon which he used against further North

Vietnamese army soldiers. He then half carried, half dragged the severely wounded section commander back to the section. Private Norden, seriously wounded, again advanced to the forward scout. He pressed forward under enemy fire and reached the scout, killing the North Vietnamese army soldier who had been using the scout as a shield. Having determined that the scout was dead, Private Norden returned to the section to collect grenades and moved forward for the third time. "He cleared the area to enable the body of the scout to be recovered. Private Norden showed a complete disregard for his own personal safety and his courage and selfless acts resulted in the enemy position being secured and likely saved the lives of the other members of the platoon."

The section leader saved by Pte Norden's derring-do was Lance Corporal Daniel Joseph Kelly from Innisfail whilst the unfortunate forward scout who lost his life was Private Christopher Robert "Cowboy" Nisbet, aged just 20, of Bridgeman Downs, Brisbane.

It should not have taken 56 years for Richard Norden to be honoured this way. Thankfully his mates, the Gundagai RSL Sub-Branch and particularly Lieutenant Colonel George Hulse OAM (Retd) never gave up the cause.

'BRAVE SOLDIER'

"Dick Norden was a very brave soldier ... he had been involved in an action that was just breathtaking in Vietnam," said General Sir Peter John Cosgrove, AK, CVO, MC, an Australian retired senior Army officer who served as Australia's 26th Governor-General.

"All these years later to hear that it's now been identified, that is fitting. That is a great thing for all of those veterans who would've known Dick Norden."

Richard Norden's boyish smile on the cover of this ANZAC publication belies the fight and toughness that dwelt within this daring Digger ... one of the bravest soldiers Australia has ever produced.

Whilst his eyes closed to the world many, many years ago, his spirit lives on in the values taught to all who march out of Blamey Barracks, Kapooka: service, courage, respect, integrity and excellence.

May this always be so for that long line of khaki, who embody the enduring and powerful spirit of ANZAC.

Thank you for your service, Private Richard Leslie Norden VC. Rest In Peace, soldier, your duty is done.

Plans are advanced to erect a statue of Richard Norden VC in the park beside Carberry Park on Sheridan Street, Gundagai.



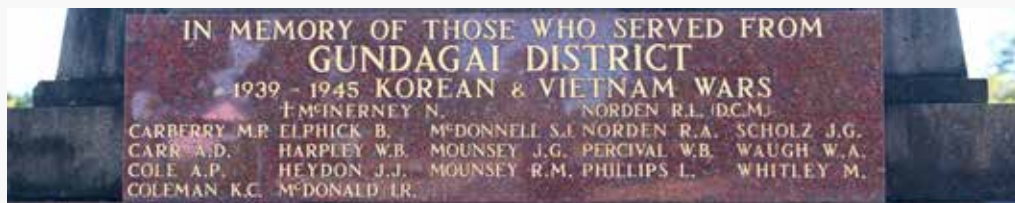
CORTEGE: Richard Norden's lengthy funeral procession in Canberra winds its sorrowful way to his final resting place on 1 November 1972.

The life-sized bronze tribute will capture him performing the Coral-Balmoral Battle deeds that earned him his VC with the intention to unveil the memorial on 14 May 2026, the 58th anniversary of the action.

* Lieutenant General Sir Donald Beaumont Dunstan AC, KBE, CB (1923-2011) was a distinguished Australian Army Officer who was the longest serving Governor of South Australia. A Duntroon graduate, he fought in World War II in which he saw combat with the 27th Battalion against the Japanese during the Bougainville Campaign in 1945, receiving a Mention in Despatches for his actions while commanding a platoon. Post war, he was the eighth of now 38 Commandants of 1st Recruit Training Battalion, Kapooka, filling that role from April 1965 to January 1968. Soon after he was deployed to Vietnam as Deputy Commander of the 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF). He succeeded Brigadier Ron Hughes as Commander of the 1ATF on 21 May 1968 during the Battle of Coral-Balmoral. For his services during this battle, he was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire, in 1969. This was the same battle in which Richard Norden earned his VC.

** Narrandera was spelt Narandera in most instances and publications until 18 January 1949 and, in many cases, long after that.

Please note, great care was taken compiling this article using various sources including family records, ancestry.com.au, Australian War Memorial, Department of Veterans' Affairs World War II and Vietnam War nominal rolls and National Archives of Australia. If there are any genealogy errors which can be verified, please contact my office in order to update the online version of this booklet for accuracy and future reference. 🍷



MEMORIAL: Richard Norden and his brother Robert's names on the Gundagai war monument at the intersection of Sheridan and Virgil streets and Railway Parade.



Painted by Sir John Lavery, 1917.
The artist was commissioned to paint a portrait of the General by the War Office.
The General is shown in the uniform of a General in the British Army.
The General is shown in the uniform of a General in the British Army.
The General is shown in the uniform of a General in the British Army.

OUR TOP MILITARY MAN A SON OF WAGGA WAGGA

HE WATCHED over every Wagga Wagga City Council meeting by way of a magnificent oil painting portrait from 2001-24. He has a local hotel, suburban street in Turvey Park and the Australian Army barracks at Kapooka named in his honour.

Field Marshal Sir Thomas Albert Blamey, GBE, KCB, CMG, DSO, CSJ, ED* (see Page 15), was an Australian General of the First and Second World Wars.

He is the only Australian to attain the rank of Field Marshal.

And he is a son of Wagga Wagga – Lake Albert to be precise, for he was born there, on 24 January 1887, the eighth of 11 children (seven daughters and four sons) of Richard Henwood Blamey Snr (1846-1937), a local farmer, and his wife Margaret Louisa, née Murray (1849-1931).

Educated locally, Blamey was a keen Army Cadet and head of his school's unit for two years.

Blamey began his working life in 1899 as a trainee school teacher at Lake Albert School, transferring to South Wagga Public School in 1901. Two years later he moved to Western Australia, where he taught for three

years at Fremantle Boys' School. He coached the rifle shooting team of its Cadet unit to victory in the Western Australian Cup.

Blamey received a Commonwealth Cadet Forces' commission in 1906 and was posted to Melbourne.

On 8 September 1909 he married Minnie Caroline Millard (1875-1935) at the Methodist Church in Toorak and they had two sons, Charles Middleton (born 1910) and Thomas Ramond (1914).

Blamey transferred to the Australian Military Forces in 1910 and was promoted to Captain.

Graduating from the Staff College at Quetta in India in 1913, he was in England when the First World War broke out and joined the General Staff of the 1st Australian Division in Egypt.

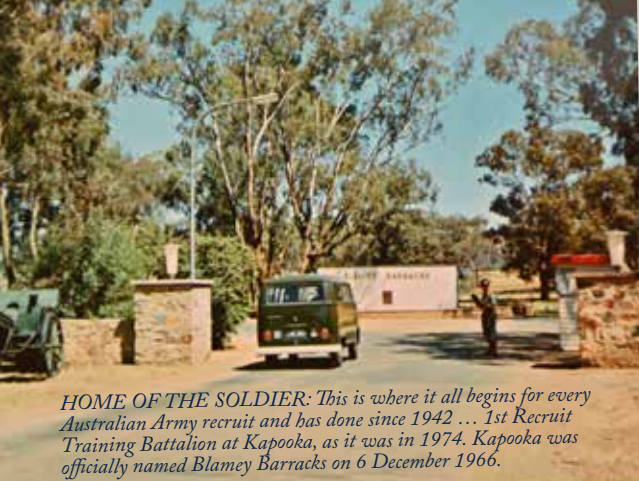
Blamey was amongst the first onshore at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and in July was promoted to Temporary Lieutenant Colonel and returned to Egypt to assist in forming the 2nd Australian Division.

On the Western Front, Blamey was appointed Chief of Staff and served as General Staff Officer 1 in the 1st Division until June 1918 when promoted to Temporary Brigadier and became Chief of Staff of the Australian Corps.

continued ...



PARENTS: (above) Thomas Blamey's mother Margaret and father Richard. (Left) The commissioned portrait, by Wagga Wagga artist L D (Laurie) Redgrave and which now hangs in the Museum of the Riverina Historic Council Chambers, was presented by then Commandant Colonel Michael Crane (later General and Distinguished Service Cross and Bar, now retired) and all ranks of Blamey Barracks on 26 May 2001 to mark the 50th anniversary of Sir Thomas's death.



HOME OF THE SOLDIER: This is where it all begins for every Australian Army recruit and has done since 1942 ... 1st Recruit Training Battalion at Kapooka, as it was in 1974. Kapooka was officially named Blamey Barracks on 6 December 1966.

Post-war, Blamey was given several key postings, including one to London as Colonel, General Staff and Australia's representative on the Imperial General Staff. He was appointed Second Chief of the Australian General Staff in 1925.

Soon after, however, he left the regular Army to become Victoria's Commissioner of Police and transferred to the Militia.

Tragedy dogged Blamey's life in the early to mid-1930s.

Eldest son Charles, just 22, lost his life in a training incident flying for the Royal Australian Air Force at Richmond on the morning of 6 December 1932.

He was killed instantly when a wheel of the RAAF Moth he was piloting struck a wooden slab fence in a swooping manoeuvre and plunged nose first to the ground.

The sound of the impact was heard a mile away with the plane's propeller smashed into small fragments and not more than six inches of the hub remained.

The undercarriage had been forced to the back of the aircraft and the seat in which Flying Officer Blamey was sitting had been crushed by the engine.

Flg-Off. Blamey had been in the RAAF for two years and had been attached to No. 3 Squadron, Richmond, for about nine months.

He held a pilot's licence and was completing the training course for an instructor's certificate when he met his death. In 1927 he had entered the Royal Military College, Duntroon, graduating to the rank of Lieutenant three years later.

Mechanic Aircraftsman John Plumb was with Flg-Off. Blamey but had a remarkable escape, with only minor injuries.

Flg-Off. Blamey was buried in Woronora Cemetery with full Air Force honours the following afternoon, his body carried to the graveside by six of his former comrades. Three rounds were fired over the open grave and a trumpeter sounded the Last Post.

In a brief address, the Reverend Harold Stonham Bowden, minister at the Rockdale Methodist Church, said Flg-Off. Blamey "had died in the performance of his duty," reported *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

After a prolonged illness, Lady Blamey passed away on 18 October 1935 in a private hospital in Melbourne and was buried at Fawkner after a private service the next day.

Sir Thomas remarried, exchanging vows with Olga Ora Farnsworth (1902-67) at St John's Church of England, Toorak, on 5 April 1939 – the day Prime Minister Joseph Lyons suffered what would be a fatal heart attack, plunging the nation into a pall of sorrow.

After a late afternoon party to mark the nuptials, it was reported the couple "left by car for Wagga on their way to Sydney".

As Lady Blamey, throughout World War II, Olga visited hospitals on behalf of the Red Cross; comforting the wounded, writing letters home for those unable to write for themselves and generally catering for the day-to-day needs of Australia's troops.

From Palestine in 1940, to looking after Australia's Prisoners Of War at Changi prison after the war, she was tireless in her efforts and gained deserved praise for her efforts from the Army and the Red Cross. Lady Blamey, who would outlive Sir Thomas by nearly 16 years, was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1945.

Within a month of the Second World War beginning, Sir Thomas was given command of the 6th Division.

The following year he became commander of the Australian Corps and in December 1941 reached the rank of General.

In March 1942, with Japan having entered the war by attacking Pearl Harbor, Gen. Blamey returned to Melbourne as Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Military Forces and, under American General Douglas MacArthur, became commander of Allied Land Forces, South West Pacific Area.

Gen. Blamey conducted a series of successful offensives in New Guinea in 1943.

His World War II campaigns included the Kokoda Track, Battle of Milne Bay, Salamaua-Lae, Finisterre Range, Bougainville, New Britain and Borneo.

As with any leader, military or political, there will always be critics and Gen. Blamey, controversial and ruthless, had his share but his results speak for themselves.

At the Battle of Wau, from 29 January to 4 February 1943, Gen. Blamey won by acting decisively on intelligence, shifting the 17th Infantry Brigade from Milne Bay in time to defeat the Japanese attack, despite being outnumbered by 1,000 troops.

The joint Australian-US forces lost 349 killed, wounded or missing whereas Imperial Japan lost an estimated 1,200 killed.

One of Australia's official war historians, Dudley McCarthy (1911-87), wrote this: "At the very peak of this leadership development was General Blamey himself. His greatness was demonstrated almost daily by a knowledge unparalleled in Australia of how an army should be formed and put to work; by his exercise of the vital field command at the same time as he kept within his grasp a vastly detailed control of the Australian Army as a whole; by his sagacity and strength in meeting the rapidly changing demands of a difficult political situation; by his ability speedily to encompass the requirements of the new war and plan far ahead of the events of the day as he controlled them; by his generally unappreciated humanity."

Retiring to Melbourne after the war, Gen. Blamey was promoted to Field Marshal on 8 June 1950 yet a few days later he fell gravely ill. On 16 September, in hospital, he received his Field Marshal's baton from Governor-General William McKell.

Field Marshal Blamey died at age 67 of a hypertensive cerebral haemorrhage on 27 May 1951 at the Repatriation General Hospital, Heidelberg.

An estimated quarter of a million people lined the streets of Melbourne for his State Funeral.

His remains were cremated and his ashes were interred beneath a memorial statue dedicated to him which was unveiled by Prime Minister Robert Menzies in King's Domain, Melbourne, on 27 February 1960. 🇲🇵



GENERAL'S DEVOTED ALLY: (above) General Sir Thomas Blamey and Lady Olga Blamey watching the Australian Women's Army Service back race at the 7th Australian Division rodeo.

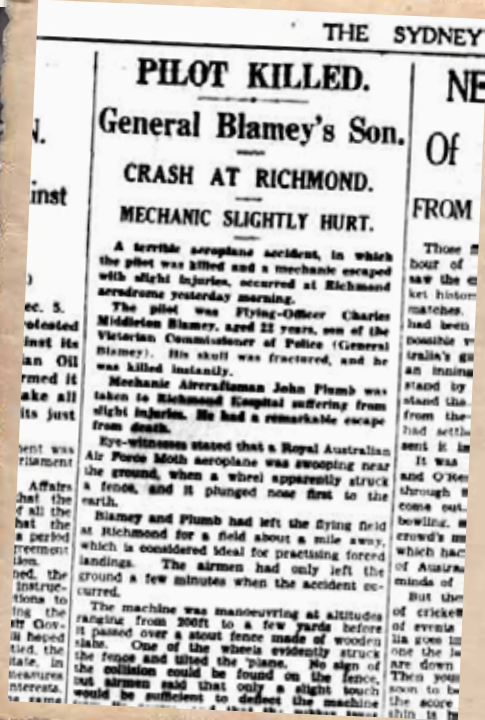
THOMAS BLAMEY'S AWARDS

GBE, KCB, CMG, DSO, CSJ, ED*

(*) Thomas Blamey's Honours and Awards

GBE	Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire
KCB	Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath
CMG	Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George
DSO	Companion of the Distinguished Service Order
CSJ	Order of Saint John
ED	Efficiency Decoration

TRAGEDY: The Sydney Morning Herald's coverage of Flying Officer Charles Blamey's death whilst training with the RAAF.



THANK YOU, GENERAL BLAMEY

IF NOT for the leadership of Wagga Wagga's own Thomas Blamey, his brave fighters in khaki, this country's remarkable nursing sisters and the courage of the Papua New Guineans fondly known as the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels, Australians would no doubt be speaking another language now.

The following four pages have a series of 16 official Thomas Blamey photographs, taken in the Pacific theatre of war, published together for the first time.

General Blamey was a controversial figure but did what was required for Australia to prevail in the South West Pacific Area in World War II.

On 2 September 1945, Gen. Blamey signed the Japanese surrender document on behalf of Australia on board USS

Missouri with American General Douglas MacArthur, then flew to Morotai and personally accepted the surrender of the remaining Japanese in the South West Pacific.

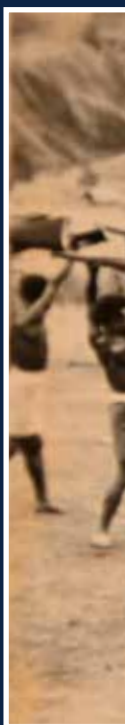
This is why the public school at Lake Albert, where Thomas Blamey was born, has a line in its song: "By grim determination Blamey led the nation."

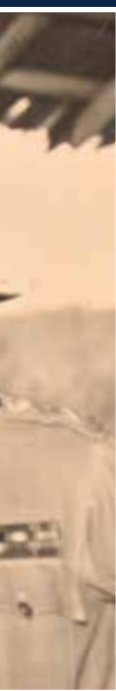
Indeed he did and we should be forever grateful this was so.

Announcing the naming of Kapooka as Blamey Barracks in 1966, the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Roden Cutler VC, said: "He came from this district and part of the land Kapooka camp now occupies was once farmed by his father. It seems fitting that his memory should be perpetuated here."









HONOURED: Colville Armstrong's name is third from the top, left column, on the cenotaph in Wagga Wagga's Victory Memorial Gardens. A total of 207 Great War locals are honoured on this pillar, made of Bowral trachyte and unveiled by Brigadier General Thomas Blamey on 17 September 1922.



ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF
THE MEN OF WACCA WACCA
AND DISTRICT
WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR
1914 - 1918.

ALCHIN, D.C.H.
ALLEN, E.
ARMSTRONG, C.F.
ALLSWORTH, A.J.
ASHTON, S.
BAKER, J.A.
BAKER, T.N.
BARLING, F.
BIRRELL, W.H. D.C.M.
BOLTON, C.
BOYTON, C.S.
BOYTON, R.H.
BRADNEY, W.E.
BRADNEY, J.
BROWN, S.G.
BLACKMAN, J.H.
BRETTLE, D.
BRUCE, C.
BEATTIE, A.L.
BENSON, F.J.
BIRMINGHAM, J.P.
BINGLEY, C.S.
BRUCE, J.A.
BOX, A.L.
BARWICK, G.
BIRCH, C.E.
BYE, A.D.
BALL, M.
BROWN, F.R.
BEATTIE, J.R.
BREASLEY, L.
CONDELL, J.J.
CONNELLY, T.
COYNE, P.P.
CROSIER, B.W.
CLARKE, H.
CRAWFORD, R.H.
CRITTENDEN, H.C.
CRITCHTON, W.F.

DAVIS, S.
DIESEL, A.
ERICKSEN, T.C.
EVANS, C.S.
ELLIOT, J.C.
ERSKINE, F.W.
EDMONDSON, H.H.
ENGLISH, C.
FLEMING, H.
FORD, S.W.
FLANAGAN, C.
FURNESS, J.
CALVIN, A.S.
CILL, N.H.
CELME, R.
GRAHAM, R.
GRIFFITHS, T.A.
HOLLIDAY, F.A.
HALLORAN.
HAMILTON, L.W.R.
HEATH, C.T.M.
HILLAM, B.
HURST, R.V.
HALL, H.J.
HINE, L.W.
HUNTER, P.
HINTON, W.F.
HALLAM, J.W.H.
HULL, A.V.L.
HENNINGHAM, M.M.
HAWKES, F.W.
HARTLAND, R.T.
HUXTABLE, H.C. M.M.
HAMILTON, E.
HOGAN, A.D.
HEYWOOD, R.E.
HILTON, V.
IRVINE, N.R.
JONES, M.J.

THE TRAGIC TALE OF COURAGEOUS COLVILLE

FOR a soldier who gave his all ... and then some ... Yass-born Colville Frederick Armstrong from Wagga Wagga probably deserved better than the way he was treated at war's end.

Lance Corporal Armstrong was docked a day's pay but, worse, was stripped of his rank for being absent without leave from nine o'clock on the night of 11 November 1918 – the day the World War I armistice was called – until three o'clock the following afternoon.

Captain Harold Alexander Sheridan of the 4th Machine Gun Battalion imposed the penalties.

Rules are rules and military discipline must be followed, but given the huge relief washing over the men at the frontlines, it was perhaps understandable LCpl Armstrong sought a little respite.

LCpl Armstrong's story is a tragic one ... of a life full of promise cut cruelly short.

His father was Joseph Colville Beckett Armstrong (known as Colville), fourth of 12 children of English immigrants Oliver Goldsmith Armstrong and Agnes Frances (née Carpenter). A civil engineer, Colville Senior was Council Clerk at Jerilderie for a time.

Our brave Digger's mother was Wilhelmina Mary (née Muller), daughter of Carl Frederick Heinrich Ludwig Muller and Katrina Maria (née Reinhardt).

Tasmanian-born Colville Armstrong Snr and Wilhelmina, originally from Penrith, wed in Wagga Wagga in 1885. Joseph was 35 and his bride 21.

Later that year their first child, Joseph, was born at Rylstone near Mudgee and died the same day.

Their marriage produced another seven children: Amelia Mary Agnes born at Balmain who lived from 1885 to 1951, Francis Augustine Joseph, Wagga Wagga (1888-1951), Agnes M Evelyn, Jerilderie (1891-1963), Maria Ada E, Wagga Wagga (1892-1950), Marion Colville Irene, Wagga Wagga (1894-1959), Colville Frederick, Yass (born 21 May 1897) and Katherine Norah, Jerilderie (1900-80).

Young Colville was educated by the Christian Brothers at Wagga Wagga.

He was a first cousin of Warwick Armstrong (1879-1947), who would play 50 cricket Tests for



***BRAVE:** Lance Corporal Colville Frederick Armstrong (right) with 4th Machine Gun Battalion comrade Frederick Myers from Brisbane, who was captured by the Germans and held as a Prisoner Of War from 6 April 1918 until war's end. The soldiers are posing with a dog, possibly their unit mascot.*

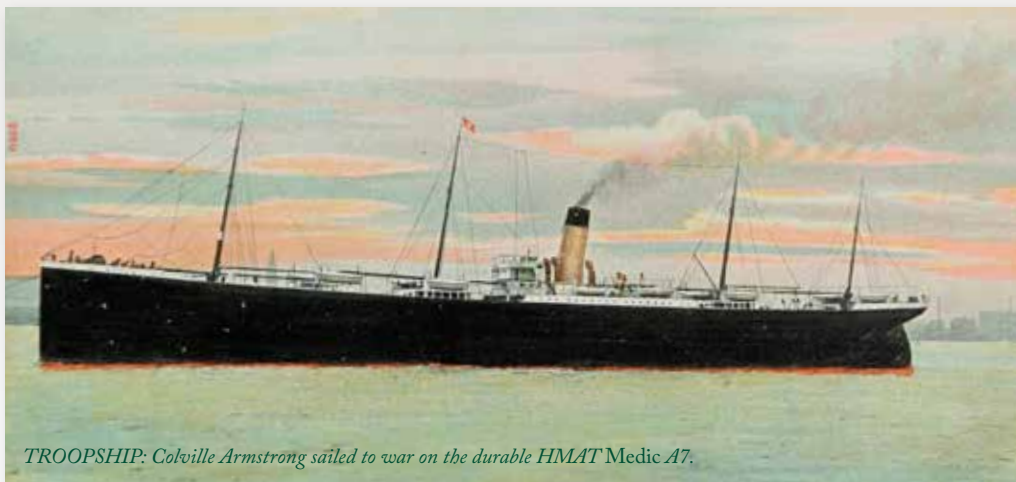
Australia between 1902-21, captaining his country 10 times and scoring six centuries. Warwick also played 16 Victorian Football League games for South Melbourne from 1898-1900 but chose not to sign up for the war, after hostilities erupted in 1914.

After leaving school, Colville became an assistant motor mechanic.

Having just turned 18, Colville enlisted with the Australian Imperial Force at Cootamundra on 7 August 1915, coincidentally the day of the Battle of the Nek at Gallipoli, part of the August Offensive which included the Battle of Lone Pine and a complex series of actions to take control of the Sari Bair Range from the Ottomans.

Each day, newspapers were filled with casualty lists, articles associated with patriotic funds for the war effort and recruitment updates.

continued ...



TROOPSHIP: Colville Armstrong sailed to war on the durable HMAT Medic A7.

Indeed, on the day Colville signed up, *The Daily Advertiser* reported 91 recruits had passed the local medical examination of whom 79 had been sent to Sydney and Cootamundra and 12 were “awaiting despatch”.

Cootamundra had a huge part to play in Great War recruitment.

In fact, as *The Corowa Free Press* reported on 11 April 1916: “The Cootamundra Camp is known as ‘The Riverina Boys’. Its full working number runs to 2000 men, not including officers. Cootamundra stands out as the biggest recruiting camp by far in New South Wales, and as a body of men it is unsurpassed by any other camp in the State.”

Colville was listed as being five feet, four-and-three-quarter inches (164.4 centimetres) tall and weighing 10 stone, eight pounds (67 kilograms), with blue eyes and dark brown hair.



MATES: Colville Armstrong (back row, second from left) with a group of AIF soldiers in a studio portrait.

Allocated Service Number 3683, he left Australia on 30 December 1915 with the 304-strong 4th Infantry Battalion, 12th Reinforcements on the 11,985-ton HMAT *Medic A7* – built for the Oceanic Steam Navigation Co. Ltd (White Star Line) and sister ship of the ill-fated RMS *Titanic*.

Medic served in the Second Boer War and two World Wars before being torpedoed and sunk by German submarines *U-211* and *U-608* on 11 September 1942.

After arriving in Egypt, Private Armstrong transferred to the 12th Brigade, Machine Gun Corps.

Dental troubles landed him in hospital in May 1916 but he proceeded to join the British Expeditionary Force out of Alexandria, landing at Marseilles on 11 June 1916.

He suffered a bout of influenza and sought treatment from the Casualty Clearing Station in January 1917.

Once recovered and back with his unit he was appointed a Lance Corporal on 21 April.

A week later he came down with a pyrexia – a persistent fever above 38.3° Celsius (100° Fahrenheit) – of unknown origin and was taken to the Divisional Rest Station. It would be a month before he rejoined his unit.

Then on 12 December LCpl Armstrong was admitted sick to hospital with scabies.

He was back to the battlelines in no time and on 1 April 1918 his designation was changed to the 4th Machine Gun Battalion, which was equipped with a total of 64 Vickers medium machine guns – assigned at a scale of 16 per company – and which participated in the final stages of the war, seeing action during the Allied defensive operations during the German Spring Offensive and then the Allied Hundred Days Offensive, which at long last brought an end to the conflict.

During these engagements, the battalion was used to provide enfilade fire in defence and plunging fire in support of attacking infantry forces, engaging targets out to 3,000 yards (2,700 metres).

After the guns fell silent on the Western Front, the then Pte Armstrong again came down with an undetermined pyrexia.

He was said to be “dangerously ill” the next day. On 19 December, just 21 years young and despite doctors’ best efforts, Pte Armstrong succumbed to his illness.

On the night of 10 January 1919, the awful news was conveyed to his mother who lived on Collins Street, Wagga Wagga.

A cable message with the tragic news was communicated to Mrs Armstrong by Catholic Monsignor Michael Buckley.

It was especially sad, given she was still grieving the death of her husband, just short of his 69th birthday, from bronchopneumonia, on 31 July 1918.

Her beloved son had been laid to rest in Maubeuge-Centre Cemetery, Maubeuge, Avesnes sur Helpe, Nord Pas de Calais, France.

Pte Armstrong’s effects arrived per HMAT *Bulla* A45 on 1 August 1919 with Mrs Armstrong signing for a wallet, paper and envelopes and then more belongings via HMAT *Beltana* A72 on 9 September 1919 with that parcel containing photographs, a pocket book, a pair of braces, mouth organ, a broken pocket knife, cards, wallet, watch, keys, a ring, two discs and eight coins.

His 1914-15 Star, British War and Victory Medals all duly arrived as did, eventually, the 1920 publication *Where the Australians Rest* – “A description of many of the cemeteries in which Australians – including those whose names can never now be known – are buried” – on 4 November 1921.

Finally, on 29 November 1922, the medal no serviceman’s mother wanted – the Memorial Plaque or Dead Man’s Penny as it was commonly known – was delivered.



RANK RETAINED: Colville Armstrong remains a Lance Corporal on his father's headstone where he is also immortalised at the Wagga Wagga Monumental Cemetery.



REMEMBERED: Colville Armstrong's name on the Australian War Memorial Roll Of Honour.

The Great War cut such a swathe through communities. Families were torn apart.

Colville Armstrong’s particulars required for the Roll of Honour of Australia in the Memorial War Museum stated he had also lost two cousins – one killed in action and the other from wounds.

Such devastation.

Mena Armstrong never got over the loss of her beloved boy.

She died, on 28 November 1931, aged 68, whilst visiting her daughter Mrs Agnes Ware at Malvern, Victoria, leaving behind her only surviving son, five daughters and 12 grandchildren.

She was buried beside her husband, on whose headstone their brave machine gunner is also remembered, in the Wagga Wagga Monumental Cemetery.

The grave marker kept, for eternity, his Lance Corporal rank ... and rightly so.

If ever a soldier earned his insignia it was Colville Armstrong who, as the *Advertiser* noted whilst announcing his passing, “had been in many severe battles”.

Colville Armstrong is remembered on the cenotaph and memorial arch in Wagga Wagga’s Victory Memorial Gardens and as one of 4 Battalion’s 104 men whose names liveth forevermore on the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour. 🌹

2025 ANZAC DAY RIVERINA AND CITY

Service Times and Venues

ADELONG

- 9.15am Short service at Grahamstown-Shepardstown monument, Tumut Street, followed by wreath laying at cemetery gates. (The spelling of what is now Shepherdstown is taken from the wording on the pedestal which was first erected in Grahamstown in 1921 before later being removed and re-unveiled at its current location on 25 April 2008).
- 10am Contingent including school children, ex-servicemen and women and serving personnel assemble at Adelong Services and Citizens' Club.
- 10.45am March to Memorial Park.
- 11am Wreath laying by officials and residents.
- 11.15am Combined service.
- 11.45am Return to S&C Club.

ARDLETHAN (includes Beckom)

- 6am Dawn Service at the RSL Club Rooms, Deakin Street, Beckom.
- 10.45am Assemble and march from Ardlethan Post Office, Yithan Street, to cenotaph, Memorial Hall, Ariaiah Street.
- 11am Service begins at cenotaph.
- Noon Community lunch, Ardlethan Memorial Hall, Ariaiah Street.

ARIAH PARK (includes Quandary)

- 10.45am Assemble for march at Bowling Club, Coolamon Street. March to cenotaph.
- 11am Service at cenotaph. Afterwards, lunch will be served at the Bowling Club.

BARELLAN

- 2.50pm Assemble for march at Barellan War Memorial Club, march along Bendee and Boree streets. Leeton Town Band in attendance.
- 3pm Service and wreath-laying ceremony at cenotaph, Mulga Street. Afternoon tea served at the Barellan War Memorial Club following the service.

BARMEDMAN

- 10.30am Assemble and march along Queen Street to Soldiers' Memorial Park.
- 11am Service at Soldiers' Memorial Park.

BATLOW

- 6am Dawn Service at cenotaph, Memorial Park, Park Avenue.
- 10.30am March leaves from Memorial Avenue (beside the CBA Bank), proceeds to cenotaph. Followed by main service.

BENDICK MURRELL

- 9am Wreath-laying ceremony at Bendick Murrell Memorial Hall.

BETHUNGRA (includes Frampton, Illabo)

- 6.15am Dawn Service at Bethungra Memorial Park, Olympic Highway. Catafalque party may be in attendance. Wreath-laying ceremony.

BIGGA

- 5.45am Assemble at Mulgowrie Street, Bigga Recreation Ground.
- 6am Dawn Service.
- 9.45am Line up for march at Mulgowrie Street, Bigga Recreation Ground and march to Memorial Hall, Binda Street.
- 11am Commemorative service at Memorial Hall.

BIMBI

- 1pm Commemorative barbecue – Bimbi Rural Fire Service Fire Shed.
- 2pm Commemorative service at cenotaph. Wreath-laying ceremony. Cadet catafalque party in attendance.

BINALONG

- 10am Assemble for service at War Memorial Garden, Fitzroy Street.
- 10.15am Main service.

BOGAN GATE

- 5.30am Dawn Service at the Monument, Hutton Street. Followed by breakfast in Memorial Hall.
- 11am Minute silence.

BOOROWA

- 6am Dawn Service at War Memorial, Marsden Street.
- 10.15am Assemble outside Boorowa Post Office, Marsden Street.
- 10.30am March from Marsden Street to War Memorial.
- 11am Minute silence.

BOWNING

- 5.45am Dawn Service, Bowning Community Hall, 3 Short Street, Bowning.

BREADALBANE

- 8am Service and wreath laying, Breadalbane Hall, Chisholm Park, Breadalbane Road. Community breakfast to follow.

BRIBBAREE

- 3.45pm Assemble at Bowling Club.
- 4pm March to cenotaph (next to Brimbaree Fire Shed).
- 4.15pm Memorial service at cenotaph. Wreath-laying ceremony. Cadet catafalque party in attendance. Followed by refreshments, Brimbaree Bowling Club.

2025 ANZAC DAY RIVERINA AND CITY SERVICE TIMES AND VENUES

CANOWINDRA

- 6am Dawn Service at cenotaph, Memorial Park, Gaskill Street.
- 10.45am Assemble at corner of Ryall and Gaskill streets and march to Memorial Park.
- 11am Service at the cenotaph, Memorial Park.

CARAGABAL

- 4pm Service at the cenotaph, Mid-Western Highway, conducted by students from Caragabal Public School. Afterwards, refreshments will be available at the Caragabal Pub.

COLLECTOR

- 6am Dawn Service at Collector cenotaph, Murray Street.

COLLINGULLIE

- 8am Service at Memorial Hall, Sturt Highway. Breakfast afterwards.

COOLAMON (includes Marrar)

- 5.30am Assemble for Dawn Service.
- 6am Dawn Service at cenotaph, Cowabbie Street. Followed by a community breakfast in the park.
- 10.45am Assemble outside RSL Memorial Museum, Loughnan Street and march to cenotaph.

- 11am Main service.

COOTAMUNDRA

- 6am Dawn Service at cenotaph in Albert Park.
- 10.15am Assemble for march in front of Cootamundra Ex-Servicemen's and Citizens' Memorial Club.
- 10.30am Ceremonial march beginning at the front of the Cootamundra Ex-Servicemen's and Citizens' Memorial Club.

- 10.45am Commemoration service at the cenotaph, Albert Park. If inclement weather, service to be held at Cootamundra Ex-Servicemen's and Citizens' Memorial Club.

COWRA

- 5.50am Dawn Service at cenotaph, Brisbane Street.
- 9.30am Ceremony at Cowra War Cemetery.
- 10.20am March form-up prior to community wreath-laying service on Brisbane Street.
- 11am Community service at River Park.
- 12.30pm Service at the Cowra Locomotive Depot.

CROOKWELL

- 5am Gunfire breakfast, Criterion Hotel, 72 Goulburn Street, Crookwell.
- 5.30am Assemble at Crookwell Services Club, 160 Goulburn Street.
- 5.40am Line up for march and proceed to Memorial Park.
- 6am Dawn Service, Memorial Park.
- 10.30am Assemble at Services Club.
- 10.40am Line up and march to Memorial Park.
- 11am Commemorative service.

CROWTHER

- 10.15am Wreath-laying ceremony at Crowther Memorial, Olympic Highway.

DARBYS FALLS

- 9.45am Assemble at Memorial, Rural Fire Service Shed.
- 10am Memorial service.

EUGOWRA

- 5.45am Dawn Service at Memorial Park cenotaph.
- 10.45am March from the corner of Broad and North streets to the cenotaph, Memorial Park.

- 11am Main service at cenotaph, Memorial Park.

FORBES (includes Bedgerabong, Corinella)

- 5.15am Assemble at Forbes Services Memorial Club, Templar Street, and march to cenotaph, Harold Street, followed by Dawn Service.
- 10.15am Assemble on Cross Street.
- 10.30am March to cenotaph, Harold Street, followed by main service.

FOREST HILL

- 5.45am Ceremony begins at front gate RAAF Base Wagga, Sturt Highway. Please be in position by 5.45am.

GALONG

- 6am Dawn Service, Galong Memorial Hall, McMahon Street. Breakfast to follow.

GANMAIN (includes Matong)

- 6am Dawn Service, Memorial Gate in front of Bowling Club, Waterview Street.
- 9.30am Assemble for march on corner of Ford and Waterview streets.
- 10am March proceeds to Memorial Gate.
- 10.30am Main service.
- 5.30pm Retreat service at the flag pole inside the Memorial Gate.

GOOLOOGONG

- 6am Dawn Service at the Memorial Clubrooms. Gunfire breakfast to follow.
- 9.45am Assemble for march at Memorial Club Rooms.
- 10am Commence march, followed by ANZAC service at cenotaph in Recreation Memorial Park.

continued ...

2025 ANZAC DAY RIVERINA AND CITY SERVICE TIMES AND VENUES

GRABBen GULLEN

- 8.45am Assemble at Grabben Gullen Hall, Camp Street.
9am Service.



REMEMBERING: Locals who served from Grabben Gullen are honoured at the village's memorial outside the Camp Street hall.

GREENETHORPE

- 7.30am Main Service at Soldiers' Memorial Hall including dedication of local serviceman to Wall of Honour. Followed by refreshments.

GRENFELL

- 5am Gunfire Breakfast, Criterion Hotel, Main Street.
5.45am Dawn Service at cenotaph, corner of Burrangong Street and Mid Western Highway. Cadet Catafalque party. Student presentations from Grenfell schools. Music by Grenfell Town and District Band. *The ANZAC* to be performed by Belinda Day. Australian National Anthem performed live. Coffee, tea and ANZAC biscuits provided.
7am Wet Breakfast, Criterion Hotel, Main Street.
8am Pilgrimage to Grenfell Cemetery.
10.30am Assemble for march, roadway near Criterion Hotel, Main Street, Grenfell.
10.45am March commences, led by riderless horse, and proceeds to cenotaph, Memorial Park.

- 11am Commemorative service and wreath-laying ceremony at cenotaph, Memorial Park, corner of Burrangong Street and Mid Western Highway. Cadet Catafalque party. Student presentations from Grenfell schools. *Spirit of the ANZACs* to be performed by Belinda Day. Australian, New Zealand and British National Anthems performed by the Grenfell Town and District Band.
3 May Dining-in night at the Grenfell Country Club, Gooloogong Road.

GUNDAGAI (includes Coolac, Mount Horeb)

- 6am Dawn Service at ANZAC Grove. Federation Guard in attendance.
10.15am Assemble outside Lotts Family Hotel, Sheridan Street.
10.30am March will be led by the 7th Light Horse Gundagai Troop followed by the Vintage Car Club vehicles carrying RSL members. Proceed East along Sheridan Street to cenotaph.
11am Wreath-laying ceremony. Federation Guard in attendance. On completion, the parade will return west along Sheridan Street, dismissing adjacent to Lotts Family Hotel.

GUNDAROO

- 5.30am Dawn Service, Memorial, corner of Cork and Harp streets. Followed by breakfast at Gundaroo Soldiers Memorial Hall, 52 Cork Street.

GUNNING

- 5.45am Dawn Service, Memorial Garden, Gunning Showground, 80 Lerida Street, Gunning.
10.45am Veterans march with step off at Pye Cottage, 181 Yass Street, Gunning.

- 11am Main service, Gunning cenotaph, outside the Gunning Post Office, 90 Yass Street.



LEST WE FORGET: Gunning District Soldiers' Memorial on the corner of Yass and Warrataw Streets.

HARDEN-MURRUMBURRAH

- 6am Dawn Service at cenotaph, Newson Park, corner Station and Albury streets, Harden.
10.30am Assemble in front of Mechanics' Institute, Neill Street, Harden.
10.40am March to cenotaph.
11am Main service. If inclement weather, service to be held in Mechanics' Institute.

HUMULA

- 10.15am Assemble for march at Humula Citizens' Sports Club.
10.30am March to Humula Community Hall. Service to follow outside hall, followed by morning tea.

JUGIONG

- 3pm Assemble for march adjacent to Police Station and march to Memorial Gates, Riverside Drive, where the memorial service will be conducted. 7th Light Horse Gundagai Troop in attendance.

2025 ANZAC DAY RIVERINA AND CITY SERVICE TIMES AND VENUES

JUNEE (includes Illabo, Wantabadgery)

- 5.45am Dawn Service on Broadway.
- 10.35am March from Memorial Park, Peel Street, to Railway Square for two-minute ceremony. March finishes at cenotaph on Broadway and will be followed by the memorial service.

JUNEE REEFS

- 3pm Service and wreath laying at Junee Reefs-Ivor Hall, Junee Reefs Road, conducted by Junee RSL Sub-Branch. Afternoon tea afterwards.

KOORAWATHA

- 6am Form up for Dawn Service at War Memorial Park Memorial Gates.
- 10.45am Assemble at the top end (highway end) of Boorowa Street. March to Regional Rooms for memorial service.

LOCKHART

- 9am Commemoration service at Lockhart Lawn Cemetery.
- 10.15am Form up at Commercial Hotel, Green Street.
- 10.30am March to cenotaph on Hebden Street.
- 10.45am Wreath-laying ceremony. Return to the Lockhart Ex-Servicemen's Club afterwards.

MIRROOL

- 6am Dawn Service at cenotaph, Ariaiah Street.
- 9am Service at cenotaph on Ariaiah Street, followed by morning tea.

MONTEAGLE

- 2pm Wreath-laying ceremony at Monteagle Memorial Hall.

MURRINGO

- 8.30am Assemble on Murringo Gap Road adjacent to Murringo Public School. March to Murringo Memorial Hall for service in hall grounds. Followed by morning tea and a history display in the hall.

MURRUMBATEMAN

- 9.30am Commemoration service at Jans Park, Barton Highway. Followed by morning tea at the Murrumbateman Country Inn, Barton Highway.

NANGUS

- To be commemorated on Thursday 8 May.
- 10.30am Community service at Public School, Tenandra Street.

PARKES

- 5.30am Dawn Service, Memorial Hill followed by breakfast at Parkes Services Club, Short Street.
- 8.15am Assemble for march in front of Parkes Services Club.
- 8.35am March commences.
- 9am ANZAC civic service at cenotaph, Cooke Park.
- 10.45am Pilgrimage and wreath-laying ceremony at war graves at Parkes Cemetery.
- Noon Luncheon at Parkes Services Club.
- 5pm Retreat at cenotaph, Cooke Park.

PEAK HILL

- 6am Dawn Service at AIF School of Arts Memorial Gates.
- 10am Assemble for march on Bogan Street, march along Caswell Street. Veterans join the march at Dugga Street. Proceed to the AIF School of Arts.
- 10.30am Main service.

PLEASANT HILLS

- 9am Service at Memorial Hall, Manson Street, followed by morning tea.

QUANDIALLA

- 10.30am Assemble at Blamey Park, Second Street.
- 10.45am March to Memorial Hall.
- 11am Commemorative service at Memorial Hall, Second Street. Service conducted

by Quandialla Central School students. Followed by refreshment and lunch at the Bland Hotel.

RAND

- 5.30am Dawn Service followed by breakfast at the RSL Club.
- 10.45am Assemble and march to the cenotaph.
- 11am Service.

RUGBY

- 6.30am Service at the ANZAC Memorial, Rugby Road.

SPRINGDALE

- 9am Prayer and laying of wreaths at Springdale Memorial cenotaph on Burley Griffin Way. Introduction by Colonel Pat Thorne AM (Ret.).
- 9.15am Fly-over by Warbirds.
- 9.20am Springdale ANZAC Memorial Scholarship Oration: Tribute to a Springdale local. Temora Band plays the Recessional including the Last Post. Service to follow. Refreshments in the Springdale Hall afterwards.

STOCKINBINGAL

- 3pm Commemoration service at Memorial Site, King George V Park, Britannia Street.

SUTTON

- 5.45am Dawn Service, outside Sutton Public School, Victoria Street, Sutton. Followed by barbecue breakfast.

TALBINGO

- 6.30am Dawn Service at Miles Franklin Park. Breakfast at the Country Club, Bridle Street, afterwards.

TALLIMBA

- 3pm March followed by commemorative service in the Tallimba Park. Afternoon tea will be available following the service.

continued ...

2025 ANZAC DAY RIVERINA AND CITY SERVICE TIMES AND VENUES

TARALGA

- 5.30am Assemble for service at the cenotaph opposite Taralga Hotel, 24 Orchard Street.
- 6am Dawn Service. Followed by Gunfire breakfast at the Memorial Hall, 41 Orchard Street. All welcome.
- 12.30pm Luncheon at the Taralga Sports Club.
- 2.30pm March starting at the Argyle Hotel and finishing at the Taralga Hotel.

TARCUTTA

- 10.30am Assemble for march from Tarcutta Rural Supplies to Memorial Hall.
- 11am Service at Memorial Hall, Sydney Street.

TEMORA (includes Reefton)

- 6am Dawn Service at cenotaph, Callaghan Park, Loftus Street.
- 10.30am Assemble at the Police Station, De Boos Street.
- 10.45am March to the cenotaph, Callaghan Park.
- 11am Service at cenotaph, Callaghan Park.

THE ROCK

- 6am Dawn Service at Soldier Memorial, Urana Street.
- 10.30am Service at cenotaph, Urana Street. Followed by lunch at the Memorial Bowling Club.

TRUNDLE

- 9.50am Form up at Trundle Central School, Forbes Street.
- 10.10am Commemorative march, Forbes Street.
- 10.30am Commemorative service at Trundle Memorial Hall.

TUENA

- 11am Service at cenotaph, Bathurst Street. Followed by lunch in the hall.

TULLAMORE

- 6am Dawn Service at Tullamore Memorial Park.
- 10.45am Commemorative service at Tullamore Memorial Park.

TUMBARUMBA (includes Khancoban, Rosewood, Tooma)

- 6am Dawn Service at District War Memorial, corner of Bridge and Winton streets.
- 6.30am Gunfire breakfast in the Memorial Hall.
- 7.30am Pilgrimage to cemetery to lay wreaths.
- 10.20am Assemble for march outside Memorial Hall.
- 10.30am March starts at Memorial Hall.
- 11am Main service at cenotaph.

TUMBLONG

- 9am Service at memorial, St James's Anglican Church, Adelong Road. 7th Light Horse Gundagai Troop in attendance.

TUMUT (includes Brungle, Lacmalac)

- 6am Dawn Service at cenotaph in Richmond Park, corner of Russell, Capper and Robertson streets.
- 10.15am Assemble for march in front of Fire Station.
- 10.30am March to Richmond Park followed by main service.

UNGARIE

- 6am Dawn Service, RSL Park, Ungarie Street.
- 9am Service at Ungarie Cemetery.
- 10.20am Assemble for march in Ungarie Street opposite the Rural Fire Service Shed.
- 11am Main service at Memorial Park. If inclement weather march to Memorial Hall. Light lunch to follow.
- 6pm Retreat at cenotaph, Memorial Park.

URANQUINTY

- 9am Service at Wirraway Park rest area, Morgan Street.

WAGGA WAGGA

- 5.30am Dawn Service at the cenotaph, Victory Gardens, Corner Baylis and Morrow streets (conducted by Legacy).

- 6.30am War Cemetery Service, Koorlingal Road.
- 7am ANZAC Gunfire Breakfast, Wagga RSL Club, corner of Kincaid and Dobbs Streets.
- 9.30am Participants assemble for ANZAC Day Parade. Corner Baylis and Morgan streets.
- 10am March along Baylis Street to the cenotaph at the corner of Baylis and Morrow Streets, followed by a commemorative service.
- Noon ANZAC Day lunch at the RSL Club. Ticket sales from Monday, 24 March.
- 5.30pm Sunset service at the Wagga RSL Club Memorial at the entrance of the club, Dobbs Street.

WALLEND BEEN

- 8.30am Assemble at Wallendbeen Public School and walk to cenotaph.
- 9am Main service followed by morning tea at Wallendbeen Memorial Hall.

WALWA, VICTORIA (includes Jingellic, NSW)

- 10am Commemorative service at cenotaph, Walwa Services Memorial Hall, Main Street. Morning tea and two-up to follow.

WEE JASPER

- 9.30am Assemble for march at the Wee Jasper Bridge over the Goodradigbee River.
- 9.45am March to the Memorial Hall, Wee Jasper Road.
- 10am Main service at the hall.

WEST WYALONG (includes North Yalgogrin, Wamboyne, Weethalle)

- 6am Dawn Service at Services and Citizens' Club cenotaph.
- 10.15am Assemble for march on corner of Church and Main streets.
- 10.30am March to cenotaph at Services and Citizens' Club.

2025 ANZAC DAY RIVERINA AND CITY SERVICE TIMES AND VENUES

11am Main service with a wreath-laying ceremony.

WIRRIMAH

8.15am Memorial service at Wirrimah Memorial Park, Smiths Road.

WOMBAT

6am Dawn Service followed by refreshments at the Wombat Hall. Harden-Murrumburrah Light Horse in attendance, as well as the Boorowa Cadet Unit.

WOODSTOCK

2.15pm Assemble for march across from Woodstock Public School, corner of Parkes and Carrington streets.

2.30pm March to Sr Jenny Kerr's Park for wreath laying and then to Arnold Bennett's Gates for wreath laying, then into hall for ANZAC service. Refreshments after service.

WYALONG

8.45am March and wreath-laying ceremony at cenotaph at Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Neeld Street.

WYANGALA

5.45am Dawn Service at memorial outside of the Wyangala Country Club, Sixth Avenue. Followed by breakfast at the Country Club.

YASS

5.45am Dawn Service, cenotaph, Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall. Followed by breakfast at Yass Soldiers' Club, 86 Meehan Street.

10.45am March will step off from the corner of Comur and Lead streets.

11am Commemorative service and wreath laying, cenotaph, Yass Soldiers' Memorial Hall.

YERONG CREEK

11am Service at cenotaph in Stanley Galvin Memorial Park.

YOUNG

5.45am Dawn Service at Memorial Town Hall followed by visits to the old cemetery and then the lawn cemetery. Breakfast at the Services Club to follow.

10.40am Assemble and march from Town Hall.

11am Main service at Anderson Park.

CAPITAL CITY SERVICES:

CANBERRA

4.30am Readings by defence personnel.

5.30am Dawn Service, Parade Ground, Australian War Memorial.

7.30am Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ceremony, For Our Country Memorial, Sculpture Gardens, Australian War Memorial Grounds.

9.30am RSL ACT Branch ANZAC Day Veterans' march and Commemorative Ceremony, Parade Ground, Australian War Memorial. Marching contingents will form up along ANZAC Parade from approximately 8am.

1-4pm Museum galleries open to the public.

4.30pm ANZAC Day Last Post Ceremony, Commemorative Area.

MELBOURNE

5.30am Dawn Service at the Shrine of Remembrance Forecourt.

8.30am ANZAC Day March starting at intersection of Flinders and Swanston streets and concluding at the Shrine of Remembrance. A Commemorative Service to be held at conclusion of march.

SYDNEY

4.20am Dawn Service at the cenotaph in Martin Place.

9am ANZAC Day march starting at intersection of Elizabeth Street and Martin Place, walking past the ANZAC Memorial at Hyde Park.

12.30pm ANZAC Day Commemoration Service at the ANZAC Memorial, Hyde Park, adjacent to the Pool of Remembrance.

5pm ANZAC Day Sunset Service at the cenotaph in Martin Place.

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.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Australian War Memorial, Geoff Burch, *The Gundagai Independent* journalist Helen Castles, Sherry Morris, the late Richard Norden VC's siblings Rodger and Robyn, *The Maher Cup – A Social History of Football in NSW's Group 9 Towns – 1920-1971* by Neil Pollock, and Lieutenant Gerard Pratt RAN, Manager, Visitor Services, AWM.

BRONZED AUSSIE:

The statue of Richard Norden VC and Battle of Coral-Balmoral memorial to be erected in Gundagai's main street will require funding of up \$250,000. A dedicated committee, headed by RSL Sub-Branch secretary Paul Vercoe and comprising council and community representatives, is appealing for donations to this most worthy cause. An account has been set up with the Bendigo Bank for deposits. Details are: BSB 633 000. Account No. 227 918 737.



RIVERINA & CENTRAL WEST WRITING AWARDS

IF THE quality and quantity of entries in this year's 15th annual Riverina ANZAC Day writing competition is anything to go by, the spirit of Australia's most important national day – 25 April – is alive and well in this region.

The theme for the 2025 competition was "ANZACs: Heroes all" and a total of 684 entries from 23 schools were received, providing a difficult task for judges to decide the best 16 literary pieces.

Students adjudged the best across the Riverina, whose works are published in the following pages of this commemorative publication, will each receive one of 16 beautiful book prizes, pictured above, from the Australian War Memorial.

Every student who submitted an entry will receive an individually signed keepsake certificate featuring a watermark image of the cover page of this year's booklet, featuring Richard Norden VC.

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

Thank you to every student for entering and to the many dedicated and wonderful teachers across the region who continue to support this most worthwhile competition.



NORTH

MY DAD, MY HERO

PRIMARY SCHOOL WINNER:

Evelyn Tait, 10, Year 4,
St Anne's Catholic College, Temora

IRAQ, Timor Leste, Afghanistan. These are all places where modern Veterans have been. My hero has been to all these places. He left home at 19 years old. He was in infantry. He was in the Army for six years. He's not in the Army anymore. Every ANZAC Day he marches and I wear his medals. He also likes to teach, ski and umpire footy.

This hero is my Dad.



DEDICATED TO MY GREAT GRANDPA JAMES

PRIMARY SCHOOL HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Madison McCormack, 11, Year 6,
St Anne's Catholic College, Temora

ANZACS how do we describe you?

Noble and brave.

Zeal and bold for Australia.

ANZACS we will never forget you even if you live or die.

Courageous and faithful we pray for you.

Shining in your heart is the name Australia.

Lest We Forget your name and purpose in our hearts. So thank you hero in our hearts.

Lest We Forget.



UNTIL THE FINAL BREATH

SECONDARY SCHOOL WINNER:

*Cohan Howden, 16, Year 11,
St Raphael's Catholic School, Cowra*

AS THE Sun sank into the sea.

The man sat in his rocking chair.

Lost in memories.

He would keep his oath.

While he still had breath.

To remember them all.

Lest We Forget.

The shock of explosions rattled through his mind.

Hellfire rained down mercilessly from the sky.

Soldiers surged, for their country and pride.

Live or die trying, fate would decide.

Word was spread, a command to retreat.

Not today, no side would be beat.

Between the cover of dirt, wood and mud.

Sounds of agony and pain, men drowning in
their blood.

In No Man's Land, soldiers were crying.

He couldn't sleep or eat and listen to them dying.

As the night turned darkest he went over the top.

To bring back heroes, give them another shot.

For hours that stretched over like days.

He'd bandage and carry and drag them away.

And tell them that they're going to go home.

To their mother and father, to families of their
own.

Eventually he'd return home to a town so proud.

And hear the cheers of a grateful crowd.

Valour and recognition were pinned to his chest.

Symbols for a hero
who'd given his best.

Before the Sun took
its place at dawn.

Remembrance rang
out from a brass
horn.

He'd keep his oath.

As long as he had
breath.

To remember all
and every hero.

Lest We Forget.



STRENGTH

SECONDARY SCHOOL HIGHLY COMMENDED:

Archie Foster, 13, Year 8, St Anne's Catholic College, Temora

ANZAC Day, observed on April 25th each year, is a solemn occasion to honour the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) heroes, who displayed unparalleled bravery during World War I. The most iconic moment of this history occurred in 1915 when the ANZAC soldiers landed at Gallipoli. Though the mission failed, the courage, resilience and comradeship shown by these men became the foundation of national pride for both Australia and New Zealand.

But ANZAC Day is not just about Gallipoli. It is a day to remember all those who served in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations since then. From World War II to more recent conflicts, countless men and women have followed in the footsteps of the ANZACs, protecting the freedoms we hold dear.

On this day, ceremonies are held across both countries, with Dawn Services, marches and moments of silence. The spirit of the ANZACs – characterised by mateship, endurance and selflessness – continues to inspire generations. We reflect on the sacrifices made by these brave individuals and honour their commitment to a cause greater than themselves.

As we gather to pay our respects, we also remember the families and communities who supported these heroes. ANZAC Day reminds us all of the profound cost of freedom, and it serves as a reminder of the values of courage, sacrifice and service that continue to shape our nations.

We will never forget the heroes who gave everything for us.



ANZAC DAY

IN THE RIVERINA, CENTRAL WEST,
SNOWY MOUNTAINS, SOUTH WEST
SLOPES & SOUTHERN TABLELANDS.

EVERY HERO

PRIMARY SCHOOL

WINNER: *Alfie Robson, 11,
Year 6, Sturt Public School*

HEROES are ANZACS,
We all think that,
And they are,
But heroes,
Are not just them.
The mothers,
The children,
The brothers,
The sisters,
The nans,
The pops,
And the dads.
All the people at all the homes,
Suffered,
But did not give up.
They sent biscuits,
Letters,
And hope.
On the field,
Animals,
Pets,
Fought,
And died.
Dogs,
Cats,
Pigeons,
Horses,
Donkeys,
Crows.
Enough tears,
Have fallen,
Each with a lost memory,
Put,
To waste.
Everyone who suffered,
During battle,
During war.
No matter how they look,
No matter
how they
speak,
No matter
anything,
They are
heroes.
All are
heroes.
Every
hero.



SOUTH

HEROES ALL

PRIMARY SCHOOL HIGHLY

COMMENDED: *Lucy Lloyd, 12,
Year 6, Henschke Primary School*

A POEM for those who served at war.
Did you know what you were signing
up for?
Fighting for your country, family and
friends.
Without even knowing how it shall end.
True bravery is a source hard to find.
One with a sturdy frame of mind.
Can enable this power.
Use it to devour.
Or serve.
Bracing the optic nerve.
You fought hard.
Without any "get out of jail free card".
Bullets hit harder than a dart.
This role is not one for the faint of
heart.
Some with no experience.
But all really took it serious.

Comrades lay injured or dead on the
ground.
Panicked moments whipped 'round.

All stayed strong.
All had their place.
All belonged.
All fought with their face.
Looking straight on.

Your sacrifice and effort shall never be
in vain.
Although we don't know the pain.
So we gather all together on the same
day.
To say:
That we are grateful for your service.
Though we can never fully repay.
For what happened.
For what you all went
through.
On those fateful
days.

All who went to war.
All who had saw.
Thank you for your
avail.
To Heroes, All.



SHADOWS ON THE RAMU RIVER

SECONDARY SCHOOL WINNER:

*Thomas Abell, 14, Year 8,
Wagga Wagga High School*

IN JUNGLES thick with death's
embrace,
Where shadows lurked and time did
race.
A hero stood, though small and
scarred,
With courage fierce, never failing his
guard.
A kind soul of only seventeen,
His battalion nowhere to be seen.
Through mud, sweat, and endless rain,
He fought through sorrow, fought
through pain.
On New Guinea's soil, where soldiers
bled,
He pressed ahead, where others fled.
Twenty-five wounded, twenty-two
dead,
Uncertain of the road ahead.
A lone reconnaissance lies, quiet, low,
Beneath the ancient tree's dark glow.

His clothes squelched, he shook with
a shiver,
He lay down in the crocodile infested
Ramu River.
He watched as the Japs drew near,
Their footsteps soft, their mission clear.
By the river's edge, so calm, so wide,
Where war's cruel whispers twist the
tide.

Through tangled roots and a mossy
veil,
His breath is still, his face is pale.
Of memories missing and days long
gone,
As soldiers pass, and shadows drawn.
Wanting to head home, he soldiered
on,
He lowered the brown slouch hat he
don.
The Japs came within 200 yards,
Once dark, he headed back to play
cards.
The war went on for
three years more,
He hoped to never
again see the things
he saw.

*In memory of Private
Patrick J Baker, 4th
Battalion*



COST FOR ALL

*SECONDARY SCHOOL HIGHLY
COMMENDED: Abigail Touzel, 15,
Year 10, Wagga Wagga Christian College*

BENEATH the dawn of history's call,
A soldier stood, so proud, so tall,
With mud covered boots, and rifle
held tight,
He marched to war in fading light.

The drums of ANZAC beat once
more,
On Gallipoli's rough forsaken shore,
Where courage clashed with steel
and fire,
And men rose high, their flags held
higher.

The wind would whisper through the
trees,
As soldiers prayed, and fought the
pleas,
Their bodies strained, their minds
were set,
On land where blood and dreams
were wet.

Beneath the sky, so dark and wide,
With comrades close, he fought with
pride,
Through rain and mud, through fire
and strife,
He gave his all, his youth, his life.

No medals earned for quiet tears,
For courage lived throughout the
years,

By memories of lands once safe and
free,
Now ravaged by this cruel cold sea.

Charging forward to any safe cover,
Looking up at the clouds, wishing I
could hover,

"Forward, forward at any cost,"
The Generals barked words glazed
with frost.

The battle raged, the soldiers fell,
In trenches deep, where shadows
dwell,
Yet still they fought, through pain and
tears,
In silence they faced their deepest
fears.

And though the years may dull the
sound,
Their bravery will still resound,
For in the heart of each young man,
An ANZAC's spirit, proud, began.

Now from the soil, their voices rise,
As poppies bloom beneath peaceful
skies.

Their
sacrifice,
a timeless
call,
Reminds
us all –
there was
a cost for
all.



EAST

THINKING BACK

*PRIMARY SCHOOL WINNER:
Lily-Rose Mooney, 11, Year 6,
Gundagai Public School*

AS I sit here and think back,
To those that wore the slouch hat.
I think of those families who would
dread,
That one of theirs would lay dead.
We stand here at the Dawn Service,
and speak about the ones that served
for us.
Imagine having to listen to that gun,
Knowing one day you might be done.
I feel sorry for those that had to eat
out of an old tin,
All the agony and pain they were in.

In my mind I can vividly see,
A serviceman standing right in
front of me.
He has a scar from a bullet wound,
As red as the poppies bloom.
We stand in a large and dense crowd,
And say in chorus "Lest We Forget"
loud and proud.



ANZACS HEROES TO ALL

*PRIMARY SCHOOL
HIGHLY COMMENDED:
Holden Pearsall, 10, Year 5,
Murrumburrah Public School*

ANZACS heroes to all. My
point of view is that ANZACS
are heroes to all of Australia
and New Zealand because they
allowed us to have the best lives
we need to have, even though
they may not have lived their
happiest lives because they had
to fight in the war and so had
best friends. As soon as you
entered the shore you probably
knew you were going to get
shot.

ANZACS are heroes to me,
ANZACS mean a lot to me.
For starters if I got called and
they said, "OK you're in the
Army" I would reply, "Ahh
nah ah." But they would be
like, "OK I just need to ask
my Mum" Or "OK sure I
would join the Army". So what
I'm trying to say here is that
they would be brave going
to the Army unlike me. And
another reason, they sacrificed
themselves just for us.



ANZAC DAY

IN THE RIVERINA, CENTRAL WEST,
SNOWY MOUNTAINS, SOUTH WEST
SLOPES & SOUTHERN TABLELANDS.

WITHIN HIS GRAVE, I'LL REMEMBER

SECONDARY SCHOOL HIGHLY
COMMENDED:

Katelyn Leseberg,
16, Year 11,
Cootamundra
High School



A DUSTY picture frame, a thumb brushed against the grime, pushing away the years for a sight that swelled tears. He sat upon a creaky chair, one that swayed against the humid winds. Horizon etched with a bright orange hue, the Sun barely a sliver against the dawn. To some, the morning heat was bothersome, a foe that offends their souls. Unlike them, he breathed temperatures worse ... Recalling in his haunted consciousness, lay infernal lands that swallowed up any poor man who dared to venture. High cliffs, rough terrain, dreary skies; Hell lacked the lifeblood of the world, solace of supplies absent yet superiors forced a march, ignoring the cries of the tortured.

Memories lingered upon his troubled mind, taunting him with one's loss ... Buried there – amongst the poppy petals – rested a beloved ... now reduced to a photo he grasped so desperately between swollen fingers. He once stood beside him, he once lived to serve a nation, he once did for moronic decisions enacted by higher powers ...

Thousands of souls sent to Saint Peter's gate, he among them ... service forgotten, life inconsequential ... reducing the Shepherd, saviour, of his life; meaningless like the dirt beneath, ignited fire within his heart ... he meant more to him than that. More than a number, more than just a friend. He sacrificed his light so bright for generations to live on. He will forever be a human who lived, who experienced the joys of life, more than the 60,000 nameless souls considered by many.

EAST

A DOG AND A SOLDIER

SECONDARY SCHOOL
WINNER: Hailie Onley, 17,
Year 12, Cootamundra High School

MAN'S best friend, that's what they were,
In the thick of mud and fear we stir.
With whimpering hearts beneath a starlit sky,
A soldier by my side, my comrade, my ally.

Through trenches deep where shadows creep,
He bounded forth with courage steep.

His tail was hope amidst despair,
A gentle spirit in the darkest air.

We roamed the fields where bullets screamed,
In every glance our friendship beamed.

Though war raged fierce with its cruel embrace,
In his loyal eyes I found a sacred space.

Each night we'd huddle under stars so bright,
His breath and fur beside me felt ever so right.

Together we faced the demons that rove,
Two souls intertwined in this battlefield grove.

But fate has a way of slashing dreams down,
An order came swift, he wore battle's crown.

"Go fetch!" they cried as noise pierced the gloom,
And the brave little Duke leaped to face impending doom.

I watched him charge forth through chaos unfurled,
My heart beat faster amidst all that swirled.

And then like an echo a silence did fall.

When smoke cleared away from zephyr's cold kiss,
Broken lay Duke upon a bloodied abyss.

But he had done all he could,
The brave hero on Earth now embraced by the wood.

Tears streamed like rivers, I fell to my knees,
Gone was my partner who ran wild with ease.

Now silence reigns where his bark used to rise,
In star-sprinkled nights I saw those warm amber eyes.

The hero lies still but forever lives on,
But my soul feels his echo in each breaking dawn.



WEST

THERE IS HOPE

PRIMARY SCHOOL WINNER:
Grace Kelly, 12, Year 6,
St Brendan's Primary School,
Ganmain

AS THE combat started,
The heroes run out to the battlefield,
Hundreds of soldiers already departed,
While the remaining seek shield.
One brave soldier keeps on fighting,
Not letting his fear win.

The air is full of smoke,
The ground shaking below.
He stands his ground,
ready to go.
With ammo flying all around
He holds his head high,
And never backs down.

Amongst the smoke he keeps moving on,
With every step he will fight.
Despite the noise he stays strong.
Hope is found in the dark of night.



A SHINING STAR

*SECONDARY SCHOOL
WINNER: Khyia Mead, 14, Year 10,
Junee High School*

1916 a terrible year.
Many people couldn't bare.
Soldiers facing fear.
Soldiers had been lied to.
Told that they would love it.
Soldiers wishing they hadn't tied
their last shoe.
Soldiers being forced to fight.
Left their families at home.
Now, nowhere in sight.
Families had fallen apart.
Wives waiting for their loved ones
to return like swans waiting for
theirs.
If only they had been smart.
While wives were at home crying.
Wishing like a genie for their return.
Soldiers were sacrificing their life
dying.
Two years had passed.
Constant war since then.
The wives hoped it wouldn't last.
Hoping for the letter was like
hoping for a blue moon.
She was hoping for the best.
The day of his return she had
waiting for him a balloon.
Now she had to wait.
Sit inside and watch the door.
Hoping he would bring home fate.
She was waiting for him to come
home with her crown.
He treated her like a princess.
All she could do now was frown.
He never returned.
Her heart shattered.
Her whole world is now burned.
All she could do was lay in bed.
She was mortified at the fact he was
never returning.

She wished he
wasn't dead.

One week
later she heard
a knock on
her door.
She really
believed with
all her hope it
was him.
Now she had to be sure.
She opened the door with joy.
Upset when she didn't see her
husband except a soldier.
Standing in front of her with a letter
and a toy.

The letter was written from her
husband explaining how much he
loved her.
And how he carved the toy for her
to keep.
Her world was now a blur.

The soldier explained to her that he
would not be returning.
Heartbroken she fell to the floor.
All the pain left her with a sting.
Five years after still heartbroken.
She keeps the toy and his letter like
it is treasure.
The memory of him every day still
soaks in.

She was very proud of who he was.
And how he fought for his country.
Although she doesn't get to see him
in person, she can see him in the
stars.

So every clear night.
She'll lay out under the stars as if a
little kid.
She knows while she's there, nothing
can give her a fright.

She loves to see a shooting star.
She always wishes he would come
back to her.
But she knows when she looks up
he isn't far.



ALL ANZACS ARE HEROES

*SECONDARY SCHOOL
HIGHLY COMMENDED:
Elliane Reynolds, 16, Year 10,
West Wyalong High School*

BENEATH our weary feet, we
tread the earth we roam,
Beneath the soil that cradles what
we call home.

There lie stories, etched deep in
the ground,
Unspoken, yet their echoes
resound,
Courage carved into the fabric
of time,
Forever unforgotten, in each
heart and mind.

The sacrifice they made, pure and
true,
Will be honoured forever, as the
years pursue.

Their blood, sweat and tears,
their bravery, and ability to
overcome their fears.

Sons, fathers, brothers
All put out on the line,
To fight side by side
Leaving everything behind.
From their beloved home town
footy team,
To their family, and everything in
between.

They abandoned it for a cause
much bigger than themselves,
For a future they weren't even
sure of themselves.

And all that just to fight a war
they didn't begin,
All that just to die for another
man's sin.

Each soldier, nurse and cook
played their part.

Fighting for
what was right
with their
mind and their
heart.

Heroes,
whether living
or gone.
Their legacy
remains,
forever and
strong.



KEEPING US SAFE

*PRIMARY SCHOOL HIGHLY COMMENDED:
Noah Burns, 7, Year 2, Matong Public School*

BRAVE men.
Scared but brave.
Fighting, hiding, shooting.
Fighting, saving, training.
Strong.
Fighting to save us.





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