

WINNER — SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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Consider what values and characteristics demonstrated by the ANZACs at Gallipoli and later reinforced at the Western Front, continue to influence Australians Today.

Despite the calamity and death of the campaigns at Gallipoli and the Western Front, all was not lost. The Australian and New Zealand soldiers demonstrated many key values and characteristics that have been remembered and are widely recognised and admired in society today. In particular, the ANZACs displayed remarkable resilience, mateship and pride.

Resilience is a highly regarded characteristic that was admired in the ANZAC soldiers at Gallipoli and later at the Western Front. The soldiers faced many hardships, however the ANZACs persevered and kept fighting for their country, even though circumstances were so arduous. Historian CEW Bean (1924) described the great resilience shown by the Wellington Battalion. *'Of the 760 ... there came out only 70 unwounded or slightly wounded men. Throughout that day not one had dreamed of leaving his post. Their uniforms were torn, their knees broken. They had had no water since the morning; they could talk only in whispers; their eyes were sunken; their knees trembled.'* (cited in Dolan and Meyers, 2005) At the Western Front resilience was also vividly displayed. Archie Barwick wrote in his diary, *'All day long ground rocked and swayed backwards and forwards from the concussion ... men were driven stark staring mad ... were nearly all in a state of silliness and half dazed but still the Australians refused to give ground.'* (cited in MacFarlane, I, date unknown) This type of endurance is very special. For someone to keep going when everything around them is diminishing is truly amazing. Today resilience is most recognised in the Australian farmers. The farmers have been the hardest hit in a seemingly inexhaustible drought that has lasted over six years. Farmers are forced to live in dustbowl conditions, raising emaciated livestock and in huge debt. Many farmers have given up their land; however, many still remain, determined to push through these difficult times. NSW Liberal senator Bill Heffernan (2006), who runs a farm himself, said *'Australia's farmers were resilient in the face of hardship.'* (cited in The Age, 2006) Another source (2006) stated that *'Australia's farmers are typically tough, resilient and resourceful – qualities that have enabled generations of country families to*

tough it out in hard times of drought and bushfires.' (cited in Stuff) The majority of men and women that endure these harsh circumstances continue to push through the pain and are resilient in all ways determined to keep Australia's agricultural industry together. Resilience is recognised in many generations of Australian citizens since Gallipoli and the Western Front. We are known as the Aussie bush battlers.

Mateship is one of the most significant values in Australian society. Mateship is in fact one of Prime Minister John Howard's favourite terms. He even attempted to have it included in the preamble to the constitution at the 1999 referendum. Although the referendum passed, John Howard often uses the term when defining the nation. The definitive molding of mateship is thought to have originated during World War One and ever since the impeccable demonstration of mateship at Gallipoli and at the Western Front this priceless quality has been admired by all Australians. Historian CEW Bean (1924), recounted at Gallipoli how two soldiers willingly helped each other out, *'He (Colonel Clarke) was carrying his heavy pack, and could scarcely go further. Laing advised him to throw the pack away, but Clarke was unwilling to lose it, and Laing thereupon carried it himself.'* (cited in Board of Studies, 2001) At the Western Front mateship like this was also seen when Australian soldiers disobeyed the British order to not rescue wounded men in the open in case they themselves were wounded. *'They could not leave their mates stranded and calling for help. One officer walked across the battlefield and made a truce with the Germans. He even offered himself as a prisoner while his men tried to find all the Australian wounded.'* (Anzac Day Commemoration Committee (QLD) Incorporated, 1998) Mateship like this has been remembered and celebrated and has a strong influence on Australians today. Remarkable mateship was displayed when earlier this year two miners were trapped inside a mine in Beaconsfield, Tasmania for fourteen days. Prime Minister John Howard (2006) commended this mateship when he stated *'Everybody was working together, differences of occupation and background, religious and political belief was put aside. A whole community was united in its determination to achieve a result.'* (cited in The Prime Minister of Australia) The bonds of mateship that the ANZACs showed are reflected in the saying for which Australia is most renowned, 'G'day mate!'

Pride is an important characteristic displayed at Gallipoli, the Western Front and to this present day. The ANZACs showed great pride in themselves after overcoming obstacles and pride in their mates as they successfully accomplished a day's work of fighting and pride in their country. After fighting at Gallipoli, soldier Roy Denning (1915) wrote to his mother *'I was justified in being proud of being an Australian.'* (cited in The Anzac Landing) At the Western Front pride was demonstrated when *'His (Major Black) men leapt through with him, and fought their way into the German trenches. They were the first soldiers to break through the Hindenburg line. Proudly they looked for Major Black. But he lay dead on the wire.'* (Anzac Day Commemoration Committee (QLD) Incorporated, 1998) This pride is still evident in today's society. Our citizens are proud to live in a country that is safe, where we have the freedom of speech and where everyone is accepted. Australia is the envy of many people and Australians are proud to live here. In 2000 when Cathy Freeman lit the Olympic Cauldron she held the uttermost pride within her as she received the flame and ascended the stairs towards the cauldron. In an interview after receiving news that she had been selected to light the cauldron Freeman stated *'I'm very, very honored. I'm very proud.'* (CNN Sports Illustrated, 2001) Having Cathy Freeman light the Olympic cauldron was especially significant due to her Aboriginal descent. Often after winning a race Freeman carried the Australian flag along with the Aboriginal flag in order to manifest her pride in the heritage of her people. Freeman stated *'I just wanted to show I am proud of who I am and where I come from.'* (Hudson, 2005) Pride was a key element shown at Gallipoli and the Western Front and is widely demonstrated in today's society as Australia's citizens are proud to live in Australia.

The ANZACs were truly inspiring soldiers, holding their heads high in times of tragic loss. At Gallipoli and the Western Front, soldiers were mentally, physically and emotionally challenged. However, with the support of their mates and the desire to make their country proud, the soldiers continued to run, continued to fight and continued to survive. This transfixed the minds of many Australians and these qualities are, to this present day appreciated, admired and demonstrated. Mateship, pride and resilience are shown by the Australian farmers, the Beaconsfield miners and Cathy Freeman portraying to the whole world the treasured spirit and qualities of Australians that have lived on ever since Gallipoli and the Western Front.

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