



The

a competition for

Simpson

year 9 and 10 students

Prize

**2009 runner-up
Victoria**

**Tiarna Borleis
Beechworth Secondary College**

World War I had a devastating effect on Australian society. Why should we commemorate our participation in this conflict?

by Tiarna Borleis, Beechworth Secondary College

World War One had some very important effects on Australian society, both positive and negative. These effects changed Australia forever. We should commemorate them with both celebration and remembrance for those who sacrificed, saved, protected and determinedly looked after our nation. This is why Wilfred Owen's poem 'Dulce Et Decorum Est' contains these powerful lines.

"The old lie: Dulce et decorum est Pro patria mori.

How sweet and pleasant it is to die for your country"

Wilfred Owen from the poem Dulce Et Decorum Est

Some of the positive effects include women's rights. Women gained respect from the government as they accepted the sacrifices the war demanded, running businesses, factories and becoming tradeswomen. The women produced army uniforms and raised money for the troops overseas, funding medical supplies, assistance to war widows and constant support to any other needs. If it wasn't for women, Australia would have gone into a devastating crisis of non-productive industry:-

The Mother

He was all I had to give;

Now, life has nothing for me;

For my heart lies in a nameless grave in far Gallipoli.

Why should I dry my tears, or talk of Victory!

For my heart lies dead in a nameless grave in far Gallipoli.

God guard all mother's sons, fighting for liberty;

But my heart lies dead in a nameless grave in far Gallipoli.

By Dowell O'Reilly



Of course a negative effect of World War One was the death and loss of thousands of men. Within two years most families had lost a son, brother, husband or father, or had a relative of some form wounded. Not only were the effects devastating for Australia, they were just as devastating for the Turkish people.

Interestingly, another negative effect of World War One included the shortage of medicines in Australia. A majority of medicine was sent to the front and other medicines such as aspirin had been imported from Germany before the war started and was now unavailable. Vast outbreaks of disease spread throughout Australia and caused a high death rate for we had no proper medical supplies to help in surgery, sickness and the cleaning of wounds.

“I do not order you to attack, I order you to die”

Lieutenant-Colonel Mustafa Kemal to his Turkish soldiers. (AWM A05319)

Recently, there has been a commemorative event in France. Our new Australian Governor General Quentin Bryce was very moved when she attended a ceremony in France. The events there and the role of Australians are not as well known by students nor the public. But a tragic number of young soldiers died there too. Commemoration helps us get the story more accurate for future generations. It might help us journey through our current story in Iraq, Afghanistan, Timor and Bougainville.

World War One began in 1914 and lasted for four years. The Gallipoli story stands out from the rest of the Great War stories to most Australians in the world. The Gallipoli Battle started on April 25th 1915 when Queenslanders of the Ninth Battalion came ashore at what the Turks called Ari Burnu (Bees Nose) more and more boats piled ashore. The ANZACS were supposed to be dropped off at Tepe, a flat stretch of coast. Instead they were dropped at a steep, broken coastal cliff area. They were off course. The maps told them nothing.

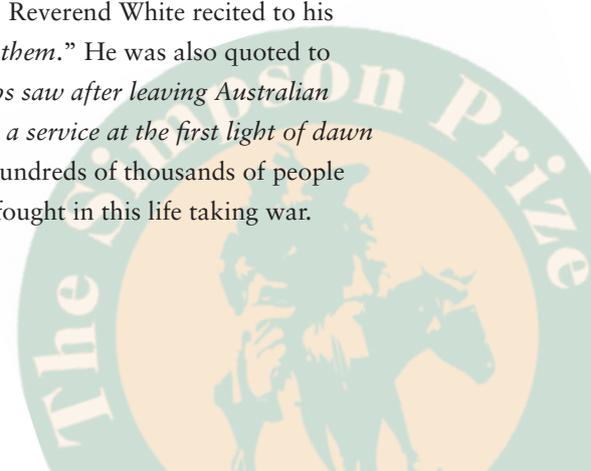
Thousands of men tried scrambling up the cliffs and the majority of them died. This is why we commemorate them at the dawn service on ANZAC day.

Who was to be blamed for the wrong landing? No one knows to this day.

“They told us to strap material to our boots so the Turks wouldn’t hear us leave but I disagree I think it was so our dead mates wouldn’t hear us leave them behind.”

Anonymous

The commemoration process of the dawn service began on the 25th April 1923 with a man named Reverend Arthur Ernest White 44th Battalion First AIF, on Mount Clarence overlooking King George Sound, Albany, Western Australia. With twenty men at his side they placed a wreath on the sea and watched it sail away. Reverend White recited to his men *“As the sun rises and goes down, we will remember them.”* He was also quoted to have said *“Was the last sight of land these ANZAC troops saw after leaving Australian shores and some of them never returned. We should hold a service at the first light of dawn each ANZAC day to commemorate them.”* Every year hundreds of thousands of people stop at dawn to remember and silently thank those who fought in this life taking war.



Commemorate means “*a celebration or reminder of some past event or person*”. We should celebrate the lives won and remember those that we lost.

The Great War deserves commemoration, respect and forgiveness. If we constantly focus on the war for killing so many of our boys we will never see the positive outcome. Yes, it had some very important negative effects, but if we only ever see the negative effects the positive will soon become forgotten. We will forget where women’s rights came from but remember all the death and loss. We should forgive the opposing countries for they also lost thousands of innocent people. To them we were the monster. To us they were. Who is the monster? If we voted against the war we were called ‘filthy cowards’ who ‘licked the boots of the Germans’. We were called these names because we didn’t want to see our brothers, fathers, husbands or relatives dead. Really, who is the monster?

“The impossible heights lay just beyond the impossible reach of their courage”

Peter Bowers

World War One had some very important effects on Australian society, both positive and negative they changed Australia forever. We should commemorate both effects with celebration and remembrance of those who sacrificed, saved, protected and determinedly looked after our nation.

“Lest we forget, or if we forget, will we have to re-experience the death and horror of World War One and loose all those we lost again.”

Judith Lazarus

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