


My Visit



to the Australian War Memorial

Teacher notes

1



Hall of Memory

The Hall of Memory contains mosaics and stained glass windows that show the special qualities of Australians in both World Wars. The Unknown Australian Soldier buried here represents all Australians who have died in war. Look at the words under the windows.

Which three of the words do you like the most?

How did you feel when you were inside the Hall of Memory?


Hall of Memory

The Commemorative area is a quiet place for contemplation of the efforts of ordinary Australians in war and for the remembrance of those who suffered and died. The Hall of Memory is lined with mosaics and stained glass windows which show the special qualities of Australians in both World Wars. On 11 November 1993 an unknown Australian soldier from the First World War was brought from a cemetery in France and interred in the Hall of Memory. He symbolises all Australians who have died in war. The four pillars symbolise the four elements of life: earth, fire, air and water.

Post-visit activity:

- Design your own mosaic or stained glass window to commemorate Australians who died in war.

2



Gallipoli boat

This is one of the lifeboats that carried Australian soldiers ashore at ANZAC Cove on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. If you were a soldier heading for ANZAC Cove, where would you want to sit in this boat? Why?

Gallipoli boat

This is one of the lifeboats that carried Australian soldiers ashore at ANZAC Cove on Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. The boat holds about 30 men. These boats were also used to evacuate casualties and land supplies. During the initial landings, they were towed ashore by small steamers from the Royal Navy warships supporting the landings; sailors went with each boat to row it back to its parent ship. This boat was left on the beach after being damaged during the eight month-long campaign on Gallipoli, but was recovered after the war.

If you have time:

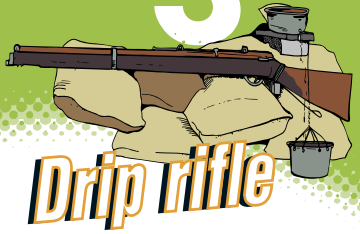
Visit the floor and table maps in the Gallipoli Gallery to see where the ANZACs landed.

Post-visit activity:

- Discuss:
Why do you think this object is on display in the Memorial?

3

3



Drip rifle

Rifles like this fired automatically after the soldiers left the trenches, so that the Turks would not know that the ANZACs were being evacuated from Gallipoli secretly at night.

Can you explain how it works? [Hint: water was poured into the top container.]

Drip Rifle

The drip rifle was “invented” by Lance Corporal W. C. Scurry, 7th Battalion, AIF, with the assistance of Private A.H. Lawrence, who at one time gave up his small ration of water for two days to enable experiments to be conducted. How does the drip rifle work? The top container is filled with water, which drips through a hole drilled in the bottom of the container. Eventually enough water drips into the bottom container to make it heavy enough to tip over, pulling down a cartridge box filled with stones sitting on or near the butt of the rifle. This weight in turn pulls the string attached to the trigger, causing the rifle to fire. Quantities of water in the top container and the size of the holes in the tins through which the water dripped were varied so that rifles would fire at different times.

Soldiers at Gallipoli also made jam tin bombs and graters, among other things, from the materials they had at hand.

If you have time:

Can you find other examples of soldiers being resourceful and inventive in this gallery?.

Post-visit activity:

- Find out more about Gallipoli by visiting the Memorial website [http:// www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au) and the Department of Veterans' Affairs website <http://www.anzacsite.gov.au>

4



This diorama shows a success for the Australians in one of the last big battles in France during the First World War.

Find five different things that soldiers are doing to help each other in this diorama.

Mont St Quentin diorama

Because of its strategic importance, Mont St Quentin was heavily fortified by the Germans with thick wire and extensive trench systems, as you can see in this diorama. It was believed to be impregnable. The Germans tried to make one last stand here against the rapidly advancing Allies, using their best remaining troops to guard it - the Prussian Guard. The Australians were worn with the ceaseless effort they had recently undergone, and some Battalions had been reduced to as few as 100 men (although most had about 300). Over three days, the already battle-weary Australians cleared the approaches to the hill and captured it, without either tanks or creeping artillery barrage.

The success of the Australians was commented on at the time:

- Marshal F. Foch commented on their “altogether astonishing valiance”.
- Brigadier General G. W. St G. Grogan VC described it as “perhaps the greatest individual feat of the war - the successful counter-attack by night across unknown and difficult ground, at a few hours' notice, by the Australian soldiers”. The Australians were so proud of their hard-fought victory at Mont St Quentin that this was the first diorama they asked to be made for the Memorial.

Post-visit activity:

- Try making your own diorama, using the following materials: paddlepop sticks, straws, cotton wool, cardboard, string, steel wool, paint, playdough or clay.

5



In 1942, Australians fought a terrible battle against the Japanese on the Kokoda Trail, which crosses the Owen Stanley Range in Papua. Look at the diorama and the film.

What difficulties faced the soldiers fighting on the Kokoda Trail?

Kokoda

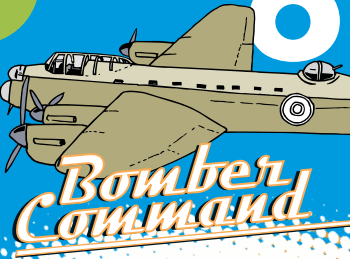
Kokoda was arguably the most significant part of Australia's seven-month campaign in Papua during the Second World War. More Australians died in these seven months of fighting, and the Japanese came closer to Australia, than in any other campaign. The battle of the Kokoda Trail was jungle warfare at its worst - a desperate battle against men and appalling conditions. The men were exhausted as they struggled up and down precipitous slopes, many of them burdened with a 30-45-kilogram pack and weapon. At night the soldiers froze in their muddy, wet uniforms. There was little prospect of a hot meal, and obtaining supplies was a serious problem throughout the campaign. They suffered from diseases like malaria, scrub typhus and dysentery. The support of Papuan and New Guinean carriers and stretcher-bearers was invaluable. They were referred to affectionately as “fuzzy-wuzzy angels”. Look for William Dargie's painting of them, *Stretcher bearers in the Owen Stanleys*, just outside the Kokoda display.

Post-visit activity:

- One of their biggest problems was carrying their pack and equipment up the steep, muddy track. If you were a soldier on the Kokoda Track which of the following items would you be carrying?

spare set of clothes / 2 pairs socks
extra boots / blanket / bandages
ammunition / rifle / helmet
slouch hat / waterproof cape / knife
water bottle / cigarettes / machete
matches / eating utensils / Aerogard
ground sheet / tent / camp bed
sleeping bag / diary and pen
25-30 kilograms of food / mobile phone
mosquito net

6



Bomber Command

Flying Lancaster bombers was one of the most dangerous tasks during the Second World War. They flew from English airfields on bombing raids over Germany.

How did you feel while you were riding in the "bomber"? What would have been the best and worst parts about flying in these planes?

Bomber Command

Lancaster bombers were crewed by seven men: pilot, engineer, bomb-aimer, navigator, radio operator, mid upper gunner and rear gunner. The crews were a mix of British, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans and Canadians. The planes were not pressurised, so each man had to breathe oxygen through his face mask when the aircraft were flying at altitude. The high altitude made the trip of 5-10 hours very uncomfortable because of the cold, despite heating in the forward compartment and heated flying suits for the rear gunner. Flying Lancaster bombers was one of the most dangerous tasks during the Second World War. Approximately one third of the men flying in them became casualties. Their chance of survival over more than 20 missions was slim.


Post-visit activity:

- Find out more about "G for George", a Lancaster bomber, by looking up the encyclopedia on the Memorial website at <http://www.awm.gov.au>

"G for George":

Go to Anzac Hall and see the Lancaster "G for George".

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Kittyhawk and Zero

These two planes were flown in air battles over New Guinea and Northern Australia during the Second World War.

Look at the wings to find out which plane was flown by the Japanese. How can you tell?

Look at the Kittyhawk display. What skills would you need if you were the pilot or the mechanic?

Kittyhawk and Zero

The Zero was a formidable fighter plane. In the early part of the war Allied pilots were warned, "Never dogfight with a Zero". It was lightweight, fast and very maneuverable. No aircraft flown by Australians was a match for the Zero. Kittyhawks were obtained from America to help in the defence of northern Australia and Papua and New Guinea. Because the Zero was so light, when it went too fast it got the shakes. When it went into a steep dive it could not pull out. So the Kittyhawk pilot would get up high and swoop the Zero like a magpie does to us. This was the only way Australian pilots really had a chance against the Zero.

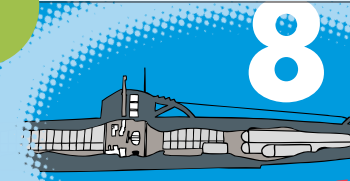
At Milne Bay in New Guinea, Australian troops on the ground and pilots flying Kittyhawks, fought a fierce battle with the Japanese, forcing

them to withdraw. One of the Australian aces who flew Kittyhawks against the Japanese was Bruce "Buster" Brown. He is in a photograph next to the plane, leaning against the cockpit sill. Polly was his regular aircraft and he flew it at Milne Bay. He named it Polly after his girlfriend, whom he later married (this was her nickname).

Post-visit activity:

- Decorations on aircraft were called "nose art". Design your own nose art for your own Kittyhawk. You can use words, pictures or cartoons.

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Japanese midget submarine

Make sure you arrive in time to see the sound-and-light show of the midget submarine attack on Sydney Harbour. What damage was done by one of the midget submarines?

How did people in Sydney feel after the midget submarine attack on the night of 31 May 1942?

Japanese midget submarine

On the night of 31 May 1942 three midget submarines were released from their sea-going "mother" submarines and entered Sydney Harbour. One became entangled in the boom net across the harbour and her two-man crew blew her up. A second entered the harbour and fired torpedoes at the cruiser USS *Chicago*. They missed the *Chicago* but one hit the depot ship HMAS *Kuttubul*, killing 21 naval ratings. This midget submarine was never found. A third midget submarine also entered the harbour but was badly damaged by depth-charges before it could fire any torpedoes. The two crewmen in this submarine committed suicide rather than surrender or be captured. The submarine in the Memorial's collection is a composite of the first and third midget submarines. The four submariners were given funerals with full military honours and their ashes were returned to Japan.

This was done as a chivalrous gesture to the courage of the submariners, but also in the hope that captured Australian servicemen would be accorded the same respect and that Japanese treatment of captives might be improved.

If you have time:

Go to the Second World War gallery to locate the saucepan that was hit by a Japanese shell fragment which landed in a Rose Bay kitchen.

Post-visit activity:

- Go to the Memorial website to find some interesting education activities: <http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/remembering1942/>