The Memorial’s Guide to Anzac Day

Anzac Day developed from the commemoration of the Australian and New Zealand soldiers who lost their lives on Gallipoli during the First World War. Although the campaign failed, the endurance and sacrifice of those soldiers led to the creation of the “Anzac legend”. Over the years, Anzac Day has broadened to include the commemoration of all men and women who have served for Australia in war and peace.

FAST FACTS
- Anzac is the acronym formed from the initial letters of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.
- 25 April was officially named Anzac Day in 1916.
- During the 1920s Anzac Day became established as a national day of commemoration.
- For the first time in 1927, every state observed some form of public holiday on Anzac Day.
- By the middle of the 1930s, all the rituals we now associate with the day – dawn vigils, marches, memorial services, reunions, two-up games – were firmly established as part of Anzac Day culture.
- 25 April is also the anniversary of the recapture by Australians of Villers-Bretonneux, France, in 1918.
- It is also the anniversary of the final day of the battle of Kapyong, Korea, in 1951.

On that day, 25 April 1915
- Australian and New Zealand soldiers set out, as part of a larger British force, to capture the Gallipoli peninsula in order to open the way to the Black Sea for the allied naval forces.
- Soldiers landed on Gallipoli on 25 April; they met fierce resistance from the Turkish defenders. The campaign dragged on for eight months.
- Almost 9,000 Australian soldiers were killed, with 26,000 casualties in total.
- Although the Gallipoli campaign failed, the Australia and New Zealand created the “Anzac legend”, which has become an important part of the national identity of both nations.

Anzac Day at the Australian War Memorial

FAST FACTS
- Anzac Day was first commemorated at the Memorial in 1942, five months after it opened.
- Anzac Day commemoration at the Memorial comprises a Dawn Service and a National Ceremony.

Dawn Service
The Dawn Service observed on Anzac Day has its origins in a military routine which is still followed by the Australian Army today.

During battle, the half-light of dawn was one of the most favoured times for an attack. Soldiers in defensive positions were woken in the dark before dawn, so by the time first light crept across the battlefield they were awake, alert, and manning their weapons; this is still known as the “stand-to”. As dusk is equally favourable for attacks, the stand-to was repeated at sunset.

- The Dawn Service is held from 5.30 am to 6 am at the Memorial.
- The service is conducted by a Chaplain.
- The ceremony is informal, with visitors standing on the Parade Ground.
- The Memorial’s Commemorative Area opens 15 minutes after the service concludes, and remains open until 8 am. Here the public can view the Tri-Service Guard mounted at the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier.
- Families and young people are encouraged to take part, and services in Australian capital cities have seen some of the largest turnouts ever. Reflecting this change, those services have become more elaborate, incorporating hymns, readings, pipers, and rifle volleys. Other services, though, have retained the simple format of the dawn stand-to, familiar to so many soldiers.
- The 2015 Dawn Service will feature readings before the service begins and large screens for those standing down Anzac parade.
National Ceremony
The National Ceremony at the Australian War Memorial includes a march, coordinated by the Returned and Services League (RSL), of Australian veterans of wars and peacekeeping deployments.

The Memorial ceremony also includes hymns, prayer, an address, laying of wreaths, a recitation, the Last Post, a period of silence, either the Rouse or the Reveille, and the National Anthem.

- The National Ceremony traditionally runs from 10.15 am to 12 noon at the Memorial.
- Dignitaries, such as the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, are invited to salute the Parade.
- The march is coordinated by the RSL; for enquiries regarding march procedures and protocols, please contact the RSL.
- Veterans who are part of the march gather on Anzac Parade with their units.
- Veterans are seated in the stands situated at the end of the Parade Ground.
- The Memorial opens after the ceremony and remains open until 5 pm. The public may view the Tri-Service Guard mounted at the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier.
- Following the ceremony, the public are invited to lay a poppy at the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier.
- The public are also welcome to lay a personal wreath at the Stone of Remembrance upon the completion of the ceremony.

Symbols of commemoration

Rosemary
Rosemary became an emblem of both fidelity and remembrance in literature and folklore. Traditionally, sprigs of rosemary are worn on Anzac Day and sometimes on Remembrance Day. Rosemary has particular significance for Australians, as it is found growing wild on the Gallipoli peninsula.

Red Poppies
The Flanders poppy has long been a part of Remembrance Day, the ritual that marks the Armistice of 11 November 1918, and is also increasingly being used as part of Anzac Day observances.

- During the First World War, red poppies were among the first plants to spring up in the devastated battlefields of northern France and Belgium.
- In soldiers’ folklore, the vivid red of the poppy came from the blood of their comrades soaking the ground. The sight of poppies on the battlefield at Ypres in 1915 moved Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae to write the poem In Flanders fields (see “The recitation”). In English literature of the nineteenth century, poppies had symbolised sleep or a state of oblivion; in the literature of the First World War a new, more powerful symbolism was attached to the poppy – the sacrifice of shed blood.

The poppy soon became widely accepted throughout the allied nations as the flower of remembrance to be worn on Armistice Day. The Australian Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League (the forerunner to the RSL) first sold poppies for Armistice Day in 1921. For this drive, the league imported 1 million silk poppies, made in French orphanages. Each poppy was sold for a shilling: five pence was donated to a charity for French children, six pence went to the League’s own welfare work, and one penny went to the League’s national fund. Today the RSL continues to sell poppies for Remembrance Day to raise funds for its welfare work.

The poppy has also become very popular in wreaths used on Anzac Day. An early instance took place in Palestine, where poppies grow abundantly in the spring. At the Dawn Service in 1940, each soldier dropped a poppy as he filed past the Stone of Remembrance. A senior Australian officer also laid a wreath of poppies picked from the slopes of Mount Scopus.

Poppies adorn the panels of the Memorial’s Roll of Honour, placed beside names as a small personal tribute to the memory of a particular person, or to any of the thousands of individuals commemorated there. This practice began at the funeral of the Unknown Australian Soldier on 11 November 1993. As
people waited to lay a single flower by his tomb in the Hall of Memory, they had to queue along the Cloisters that house the Roll of Honour. By the end of the day, hundreds of RSL poppies had been pushed into the cracks between the panels bearing the names of the fallen.

**Customs**

**Riderless horse**
Anzac Day marches and other memorial parades are often led by a lone, riderless horse, with a pair of boots set backwards in the stirrups and the saddle stripped. Ancient peoples, such as the Saxons and Scythians, used to bury a great warrior's horse with him so that it could serve him in the afterlife. This practice was continued in some European countries until the late eighteenth century. In modern times, custom has been kinder to the horse, which has been led in its master's funeral procession with his boots reversed as a sign that a warrior has fallen in battle.

A riderless horse has been added to some Anzac Day parades as an additional symbol of respect and mourning, often for the men of Light Horse units.

**The Federation Guard**
Australia's Federation Guard is a tri-service ceremonial unit of the Australian Defence Force. The service involves the Federation Guard forming a catafalque party around the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier. A Catafalque Party was originally appointed to guard a coffin from theft or desecration; the coffin has come to be represented by a remembrance stone or tomb. Now it performs a ceremonial role, honouring the dead.

During Anzac Day, the Catafalque Party is mounted at the Stone of Remembrance.

**Reversed arms**
The tradition of reversing and resting on arms – that is, leaning on a weapon held upside down – has been a mark of respect or mourning for centuries, said to have originated with the ancient Greeks. Descriptions of sixteenth-century military funerals provide the earliest documented instances of carrying arms reversed in more recent times. Although Australian soldiers still rest on arms as a mark of respect for the dead, the short Steyr rifle, the present Australian service rifle, is difficult to carry reversed.

**Flags at half mast**
The tradition of lowering flags to half mast as a sign of remembrance is believed to have its origins on the high seas. As a sign of respect or honour for important persons, sailing ships would lower their sails, thus slowing the vessel and allowing for the VIP’s own vessel to come alongside and for him to board if so desired. Lowering of sails was also used to honour VIPs who were reviewing a naval procession from the land. In time only the ship's flags were lowered in a symbolic gesture. This practice was also adopted on land. It is today a universal symbol of respect and remembrance.

During the National Ceremony the flags begin at half mast and are raised to the mastheads during the Rouse.

**Laying of wreaths**
Flowers have traditionally been laid on graves and memorials in memory of the dead.

- Rosemary, symbolising remembrance, is popular on Anzac day.
- Laurel is a commemorative symbol; woven into a wreath, it was used by the ancient Romans to crown victors and the brave as a mark of honour.

In recent years, the poppy, strongly associated with Remembrance Day (11 November), has also become popular in wreaths on Anzac Day and as a sign of commemoration when placed on the Roll of Honour or the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier.

- During the National Ceremony, wreaths are laid on the Stone of Remembrance by visiting dignitaries and representatives of various countries, junior legatees, and service organisations.
- The public may lay a wreath at the conclusion of the official ceremony.
The recitation, including the Ode
In most ceremonies of remembrance there is a reading of an appropriate poem. One traditional recitation on Anzac Day is the Ode, the fourth stanza of the poem "For the fallen" by Laurence Binyon (1869–1943). This poem has been recited in ceremonies since 1919, including the Memorial’s inauguration in 1929, and at every Anzac Day and Remembrance Day ceremony held at the Memorial.

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:*
*Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.*
*At the going down of the sun and in the morning*  
*We will remember them.*

[Response]
*We will remember them.*

Sounding the Last Post
In military tradition, the Last Post is the bugle call that signifies the end of the day’s activities. It is also sounded at military funerals to indicate that the soldier has gone to his or her final resting place, and at commemorative services such as Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, and at the Last Post ceremony held each day at the Memorial.

A period of silence
Silence for one or two minutes is included in the Anzac Day ceremony as a sign of respect and a time for reflection. One minute’s silence was first observed in Australia on the first anniversary of the Armistice and continues to be observed on Remembrance Day, 11 November. Over the years, the one minute’s silence has also been incorporated into Anzac Day and other commemorative ceremonies.

The Rouse and the Reveille
After the Last Post and one minute’s silence, flags are raised from half mast to the masthead as the Rouse is sounded. Today it is associated with the Last Post at all military funerals, and at services of dedication and remembrance.

• From Roman times, bugles or horns had been used as signals to command soldiers on the battlefield and to regulate soldiers’ days in barracks. The Reveille was a bright, cheerful call intended to rouse soldiers from sleep and get them ready for duty; it has also been used to conclude funeral services and remembrance services. It symbolises an awakening in a better world for the dead, and also calls the living back to duty once their respects have been paid to the memory of their comrades.
• The Rouse is a shorter bugle call that was also used to call soldiers to their duties; being short, the Rouse is most commonly used in conjunction with the Last Post at remembrance services. The exception is the Dawn Service, when the Reveille is played.

The lone piper
The bagpipes are the traditional instrument of the people of the Scottish highlands and have been carried into battle with Scottish soldiers, from the days of William Wallace in the fourteenth century to the Falklands War of 1982. Traditionally, in Scottish units a lone piper takes the place of a bugler to signal the day’s end to troops (see Last Post) and also bids farewell to the dead at funerals and memorial services. The ceremonial presence of a piper became established in Australia during the 1920s.

Commemorative places at the Memorial

The Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier, Hall of Memory
The original Unknown Soldier was entombed in Westminster Abbey in London on 11 November 1920, two days after being brought from France. His body had been selected from among four, each draped in the Union Jack, which had been recovered from the British battlefields of the Somme, Aisne, Arras, and Ypres.

The soldier was assumed to have been British (though he could have been a Canadian, a New Zealander, or even an Australian); he was intended to represent all the young men of the British
Empire killed during the Great War. On the same date, an unknown French soldier was buried under the Arc de Triomphe, and several other allied nations soon entombed unknown soldiers of their own.

Plans to honour an unknown Australian soldier were first put forward in the 1920s, but it was not until 1993 that one was at last brought home. To mark the 75th anniversary of the end of the First World War, the body of an unknown Australian soldier was recovered from Adelaide Cemetery near Villers-Bretonneux in France and transported to Australia. After lying in state in King’s Hall in Old Parliament House, the Unknown Australian Soldier was interred in the Hall of Memory at the Memorial on 11 November 1993. He was buried with a bayonet and a sprig of wattle in a Tasmanian blackwood coffin, and soil from the Pozières battlefield was scattered in his tomb.

Commemorative Area
At the entrance to the Memorial are two medieval stone lions that once stood at the gateway of the Menin road at Ypres (Ieper). Damaged during the First World War, the lions were presented by the city of Ypres to the Memorial in 1936.

From the entrance, you can see the copper-clad dome of the Hall of Memory, under which lies the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier. Stepping through the front entrance to the Memorial, your attention is immediately captured by the Commemorative Area. Straight ahead are the Pool of Reflection and the Eternal Flame. Above are 26 sculptures carved in sandstone, representing the people and animals inhabiting Australia. Light and shade, flowers and stone, flame and water: all the elements here are designed to evoke a mood of calm contemplation.

Australia’s involvement in conflict
Colonial period, 1788–1901
Sudan, 1885
South African War (Boer War), 1899–1902
China (Boxer Rebellion), 1900–1901
First World War, 1914–1918
Second World War, 1939–1945
Occupation of Japan, 1946–1952
Korean War, 1950–1953
Malayan Emergency, 1950–1960
Indonesian Confrontation, 1963–1966
Vietnam War, 1962–1975
Iraq: First Gulf War, 1990–1991
Afghanistan, 2001 to present
Peacekeeping, 1947 to present

Memorial facts and figures
• A competition for the Memorial’s design was held in 1927.
• The Memorial was designed by two Sydney architects, Emil Sodersteen and John Crust.
• The original form of the Memorial was completed and opened in November 1941.
• The Hall of Memory was completed in 1959.
• Over 6 million tesserae form the mosaic in the Hall of Memory. It is one of the largest single mosaics in the world.
• The Hall of Memory mosaic was designed and created by Napier Waller.
• The Byzantine dome in the Hall of Memory rises to 24 metres above the floor.
• In June 2001 the construction of Anzac Hall was completed.
• The Memorial hosts over 800,000 visitors a year.
• The Memorial comprises the Commemorative Area, Orientation gallery, First World War galleries, Second World War Galleries, Aircraft Hall, Conflicts 1945 to today gallery, Anzac Hall, Special Exhibitions gallery, Colonial gallery, Afghanistan gallery and the Research Centre.
Commemoration

Roll of Honour
The Roll of Honour records and commemorates the names of Australia's war dead. It takes the form of bronze panels in the Memorial's Commemorative Area and the Roll of Honour database, which is accessible via the Memorial's website.

The current criteria for the Roll of Honour can be found on the Memorial's website. On 6 March 2013, the Council of the Australian War Memorial decided that all Australian servicemen and servicewomen who die on operational service, including non-warlike operations, will be included on the Roll of Honour. As a result of this change, all the names of Defence personnel currently recorded in the Remembrance Book will be added to new bronze panels to be installed on the Roll of Honour wall in the Memorial’s Commemorative Area. The current Remembrance Book will be preserved as an important part of the Memorial’s National Collection.

Commemorative Roll
The Commemorative Roll commemorates the names of those Australians who in other respects would qualify as eligible for the Roll of Honour, but who were:
- Members of the armed forces of allied countries
- Members of the Merchant Navy
- Members of philanthropic organisations
- War correspondents, photographers, or artists
- Munitions and other workers
- Official historians.

Anzac biscuits
The army biscuit, also known as an Anzac wafer or Anzac tile, is essentially a long shelf-life, hard tack biscuit, eaten as a substitute for bread. Unlike bread, though, the biscuits are very, very hard. Some soldiers preferred to grind them up and eat as porridge. The popular Anzac biscuit is a traditional, eggless sweet biscuit.

Ingredients
- 1 cup each of plain flour, sugar, rolled oats, and coconut
- 4 oz butter
- 1 tbls treacle (golden syrup)
- 2 tbls boiling water
- 1 tsp bicarbonate soda (add a little more water if mixture is too dry)

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

Source
Recipes taken from Robin McLachlan, Anthea Bundock, Marie Wood, Discovering Gallipoli: research guide (Bathurst, NSW: Times Past Productions for the Australian War Memorial, 1990)