

**Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett JP**  
**ANZAC Day Address**  
**Hamilton Hill Memorial Hall**  
**25 April 2026**

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Good Morning Distinguished Guests, Veterans, our Serving Men and Women of the Australian Defence Forces, Ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys.

Today as we gather to commemorate our Anzacs and all the service men and women who have followed in their footsteps I ask that you also remember those who kept the home fires burning.

They were the men manpowered to keep the production of food, equipment and other essentials flowing to the frontline throughout the first and second world wars.

They were the women who worked the farms, replaced the men in the factories, who drove the trucks, prepared parcels for the 'boys', raised the families and who kept in touch with letters to their loved ones on the battlefronts.

They were the women who formed the Women's Land Army in 1942, later to be known as the Australian Women's Land Army. Disbanded on 31 December 1945 it took 52 years before they were to be formerly recognised and to become eligible for the Civilian Service Medal.

They were the doctors and nurses and the volunteers who tended to the wounded on their return and those requiring quarantining having contracted crippling and sometimes deadly diseases.

Together, they were the ones who kept the home fires burning.

They helped lay the foundation for victory from a distance giving hope and inspiration to their fathers, uncles, brothers, husbands, friends and sweethearts fighting in far distant lands.

Occasionally the home fires were sparked by an unexpected gift from the home front - something to hold, something to treasure.

Mrs Adelaide White was one person who received such a gift from her son, Sydney Fox White.

It arrived at the front door of their home - delivered by the local postman.

It wasn't long after that, at the same front door that they received the tragic news of his death.

Sydney had died of the effects of gas poisoning on 22 October 1917.

The family funeral notice read:

"Not one he loved was by his side  
To hear his last faint sigh  
Or whisper one loving word  
Before he closed his eyes"

Ah! Something to hold, something to treasure - that gift is still in our family today.

It was a silver chain link belt delicately engraved and sent to his Mother before he entered the war zone in France in 1916 - he survived for just 16 months from the date of posting that silver belt.

That silver belt has been passed down through the generations and is now with my wife, Patricia.

Many such treasured gifts were received and continue to be received from loved ones in war and peacekeeping zones.

These gifts are a poignant reminder of war, its impact on families, on communities, on nations and importantly on how we can continue to work together to keep the home fires burning.

In closing, I leave you with a quote from the historian of the ANZAC legend, the renowned Charles Bean, he said:

"Their story will stand ...

it rises, as it will always rise,

above the mist of ages,

a monument to great hearted men,  
and,

for their nation, a possession forever."

Lest We Forget!