

Speech by Mayor Logan K Howlett, JP
ANZAC Dawn Service Address
Hamilton Hill Memorial Hall
25 April, 2026

In the stillness of dawn we stand here this morning and reflect on those events where the first soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed on the shores of the Gallipoli peninsula in Turkey.

The men were part of a British and French led invasion. The Allies' mission, to destroy Turkish guns that were preventing naval ships from reaching and bombarding the Turkish capital, Constantinople, now Istanbul.

If they succeeded, Türkiye might be forced out of the war and Germany would lose an important ally.

At Anzac Cove, the Australians were the first to land. The New Zealanders followed later in the day. And just as our flags fly today in unison so the boys from our two nations met the challenge full on.

They advanced about a mile in some places, less in others, but they could go no further. For the next eight months, the campaign was a stalemate.

In December, the Anzacs were evacuated.

By then, about 8,700 Australians and almost 2,700 New Zealanders had been killed.

They were some of at least 130,000 soldiers on both sides who lost their lives at Gallipoli.

Anzac Day has been one of the most important dates on Australia's calendar since 1916.

At first, it gave people a chance to honour the original ANZACS – the Australians and New Zealanders who fought on Gallipoli.

Then it became a day for those who had served in the First World War.

With Australians experiencing the Second World War, and wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations that have followed, ANZAC Day has become an occasion to honour all who have worn our country's uniform in service.

Today, we reflect on that service. We recognise more than a hundred thousand Australian service men and women who have lost their lives in military operations carried out in our country's name.

We honour the values that have been invested in the original Anzacs – loyalty, selflessness, courage – and the ways in which later generations have measured their own achievements against those of the soldiers who fought on Gallipoli.

The ANZAC tradition is intrinsically linked to our local Cockburn community.

I'd like to share with you the story of Charles and Christina Bischoff, who arrived in Western Australia from South Australia at the turn of the century.

They purchased 10 acres on Edeline Road in Spearwood with plans to establish a vineyard and poultry farm.

With their five sons, who attended Fremantle Boys School, they were ready to contribute to the making of a community.

Their plans were put on hold and their lives forever changed with WW1 and the loss of three of their sons.

Walter Samuel served as a private in the 11th infantry battalion and was wounded in France before he died in April 1918 just a few months before his 21st birthday.

Norman, a labourer served as a private on the Western Front in the 28th Infantry Battalion.

He was killed in action in France on 10th January 1917 aged just 23.

Their son Freddy contracted pneumonia and died in 1919 while training at Black Boy Hill Military Camp in Greenmount before leaving Australia.

Norman and Walter names are inscribed on this memorial and the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour in Canberra.

Today we pay tribute to these young men and to all those who gave their lives for their country, to acknowledge those who returned home from those wars, many carrying physical and mental scars, and to acknowledge the current serving men and women of the Australian Defence Forces.

Our thoughts too are with others serving in war and peace keeping efforts in far distant lands, away from home, away from family and friends, away from their communities.

Lest We Forget.