

**ADDRESS AT AN ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE BY
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GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
NEW TOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL, FRIDAY 24 APRIL 2015**

I am really pleased to have been invited to address your special ANZAC Day commemorative service. Both my husband Dick and I have relatives who served in the military in the Second World War and I have recently attended military events including a memorial to honour Corporal Cameron Baird, the 100th recipient of the Victoria Cross, in Burnie. As a result, we are both very aware of the sacrifices made by service men and women and of the importance of remembering their actions.

Where did ANZAC Day originate? On the 25th of April 1915, men of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps went ashore on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey. They were met with very difficult terrain and a determined adversary that made the landings and subsequent fighting demanding and dangerous. At the end of 1915 the men evacuated, but not before 8,000 Australians had been killed.¹

Their actions forged what has become known as the ANZAC spirit. That spirit has been the driving force behind all Australian servicemen and women ever since, through the rest of the war in Europe, later on in World War II, Korea, Malaysia, Borneo and Vietnam, all of which happened long before you were born.

The spirit is also carried by current service people serving at home and on operations overseas today. No Australian wants to see one of the members of our Defence Force killed, and when it happens it affects all of us. Only last month there was a parade in Hobart to commemorate the end of Australian operations in Afghanistan, where 40 soldiers lost their lives. When we remember and reflect on the spirit of ANZAC we must not forget today's veterans', the young men and women who are returning from duty in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, Solomon Islands and Timor Leste. ANZAC Day is a day to

¹ <http://www.army.gov.au/Our-history/Traditions/Anzac-Day> accessed 27 Mar 15

remember all men and women of the Australian Defence Force, regardless of the time they served.

What does the ANZAC spirit mean? I believe it is something that can apply to all of us and that we can use in our everyday lives. The ANZAC spirit represents a sense of purpose and direction. The original ANZAC's knew what they had to do and they did it, regardless of the danger and difficulty. You can do that, too, by doing the work that you need to do at school or home regardless of any difficulties you might find. Simply a sense of purpose and direction means trying hard.

Secondly, the ANZAC spirit represents courage and an acceptance of responsibility. This is another quality you should apply in your everyday lives. Take responsibility for your work and your actions. It is easy to do that when things go well, but when things are going badly, or you make a mistake, it takes courage to admit that we were wrong and to make it right. Remember the ANZAC spirit and take responsibility for what you are doing. So next time you want to say, 'It's not my fault' – think twice ...

The ANZAC spirit also includes a sense of compassion. What is compassion? It is pity and concern for others, sympathy, tender feelings. This has been summed up in the Australian experience as mateship. The idea of mateship can be traced back to Colonial times when settlers had to rely on each other for help due to the harsh conditions that they found on their arrival. In terms of the ANZAC spirit of mateship, however, we are really talking about how the soldiers in the First World War exhibited that characteristic. Talking about those soldiers it has been said that 'mateship was a particular Australian virtue, a creed, almost a religion'.² Those men shared an experience that allowed them to look beyond themselves and to closely bond with the men around them.

It is important to ask, then, how can you be a mate? You can watch out for those around you and help them when you can. Don't tease others because they are having a difficult time or because they come from another background or part of the world. And if there is someone who no-one wants

² <http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/mateship-diggers-and-wartime> accessed 31 Mar 15

to talk to or muck around with, someone who is picked on for some reason, stand up for them and be kind. Standing up for someone who is being teased or picked on is true courage.

So I think that these three very simple things are what we mean when we talk about the ANZAC spirit: determination, courage and compassion. They are things that we can all try to do in our own lives. By doing so, we honour the spirit of those who came before us, as well as making our society a better and more inclusive place.

I want to finish with a story and a poem. A story that I think highlights the loss and sorrow felt by families of soldiers at home more than the bald numbers of those killed in the WW1 and the wars before and since. Some of you may have heard of Rudyard Kipling, author of the Just So Stories – How the camel got his hump, How the leopard got his spots and so on. At the outbreak of WW1 Kipling had a son, Jack who was 16. Jack wanted to be a soldier but he had very poor eyesight and was twice rejected by the British army. However, his father, who was an important man, managed to help him enlist with the Irish Guards. Whilst fighting in the trenches in August 1915, he lost his glasses and was shot and wounded at the Battle of Loos. It was six weeks after his 18th birthday.

When his parents received the War Office telegram saying he was missing, his father feared the worst. But his mother did not give up hope that he would be found alive. He wasn't. Rudyard Kipling wrote this poem, called My Son Jack.

“Have you news of my boy Jack?”

Not this tide.

“When d’you think that he’ll come back?”

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

“Has any one else had word of him?”

Not this tide.

For what is sunk will hardly swim,

Not with this wind blowing, and this tide.

“Oh, dear, what comfort can I find?”

*None this tide,
Nor any tide,
Except he did not shame his kind —
Not even with that wind blowing, and that tide.*

*Then hold your head up all the more,
This tide,
And every tide;
Because he was the son you bore,
And gave to that wind blowing and that tide!*

Thank you.