



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATION

Thursday 25th April 2019

The Honourable James Merlino MP, Acting Premier, representing the Premier of Victoria

Senator the Honourable Mitch Fifield, representing the Prime Minister

The Honourable Robin Scott MP, Minister for Veterans

The Honourable David Davis MP, representing the Leader of the Victorian Opposition

The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor Sally Capp

Mr Graham Ashton AM APM, Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police

Air Vice Marshal Chris Spence AO (Ret'd), Chair of the Shrine Trustees

Dr Robert Webster OAM, State President and members of the RSL Victorian Branch, and members of **other ex-service organisations**

Leaders and members of the Australian Defence Force

Members of the Consular Corps

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering, and I pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this afternoon.

As we come together at our Shrine today for the ANZAC Day commemoration, I am conscious that we are a mixed group gathered here.

Amongst us are veterans and current Australian Defence Force personnel who have seen active duty - fighting or contributing as peace-keepers in trouble spots around the world, in the service of our country.

Amongst us are those who have lost family, friends and colleagues, whilst on duty in different corners of the world.

And otherwise, there are thousands of Victorians, from all different parts of our State, from different walks of life, from different backgrounds and of different ages. Victorians – respectful and good-hearted people - people who simply choose to be here on this important day.

What we share as we gather here together is our understanding of how very much this Day matters. Why this Shrine matters. Why we think it is so important to look back through history, to events - some more than 100 years' ago.

It is not just by chance that we gather to remember here, at this Shrine of Remembrance, specifically created to commemorate those who gave so much in the First World War. Of course, soon enough it was to remember those lost in another world war. And in other wars and battles and peace-keeping operations since.

Across Australia today, large numbers of people will also come together at other shrines and memorials.

Because this day – ANZAC Day – is important to us all.

It commemorates the landing on 25 April 1915 of Australian and New Zealand troops on the Gallipoli Peninsula. So many young men. So far away from home. Such a hard battle.

But like the Shrine, the remembrances of ANZAC Day now also extend to the many brave men and women who have served since the ANZACs all those years ago.

It commemorates the hardships of their service, the extensive injuries suffered by them and the tragic loss of so many lives.

It commemorates the courage, the endurance and the care for each other amongst our troops.

It really does not matter whether it was one hundred years ago, or just yesterday. The sacrifices that they made are ageless. We do not forget just because it was not in our lifetime, or on our doorstep.

By coming together today, we show our shared understanding that history matters.

That it helps explain what shapes our lives today, and it helps us, particularly you – our young people here, our future leaders – to learn how you want to shape our future.

And, by coming together today, we show our shared appreciation for all those who have served to keep us safe.

Gratitude for what they have given to the people in distant countries in which they served. For what they gave to our grandparents and parents. For what they have given to each one of us today.

We are all – original Australians, long-time and more recently arrived Australians – we are all the beneficiaries of the democracy, the freedoms and the stability that they have helped to secure.

As the years pass, it could of course become harder to remember. The immediacy of events is often overcome by time. The voices of first-hand accounts are, in some instances, just a whisper now. Significant anniversaries come and fade away.

But if we forget, we dishonour what our brave ADF men and women have given to us.

If we forget, we discourage others from their own contributions.

And, if we forget, there is a greater chance that we will never learn from history's events. The lives lost in and the heartache of war.

And so, in coming together, in this reflective setting, on this special day of remembrance, we think of all those who have served. We think of and wish for the safety of all those who are on active service right now.

And we ensure that we never forget.