



ANZAC DAY 2020



LIGHT UP THE DAWN

WITH OUR ANZAC SPIRIT





ANZAC DAY 2020

Dear Gentlemen

Whilst the streets will be quiet and empty this year, we can still join our veterans and RSL to remember those who have sacrificed the ultimate during previous conflicts.

MHSOBA members, families and friends are encouraged to join the rest of the country this ANZAC day. At 0600 you can stand in your driveway, on your balcony or in your lounge room to commemorate those who served, those who died and those who are still serving.

A live ABC radio broadcast from the Australian War Memorial will be available at 0600 tomorrow morning. To listen, go to <https://www.abc.net.au/radio/sydney/anzac-day-2020/12133324>

For their ongoing efforts to find missing Old Boys who served in all theatres of war, MHSOBA acknowledges and thanks William (Bill) Latham, Lambis Englezos, Alan Gregory and Luke Savage.

Lest We Forget.

Peter Stathopoulos
President
MHSOBA Inc.



The School and WWI

Coming within the first decade of the school's life, the Great War had a profound effect on the school. The enlistment rate by old boys was very high, and the Principal Joseph Hocking, focused the school community on their service, with lists, articles and photos in the school magazine.

The school magazine, Ours, was posted to old boys known to be serving overseas, who would then write to the school about their happenings, which would be published and sent overseas. A number of photos and letters about the Gallipoli landing were published in Ours within 3 months of the landing itself. This constant feedback tied the students and the old boys together. Students also helped raise money and collect goods.





The School and WWI (continued)

Military Jottings

Departure of Troops.

On the morning of their departure I went to the camp to say good-bye to some friends. They then told me that they were leaving at 9 o'clock. Five minutes past nine found me rushing towards City-road, South Melbourne. I met the troops on the road, near the junction of the tram lines, and marched with them to the Railway Pier. From that time till after two we waited patiently on the beach. About half-past two the crowd tried to rush the gate, but they were stopped by the pickets and the police. After a time even these combined forces proved insufficient, although the pickets had their bayonets against the breasts of the people. One

woman completely lost her head in the excitement, and flung aside the bayonet nearest her. This stirred up the others, who then broke through, and rushed along the pier as fast as their feet would carry them. About a quarter-past three the Orvieto pulled out, carrying among her hundreds of troops Mr. Fairlie and two of our ex-students, one of whom had been trained at Duntroon. It was a great sight. As the boat drew out the men swarmed into the rigging, while the crowd surged to the end of the pier to get a parting glimpse of their brothers and friends who were going to defend their country.

R.McI. (Class F2).



The School and WWI (continued)

On Sunday, 11th October, when I visited the Broadmeadows Camp to say farewell to my two soldier brothers, I wore my M.H.S. band and badge. When leaving the camp I heard a voice near me say "Good old Contin.," and looking round I saw a smiling, sunburnt young soldier, who saluted. I wonder if he was one of "Our Boys," who recognised our red, green and black? K.M.B. (Class B1).

By the end of The Great War, 1617 boys had left MHS, of who 593 are known to have served, 31 enlisted but were either rejected, discharged, or the war ended before they served overseas. Another 3 may have served but at this stage, available records are insufficient to confirm. To date, no old girls are known to have served in WWI (though we know of 15 who served in WWII). Of the male staff, 98 taught at MHS before the war ended, of whom 12 served and another 7 enlisted but were either rejected, discharged, or the war ended before they served overseas.

We know of 98 old boys died who died during the war, including 4 at Gallipoli on ANZAC Day (the first old boys to have died during the war). Another 10 died during the Gallipoli campaign.

Another three times during the war were 4 old boys killed on the same day, during First and Second Bullecourt 1917 and Passchendaele 1917. 12 old boys were killed during the battle of Poziers or the associated actions in July and August 1916.



The School and WWI (continued)

Whilst 14 were killed at Passchendaele and Polygon Wood in Belgium during September and October 1917. The single biggest loss of life of Old Boys on one day though was in WWII, 20 November 1941, following the sinking of HMAS Sydney. 5 old boys were serving aboard her.

Of the Staff, 6 died during the war, including both old boys. After the war 3 old boys died from influenza, 3 from illness whilst on service or just after discharge and 2 died from the effects of war, one in 1920 and the last in 1924.

Of the boys who served in WWI, 118 also served in WWII, of whom 4 died whilst on service. 36 staff who taught at the school after the war had served in WWI (1 died whilst serving in WWII), including 12 who were Old Boys. 13 staff served in both WWI and WWII.

Luke Savage, Honorary School Archivist



The School and WWI (continued)



Private T. W. Liddell

A letter from Frank Brennan, written before his departure from Egypt, has a pathetic interest for us to-day, for of all the men mentioned, only one as far as we know has come through without a scratch, while the writer is also wounded.

"All the old M.H.S. chaps are doing well, and we often have a chat about old times. I have had several pleasant yarns with Mr. Fairlie. He was remarking about the contrast between a soldier's life and a teacher's life. One free from all anxiety, a happy-go-lucky existence, a life of freedom in spite of any physical hardships, as against a state of everlasting studying and mental weariness. I have also seen Bill Colvin, Archie Feddersen, Frank Lord, Signaller Corben, Bugler Davies and others, all doing well."

We have no details as to Mr. Fairlie's end, but we know that he did the work of a soldier, as he did all other work, thoroughly and well, and that he died a soldier's death.



Private R. J. Bretherton

Archie Feddersen is now in hospital at Port Said and doing well. He carries with him as a memento a Turkish bullet, though he doesn't know exactly where it is. From a most interesting letter kindly supplied by his father, space only admits of a short quotation.

"Life in the trenches is all right, as we have good tucker in plenty, and also get plenty of cigarettes and tobacco. One night when I was on observation post a big Turk—he must have been six feet six, came walking round the bushes as if he was going down Bourke Street. He did not notice the trench, and for the space of four seconds he continued. Then he saw us and turned to escape. There were three of us within a space of thirty yards on sentry, and Mr. Turk dropped in his tracks. H. Nicholls (who is still going strong) and myself had a good bit of shooting at them while they were making a trench, and I do not think it was without effect.

"I have been in a couple of very tight corners since we started. Another day when we



Melbourne High has always had a close association with ANZAC.

26 Old Boys and two teachers were at Gallipoli – 11 of them were killed there. One teacher (Aubrey Liddelow) sent back a photo, published in the school magazine Ours, of him and his men on the beach at ANZAC Cove on 25 April 1915.



The Beach Where Our Lads Landed
Note the packs, etc. thrown aside in the first rush
Photo by Lieut. Liddelow



Melbourne High has always had a close association with ANZAC (continued)



Landing Place of Australians at Gallipoli
A Beach Party under the command of Lieut. Liddelow. Taken on the historic 25th April.

Photo by Lieut. Liddelow

were in the trenches, Bert Summers and I were sitting in a dugout, when a shell landed on top and blew the roof clean off it. Luckily, no more landed there. Another day I had just gone into the trenches when a shell burst about 30 yards on the left, blowing up the dirt, and one piece, about 4 lbs., hit me on the side of the head, and sent me heels over head."

A few extracts from a cheery letter from Sergeant Rochstein.

"I have had the luck to get slightly 'knocked,' but I was extremely lucky in getting a couple of clean wounds. I might have got 'dum-dums' or various other things. I reckon myself fortunate because enough lead and nickel whistled past to sink a battleship. I may always be minus a little flesh, but it will not 'invalide' me at any rate."

Sid. Lumb is stationed at the hospital at Heliopolis. By the kindness of his father we are able to quote from his letters.

"The boys all praise the Queen Elizabeth—'Good old Lizzie,' as they call her. As one chap puts it, her first shell kills a few hundred,

and the next buries them. An armoured train was worrying our chaps. 'Lizzie' spoke, and it was no more. A battalion of Turkish reinforcements was coming up—the ship spoke again—men, horses, guns, wheels and earth were hurled in the air, and a crater left."

Sid speaks in his letters of many of our lads who have passed through the hospital there or whom he knows to be in hospital. Jim Cormack (since dead), Kenneth Hollings, Tom Carmichael and others.

Staff-Sergeant W. R. Penington contributes a most interesting letter to the "Spectator."

"After about three days we sighted the rendezvous, and there it was that we became part of what was perhaps the greatest fleet of ships that has ever been got together—huge liners and dirty old tramps, all laden with troops, and the munitions of war; ships of war, from the largest battleship in the world down to the smallest, British, French and Russian. It was a magnificent sight, and one I am not likely to forget.



Melbourne High has always had a close association with ANZAC (continued)

Another teacher - Walter McNicoll - was injured at Gallipoli and highly decorate. Being repatriated home for short while to recover from war injuries he led the first ANZAC March in Melbourne in 1916. While he had left MHS at this stage and become Principal of Geelong High School, he was a foundation teacher of our school. So Colonel Walter McNicoll DSO led the first ANZAC march held in Melbourne, leading the 10th Brigade. The school has commemorated ANZAC ever since.



Lieut. Col. W. R. McNicoll, D.S.O.
at Ismailia, Suez Canal

We are glad to hear that Lieut.-Col. McNicoll, who was at one time one of the teaching staff of this School, has had the "Distinguished Service Order" bestowed upon him for gallantry and devotion to duty on active service in Gallipoli. This award is second in order of merit to the Victoria Cross.

Lieut.-Col. McNicoll was severely wounded by a Turkish bullet, but is making good progress towards recovery.



Melbourne High has always had a close association with ANZAC (continued)

One of those 26 boys at Gallipoli was George Langley. When Langley's ship the Southland arrived at their destination, Langley now a Captain, was standing on top of the hold addressing his men when the ship was torpedoed. Langley was thrown into the bilge, was badly injured in both legs – eventually was hauled out and managed to safely evacuate his men into lifeboats before collapsing from his injuries.

Still 30 men lost their lives some from drowning. Because of this as Principal of this school he introduced a policy that each boy had to learn to swim before doing any other sport. While injured Langley insisted on going on shore with his men. He was there until the evacuation.

Asked to speak about ANZAC on the 50th anniversary Brigadier George Langley CBE DSO ED Serbian Order of the White Eagle said:

That fateful Sunday morning of 25 April 1915, which marked our entry into the European theatre of war announced to the world that Australia had come of age – had passed its initiation ceremonies with honour and distinction and was now entitled to be admitted to the Comity of Nations. The events which followed in the various theatres of war in which Australians played a part on land, sea or air only served to emphasise our new status. The poet Henry Lawson was right 'I tell you the Star of the South shall rise - in the lurid clouds of war.'

Alan Gregory