



Guy Barnett MP

LIBERAL MEMBER FOR LYONS

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA – HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY – ADJOURNMENT SPEECH
ANZAC DAY 2018

TUESDAY 2 MAY 2018 [6.37 p.m.]

Mr BARNETT (Lyons - Energy) - Mr Deputy Speaker, I first congratulate the member for Braddon and Royal Australian Navy veteran on his remarks in terms of the importance of Anzac Day and associate myself with those remarks and thank him for a terrific contribution. I want to speak about Anzac Day and what an honour it is to be the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. It is a dream role and I wanted to note that this is the centenary of Anzac - it runs from 2014 to 2018. It represents one of the most significant commemorative events in Australia's history and during this period Australians will commemorate 100 years of service and sacrifice by Australian service men and women in all wars, conflicts and peace keeping operations.

This year, 2018, marks the 103rd anniversary of the original Gallipoli landings and the birth of the Anzac story in 1915. These stories helped forge the Australian identity and character of our nation, the attributes of courage, endurance, mateship and sacrifice. They are still very relevant today. In fact more so than ever before.

I had the honour of being in four special places across the state this Anzac Day. Firstly in Bicheno, well organised by Doug Renshaw and the Bicheno RSL. I spoke there at the dawn service and then on to Perth for the 9.00 a.m. service. Well done to Brian Harper and the Northern Midlands RSL for conducting that service. It was really special indeed and it was a great honour to speak and share some remarks. Then on to Longford where MC, Geoff Leitch from the Northern Midlands RSL did very well. In the afternoon at Nunamara, Peter Gutwein gave an excellent contribution.

I had the opportunity to speak in honour of Harry Murray VC - Australia's most highly-decorated soldier who was born and bred in Evandale. The guest speaker at that event was Cheryl Murray and the previous week I was able to host her in Evandale with the Evandale History Society to promote the memory of Harry Murray VC. There is a statue in Evandale in his honour. Thanks to Laurie Wotherspoon and all the volunteers who helped organise that particular event.

The RSL advises my office that there were an estimated 129 services: dawn, 11 o'clock and

other services during the day on Anzac Day at 82 separate locations around Tasmania. How fantastic. The advice is that the numbers were up, close to 50,000 and I know many members in this Chamber and across the Parliament of Tasmania would recognise that and note it. We feel very proud.

I welcome back the members of the Frank MacDonald Memorial Prize winners who participated in northern France and Belgium, along with Ivan Dean MLC, honourable member, and a good colleague and friend - we walked the Kokoda Track together in 2008 – he was a member of that group along with Sam Davis who led the group on behalf of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

To all the students and teachers who were involved, I followed them on Facebook and what an experience, they attended ANZAC Day service at Villers-Bretonneux, together with the Prime Minister and thousands and thousands of others. It is the 100 year anniversary of the Battle of Villers-Bretonneux, and the Sir John Monash Centre was officially opened on the day by the Australian Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull.

It has been a very special time indeed for so many Australians. This particular Anzac Day and this particular year we have the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Hamel, led by Sir John Monash, one of the most famous battles. He estimated 90 minutes to win that particular battle and it was 93 minutes. It was absolutely mind-boggling and highlights the distinguished nature and acumen of such a wonderful military leader. That was on 4 July 1918. The 100th anniversary of the Battle of Amiens on 8 August 1918; the 75th anniversary of Hellfire Pass and the Thai-Burma Railway, and many other anniversaries, and of course the 100th anniversary of the World War I armistice on 11 November 1918. There are many anniversaries this year.

Speaking on Villers-Bretonneux, the school at Villers-Bretonneux bears the simple message on the playground wall, 'Never forget Australia'. They have a special national memorial there for those who fell in the conflict and it stands just outside Villers-Bretonneux and now the Sir John Monash Centre, as I have indicated.

Many people have a family link to those veterans across the country and in Tasmania, likewise I am one of those, a grandson of H.S. Barnett and happy to tell the story. He joined the Australian Flying Corp 100 years ago. He lived here in Hobart and was based in England. He flew a biplane. It was little more than canvas, wood and wire. He was nicknamed Butcher Barnett - not for what you are thinking. In fact, during his training, he landed on a flock of sheep and obtained that name as a result.

My wife's grandfather and great uncle both trained in the Tasmanian Light Horse at Mona Vale near Ross with George Henry Bramich serving in Palestine from 1916 to the end of the war in 1918. We just had the 100 year anniversary of the Battle of Beersheba on 31 October last year outside the front of Parliament House with the Tasmanian Light Horse regiment. It was a

fantastic occasion and congratulations to the Tasmanian Light Horse regiment.

16 October 2018 is the 75th anniversary of the work of Australian prisoners of war at Hellfire Pass. We have heard quite a bit about that in recent weeks - Hellfire Pass in Thailand and the completion of the Thai-Burma railway. My great uncle, Laurie Thyne served there as a POW in squalid and brutal conditions under the Japanese for more than three-and-a-half years, and he survived. Many did not. I had the honour of being there at Anzac Day at Hellfire Pass with my wife Kate in April 2010 and it is one I will never, ever forget. It was very special indeed.

I pay a tribute to our veterans, 10 500 around Tasmania - and their families. It is fantastic what they have done for us and for our sake and to ask the question, what can we do in response?

Lest we forget.