



COMMENT || GUY BARNETT

Observing an Anzac Day like none before

SINCE the First World War, Tasmanians have honoured the service and sacrifice of our ANZACs at commemorative ceremonies around the State.

We remember and reflect on the many thousands of Tasmanians who, since the Boer War, have served in wars, peace-keeping missions and other operations. We remember their sacrifice.

Due to the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19, Anzac Day 2020 will be like no other.

However, this will not deter us in honouring our servicemen and women.

For the health and safety of our veterans and all who honour them, the Government is encouraging Tasmanians to commemorate this Anzac Day by staying home, which will save lives, and instead pay your respects differently this year.

This April 25, Tasmanians can unite in the ANZAC spirit by joining Australians across the nation to honour the service of our Defence Forces, past and present in the following ways:

At 5.30am, the Australian War Memorial in Canberra will televise a private Anzac Day commemorative service on ABC TV, ABC Radio, Facebook and iView.

At 6am stand at your driveway, front door or balcony and observe a minute's silence as part of Light up the Dawn.

There will also be an RSL Tasmania Commemorative Service at 11.30am, and I encourage everyone to tune into the ABC Local Radio or a live stream on Facebook of the ceremony.

This year is the 105th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings, where the Anzac legend was born. On April 25, 1915 Australian and New Zealand soldiers landed at what is now called Anzac Cove on the Gallipoli Peninsula. By that evening, 2000 had been killed or wounded.

By the end of 1915, when Australian and New Zealand troops withdrew from Gallipoli, over 8000 Australian lives had been lost.

Thousands of Australians enlisted in World War I with more than 416,000 serving during the four-year conflict from a population of only five million.

During World War I, 15,484 Tasmanians enlisted to serve - many never returned.

During the conflict, Tasmanians would serve with distinction across the globe, making little-known places such as Gallipoli, Villers-Bretonneux and Beersheba famous in Australian history.

While the stories of courage and service



NOT THE SAME: There will be no community gatherings at war memorials this Anzac Day, but we are being urged to pause to reflect and to remember on the service and sacrifice of so many Australians.

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are inspiring, the cost to Australia during the Great War was devastating.

The best part of a generation was lost, with more than 60,000 killed and 156,000 wounded, gassed, captured and many more were traumatised.

Two-thirds of those who served overseas were killed or wounded - a devastating casualty rate of 65 per cent, one of the highest of any nation in the war.

A further 40,000 Australians were killed in active service in World War II, and subsequent conflicts in Korea, Malaya, Vietnam and the Middle East.

Tasmanians have a proud history of serving with bravery, continuing a record of courage that started during the Boer War and continues today in places like Afghanistan and Iraq.

In fact, of the 100 Victoria Crosses won by Australians since the medal's inception, 14 have been awarded to Tasmanians - a tremendous record and one of which the state can be proud.

Many of the freedoms that we enjoy today are due to their service, sacrifice and bravery.

Today, more than 10,500 war veterans and ex-service personnel live in Tasmania. I am privileged to work alongside the Returned and Services League of Australia (Tasmania Branch) to support this community.

Together we understand the importance of increasing awareness and appreciation of the extraordinary service and sacrifice of our current and ex-serving personnel.

It is vital that these messages reach our young people to carry forward for genera-

tions to come.

The COVID-19 pandemic is as serious a challenge our state has ever faced, but this does not diminish observance and respect of Anzac Day and those who gave their lives to protect ours.

Even though we cannot gather together physically, this is a time for our community to reflect on and celebrate those qualities that define our service men and women of the past, those currently serving, and indeed that define our nation - courage, endurance, initiative, discipline and mateship.

Let us remember them.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

We will remember them.

Lest we forget

■ Guy Barnett is the Tasmanian Minister for Veterans' Affairs