

Greeting – Identify Official Guests..

I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN BY ACKNOWLEDGING THE TRADITIONAL OWNERS OF THE LAND ON WHICH WE MEET TODAY. WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO THEIR ELDERS PAST AND PRESENT AND EMERGING, INCLUDING ALL INDIGENEOUS PERSONNEL WHO HAVE ANSWERED THE “***CALL TO SERVE***” THIS GREAT NATION.

SO WE GATHER ON THIS SOLEM DAY, **NOT TO GLORIFY WAR**, BUT TO HONOUR THOSE WHO HAVE SACRIFICED THEMSELVES IN SERVICE OF OUR COUNTRY DURING TIMES OF CONFLICT AND CRISIS.

ANZAC DAY MARKS THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN, WHICH WAS THE FIRST MAJOR CONFLICT FOUGHT BY THE AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ARMY CORPS (OR ANZAC FORCES) DURING WORLD WAR I.

THE RESULT WAS A STRATEGIC MILITARY FAILURE THAT SAW US DEFEATED BY THE OTTOMAN TURKISH ARMY AND FORCED TO WITHDRAW, SUFFERING OVER 26,000 CASUALTIES INCLUDING OVER 8,000 DEATHS.

SO, YOU MAY ASK WHY IS IT THAT OUR NATION CHOSE TO HONOUR
OUR MILITARY LEGACY ON THE DAY OF A RESOUNDING DEFEAT
WHERE WE SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES?

COMPARED TO ALMOST EVERY OTHER NATION THAT CELEBRATES A
GREAT MILITARY VICTORY ON THE BATTLEFIELD.... THE ANSWER
TO THIS QUESTION LIES IN OUR NATIONAL VALUES ... MILITARY
ETHOS AND CULTURE

**WE DO NOT CELEBRATE WAR NOR DO WE CELEBRATE ANZAC
DAY ... WE COMMEMORATE ANZAC DAY**, IT A SOLEM OCCASION,
PAYING RESPECT FOR HARD WON THE GIFT OF FREEDOM.

ANZAC DAY IS A CONTINUAL REMINDER OF THE DEBT WE OWE TO
THOSE WHO FOUGHT TO PROTECT US. IT ALSO SERVES AS A STARK
WARNING ABOUT THE FUTILITY WAR, AND THE SUFFERING THAT
LINGERS WHEN THE WEAPONS CEASE FIRING.

YET IT STILL REMAINS OUR DUTY TO STAND **'READY TO SERVE'** IF
WE ARE CALLED TO ONCE AGAIN **DEFEND OUR PEOPLE OR OUR
FREEDOMS.**

NOW, LOOKING BACK THROUGH THE HONOUR ROLL FOR BALLINA SHIRE WE FIND THE NAME OF HENRY ELVERY. IN 1915, HENRY ELVERY WAS 25, WORKING ON HIS FATHER DAIRY FARM IN TUCKOMBIL.

HENRY HAD AMBITIONS OF COMMERCIALISING THE FARM'S MILK PRODUCTION INTO CHEESE AND BUTTER BY FOCUSING ON NEW MILK SEPERATOR TECHNOLOGY, BECAUSE AT THAT TIME A LOT OF MILK WAS BEING WASTED AS LOW-GRADE FEED SUPPLEMENTS FOR LIVESTOCK.

HOWEVER, HENRY GAVE UP HIS DREAMS AND VOLUNTEERED TO JOIN THE AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES. AFTER TRAINING HE WAS SHIPPED OUT TO EGYPT, THEN ONTO FRANCE WHERE ONLY 11 OUT OF HIS PLATOON OF 30 SOLDIERS SURVIVED, HENRY NEVER RETURNED BACK TO TUKOMBIL, DYING IN THE TRENCHES, AT THE BATTLE OF POZIERERS, IN 1916.

NOW I PLAN TO HAVE HENRY BE AN EXAMPLAR OF ONE SOLDIER'S STORY AS TO HELP UNDERSTAND THE SCALE LOSS FROM WAR AND IMPORTANCE OF WORDS **'LEST WE FORGET'**.

"I WANT YOU TO LOOK BEYOND ME STANDING HERE. AND I WANT YOU TO SEE INSTEAD HENRY ELVERY AS A 25-YEAR-OLD SOLDIER. NOW I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE HENRY IS STANDING, AS A REPRESENTATIVE, AT THE FRONT OF ROWS UPON ROWS OF OTHER AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS, AIRMEN AND SAILORS OVER 100,000 SOULS ... (100 X 1000 ROWS).

NOW IMAGINING ALL THESE PEOPLE TRY TO FEEL THE QUIET PAINFUL SUFFERING OF EVERYONE IN FORGOTTEN MOMENTS OF THEIR DEATHS, FROM EITHER BEING TRAPPED IN A SINKING SHIP, OR BURNING IN THE WRECKAGE OF AN AIRCRAFT OR TANK, OR LAYING WITH BROKEN BONES AND GAPING WOUNDS FROM GUNFIRE OR EXPLODING SHELLS ON A BATTLEFIELD.

FROM OUT OF THIS MASS OF PAIN AND SUFFERING THEY LEAVE US A FINAL COLLECTIVE MESSAGE ... **"WE HAVE GIVEN OVER OUR LIVES TO BRING YOU FREEDOM ... SO TAKE THIS FREEDOM, PROTECT IT, AS ARE WE NO LONGER ABLE TO PROTECT IT FOR YOU ... THEN USE**

***THIS FREEDOM TO BUILD A BETTER WORLD, WHERE YOUR
CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN WILL ONLY KNOW PEACE AND
PROSPERITY”.***

FOR ME --- THIS IS DEFINES **WHY WE COMEMORATE ANZAC DAY**
AND THE GRAVITY OF – **LEST WE FORGET.**

IN CLOSING I WOULD LIKE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SERVICE TO
PROTECT OUR NATION COMES IN MANY FORMS. I WOULD LIKE TO
OFFER MY GRATTITUDE TO THE EMERGENCY SERVICES, SES, RFS
POLICE AND VOLUNTEER ORGANISATIONS WHO HAVE ALL SERVED
TO KEEP OUR PEOPLE SAFE, AS WE SUFFERED THROUGH DEVASTING
FLOODS OVER THE LAST TWO MONTHS.

*THIS TOO IS NO LESS A SERVICE TO THE NATION AND OUR PEOPLE OR
DISPLAY SELFLESSNESS TO PROTECT OTHERS WHO DEPEND UPON US IN
TIMES OF CRISIS.*

THANK YOU

“LEST WE FORGET”

