

## 2019 ANZAC Day Speech

Today at this hour, hundreds of thousands of Australians gather at memorials in cities, suburbs and towns across the country, we come here to commemorate one of the most significant events in our national calendar.

Anzac Day goes beyond the anniversary of the landing on Gallipoli in 1915. It is the day on which we remember all Australians who have served and those that have died in war and on operational service past and present.

The Anzac spirit forged at Gallipoli will never be forgotten. We should remember them not as old soldiers from a distant war, but as the young Australians they were in 1915.

The spirit of Anzac, with its qualities of courage, mateship, and sacrifice, continues to have meaning and relevance for our sense of national identity.

This same spirit is represented among the diverse group of veterans gathered here today.

Following the multiple terrorist attacks in New York and Washington DC on 11 September 2001, US President George W. Bush declared a "war on terror". Australia invoked the ANZUS treaty to support the US effort and Australian military personnel joined the forces of "the coalition of the willing".

This became Australia's longest military campaign and involved the Army, Navy and Air Force in operations throughout the Middle East.

In all wars there are casualties, some visible others not, Jose' Narosky once said “*in war there are no unwounded soldiers*”.

Many of those that have returned from military operations show no physical scars, however inside they are wounded and suffer with PTSD or anxiety. It is believed that last year alone over 80 returned service personnel took their lives. We must all do what we can to help those in need.

For younger generations, it is sometimes difficult to understand why it is with gratitude that we should remember, but we have enjoyed the benefits of the peace and easy existence. And so on ANZAC Day we all pause to remember those that offered up their life in the defence of their nation and community, which is the greatest contribution any citizen can make.

### Lest We Forget



[Photo: Port Stephens Examiner]

Ian Harding

President, Medowie RSL Sub-Branch