

95th anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli



Facts, Figures and Background

2010 marks the 95th anniversary of the landings at Gallipoli and the commencement of the Gallipoli campaign.

On 4 August 1914 the European nations went to war. As Australia was a British dominion Prime Minister Andrew Fisher's government pledged full support for Britain and committed Australia to war. The war's outbreak was greeted in Australia with great enthusiasm by some sections of the population.

By the end of 1914, more than 52,000 men had enlisted. The enlistment age was initially between 21 and 35 years. This was later raised to 44 years, and men younger than 21 who wished to enlist could do so with permission from their parents.

On 1 November 1914 a convoy of three warships and 36 transport ships carrying around 30,000 men sailed out of King George Sound in Western Australia. The troops trained in Egypt and on 25 April 1915 members of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed at Gallipoli together with troops from Britain, France and their empires. This began a campaign that ended with the evacuation of troops on 19 and 20 December 1915.

Around 60,000 Australians and 18,000 New Zealanders served on Gallipoli, with the total allied force numbering 500,000. The Turkish force was of a similar size. During the eight month campaign some 8700 Australians were killed in action, or died of wounds or disease. Turkey lost nearly ten times as many soldiers, with over 86,000 casualties.

The Gallipoli campaign was a failure, but the well-planned evacuation in December enabled the Australians to leave Gallipoli without further loss. Many of those who served on and survived Gallipoli went on to fight on the Western Front in battles marked by greater casualties and harsher conditions.

Websites and References

Education resources

- *Gallipoli and the Anzacs*, DVA, 2010. An education resource for secondary schools
- *Investigating Gallipoli*, DVA, 2010. An education resource for primary schools

Website

Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA)

www.anzacsites.gov.au Gallipoli and the Anzacs site

www.dva.gov.au/anzac Background information on Anzac Day

National Archives of Australia (NAA)

www.mappingouranzacs.naa.gov.au Mapping our Anzacs

Australian War Memorial (AWM)

www.awm.gov.au/roh Roll of Honour

www.awm.gov.au/exhibitions/dawn Dawn of the legend

Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)

www.abc.net.au/innovation/gallipoli/ Gallipoli, The First Day website

Teaching Activities

1. Discuss the poster, the images and their relevance to Anzac Day. Is there one or several messages in the poster? What is the aim of the poster?
2. Look closely at the image at the top half of the poster. It shows the men of the 1st Divisional Signal Company rowing towards Anzac Cove on the morning of 25 April 1915. (AWM A02781)

Discuss these questions:

- a) What time of day was the photograph taken?
 - b) Were these soldiers the first to land at Anzac Cove? Find out about the landing from the ABC website *Gallipoli, the First Day*.
 - c) From the photograph is there any evidence to suggest how the soldiers were feeling? What might they have been thinking as they came ashore?
 - d) On arrival, the Signal Company set up and completed the laying of wires from the divisional headquarters to the brigades. Go to the Roll of Honour at the Australian War Memorial and research the story of one of the men of the 1st Divisional Signal Company.
 - e) Signaller Ellis Silas described the landing that day: 'It was a relief to get ashore; we are packed so tightly in the boats and moreover so heavily laden with our kit that, had a shot hit the boat, we should have no chance of saving ourselves—it was awful the feeling of utter helplessness. Meanwhile the Turks pelted us hot and fast. In jumping ashore I fell over, my kit was so heavy; I couldn't get up without help ... It was a magnificent spectacle to see those thousands of men rushing through the hail of Death as though it was some big game—these chaps don't seem to know what fear means ... The beach is littered with wounded, some of them frightful spectacles; perchance myself I may at any moment be even as they are.' Discuss this quote and the impact of the casualties from the first day.
 - f) Go to www.awm.gov.au/research/people/all/ and research Major H.L. Mackworth. Look under honours and awards and find out the role he played on the 25th and 26th April 1915 in the Signal Company.
 - g) Discuss the technology available at the time of the First World War. How important was communication on the first day at Gallipoli? Research the problems that poor communication caused.
3. Look closely at the contemporary colour image. The scene shows a crowd standing in silent tribute during the Dawn Service at the Anzac Commemorative site, Gallipoli, on 25 April 2005. On the horizon, the Royal Australian Navy frigate HMAS *Anzac* sails with full ceremonial upperdeck lighting. HMAS *Anzac* traced the route of the troop convoy to Gallipoli for the 90th anniversary.
 - a) What might the people in the crowd be thinking about? Why have they travelled to Gallipoli for the Dawn Service? Is tracing the route of the troop convoy a good idea? Why or why not?
 - b) Discuss why veterans continue to be involved in Anzac Day marches. Is this important?
 - c) Should we encourage veterans to pass on the stories of their experiences to family members? Why?
 - d) Can you explain why some veterans do not choose to talk about their experiences?
 4. How important is commemoration for subsequent generations who may not have experience of, or family links to, service in wartime?
 5. Research on the Department of Veterans' Affairs' website where international and national commemorations will take place for Anzac Day this year.

