



## The Gallipoli Campaign

This year marks the 94th anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign fought between Allied forces from Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, Newfoundland, France and India troops, and Turkish 'Ottoman' forces. The initial landings by the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps – the ANZACs – occurred just before dawn on 25 April 1915, when Australians came ashore around Ari Burnu (Bee Point). The men of the 3rd Infantry Brigade, Australian Imperial Force, were quickly off the beaches and engaging Turkish defenders on the ridges inland.

By the end of the day, more than 20,000 Australians and New Zealanders had been put ashore, mainly in a little bay to the south of Ari Burnu that soon became known as Anzac Cove. More than 2000 Australians were killed during the first day and it has been estimated the opposing Turkish units suffered around the same number of casualties.

The original intention of the landing had been to head swiftly across the Gallipoli Peninsula and capture the Straits of the Dardanelles. Strong Turkish counter-attacks made this impossible and the Anzacs were forced to dig themselves in along a ridge-line half a kilometre from the shore. This became known as the 'Anzac' position until the evacuation of December 1915.

By the end of the eight-month campaign, 8709 Australians and 2721 New Zealanders had died with thousands more casualties.

### Main Anzac battles

On 8 May at Cape Helles, the British and French area of operations, an Australian brigade took part in the battle for Krithia. The Australian attack, like those of the other Allies, was unsuccessful and more than 1000 Australians were killed or wounded. At Anzac Cove, a strong Turkish counter-attack was launched on 19 May, with an estimated 42,000 Turkish troops attacking the Anzac positions in an attempt to drive them back into the sea. More than 3000 Turkish soldiers died and 7000 were wounded, while 628 Anzacs were killed or wounded in these attacks.

In August 1915, a major offensive was undertaken to try and break out of the 'Anzac' area in conjunction with feint attacks at Cape Helles and Lone Pine, and a further British landing at Suvla Bay. It was hoped this break-out would allow the Allied armies, composed here of Australian, New Zealand, Indian and British troops, to carry out the aim of the original landings and capture the Straits of the Dardanelles.

On the afternoon of 6 August, the Australians attacked the Turkish positions at Lone Pine as a diversion from the main Allied attack at Chunuk Bair. The enemy front line trenches were quickly seized but there followed three days of some of the most terrible fighting of the whole campaign, as the Turkish forces fought hard to regain their positions. The attack at The Nek on 7 August, where four waves of Australians were cut down before they reached the Turkish trenches, was portrayed in the 1981 Australian film *Gallipoli*.

At Lone Pine, Australian units suffered more than 2000 casualties and the Turkish forces estimated their losses at more than 6000. The Australians hung on at Lone Pine but the main Allied assault on Chunuk Bair failed. The offensive collapsed and the campaign stalled.

## Evacuation

In October 1915, the British recommended evacuation of the peninsula. This was to prove the most successful phase of the operation. The withdrawal was organised in three stages: reduction of troops to winter levels; withdrawal of all men and materiel not required to hold the position for the last two days; and the final withdrawal. The rules for the withdrawal laid down that the lives of the men were more important than saving weapons and equipment. The Turkish forces, it is now believed, were aware that an evacuation was to take place and allowed it to proceed unchallenged to preserve the lives of their own men.

The last Anzacs departed before dawn on 20 December 1915, from what is now the Anzac Commemorative Site. Only two were wounded during the withdrawal. On 8-9 January 1916, the British evacuated their positions at the southern end of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

## Casualties

More than 50,000 Australians and 8500 New Zealanders served at Gallipoli.

	<b>Died</b>	<b>Wounded</b>	<b>Total casualties</b>
Australia	8709	19,441	28,150
New Zealand	2721	4752	7473
Great Britain	21,255	52,230	73,485
France (est.)	10,000	17,000	27,000
India	1358	3421	4779
Newfoundland	49	93	142
Turkey (Ottoman Empire)	86,692	164,617	251,309

Hundreds of thousands more from all countries suffered serious sickness during the Gallipoli Campaign largely as a result of the conditions they were forced to endure.

## Anzac Day

In 1916, the first anniversary of the landings was observed in Australia, New Zealand and England and by troops in Egypt. That year, 25 April was officially named 'Anzac Day' by the Acting Prime Minister of Australia, George Pearce.

By the 1920s, Anzac Day ceremonies were held throughout Australia and all states had designated Anzac Day as a public holiday. Commemoration of Anzac Day continued throughout the 1930s and 1940s, with Second World War veterans joining parades around the country. In the ensuing decades, returned servicemen and women from the conflicts in Malaya, Indonesia, Korea, Vietnam and later engagements, veterans from allied countries and those who served in peace operations joined the parades.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the number of people attending Anzac Day marches fell, as Australians questioned the relevance of Anzac Day. However, in the 1990s there was a resurgence of interest in Anzac Day, with attendances, particularly by young people, increasing across Australia and with growing numbers making the pilgrimage to the Gallipoli Peninsula to attend the Dawn Service.

Today, Anzac Day services are held around the world, as well as nationally in almost every town and city in Australia. Hundreds of thousands of Australians gather to honour those who have served, and continue to serve our nation in the true Anzac spirit, in times of war, conflict and peace.

Similarly in New Zealand, Anzac Day is observed as a day of commemoration for those who died in the service of their country and to honour returned servicemen and women.