

ANZACs at Gallipoli

Jessica Pullar

The following is a suggestion for a museum display about the Anzacs campaign in Gallipoli for the Canterbury museum.

Enclosed is:

- *An historical overview of what actually happened at Gallipoli.*
- *A memo to a museum director explaining the importance of having an ANZAC display.*
- *A diagram showing how the museum display should be set out.*

Each of these items uses Gallipoli as a case study to illustrate the impact of World War One on New Zealand.

9th March 2010

Subject: Proposal for ANZACs at Gallipoli Research Display

To: Arabell Figg, Museum Director

Address: Canterbury Museum

From: Jessica Pullar

Dear Mrs. Figg,

I am writing to inform you of the great need of the Christchurch, and indeed the New Zealand public to know more about our ANZACs battle at ANZAC cove on 25th of April 1915. I have developed a layout that could possibly be used as a display in the Canterbury Museum about the ANZACs battle at Gallipoli. There are many reasons why it is essential for our nation to know as much as possible about our history and I believe that the battle at ANZAC cove is a significant milestone in New Zealand's history.

- Firstly, the battle at Gallipoli in 1915 is extremely important to New Zealand history because it was the first time New Zealand was put on the world stage. Before the First World War, New Zealand seemed to be an isolated and insignificant country compared to many other countries. The attack on Gallipoli showed that New Zealand could be recognized as a strong nation who fought bravely. It is important that the New Zealand public know this because we can understand how New Zealand has been recognized in the past and we can understand the events that showed that New Zealand was not just a small insignificant nation, rather, a brave fighting one.
- The ANZACs battle at Gallipoli in 1915 was also significant because it showed how brave our men were to fight for so long and not give up. It would give our nation today a strong feeling that we are from a very strong and indeed brave country that won't give

up and will keep working hard. So the display in this instance would be very worthwhile, as it would give more self-assurance to the public that we are indeed a very strong nation.

- It is very relevant too that a display of the ANZACs should go up at the museum because having just had ANZAC day, there will be lots of people that may want to know more about what happened on ANZAC cove because they have seen the memorials and news coverage. After watching a Parade, whether they were there in person or just on TV there may be many questions that people have from what did happen at Gallipoli to the significance of poppies or 'The Last Post' played at the dawn services. So this display would be an excellent idea in this sense because it would answer a lot of questions that the public will want answers for and it will give the public a creative way of finding out more about the ANZACs.
- After conducting this research of the ANZACs battle at Gallipoli, I have come to notice that over the generations the facts about what happened at Gallipoli have become very limited, especially through the knowledge of young adults, and this matter in particular is important for them to know about because many of the soldiers who fought at Gallipoli were young also. If the youth today are ill informed of what the ANZACs did at Gallipoli, they will be missing out on a significant part of our nation's history. The happenings at Gallipoli shaped our country and gave us our sense of national identity today and because of this, it is therefore crucial that our youth and indeed anyone of all ages should know as much about it as possible.
- Finally, a display of the ANZACs battle at Gallipoli would be of much value to the people of New Zealand because we need to keep the facts about what happened in Gallipoli going for many generations to come, mainly because it is an extremely significant milestone in our nation's history. Simply because it helped New Zealand find its true national identity and though much loss of life was suffered for New Zealand, it was not in vain and the people of New Zealand should be very proud of that fact. So, by keeping the facts of Gallipoli going through many more generations we will not lose the fact of Gallipoli and we can carry on respecting the fallen ANZACs memories.

Thank you for considering my idea for the ANZACs display.

Yours sincerely,

Jessica Pullar



ANZACS at Gallipoli 1915 Historical Overview

On the 28th of June 1914 after the assassination of the Archduke of Austria Franz Ferdinand, World War One began. After Britain declared war on Germany, New Zealand soon followed suit and so began one of the most remembered and most significant parts of our New Zealand history.

Background

In 1914 the First World War began raging in Europe, after a stalemate had been going on for some time, an attack on Turkey, one of Germany's strongest Allies was proposed by Winston Churchill as it was thought that this would eventually bring the war to a faster close. On 15th January 1915 Winston Churchill's proposal for an attack on the Dardanelles was accepted and plans began for the Anzacs (Australia, New Zealand Army Corps) to fight in this campaign began. The idea proposed was to take over the Dardanelles, a strategic waterway, which would help the allies threaten Constantinople, Turkey's capital. Seizing the capital of Turkey would weaken Turkey substantially. This in turn would help the war come to an end much sooner with the allies' side victorious. As Turkey was one of Germany's main allies, if Turkey surrendered, this would be a substantial loss for Germany and would weaken their war effort greatly.

There too were other reasons why seizing Turkey would have greatly aided the Allies war effort. If Turkey surrendered and became under control of the Allies, it would threaten Italy and then might make Italy join the war on the Allies side.

Leading up to the attack from the Anzacs on the Gallipoli peninsula, Britain and France attempted to seize the Dardanelles however they were unsuccessful and this in turn would have warned the Turks that there may be another attempt.

Attempt to Seize Gallipoli

On the morning of 25th April 1915 New Zealand troops prepared to attempt an attack on the Turks at the Gallipoli Peninsula. Little did they know that the Turks were ready for them and so commenced one of the most shocking days that New Zealand has ever experienced.

At 7am New Zealand troops got into their boats ready to be taken over to the Gallipoli peninsula ready to start fighting. At 9am 1200 Australian Troops were ashore. Because of the rough ground and lack of back up plans, they were completely

disorganized and therefore made easy targets for the Turks. As the Turks kept firing and wounding many Australian soldiers, more New Zealand troops were called in. After waiting in boats out from the shore for some time they transferred into smaller boats about 100 meters from shore and were towed close enough to the shore for the troops to get out. Some New Zealand troops first went to the north end of what is today known as ANZAC cove. Here they found many dead and wounded Australian troops. From there they moved towards the south end where heavy sniping from the Turks was taking place. As these troops kept proceeding south, they found many New Zealand troops dead and also many wounded. Every minute, more ANZAC troops kept arriving at the cove, still unaware of what was happening. The ANZAC troops that were unwounded started helping the wounded by putting them in boats to take them away to aid. As this was happening, the Turks firing was everywhere, it was a scene of complete chaos. The Turks also fired at the ships bringing more ANZAC troops in increasing the numbers of wounded and killed. By 1pm the battle was in complete bedlam and from here it carried on the same throughout the rest of the day, with ships bringing in more troops and the death toll and casualty rate raised higher and higher. By midnight, there were 4 big horse boats for the wounded. It was estimated that 1500 ANZAC troops were wounded that day.

This attempt at seizing the Gallipoli Peninsula was hugely unsuccessful. A large theory as to why this attempt went so badly wrong was because the ANZACs were landed at the wrong beach. However, the British navy made excuses for this like how they had made a last minute change of plan. However, there were other reasons why the attack was disastrous. The ANZACs there didn't expect a fight and so many died still sitting on their packs. It also went very wrong due to a large lack of communication. If the troops had managed to let the troops that kept coming in know of what was happening, then they would have been more organized. However, this was clearly not the case and the ANZACs suffered accordingly.

The Remainder of the Gallipoli Campaign

After this disastrous day in Australian and New Zealand history, many reactions were heard in the months after the 25th of April 1915.

The first that the New Zealand public heard after the unsuccessful landing at ANZAC cove was in the press, which was a week after it had happened. It stated that the land attack had been successful and that the men had performed with most bravery. No where did it mention a heavy casualty rate and nor did it mention the fact that the men were under heavy Turkish fire. Also included is a note from the King giving his congratulations to the troops for their success at

Gallipoli. Why the truth was uncovered is not known. However, it could be to do with the fact that the New Zealand public did not want to be worried too much by what was happening in the war and their sources would not have wanted to put young New Zealand men off from going to the war. The day after this Press article was released the Prime Minister stated that there is a lack of news and from this, things might not be as previously suggested. Five days after the original press article that stated of New Zealand's success at Gallipoli the truth was finally revealed. The article in it informed of the many wounded and killed. The attack on the Dardanelles is accurately described and talks of the heavy Turkish fire that the ANZACs were under. This was the first piece of accurate news that the New Zealand public actually heard and it took 2 weeks from the original attack on the Dardanelles for the truth to be revealed. For the Australian public, it was a similar story. It also took two weeks before they learnt of what had actually happened at ANZAC cove.

Meanwhile, at Gallipoli, the ANZACs were still suffering badly under the Turk's defences. The day after the first attempt on the Dardanelles 6 more ANZACs were killed. By now the dead were being buried anywhere with their graves being marked by small crosses made from the cardboard of biscuit boxes. On the 27th of April 1915 the Turks made another violent counter attack. After a long day of walking and being exposed at many places, the ANZACs managed to overcome the attack. On the 7th of May the ANZACs took part in a huge attack on the Turks at Krithia with French, British and Indian troops. As this fighting went on it led to a stalemate and in a bid to break it, it was arranged that an attack from the ANZACs on Chunuk Bair would take place. This attempt failed mainly due to the fact that there was no co-ordination of the forces. New Zealand Troops tried to keep fighting in Chunuk Bair but they were eventually outed by Turkish troops. Other attempts were made through the months of the campaign however none of them were successful and the ANZACs suffered heavy casualties as a result. Quinns Post was also formed to help the campaign but was ultimately unsuccessful. Though some British troops arrived to help the New Zealanders, they were not strong enough and much vigorous defending from the Turks made the campaign a failure. In December 1915 the decision was made to withdraw the troops, all troops evacuated with no casualties so this was by far their most successful operation. The ANZACs also left their mark with the Turkish troop by setting up guns to fire at certain points during the day and leaving their trenches with supplies so that the Turks were unaware of the fact that the ANZACs had gone.

Implications Today

Today, there are still many reactions and opinions being heard from the countries involved in the Gallipoli campaign. A

Turkish tour guide stated that no Turk has ever killed a New Zealander in Gallipoli, he states that it was the British who killed them and he also states that the New Zealanders didn't lose the battle, it was the British who lost the battle. He finished by saying that the British were murderers. A New Zealand journalist stated that many needless deaths were suffered from the New Zealanders from the Gallipoli campaign due to the bad decisions from the British Government. They also stated that it was 'unjust' and wasn't even our war.

The first ANZAC day was held on 25th April 1916; exactly a year after the ANZACs arrived on ANZAC cove. Parades, sports and drinks were included in the celebrations to remember those who had died on ANZAC cove a year earlier.

Today, over the years ANZAC day's celebrations have changed very little since the first one in 1916. People all over the country gather at 6am to have a service in remembrance of the ANZACs. This 6am service coincides with when the first New Zealand troops landed at the Gallipoli peninsula. The service begins with a procession to the local war memorial. A verse is then read from Laurence Binyons "For the Fallen". Then "The Last Post" is played followed by one minute's silence to remember the fallen soldiers in World War One. Laying the memorial wreaths follow this.

Throughout the day the media covers the main happenings of the public holiday. Channel ONE shows much ANZAC day coverage, as does the Maori Television channel. Radio New Zealand also has coverage of the day's events.

Anzacs ceremonies are now having more and more people coming to them as parents bring their kids for respect for both their parents and their grandparents.

Poppy day is always held the Friday before ANZAC day. People from all over the country buy small poppies to wear on poppy day. The proceeds from these poppies go to the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services Association to support those returned servicemen. The poppy itself symbolises remembrance for those who were killed on battlefields. The first New Zealand poppy day was held in 1922. It was supposed to be held on Armistice Day however the ship carrying the poppies to New Zealand came later than intended so New Zealand celebrated poppy day just before ANZAC day and this tradition had carried on since.

New Zealand also has many more small ways of remembering the Anzacs who fought at Gallipoli in 1915, Paintings have been made and have been auctioned off in remembrance of the battle at Gallipoli, also New Zealand postage stamps have been made showing pictures of servicemen who are being remembered and honoured for fighting at Gallipoli. On ANZAC day 2008

Auckland war memorial museum held and ANZAC day service, as did Te Papa of Wellington and the army museum of Waiouru.

There are also certain places around the world that remember the ANZACs, The Gallipoli battle fields are now known as the "Peace Park". The Gallipoli Star is also a significant place in Gallipoli, in Chunuk Bair where a notable battle occurred to try to make Turkey surrender, this Gallipoli star is a tall structure, which represents New Zealand soldiers who fought there in 1915.

Today New Zealanders know how brave the ANZAC fighters at Gallipoli were and the nation has found that it is an important symbol of our national identity.

To conclude, New Zealand found out who they really were after the events of the 25th of April 1915, but at a tragic cost. We discovered we were not colonials, rather, a nation to be remembered for our brave and fighting men who had fought for our country, New Zealand.