

# ANZAC Symbols and Traditions

- **Slouch hat**



By 1890, State military commandants had agreed that all Australian forces, except the artillery corps, should wear a looped-up hat of uniform pattern that was turned up on the right side in Victoria and Tasmania, and on the left side in all other States to allow for different drill movements

- **Rising Sun Badge**



There are seven patterns of the Rising Sun. The Rising Sun has evolved over time and today Australian Army soldiers wear the seventh pattern Rising Sun. The ANZAC's wore the 4th pattern that included Australian Commonwealth Military Forces on the bottom bars of the badge

- **Rosemary**



Since ancient times this aromatic herb has been believed to have properties to improve the memory. Perhaps because of this, rosemary became an emblem of both fidelity and remembrance in literature and folklore.

Traditionally, sprigs of rosemary are worn on Anzac Day and sometimes on Remembrance Day, and are usually handed out by Legacy and the RSL. Rosemary has particular significance for Australians, as it is found growing wild on the Gallipoli peninsula.

- **Light Horse Emu Plumes**



When the Light Horse went to Egypt, Queenslanders, Tasmanians and South Australians wore splendid emu plumes in their hats - actually, small squares of emu hide with the long, brown-tipped white feathers still attached. The plume had originally been a battle honour of the Queensland Mounted Infantry for their work in the shearers' strike of 1891.

Now it was adopted by almost all the Light Horse Regiments. Even when a Regiment did not wear the plume on parade or in battle, the men kept one in their kit and tucked it in the hatband when they went on leave. It was the proud badge of the light horseman.

- **ANZAC Day services**

- **The Dawn Service**

The Dawn Service is not an Army specific ceremony. It is a public ceremony normally conducted by the Returned and Services League of Australia with involvement across all three Services of the Australian Defence Force.

During battle, the half-light of dawn was one of the most favoured times for an attack. Soldiers in defensive positions were woken in the dark before dawn, so by the time first light crept across the battlefield they were awake, alert, and manning their weapons; this is still known as the 'stand-to'.

After the First World War, returned soldiers sought the comradeship they had felt in those quiet, peaceful moments before dawn. A dawn vigil, recalling the wartime front line practice of the dawn 'stand-to', became the basis of a form of commemoration in several places after the war.

- **Flag at Half Mast**



Flags are flown in the half-mast position as a sign of mourning and/or to honour the fallen in war or service to Australia

To bring the flag to the half-mast position, the flag must first be raised to the top of the mast (the 'peak'), then immediately lowered slowly to the halfmast position. (This position is estimated by imagining another flag flying above the half-masted flag – in European mythology, the flag flying above is the flag of death.).

The flag must be lowered to a position recognisably half-mast so that it does not simply appear to have slipped down from the top of the flagpole. An acceptable position would be when the top of the flag is a third of the distance down from the top of the flagpole. When lowering the flag from a half-mast position, it should first be raised briefly to the peak, and then lowered ceremoniously.

Under no circumstances should a flag be flown at half-mast at night, whether or not the flag is illuminated.

- **Catafalque Party**



A catafalque is a raised structure supporting a stand that usually holds a coffin to allow mourners to file past and pay their last respects. A watch or catafalque party was traditionally mounted around the coffin to ensure the safety of the body while it lay in state.

➤ **Resting on Arms Reversed by the Catafalque Party**



The tradition of reversing and resting on arms – that is, leaning on a weapon held upside down – has been a mark of respect or mourning for centuries, said to have originated with the ancient Greeks. Descriptions of sixteenth-century military funerals provide the earliest documented instances of carrying arms reversed in more recent times. Although Australian soldiers still rest on arms as a mark of respect for the dead, the short Steyr rifle, the present Australian service rifle, is only able to be partially reversed and rested on.

➤ **The Last Post, Reveille and Rouse**



In military tradition, the Last Post is the bugle call that signifies the end of the day's activities. It is also sounded at military funerals to indicate that the soldier has gone to his final rest and at commemorative services such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day. The Last Post is normally followed by Rouse except at the Dawn Service when Reveille is played. Historically Reveille woke the soldiers at Dawn.

➤ **A Minute of Silence**



Two minutes silence was first observed in Australia on the first anniversary of the Armistice and continues to be observed on Remembrance Day, 11 November. Over the years, the two minute silence has also been incorporated into ANZAC Day and other commemorative ceremonies. In recent times, one minute of silence has been observed at Australian commemorative events, such as ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies. The reason behind this change is largely unknown.

➤ **The Salute**

The Salute by Veterans at a Memorial Ceremony by place their Right Hand over their “Left Side” has been assumed by many to be placing their ‘Hand over their Heart’ in remembrance of their Fallen Comrades; this is not so.

The Veterans Salute to their “Fallen Comrades”, originated in London on Armistice Day in 1920, during the ceremony to unveil and dedicate the Cenotaph in Whitehall. Those present included high ranking Soldiers, Sailors and many Victoria Cross winners. The ceremony concluded with a march past. The Regimental Sergeant Major of the Guard Regiment conducting the ceremony, faced with such highly decorated military personnel, all wearing rows of medals, decreed that all would salute the Cenotaph as they marched past by placing their hand over their medals, instructing that:

“No matter what honours we may have been awarded, they are nothing compared with the honour due to those who paid the supreme sacrifice”.

➤ **The Ode of Remembrance**

The ‘Ode’ comes from ‘For the Fallen’, a poem by the English poet and writer Laurence Binyon and was published in London on 21 September 1914; Poems of the Great War in 1914. The verse, which became the League Ode, was already used in association with commemoration services in Australia in 1921.

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.*

➤ **Laying of Wreaths**



Flowers have traditionally been laid on graves and memorials in memory of the dead. Rosemary, symbolizing remembrance, is popular on Anzac Day. Laurel is also a commemorative symbol; woven into a wreath, it was used by the ancient Romans to crown victors and the brave as a mark of honour. In recent years, the poppy, strongly associated with Remembrance Day (11 November), has also become popular in wreaths on Anzac Day.

• **ANZAC biscuits**



Previously known as an ANZAC wafer or ANZAC tile, the ANZAC biscuit we know and love today is a far cry from what the ANZACs ate one hundred years ago. The ANZAC biscuit was originally intended as a bread substitute for soldiers fighting in hostile conditions. The biscuit was made to have long shelf life, meaning it was notoriously hard; in fact, they often adopted the affectionate nickname of ‘bullet-proof’ biscuits!

• **Simpson and his Donkey**



After landing at ANZAC Cove on 25 April 1915 in the morning hours of the next day Jack was carrying casualties back to the beach over his shoulder – it was then that he saw the donkey. Jack, who as a child on summer holidays had worked as a donkey-lad on the sands of South Shields England, knew what he had to do.

From then on he became a part of the scene at Gallipoli walking along next to his donkey, forever singing and whistling as he held on to his wounded passengers, seemingly completely fatalistic and scornful of the extreme danger. He led a charmed life from 25 April until he was hit in the back by a machine gun bullet on 19 May 1915.

- Medals

Australian military personnel who did WWI overseas service could be awarded the following campaign medals



1914–15 Star.  
British War Medal.  
Victory Medal.

WWI Medals for honour or meritorious service.



### **The Victoria Cross**

Awarded for "the most conspicuous bravery or some daring or pre-eminent act of valour or self-sacrifice or extreme devotion to duty in the presence of the enemy." Highest award. All ranks.

### **Distinguished Service Order**



Instituted in 1886. Awarded to senior officers for "distinguished services under fire or under conditions equivalent to service in actual combat with the enemy". Often awarded for distinction in command or service.

### **The Military Cross**



The principal army officers' award, established during World War I for junior officers, as there was no decoration for them for acts of bravery in the face of the enemy. Awarded to members of the Australian Flying Corps who came under Army control and to junior officers in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

### **Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM)**



Established 1854. Awarded to non-commissioned officers and other ranks of the Army for "distinguished conduct in action in the field."

### **Military Medal**



Most common award. Instituted March 1916 and awarded retrospectively for gallantry and devotion to duty performed by non-commissioned officers and other ranks of the Army. In June 1916 it was extended to women of all nationalities for "bravery and devotion under fire".

### **Distinguished Service Cross (DSC)**



Formerly named the Conspicuous Service Cross, it was renamed the Distinguished Service Cross in October 1914. Awarded to naval officers (commissioned and warrant) below the rank of Lieutenant Commander for gallantry during active operations against the enemy.

### **The Distinguished Flying Cross**



Established June 1918 as the principal officers' flying gallantry decoration. Awarded for acts of valour, courage or devotion to duty whilst flying in active operations against the enemy

### **The Albert Medal**



Instituted 1866. Awarded for exceptional acts of gallantry in saving life on land or sea. Only three Albert Medals were awarded to members of the Australian Army during World War 1.

### **The Meritorious Service Medal**



Instituted 1916. Awarded to Warrant Officers, non-commissioned officers and men who had rendered valuable and meritorious service, and could be awarded for gallantry in the performance of military duty. All services.

### **The Royal Red Cross**



Instituted 1883. The First Class - Royal Red Cross was awarded to fully-trained nurses who were part of the officially recognised nursing services. Awarded for exceptional devotion or competency in nursing duties in the field or military hospitals over a long or continuous period or for an exceptional act of bravery or devotion to duty.