

HOME / FRONT

100 YEAR COMMEMORATION OF THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN



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INTRODUCTION

The 100 year anniversary of the 25 April 1915 landing and commencement of battle at ANZAC Cove, Gallipoli, presents a very special opportunity for Australians to reflect upon conflict, sacrifice and service across the intervening years.

As a public gallery, concerned to present exhibitions relevant to its community, Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest was keen to make a meaningful contribution to this anniversary. Albeit, so much had been said and written of the Campaign, of its failures, of the old men who led from a safe distance, and of the bravery of the young who fought, the question hovered - "What was left to say?"

After much consideration we have chosen to devote our Main Gallery Autumn exhibition to an examination of the rare moments of respite between battle and exhaustion, enjoyed by serving soldier and nurse. At the heart of the curatorial ambition we sought to discover and articulate how those who served at Gallipoli retained a sense of self, of home, of humour and their humanity in such a bloody and senseless campaign. The exhibition was framed around the contribution of a single artist, charged with exploring these themes.

Blue Mountains artist Catherine O'Donnell was commissioned to produce a suite of large scale drawings which would situate servicemen and nurses at rest, proximate to the temporary digs, trenches, bunkers and tents where these individuals had lived and fought the eight long months of the Campaign. In doing so it was anticipated that attention would be drawn to the temporal coexistence of battle front and home front - to which so many would not return.

As the basis for her drawings, the artist researched and chose historical photographs from the collection of the Australian War Memorial. Additional research saw O'Donnell travel to Turkey in March of 2014 to meet with historians, visit war museums, ANZAC battle sites and to survey the terrain and imagine herself and others upon the peninsula's rocky landscape of hell in 1915. Imagining what happened to Australian countrymen and women so far from home, fighting Turkish soldiers in defence of their homeland as a consequence of old world geopolitical arrangements, was a difficult and melancholic task.

As the artist walked the scarred earth she found scattered relics of war - pieces of spent shrapnel, fragments of barbed wire, bone protruding from the earth, trenches, now worn and gentle furrows, the rusting, hulking, detritus of the world's first modern war.

From her research and experience O'Donnell has produced a series of large scale monochromatic charcoal drawings. Each displays the artist's much lauded technique and style, in the creation of a focal point and the removal of all deemed superfluous, leaving a field of white paper. The resulting negative space is to be filled by the imagination, while the subject of each drawing is positioned in direct relation to the viewer.

O'Donnell's artworks are exhibited in company with Gallipoli Campaign battle relics, and the personal effects of soldiers, from the collection of the Australian War Memorial. Individual accounts relating to these objects and their use during wartime create a poignant conversation between drawn history, and resonating objects - invested with both the intimate and foundation stories of our nation.

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As a means to consider the Gallipoli Campaign and the first World War from a local perspective, the Penrith community were asked to contribute to the Home / Front exhibition by sharing related memorabilia, keepsakes and correspondence. We are grateful to those relatives who came forward and agreed to place their precious mementos in our safe keeping. These contributions and the stories of individual soldiers such as Private Fred Messer, along with original local newspaper accounts of those fallen, are also on display in the Main Gallery.

Bill Sellars, Australian writer, former Prime Ministerial advisor to Malcolm Fraser, student of the Gallipoli Campaign, and long term Turkish resident was invited to write the exhibition essay 'Soldiering On'. This essay, found below, enlarges the theme of soldier life and companionship on the battlefield. Sellars' reading of the Campaign offers a unique insight to the ANZAC spirit and its expression.

Home / Front - 100 year commemoration of the Gallipoli Campaign is one of four exhibitions across the Gallery site which considers and commemorates Australian military involvements, outcome and service across the last 100 years.

In Lewers House, artist Ken Done's painting suite ***Attack - Japanese midget submarines in Sydney Harbour***, remembers the occasion during World War II, when on 31 May 1942 three Japanese midget submarines sought to enter Sydney Harbour in an attempt to blow up berthed naval ships. The first submarine got caught in boom nets at the entry to the Harbour. The Japanese warrior code of honour left the sailors with no option but to detonate themselves and vessel rather than be captured. The second and third submarines entered the Harbour, and positioned themselves to fire upon the USS Chicago. Their presence was soon detected, and amidst torpedo fire upon the Chicago, the HMAS Kuttabul, was sunk, killing 21 sailors. Depth charges sunk the second sub, while the third sub left the Harbour and headed north. In the days thereafter Australia gave a full military funeral service to the four deceased Japanese submariners. Their ashes were sent home to Japan as an act of decency during wartime.

Done's suite seeks to remember this historical episode and to honour the dead, including the bravery of these Japanese submariners who surely were on a suicide mission. Although Ken Done is most well known for his glorious depictions of Sydney Harbour, with its riotous colour and sunshine, herein Done paints the water's underworld, its black and murky depths. A screeching red is used in abundance to signal Japanese culture, geishas, nationalist messages and the blood to be shed. When colour explodes elsewhere on these canvases, it conveys the chaos of battle, fire power and destruction.

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In Ancher House, is ***Seeking Humanity - Portraits and Stories of Australia's Asylum Seekers and Refugees***, by Wendy Sharpe. This group of ten portraits are from a larger series produced by Wendy Sharpe on behalf of the Sydney Asylum Seekers Centre. Each portrait is accompanied by the subject's own story of war, dislocation, persecution, and journey to Australia seeking asylum. As we seek to commemorate Gallipoli and to remember Australia's participation in international conflict and those who served, we choose also to remember the impact of war upon civilians and the devastation upon lands and culture far from our shores.

Refugees are the inevitable outcome of war and conflict. As a responsible, generous and peaceful country, Australia has offered asylum to hundreds of thousands of refugees over the past century. Wendy Sharpe's portraits and accompanying stories contain the grateful pride these refugees have in calling Australia 'home', and outline the hope and contribution each now makes to our society.

In the Lounge Room Gallery is ***Generations of Knowledge - Serving Country, Portraits of Aboriginal Service Men and Women***. These portraits were taken by Sydney photographer Belinda Mason as part of the University of Western Sydney's Elders on Campus project. Belinda Mason's portraits capture the strength and dignity of Aboriginal service men and women assembled as part of ANZAC Day 2014 commemorations. The photographs provide a timely reminder of a service to country rarely remembered or lauded.

Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest is proud to present ***Home / Front - 100 Year commemoration of the Gallipoli Campaign***. We hope you enjoy this suite of exhibitions, and it enables you the opportunity to pause, reflect and give thanks for the sacrifice of the many Australians who have served their country this past century.

Dr Lee-Anne Hall

Director

Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest

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OPENING ADDRESS

Delivered by

**HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL
THE HONOURABLE DAVID HURLEY AC DSC
(RET'D) GOVERNOR OF NSW**

In 1789, a year after the Colony of New South Wales was established, my predecessor Governor Arthur Phillip sent Captain Watkin Tench of the Royal Marines to lead a party to explore the country west of Parramatta. Tench and his party were the first Europeans to set eyes on the rich and fertile lands of the Nepean River, the land of the Darug people.¹

I would also like to pay my respects to the Darug people, who are the traditional owners of the land on which we gather. I acknowledge their living culture and affirm my respect for their ancestors and descendants.

I am honoured to be here on the beautiful Nepean to open this exhibition 'Home Front', commemorating 100 years of the Gallipoli Campaign.

This exhibition has one striking difference from other exhibitions on our ANZAC contribution to the First World War. It does not feature war scenes.

Although the context is conflict, the seven life-size drawings by artist Catherine O'Donnell feature soldiers and nurses at rest.

This exhibition rounds out the picture of our ANZAC forces, depicting our servicemen and women in private and quiet moments and doing ordinary things, albeit in extraordinary circumstances.

It reminds viewers of the individual human dimension to conflict and captures the moments of solitary reflection, as

well as the comradeship and friendship which sustained them through the dark times.

I congratulate the artist and the curator for resisting the temptation to Hollywood-ise or mythologise war through this exhibition.

Military and naval service is not all action.

This exhibition, 'Home Front', is a bit like a Russian Babushka nested doll. The perfect metaphor for this exhibition is the treasured 'Welcome Nugget' tobacco tin in the exhibition, which held 89 prized negatives of photographs, long after it had served its original use. It is an exhibition within an exhibition within an exhibition, showing different layers of Australia's experience in conflict.

Its treasures reveal themselves the more one engages with each single artwork or artefact and the collection as a whole.

Some of the most poignant items in this exhibition are the priceless personal effects, held by families in the Penrith and Blue Mountains region, sitting alongside objects from the collection of the Australian War Memorial ...

Items such as the much-loved violin which is indelibly marked with numerous engraved autographs and the many places its owner travelled to during the First World War, including 'Gallipoli 25 April 1915', 'Egypt Jan-May 1916' and 'France June 1916 - July 1918'.

To borrow the words of William Wordsworth, in this violin we can almost hear 'the still sad music of humanity.'²

These objects, set against the backdrop of the life-size drawings, show our shared humanity.

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This suite of exhibitions also includes 20 portraits of Indigenous servicemen and women by artist Belinda Mason, artworks featuring refugees by renowned artist Wendy Sharpe - 'Seeking Humanity' – as well as Ken Done's World War II series.

I am proud to launch this exhibition which honours the men and women of the Penrith community who served in the First World War – men like Fred Messer, who was the first man of the Penrith area to fall in the Gallipoli Campaign. In the closely-held and dearly-loved personal items that survived, this exhibition also achieves something else – it honours their loved ones left behind.

I would like to encourage you to spread the word on this wonderful exhibition.

I declare 'Home Front – 100 Year Commemoration of the Gallipoli Campaign' open.

Linda and I are delighted to join you.

¹ <http://penrithvallery.com.au/index.asp?id=54>

² William Wordsworth poem, '....Tintern Abbey'

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ARTIST STATEMENT

CATHERINE O'DONNELL

For many years my drawing practice has been anchored in the suburbs, depicting urban aesthetics which shape and inform our everyday lives. I drew upon this practice and concern for home environments in my drawings for Home / Front, illuminating peaceful moments of home on a war torn battle field.

Hence, the drawings in the Home/Font exhibition depict not the horrors of the Gallipoli battle but the intimate moments shared by the brave young men and women that found themselves on the Turkish peninsula and beyond. In the production of this work I actively sought out original photographs of the 1915 Campaign from the archives of the Australian War Memorial. Images that captured the precious moments when the soldiers were away from the fighting and relentless gunfire of the front lines and could take the time to perform normal everyday activities. As in the 'The Cooks dugout' where you find two soldiers relaxing on a civilian blanket possibly a gift from home, enjoying the sunshine and reading a paper - a commonplace activity which could briefly carry these men away from the chaos and horror of war.

Light and shadow or the tonality and contrast created by the charcoal medium in these drawings is central to my practice. The monochromatic pallet is not only evocative of old black and white photography, it has the ability to transport the viewer into a more psychological terrain, engendering a visceral response and becoming a catalyst for the imagination. The life sized scale of my drawings has been carefully considered, with the audience in mind, so as to create a physical as well as a psychological response to the work. The negative space brings into focus what is there, but also suggests what is missing.

Catherine O'Donnell
2015

Biography

Catherine O'Donnell is best known for her large charcoal drawings. She has an MFA in Drawing (Research) NAS 2014, BFA (Distinction) (Awarded Deans Medal) UWS, 2005, Diploma FA 2003. She has exhibited regularly in solo and group shows within Australia and internationally. She has won many awards and numerous commendations for her work. Exhibition highlights include The New Zealand International Art Festival, The Dobell Prize for Drawing, The Kedumba Drawing Award, The Albury Art Prize, the Adelaide Perry Prize for Drawing, Hazelhurst Art on Paper, SCAP, JADA and the William Fletcher Foundation Art Fellowship. In 2014 she was awarded the National Art School British School in Rome Residency.

Catherine O'Donnell's work is held in both public and private collections and is currently represented by Flinders Street Gallery Sydney.

MAIN GALLERY

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SOLDIERING ON - ESSAY

WILLIAM SELLARS

“Engineer officer detailed to supervise trench improvement of Bn (Battalion) and to supply materials and skilled labour required.”

“Enemy kept up usual sniping during day and night. They fired gun or field mortar from right of position to left at around 9pm and 2am. Enemy digging continued all day. Casualties Lieut (Lieutenant) D R Brown and 6 others wounded.”

(War diary of the 4th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, May 14, 1915)

Thus another 24 hours passed in the front line of Gallipoli for the 4th Battalion, which drew its recruits from Sydney and the rest of New South Wales. No pitched battles, just sniping, trench work and casualties.

Though the battalion diary did not note it, May 14 was also the day Fredrick Charles Messer, one of the first men from the Penrith district to lose his life in the war, died of wounds in an Egyptian hospital.

The first Australian troops landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula at dawn on April 25, the last filed down to boats on the shore waiting to evacuate them just before dawn on December 20. The seven months of fighting in the hills and valleys above what soon became known as Anzac Cove claimed the lives of 8709 Australian soldiers killed, died of wounds or of disease, along with just under 2800 New Zealanders.

Of the more than 8700 Australians to lose their lives, more than half were killed or died of wounds in the first week of the campaign or in the month of August, when the second and last great offensive was launched to break through the Ottoman lines. Like the landing on April 25 and the subsequent fighting that flared into May, the August offensive was a failure, having extended the beachhead held by the Allies but falling well short of victory.

For the majority of the campaign, for both Allies and Turks, it was a war of attrition, of sniping, routine, boredom and of the shovel. Even on that first day of fighting on April 25, men came to learn that the slightest shelter increased the chance of survival. Soon the narrow scrapes in the ground were linked up, forming the initial trench lines that can still be traced to this day.

“It’s a funny old war,” wrote one soldier, “dug into the ground like great rabbit warrens, with the enemy only forty yards, in some places only five away, and often days elapse and you never see a Turk.”

Much of the time, that “funny old war” consisted of carrying supplies up to the lines. Everything required by a man to survive – food, water and ammunition – had to be brought over the beaches and up the winding valleys behind the forward trenches, while a constant stream of wounded were carried down.

In the line, thoughts of home

Through those first months of fighting, the men drew comfort from their mates, and from home. Sitting in their dugouts, treasured letters or papers from Australia were read aloud and news from a land half a world and a war away was shared. Men would write the name of their home town on their hats, wandering through the lines looking for someone from the same district to have a yarn with. They may have been on the Gallipoli Peninsula, but their thoughts were still of home.

By late July, army doctors were warning that increasing numbers of men were no longer fit for active service. Dysentery, enteric fever (Typhoid), physical exhaustion and mental stress had worn down the endurance of many of the veteran troops. However, as rumours of a new offensive in August began to circulate, the sick lists shortened. Buoyed by hopes of victory, men sought to hide their illnesses from the doctors and their mates, pride in their units and the need to be seen to “do their bit” sustaining them, carrying them into the last great attacks of the campaign.

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WILLIAM SELLARS

Some of the heaviest fighting in the August offensive took place around Lone Pine, a plateau some 130 metres above sea level, and now the site of the main Australian memorial on the peninsula.

Such was the ferocity of the fighting the headstones of many who fell in the battle only give an approximate date of death, no witnesses being left alive to attest when a man was killed. One such case was Andrew Blaydes, a lieutenant in the 3rd Battalion and a resident of Kingswood. Buried at Lone Pine, Blaydes' date of death is given as August 6 to 8, the first being the day he was last seen alive, the last being when his death was confirmed.

However, Blaydes and more than 2600 other Australians who fell in August died in vain, the great attack failed, with the Ottoman army retaining the high ground, still hemming the Allied troops. August marked the end of Allied hopes of a breakthrough and of victory.

The roses of no man's land

From first to last, Australian nurses were also part of the Gallipoli story. Nurses from the 1st Australian Stationary Hospital aboard the hospital ship Gascon were off ANZAC Cove on the morning of April 25, tending the wounded as they were brought from the shore. The 1st Australian Stationary Hospital was set up on the Greek Island of Lemnos, and along with the 2nd Australian Stationary and later the 3rd Australian General Hospitals, treated thousands of patients up to and beyond the evacuation in December.

While the Australian nurses who served during the campaign did not share all of the dangers faced by the men in the lines, only occasionally coming under fire when stray rounds struck hospital ships lying off the coast, many of the experiences and hardships were similar.

Living under canvas for much of the time, the nurses suffered from the heat and the cold, a poor diet and a lack of water.

"...we did not even have a bath tent as water was so short, and as well the centipedes were very bad!," wrote Nurse Louise Young of her time on Lemnos. "Our hair used to be full of burrs, and in the end many girls cut their hair short. It saved a lot of trouble."

The nurses, doctors and orderlies of the hospitals also shared the experience of exhaustion with the troops at the front, working around the clock during times of heavy fighting when the casualties were arriving in their hundreds. Often the nurses themselves became patients, disease and overwork putting them on the sick list along with the soldiers they cared for.

"I hope they don't hear us..."

After the failure of the August offensive to break through the Ottoman lines, the campaign again subsided into the routine of siege warfare: of digging, carrying supplies, of sickness, of holding on. Soon disease replaced the bullet and the bayonet as the main cause of death among Australian soldiers. A sense of stalemate prevailed.

By November, it was clear the governments in London and Paris had no intention of supporting any further offensive on the peninsula. Among the soldiers there was speculation as to the fate of expeditionary force – stay or go. However, this speculation was often kept at bay by sheer physical labour. With winter fast approaching, the focus of the troops shifted even more from fighting to digging, preparing deeper and more elaborate shelters against the rain, winds and ice to come.

Again Gallipoli became a war of the shovel, though by late autumn the enemy was as much the weather as it was the Turks. It was a battle they were destined to lose. Storms in late November saw thousands of men evacuated with frostbite, while hundreds were drowned in their trenches or froze to death as flooding rains turned to snow, a blanket and greatcoat often their only protection against the cold. By early December the decision was taken to evacuate

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SOLDIERING ON - ESSAY

WILLIAM SELLARS

the peninsula, a victory for the Ottoman defenders and the elements. Gradually the garrison of the Anzac sector was thinned out, troops being withdrawn over a series of nights until just a handful held the line on December 19. Throughout that night and the early hours of the next morning, the last troops filed out of their trenches, and down to the boats on the beach, past the graves of those who were destined to never leave.

The link between the living and the dead was strong, though for much of the seven months of the fighting the gap between the two had been narrow. For many, abandoning fallen mates, rather than defeat, was their main regret.

“I hope they won’t hear us marching down the deres (valleys),” said one soldier of the fallen who were left behind.

Men from the 4th Battalion were among the last to slip away.

“At 2.40 Lt Woodman left the trenches empty... Prior to leaving trenches everything was quiet. The whole third echelon (the last wave of the rear guard) embarked at North Beach without a casualty.”

(War diary of the 4th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force,

December 20, 1915)

For the Australians and New Zealanders, the campaign was over, though it would not be until January 9, 1916 that the last of the British troops at Cape Helles to the south slipped away, again almost without loss.

Though the veterans of Gallipoli did not know it, the war had almost three more years to run. Another 52,000 Australians would die in that time, most falling on the battlefields of France and Belgium. Yet when the Great War is thought of in Australia, it is Gallipoli that first springs to mind, a place where traces of the dugouts where soldiers once gathered to read a letter from home and draw on a pipe still remain on the hillsides. Where memorials in stone carry the names of men from far-away lands. And where a legend based on self-sacrifice, endurance and mateship rose and still resonates one hundred years on.

William Sellars
Turkey
March 2015



Above: Catherine O'Donnell, *Calling Them Home*, 2015, charcoal on paper, 210 x 370cm.

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GALLIPOLI - HISTORY AND LEGEND

In Australian history, legend and myth making, much centres on the Gallipoli Campaign. At dawn on 25 April 1915 ANZAC troops were wrongly landed on North Beach, ANZAC Cove, and ordered to establish strongholds. On the cliff tops above the beach were waiting Turkish soldiers with excellent sight lines, ready to defend their land. ANZACS who survived the brutal fire fight of landing, literally dug in, creating trenches in which to live and fight from during the eight month campaign. They were followed over the period by many thousands of others.

The Gallipoli Campaign claimed the lives of 8,709 Australians, 2,779 New Zealanders, 10,000 French and a further 21, 255 British Allied troops. For Australian troops, the hell of Gallipoli ended following a well executed Australian led evacuation under cover of night on 19 and 20 Dec 1915, when troops were carried away by barge and boat to the safety of waiting ships. By all accounts the Campaign failed in its objective to capture the Gallipoli peninsula and provide safe passage for Allied ships up the Dardanelles Strait, and thereafter to claim Constantinople.

Although a failure, it was at Gallipoli that Australian troops consolidated themselves as a fighting force and gained a reputation for their daring, tenacity, strength and good humour. Australian soldiers also gained respect and notice for expressed 'mateship'. As has been observed, by historian Bill Gammage, 'mateship' during WWI was elevated to 'a particular Australian virtue, a creed, almost a religion'.

Remembering

Some 19 years after the Gallipoli campaign, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, a commander of Turkish troops during WWI and founder of modern Turkey, gave the following message to former enemy troops. It is a message of comfort which is offered every ANZAC Day during the international commemoration held at ANZAC Cove.

'Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives, you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us, where they lie side by side in this country of ours. You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far-away countries wipe away your tears. Your sons are lying in our bosom, and are now in peace. After having lost their lives on this land, they have become our sons as well' Attaturk, 1934

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AUSTRALIAN NURSES

The Australian Army Nursing Service, formed in 1903, was active at Gallipoli. Hundreds of Australian nurses had left Australia in late 1914, to work in Army hospitals, casualty clearing stations, and upon hospital ships. Nurses were present and waiting as the Gallipoli landing took place on 25 April 1915. By the end of the day, 557 wounded had been ferried to the hospital ship Gascon. The day was remembered by Sister Ella Tucker, who nursed upon the Gascon, anchored offshore:

'The wounded from the landing commenced to come on board at 9am and poured into the ship's wards from barges and boats. The majority still had on their field dressing and a number of these were soaked through. Two orderlies cut off the patients clothes and started immediately with dressings. There were 76 patients in my ward and I did not finish until 2am.'

Positioned upon ferrying boats, barges and hospital ships, nurses gave first aid, comfort and ongoing medical care to the wounded. Hospital ships transferred soldiers to field hospitals in Alexandria in Egypt some 1050 kilometres away. In anticipation of growing numbers of soldier injuries, the 3rd Australian General Hospital was established at Mudros on the Greek island of Lemnos. The hospital comprised rows and rows of ward tents for the wounded, and living quarters for nurses and medical officers.

Nurses were confronted with horrific wounds and were often overwhelmed by the number of soldiers and the level of injury. Medical care took place in difficult, overcrowded and often unsanitary conditions. As the campaign wore on, a lack of medical equipment and supplies saw nurses improvising in their patient care, ripping up clothes and sheets where necessary. At times care was reduced to its most basic - the provision of water, food, and holding the hand of the suffering.



Left: Catherine O'Donnell, *Sisters of the Australian Voluntary Hospital*, 2015, charcoal on paper.

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TRENCHES

‘The trenches were alive with maggots and when trying to get a few winks at night they would crawl all over you, and the place was even worse than our own trenches for lice and fleas, so you can see what with one thing and another, it was no holiday in there. Besides, nearly everyone was nearly dead with a sort of dysentery, and to eat your meals or to try and get a little quiet place was impossible on account of the accursed flies’. Archie Barwick, diary entry, 13 August 1915.

The hills where battles were fought on the Gallipoli peninsula were criss-crossed with Allied and Turkish trenches. Trenches were dug into inhospitable rocky ground at a depth of between 2.5 – 4 metres, to allow soldiers cover and protection from enemy fire. The trench corridors were made in dog leg or zig-zag formations to stop shrapnel or bomb blasts from travelling along the trench and having devastating effect. Each soldier’s pack contained empty sandbags and shovels, with which to fill with beach sand. The sandbags were used to reinforce trench walls, to build parapets, or look-outs for guns to rest, and from which grenades might be lobbed. More elaborate trenches included iron-roofing and wire netting strung from poles above to keep bombs out.

Trench warfare was difficult and uncomfortable. Lice and fleas bred in the trench conditions and were the bane of the soldier’s life, found in underclothes and blankets. In wet weather trenches would fill with water and become running streams, while in warmer weather they were near uninhabitable with rotting corpses underneath feet, maggots and flies. In these conditions, officers instructed the men to keep themselves as clean as possible, to pick up rubbish and to sweep the trench floors clean.



Above: Catherine O'Donnell, *Dugout at 1st Division headquarters*, 2015, charcoal on paper, 210 x 370cm.

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CATHERINE O'DONNELL LIST OF WORKS

Catherine O'Donnell

The Cooks dugout

2014

Charcoal on paper

Drawing based upon AWM photograph G01354, 1st Divisional headquarters, Anzac Gully.

Catherine O'Donnell

Time for rounds

2014

Charcoal on paper

Drawing based upon AWM photograph AO5332, Matron Grace Wilson.

Catherine O'Donnell

The tunnel on the right flank

2014

Charcoal on paper

Drawing based upon AWM photograph P02226.030, ANZAC Cove, Gallipoli.

Catherine O'Donnell

Sisters of the Australian Voluntary Hospital

2014

Charcoal on paper

Drawing based upon AWM photograph P01064.008, 1915.

Catherine O'Donnell

Dugout at 1st Division headquarters

2015

Charcoal on paper

Drawing based upon AWM photograph C01142, Dugout occupied by the cook, 1st Division headquarters.

Catherine O'Donnell

Letters from home

2015

Charcoal on paper

Drawing based upon AWM photograph P02367.001, Mena Camp, Egypt.

Catherine O'Donnell

Calling them home

2015

Charcoal on paper

Drawing based upon AWM photograph D00392, AIF repatriating troops, England.

Catherine O'Donnell

In Shadows Past

2014

Digital recording

Trenches, Gallipoli Peninsula.

Catherine O'Donnell

Beach, ANZAC Cove

2014

Digital recording

MAIN GALLERY

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PENRITH COMMUNITY STORIES

“Coo – ee – Won’t YOU come?”

This exhibition presents a selection of photographs, awards and correspondence that help to tell the personal stories of WWI. These keepsakes connect the lives of those who experienced WWI firsthand to that of their descendants. Either handed down between generations or sought from official records, these mementoes create narratives that help to shape our collective history.

When Great Britain declared war on Germany at midnight on 4 August 1914, Australia had already begun preparations. There was never any doubt that Australia would rise to the occasion and send troops in support of the British Empire. On the eve of Australia entering the war, the soon to be Prime Minister, Mr Fisher declared, “but should the worst happen after everything has been done that honor will permit, Australians will stand beside our own to help and defend her to our last man and our last shilling” (Manning Clark).

Australia encouraged men between the ages of 19 and 38 to enlist in the Australian Infantry Force (AIF) with the aim of raising an expeditionary force of 20,000 men that had been promised to England. Training camps were established close to major cities such as in Liverpool near Sydney. Randwick Racecourse was filled with tents to house the growing number of men being fitted out with uniforms and formed into Battalion consisted of approximately 1000 men.

At the beginning of the war, the Penrith newspaper, the Nepean Times, published the letters from soldiers and nurses serving overseas, as well as obituaries for many of the soldiers. The paper also originally published names of locals who had enlisted, as well as reporting on the dead and wounded. By July 1917, with the rising number of casualties, the paper stopped publishing the lists of names.

During the 1914-1918 conflict over 300,000 Australian men and 2,396 Australian nurses volunteered to serve in the Armed Forces. By the time Armistice was declared on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918 more than 60,000 Australians were dead, and 156,000 were wounded, gassed, or taken prisoner from a population of less than 5 million. Of those that had enlisted, over 115 men born or resident in the Penrith District at the time of enlistment, were killed.

These community stories embrace the memories of distant friends and relatives and, when combined, contribute to the broader understanding of our national identity.

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PENRITH COMMUNITY STORIES

FREDERICK CHARLES EDDINGTON MESSER SERVICE NUMBER: 275

Frederick Charles Eddington Messer came from a long list of 'Penrithians'. He was the fourth born child of Mary Jane and Henry Messer, who lived on a small holding lot in Jamisontown called Telopea. By the time he was born in 1892, Fred Messer was the fourth generation to live in Australia and the second generation to be born in Penrith. For the Messer family, the mid-19th century gold rush era and life working on the rapidly expanding railways saw members of the Messer family living across the Penrith, Blue Mountains and Bathurst regions.

On 4 August 1914, Great Britain declared war on Germany and Australians were called upon to enlist and support the British Empire. Just two weeks later, on 18 August 1914, 22 year old Fred Messer enlisted in the newly formed Australian Infantry force, becoming a part of the 4th Battalion, D Company, 1st infantry Brigade. Just three days after 'signing up' Fred was at the Randwick Racecourse in Kensington, Sydney, swearing an oath to 'well and truly serve our Sovereign Lord and King in the AIF until the end of the war'. By October that same year, Fred was sailing for Egypt aboard the troop ship Euripedes, which was readied with men, horses and equipment to transport the 1st Battalion to the Middle East and France. By 26 October 1914, Fred was one of 10,500 Australians and 2,000 New Zealanders disembarking in Alexander, Egypt.

Following six weeks of training in Australia and six weeks training on board ship, Fred Messer's Division arrived in the port city of Alexandria. They were then settled at Mena camp near Cairo, in view of Egypt's great pyramids, for several weeks desert training. On 25 April 1915, 8 months after enlisting in the Australian Infantry Force, Fred Messer landed on the shores of Gallipoli. Fred Messer's brigade was the third party ashore during the he pre-dawn landing on the Turkish peninsula. Out of the 16,000 men put ashore during the first day landing, 2000 were killed or wounded.

Fred wrote to his brother Harry, describing the beach landing:

"We had to fight for a toe-hold. The Turks were entrenched on the edge of the beach, and we have to land under heavy fire. We pulled to the shore in small boats, and as soon as we were near enough we had to jump out of our boats and walk through the water to the beach up to our knees. We gave chase after the Turks as soon as we put out feet on land, and it was not many minutes before the Turks were driven out of their trenches with bullets and the point of the bayonet. We have been giving them a very hot time ever since, and intend to continue it."

On 14 May 1915, three weeks after landing at Gallipoli, and a just a few days after writing his letter home, Fred was wounded in the head by a sniper's bullet. He was transported aboard the SS Lutzow to the Mustapha Barracks, Alexandria, and then transferred to the Deaconess Hospital where he died 14 May 1915, from his wounds received while in action at the Dardanelles.

Fred's friend, and local Penrith resident Jack Symes was killed in action on 3 May, however Fred's death was the first reported casualty of a digger to reach the district of Penrith NSW. The local newspaper, the Nepean Times, reported "quite a gloom was cast over the town" and that "His parents may think of him with pride – noble pride; and we others must look on it as a privilege to have had a young citizen (and others of his spirit) so prepared to defend our rights." (29 May 1915). Also, a commemoration service was organised that saw 200 military cadets and servicemen, including Light Horse, Infantry and members of the Rifle Club, along with local dignitaries march through the streets of Penrith behind the town band before a special memorial service held in the local picture theatre, so as to accommodate the anticipated large number of attendees (5 June 1915).

HOME / FRONT

PENRITH COMMUNITY STORIES

Fred Messer was 23 years of age when he died from wounds sustained at Gallipoli. Although unmarried, he left behind a fiancée, parents and nine siblings. He is buried at Chatby War Memorial Cemetery in Alexandria, Egypt, and is one of the 464 Australian WW1 graves. He is commemorated on the Penrith Honor Roll, Memory Park and the Penrith Methodist Church Honor Roll. Messer descendants continue to maintain an extended association with the local and surrounding area. Penrith Regional Gallery would like to kindly thank all those who have lent their treasured items for inclusion in the Home / Front exhibition: Mary Williams, Colin Heard, Ian Phillips, Judith Roberts, Ken Roberts, Janice Rylands, Barbara Wimble and with particular thanks to Trevor Williams.

In Memoriam Service

Nepean Picture Theatre, High Street, Penrith Sermon by Rev Tarn

Methodist Minister

Nepean Times

5 June 1915, p. 8

“This is a very memorable occasion in the history of the town of Penrith. It is the first time that the people of this district have been called together to do honour to the memory and name of a true and brave soldier who has given his life for his country in this great war of 1914-1915. He was one of the first to hear and respond to the call of his King – to him belongs the honour as far as we know, of being the first of the young men who have gone from this town to give his very life’s blood fighting our battle.

We are not here today to mourn the death of our dear friend and brother, but to hold this service as a fitting memorial of his readiness to serve, his courage to face, and even fall before the enemy of his King and country. Last Sunday night we unveiled an honour roll in the church to perpetuate the memory of our Methodist young men, who have gone to fight our battle at the front, and the name placed at the top of the roll is that of our Private F C E Messer... It is very difficult for me to speak calmly as I desire to do when I come to speak of our brother in the personal relationship as I knew him, as one of my own band of Christian workers, and a true soldier of the Cross.

When I saw the messenger with a telegram from the military authorities I almost trembled to open it, and when I saw the contents, I can assure you that I felt it very keenly. On Wednesday morning about 10.30 I observed this telegram – and I want to read it to you so that you may know how tenderly our King and Queen and the authorities feel towards those who fall on the battlefield: –

“Officially reported that number 275, Private F C Messer, Fourth Battalion, died of wounds, 18th May. Please inform Mrs J Messer, Hornseywood, Penrith, and convey deep regret and sympathy of their Majesties the King and Queen, as well as the Commonwealth Government in loss that the army have sustained by death of this soldier.”

I conveyed that message with as little delay as possible, and am pleased to say that our friends have borne their irretrievable loss with wonderful fortitude and submission. His mother’s tribute, I am sure, touches our hearts, but expresses our own feeling and thought with regard to the loss which we have all sustained – “Oh it is hard; for he was a noble son.”

HOME / FRONT

PENRITH COMMUNITY STORIES

Fred Messer writing to his brother Harry

5 May 1915

“We had to fight for a toe-hold. The Turks were entrenched on the edge of the beach and we had to land under heavy fire. We pulled to the shore in small boats and walk through the water up to our knees, up the beach. We gave chase to the Turks as soon as we put feet on land and it was not many minutes before the Turks were driven out their trenches with bullets and point of bayonet. We have been giving them a very hot time since and intend to continue it.

I am glad to say we are getting better food and being looked after better now than since we have been in the force. The food is bully beef and biscuits, jam, potatoes and bacon; and I am feeling better than I have for some time. It is true what you said in your letter- that by the time I receive it I will most likely be amongst shot and shell. Yes, we are right in the midst of it; but everything is going on lovely, and we are as happy as can be. I might say this is the 11th day for us in the firing line, and we expect to be relieved tomorrow, for a day's rest. It will be quite a treat for us – if it is only to get a wash.

We have been 11 days without a wash and working hard all the time. For the first five days we only had about 4 hours sleep. This is the longest battle that has ever been fought. Eight days was the longest before this, and this is likely to last a few more days yet.”

William Bishop

Service Number: 1518

In December 1914, newly married William Bishop (aged 23) enlisted in the Australian armed forces. On 11 February the following year he embarked for Egypt, before taking part in the 1915 Gallipoli landing, serving as a corporal throughout the campaign. Following Gallipoli, Bishop was posted to France where he was wounded in action.

William's brother Alfred, who had returned to live in England several years earlier, had enlisted in the British Army. He too was injured while serving with the King's Liverpool Regiment, Infantry 19th Service Battalion. While not knowing of each other's enlistment, both brothers ended up being sent, at the same time, to the same Military Hospital for treatment. While recuperating, William overheard the voice of his brother, which led to the two being temporarily reunited. Treated for a fractured foot, William was returned to active duty, while Alfred (Private No. 21455) was judged unfit for further duty, having lost an arm in a shell explosion at St. Quentin.

Bishop was one of the many soldiers affected by the increased use of chemicals as forms of combat, and was exposed to Mustard Gas on two separate occasions. The use of poisonous gas, such as chlorine and mustard, was argued to be a means of dealing with the stalemate position arising from trench warfare. While rarely causing death, this method of conflict inflicted a range of symptoms, including ulcers and blindness, which plagued those afflicted with lifelong complications. Bishop eventually returned to Australia, his wife Elsie and their subsequent three children. The ramifications of Mustard Gas exposure, however, impacted greatly on his life. Bishop's lungs were permanently damaged. He suffered from a constant wheeze and cough and, in order to get adequate oxygen into his lungs, had to sleep upright.

HOME / FRONT

PENRITH COMMUNITY STORIES

Ewan (Ewie) Rose Service No. 3132

Ewan (Ewie) Rose served Australia as a Corporal in the 14th Infantry Battalion. He was an Aboriginal man born in Brisbane, c. 1880, however to date, little is known of his family background. During the 1890s he joined a travelling circus, doing odd jobs in return for meals. He developed a great interest in exotic animals but had a particular love of horses. While in St Marys, Rose was befriended by a Mr and Mrs East who offered him a wage, lodgings and meals with the family. He left the circus to live with the East Family at Llandilo and to work in their butcher business.

On 30 July, 1915 Rose enlisted in the Australian Infantry Force and was assigned to the 10th Reinforcements to the 2nd Battalion at Liverpool Camp. On 8 October, 1915 his unit sailed on HMAT Warialda A69, joining the Battalion at Tel-el-Kabir, Egypt, while it was regrouping after the evacuation of British forces from the Gallipoli peninsula. Three weeks later he was posted to France and in July was transferred to the 14th Light Trench Mortar Battery. Rose's new unit, among the first to be equipped with three-inch Stokes mortars, were to provide close support for the infantry. The weapon weighed almost 50kg and had a range of more than 700m.

On 27 August, 1917 Rose was promoted to Corporal following recognition of his, "exemplary record of devotion to duty... Prior to his promotion he was employed as scout and runner and has many times carried messages through a heavy barrage.'

On 19 July, 1918 Rose was awarded the Belgian Croix de Guerre (War Cross) by the King for his action during fighting in Polygon Wood, September 1917 and again in Broodseinde Ridge on 18 October 1917. Instituted on 25 October 1915, this high award formally recognised acts of heroism performed by individuals of the Allied Powers while on Belgium soil during WW1. In July 1918 The Melbourne Argus reported the Belgian Croix de Guerre had been awarded to 193 Australian officers and men, and to 46 New Zealanders.

Rose returned to Australia at the beginning of April, 1919 and was discharged medically unfit in July. He never married and remained living with his adoptive family. Rose died at the age of 69 on 13 October, 1945. He is buried at St Marys General Cemetery. Rose and his decoration are commemorated on the St Marys War Memorial where he is listed as H. Rose, C de G.

Nurses – At War

Working within the medical service, women proved to be an essential asset to military service. The first draft of Sisters in the Australian Army Nursing Services (AANS) left Australia in September 1914. In all, more than 3,000 Australian civilian nurses volunteered for active service during the First World War, working in hospitals, on hospital ships and trains and casualty clearing stations situated close to the front line. Australian women served in many locations, including Britain, Burma, India, France, Belgium, the Mediterranean and the Middle East.

As with soldiers, nursing provided opportunities for women to directly participate in the war effort as well as the chance for independence and travel. Nurses who enlisted received free return passage by 2nd class steamer or military transport, free uniform and an allowance for upkeep. Matrons received £100 per year while staff nurses received £40 per year, which was the same pay rate as a private soldier. In late 1916 nurses finally received officer status.

25 Australian nurses died during their service, at least 388 were decorated, with eight receiving the Military Medal for bravery under fire.

HOME / FRONT

PENRITH COMMUNITY STORIES

Penrith District Nurses

During WW1, 16 Penrith District nurses served overseas with the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force in Rabaul, on hospital ships and with the Australian Imperial Force in Egypt, England, the Western Front and Salonika, Greece.

The 16 Penrith district nurses were:

Adele Baker, Jessie Bassetti, Rachel Clouston, Esther Edith Coggins, Stella Lilian Colless, Vida Mitylene Greentree, Mary Rosa Harford, Elizabeth Kearey, Adelaide Maud Kellett, Ada Alice Morehead, Constance Neale, Ione Evelyn Grace Nowland, Florrie Manson Perkins, Jessie Grace Perkins, Alice Cecilia Scahill, Annie Eliza Major-West.

Medals

There are three medals specific to service during World War 1.

The **1914/15 Star** was authorised in April 1917 to be awarded to those who served in France or Belgium between 5 August and 22-23 November 1915. The four-pointed star is marked with a crown. The front has crossed gladius (swords), overlaid with an oak wreath that is ensigned with the cypher of King George V. The soldier's name and service number is recorded on the reverse side.

King George V instituted the **British War Medal 1914-20** in 1919 to mark the end of World War I. The medal is copper-nickel with the effigy of George V on the front. The reverse has an image of St George on horseback trampling underfoot the eagle shield of the Central Powers, and a skull and cross-bones, the emblems of death. Above this is the risen sun of victory and the years 1914 and 1918 on the outside edge.

The **Victory Medal** was authorised in 1919 to commemorate the victory of the Allied Forces. It was awarded to those who served on duty between 5 August 1914 and 11 November 1918. Each of the Allied nations issued a 'Victory Medal' to their own nationals, with Australians being awarded the medal issued by Great Britain.

Postcards

Printed postcards were a popular form of communication from the 1870s onwards. Their use was well established by the outset of WW1 and postcard publishers maximised the commercial opportunities. By August 1914 designers, artists and photographers were creating a range of postcards, including individual and group photo portraits, depictions of towns, scenic landscapes and cartoons.

These postcards found a ready market amongst the great number of soldiers and nurses travelling overseas, many for the first time. Postcards were used extensively as a vital form of communication between family and friends separated by war, but were also often collected as souvenirs that recorded the overseas route travelled. This collection of postcards is primarily made up of images that depict the people and architectural highlights of Egypt and were collected by Fred Messer while he enjoyed the typical tourist sights of Cairo.

Some of the popular Australian Imperial Forces postcards are racist by today's standards, but reflect the attitudes of the time. Some re-occurring images in the cartoons are of soldiers being harassed by boot polish boys and market sellers, and of soldiers "seeing the sights" and trying to ride donkeys or camels. "Seer! Gib it backshish" for example, translates as "Sir. Give me money."

HOME / FRONT

ARTEFACTS

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

Blanket

c.1916

Wool, with cotton drill edging

Western front, Europe.

Collection, Australian War Memorial

The owner of this blanket was Captain Percy Herbert Cherry who served in Gallipoli and on the Western Front. Cherry was born in Drysdale Victoria on 4th June 1895, moving to Tasmania when Cherry was a child. Following the outbreak of war in November 1914, Cherry enlisted on 5 March 1915 in Franklin, Tasmania with his father's permission. Cherry embarked for overseas service on 29 June, arriving at Gallipoli in early September. There he became 'D' Company's sergeant major on 13 September.

On 1 December, Cherry was wounded in the face and head by a bomb blast and was evacuated to Egypt and thereafter to London, where he was promoted to lieutenant. Cherry arrived with his unit in France on 21 March where he was involved in fighting in Pozieres. He was awarded the Military Cross for leading his men in capturing machine guns, then turning the guns upon German soldiers on 26 March 1917. Cherry went onto command 'C' company's advance in the Village of Lagnicourt, where he fought to take the village from German control under heavy artillery. Cherry and several other men were killed by a German shell. For his actions that day Cherry was awarded the Victoria Cross.

The weather on the Gallipoli peninsula could be cruel for soldiers camping in trenches and bunkers. Through summer months the heat was extreme and the flies at plague proportions. As autumn, then winter came the soldiers suffered with exposure and frost bite for a want of blankets to keep them warm. As with soldier garments, blankets in use soon became filthy, bloodied and full of lice and fleas, and thus their ability to warm and comfort the soldier was greatly diminished.

Blankets had other purposes too – they were used as an all- purpose cover, a shroud for the dead, and, by holding a blanket wide, or throwing it over incoming grenades, it would lessen the impact of flying shrapnel.

Tobacco Tin

1915

Tin

Collection, Australian War Memorial

Many soldiers in the battlefields smoked to relax or to calm their nerves. Sometimes they were given a drink or smoke before battle, and many times after, a 'smoke' was offered to the wounded and dying.

This tin is associated with the service of Gunner Maurice Charles Thompson, 2 Field Artillery Brigade, of Ascot Vale, Melbourne. Thompson was a keen amateur photographer. He enlisted 12 July 1915 and embarked for service on HMAT Nestor on 11 October 1915. After a period of training in Egypt he moved with his unit to France in May 1916. On 9 April 1918, Gunner Thompson was severely wounded in an early morning shell attack on his billet.

He died later the same day aged 25. Among the effects found on his body was a 'Welcome Nugget' tobacco tin containing 89 negatives. Taken with a Kodak Vest Pocket Autographic Camera, most of the photographs related to his time in Egypt and

Violin

c. 1914

Timber, wire strings

Collection, Australian War Memorial

This violin is covered with numerous engraved autographs. The side is engraved with a chronology of the many places its owner travelled to with the violin during World War One, including 'Gallipoli 25 April 1915', 'Egypt Jan-May 1916' and 'France June 1916 July 1918'.

This violin is associated with 2010 Corporal John McGregor MM, 4 Field Ambulance, AIF. McGregor enlisted in the Australian Army on 8 September 1914. He served at Gallipoli 1915, Egypt from January to May 1916, and France from June 1916 to July 1918. He was awarded the Military Medal for bravery in action on 26-27 September 1917. The citation for the award states 'This N.C.O.,

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ARTEFACTS

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

who was in charge of five squads of stretcher bearers on September 26th 1917 and 27th September 1917 evacuated wounded from the R.A.P. to the north of Polygon Wood, showed great courage and determination throughout.

The track along which the wounded were evacuated was constantly under heavy shellfire. When one of his bearers became a casualty, he took the vacant place in the squad, and then succeeded in keeping the line of the evacuation clear. His coolness and courage proved a great incentive to the bearers under his supervision, and aided very largely in the successful evacuation of the wounded.' He returned to Australia on 31 July 1918 and lived at various towns in New South Wales, before returning to his birthplace, Scotland.

Entertainment was a necessary and welcome diversion for soldiers and nurses during the campaign. Famously, when stationed in Egypt, many soldiers would gather at the 24 hour Empire Soldiers Club where they would gather with mates to eat, rest and listen to music. Portable instruments such as mouth organs made their way into soldier's packs or were sent to soldiers in Christmas 'billie' parcels. Instruments such as this violin travelled with soldiers, who were members of Battalion bands. Instruments such as this violin travelled with soldiers, who were members of Battalion bands.

Australian Pattern Periscope: Pope's Hill

1915

Steel

Collection, Australian War Memorial

Periscopes were used to enable soldiers to look over the parapet of a trench without being shot by the enemy. A Variety of types were used, and this example was one of the more common, being a simple rectangular tube which would have had two mirrors parallel to each other. This periscope was found at Pope's Hill on 24 February 1919 by members of the Australian Historical Mission.

This trench periscope is made from one large piece of metal folded to form a rectangular tube. Two small pieces of metal have been attached to close each end. A rectangular opening is cut at the bottom of one wider side of the tube, with another similar opening cut at the upper end on the opposite side. At each opening an angled mirror was placed (now missing) parallel with each other at 45degree angles. The periscope is rusted and has three bullet or shrapnel holes and a number of dents.

Blue Enamelled Water Bottle

c 1914-1915

Enamelled steel

Collection, Australian War Memorial

Water on the Gallipoli Peninsula was in short supply. Prior to the establishment of desalination units it had to be shipped in from Egypt and Lemnos. From its point of arrival on the beach it had to be carried to the men. This was heavy, tortuous and dangerous work, as water carriers found themselves under fire.

In this damaged Mk V1 blue enamelled water bottle there are four bullet or shrapnel holes; one large hole in the front, one in the side near the top of the water bottle and two on the back.

The owner of this bottle is unknown. It was collected by members of the Australian War Records Section (AWRS) or the Australian Historical Mission (AHM). A small party of AWRS staff worked on Gallipoli between December 1918 and March 1919 taking photographs and collecting items for the national collection. The AHM, led by Official Historian CEW Bean, visited Gallipoli from February to March 1919 to collect items for the nation, and to record the area for the official history of the war.

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ARTEFACTS

AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

Wooden Puzzle: Sapper F R Cluett,
1 Field Company Engineers, AIF 1915
Wood
Collection, Australian War Memorial

This simple puzzle (maker unknown) belonged to Sapper Frank Roper Cluett, a 21 year old blacksmith from Sydney, who enlisted in the AIF on 20 August 1914 and was assigned to 1 Field Company Engineers, with whom he was sent to Gallipoli.

Cluett received a gunshot wound to his back on 3 May 1915 while serving in Gallipoli. He was evacuated to 2 Australian General Hospital at Gezira in Egypt, where he was listed as dangerously ill at the end of August. In October he was assessed as 'still seriously ill', suffering from myelitis, an inflammation of the spinal cord. Cluett was returned to Australia on 20 October 1915 for further medical treatment at 4 Australian General Hospital at Randwick in Sydney and discharged from the army on 14 November 1916. Due to injuries sustained at the front, Cluett remained a long term patient. Frank Cluett died in 1940.

The puzzle was originally supplied to Cluett for occupational therapy, while he was hospitalised in Egypt.

Soldiers relived both tedium and battle with simple games and amusements, such as cards, tricks, two-up and simple board games. Where necessary they improvised in the creation of board games, scratching squares on a wood surface with nails or penknives. Spirits were raised with song by singing in the trenches, and also as a means to mock the enemy. On occasion the men would risk sniper fire to swim in the sea to rid themselves of lice. Famously, soldiers played a game of cricket on the beach as a diversionary ruse for the enemy Turk in preparation for the evacuation from the Peninsula in December 1915.

Barbed wire
1915
Steel, corroded
Private Collection

Barbed wire was laid all over the Gallipoli Peninsula. It was used as a means to fortify trenches and by laying it in front of the parapet to stop the offensive action of the enemy Turk leaping into the trench. It was also used by the Turks in laying sections along the beach and in the water to stop and injure soldiers in their advance.

This piece of barbed wire was collected on Artillery Road, the unpaved walkway that leads to the second Ridge and beyond to Lone Pine. Artillery Road was widened by soldiers in preparation for the August 1915 offensive. Dugouts and rest positions lined the walkway to give protection to the Australian field Artillery stationed there.

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COMMUNITY STORIES

CAPTIONS

ANZAC Commemorative Medallion for service on the Gallipoli Peninsula

This medallion was awarded to surviving members of the Australian forces who served on the Gallipoli Peninsula - or those who were in direct support of the operations from close off shore - between the dates, 25 April 1915 until the final evacuation on 8 January 1916.

The medallion depicts Simpson (Jack Simpson Kirkpatrick) and his donkey carrying a wounded soldier to safety. Simpson rescued over 300 men in 24 days. It is bordered on the lower half by a laurel wreath above the word ANZAC.

The reverse shows a map in relief of Australia and New Zealand superimposed by the Southern Cross. New Zealand fern leaves border the lower half. The name and initials of the recipient is engraved on the reverse.

The All Australian Memorial. A Historical Record of National Effort during The Great War, Australia's Roll of Honour, History, Heroes and Helpers (NSW edition)

The All Australian Memorial was produced as a gilt-decorated, purple cloth bound, illustrated memorial book. Publications were personalised with gelatin silver portrait photographs of the serviceman inside the front cover. This volume includes a portrait of William Bishop.

The book includes the regimental register, a lexicographical roll of NSW soldiers who died on service as officially compiled at embarkation. Also included are essays, double-tone illustrations from original photographs, drawings, maps and portraits, a large double-image folding panoramic frontispiece and single-page plates as well as a dedication poem to the King along with his portrait.

Lance Corporal John (Jack) Boag

John Boag was born in Cooma NSW in 1888. He enlisted on 23 February 1916 aged 27 years 11 months.

He was appointed to the 53 Reinforced Battalion, Australian Infantry Force Depot Camp at Bathurst, which was initially raised as part of the expansion of the all-volunteer First Australian Imperial Force. Boag embarked from Sydney 23 June 1916 on the SS Barambah, disembarking two months later at Plymouth.

Boag was promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal in 1917. In September 1918 he was wounded in action with gunshot wounds to the neck, arm and legs and sent to the Bristol General Hospital in England. Boag was declared an invalid and discharged from the army, arriving back in Australia 10 June 1919.

Private Albert Richard John Maher

Albert Richard John Maher was born in 1899, Murrurundi NSW. He enlisted 6 June 1916 aged 19 years 3 months at Victoria Barracks in NSW. He was appointed to the 18 Infantry Battalion, 14 to 17 Reinforcements, between August and October 1916.

Maher's enlistment documentation identifies him as, 5'7" (170 cm), fresh complexion, brown eyes and light brown hair. His 'Trade or Calling' was listed as a Telegraph Operator.

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COMMUNITY STORIES

CAPTIONS

Private Henry James Locke

Henry James Locke was a 19 years old Aboriginal man from Canowindra in Central-western NSW. On 1 September 1914 he enlisted in the Australian Infantry Force and assigned to the 1st Light Horse, C Squadron.

Locke enlisted at Rosebery Park, close to his birthplace in Waterloo, and his next of kin was listed as his father, James John Locke care of the St Marys' General Post Office. He sailed from Sydney for Egypt on 20 October 1914 and served at the Gallipoli Peninsula from 8 May to 10 November 1915.

Following the Gallipoli campaign Locke was posted to Egypt and Palestine, serving with the Western Frontier Force from January 1916 to November 1918. In late April 1917 he joined the 3rd ANZAC Battalion, Imperial Camel Corps and on its disbandment in 1918 became a member of the 15th and then the 11th Light Horse Regiments.

Locke was promoted to Lance Corporal and made Acting Corporal in August 1917 but at his own request reverted to trooper in September.

Private Henry Buchanan

Private Buchanan wrote this letter to Mrs Scoones, mother of George Scoones, who was hit by enemy fire, later dying of his injuries. When seeking medical help, Buchanan explains, "When the Turks saw me carrying a wounded man they never attempted to interfere."

Henry Buchanan originally served alongside George Scoones as privates in the 9th Infantry Battalion at Gallipoli, where they were both engaged as stretcher-bearers. Following the Gallipoli campaign, he was posted to France where he served in the 49th Battalion and where he was promoted to sergeant. Buchanan was awarded the Military Medal, for gallantry and devotion to duty when under fire during the battle at Moquet Farm. He also earned an additional Bar, issued as a secondary award for further gallantry in the field at Pozières.

James Marshall Ross

James Marshall Ross enlisted in September 1915 aged 18. He was a driver in the Divisional Ammunition Column, 2nd Division AIF. Each Division had an Ammunition Column with the responsibility of keeping a steady supply of ammunition from the storage depots known as the 'third line' to the Front, called the 'first line'.

Both horse and motor forms of transport were engaged for the task. Ross initially drove horse carts to transport the munitions to the front line, which was particularly risky as horses were vulnerable to all forms of artillery. He later drove trucks, which had been fitted out to tow field guns.

Like so many after the war he rarely spoke about the conflict.

Identity Disc (Dog Tag)

In WW1 Australian soldiers were issued with a pressed tin disc and given orders that this was to be worn around the neck. The discs were stamped with the soldier's name, service or regimental number, religion, and unit.

During the First World War the tin disc was replaced by two fibreboard discs, one octagonal and the other round. The octagonal disc was typically coloured green and was to remain with the body while the circular disc, sometimes coloured red, remained with the soldier's belongings. The green disc became associated with the notion of grass because it was to remain with the body, whereas the red disc with that of the dead soldiers blood and was to be taken in place of the body with his belongings.

HOME / FRONT

COMMUNITY STORIES

LIST OF ARTEFACTS

Cufflinks

Gift of Ruby May Price to Fred Messer on the eve of his embarking for the Middle East

c. 1914

Gold

Ladies Hand Fan

Gift of Fred Messer sent to his sister Elsie from Cairo, Egypt

1915

Bone

Handkerchief

Gift of Fred Messer to his sister Elsie from Cairo, Egypt

1915

Crocheted silk

Handkerchief

Gift of Fred Messer sent to his sister Clarice from Cairo, Egypt

1915

Silk

Fred Messer

Service no. 275

4th Infantry Battalion

embarked HMAT Euripides A14, 1914

AIF Penrith

1915

Photograph by Eden Studios, Sydney

Fred Messer

Service no. 275

4th Infantry Battalion

embarked HMAT Euripides A14, 1914

AIF Penrith

1915

Photograph

Identity Disc (Dog Tag)

Fred Messer

1914

Pressed metal, ribbon

Memorial Plaque (Dead Man's Penny)

Fred Messer

15 December 1921

Bronze

Messer Family at Telopea, the family Home

Harry Messer's Wedding Day

1912

Telopea

172-190 Jamison Rd, South Penrith

Messer Family Portrait (less Harry)

1945

Fred Messer

1914

Original Grave Marker for Fred Messer

Chatby War Memorial Cemetery, Egypt

1921

Fred Messer

Service no. 275

4th Battalion

AIF Penrith

Believed to be the photo used as the Photo of Honour at the Penrith Memoriam Service

1915

Funeral Memorial Plaque

Fred Messer

1915

Metal

Fred Messer

Mena camp, Cairo

1915

This photo postcard shows Fred Messer (third from right - foot on knee) while in the Mena Training Camp near Cairo, Egypt, before being sent on the Gallipoli campaign.

Only four items of Fred Messer's property were returned to Australia, his Identity Disc (dog tag) and pocketknife (both visible in the photo) along with his bible and a medal.

MAIN GALLERY

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COMMUNITY STORIES

LIST OF ARTEFACTS

Reverse side of card reads: "x Fred Messer - son of Guard Messer - one of your friends. X my mates."

Postcard

Sent from Egypt by Fred Messer to his mother
1915

Card reads:

My Dearest Mother, I have just received these. I did not expect them till next week so I am rushing off to try & catch this mail with them & I would like you to give them out to the ones as they are marked...

Fred is referring to the Mena Camp postcard with his 'comrades' marked with an 'X'. It could be that one of these men is Fred's friend and fellow Penrith resident Private Jack Syme, who also died of wounds received during the Gallipoli campaign.

Fred writing to his brother Harry 5 May 1915:

"I am very sorry to tell you that I have lost my dear old comrade, Jack Syme. He was shot down by my side at 11 pm, on Monday, 3rd May."

Postcards

Gift of Fred Messer to his sister Beatrice
from Cairo, Egypt
1915

Postcards

Gift of Fred Messer to his sister Elsie
from Cairo, Egypt
1915

'Penrith Boy Killed'

Nepean Times
29 May 1915, p3
Penrith, NSW

Courtesy Penrith City Library.

Private George Scoones and Private Henry Buchanan

Letter to Mrs Scoones

Private Henry Buchanan writing of Private George Scoones' death

Gaba Tepe, Gallipoli
July 1915

Private Henry Buchanan

(promoted to Corporal)

Service No. 642

49th Infantry Battalion

c. 1915

Studio photo

All items courtesy Lesley Westcott.

Lance Corporal John (Jack) Boag and Private Albert Richard John Maher

Lance Corporal John (Jack) Boag

Service No. 2033

AIF Depot Camp, Bathurst

c. 1916

Lance Corporal John (Jack) Boag (seated)

(enlisted as Private)

Service No. 2033

54th Infantry Battalion

embarked on HMAT Barambah A37, 1916

Private Albert Richard John Maher

(holding the flag)

Service no. 5836

18th Infantry Battalion

embarked HMAT Ceramic A40, 1916

c. 1916

All items courtesy William Thomas Blomfield

Lieutenant Quartermaster Francis Vere Thompson

MAIN GALLERY

HOME / FRONT

COMMUNITY STORIES

LIST OF ARTEFACTS

Letter sent by Hilda (Lil) to her mother in Sydney
posted from Melbourne
1914

Two weeks after Francis Thompson was sent to Melbourne, Hilda travelled there on the SS Katoomba - a steamship commissioned to do the passenger run around Australia and later, in 1918, requisitioned by the British government. Hilda (née Dale) and Francis Thompson were married the day before he departed from Port Melbourne for the Middle East.

Hilda concluded her letter: God grant that they will be spared to come back to us again when they have done their duty.

All items courtesy Don Carter.

Letter sent from Gallipoli by Francis Thompson to his wife Hilda
13th Infantry Battalion
1915

Letter reads:
It must have hit me like this love
path of bullet

I was leaning down you see love, places
marked 'x' are where the bullet hit me.

Francis and Hilda Thompson
Wedding Day Portrait
Melbourne
1914

13th Infantry Battalion at Gallipoli
Lieutenant Quartermaster Francis Thompson
Embarked HMAT Ulysses A38, 1914
1915

Lieutenant Quartermaster Francis Thompson
13th Infantry Battalion
Quarter Master and Signal Officer
ANZAC day march, Sydney
c. 1984

James Marshall Ross

James Marshall Ross
Service No. 9030
Driver 2nd Divisional Ammunition Column
HMAT Port MacQuarie A39, 1914
AIF Port Macquarie, Melbourne
c. 1915
J. S Wiley Photographers, Brisbane

Thuin: La Reine des Villegiatures
postcard from James Marshall Ross to his mother
c. 1916

Postcards from France
c. 1916

Views of Ypres
postcard booklet
c. 1916

All items courtesy Karen King
Corporal Ewan (Ewie) Rose

Belgium Croix-de-guerre Certificate
Ewan (Ewie) Rose
19 July 1918
Awarded for valour displayed during fighting at Polygon
Wood in September, 1917 and again at Broodseinde Ridge
in October, 1917
certificate

Corporal Ewan (Ewie) Rose
(enlisted as Private)
Service No. 3132
14th Infantry Battalion
Light Trench Mortar Battery
embarked on HMAT Warilda A69, c. 1915
studio photo

Ewan (Ewie) Rose
Llandilo
c. 1940

All items courtesy Lynette Forde and the St Marys & District
Historical Society.

HOME / FRONT

COMMUNITY STORIES

LIST OF ARTEFACTS

Corporal William Bishop

The All Australian Memorial.

A Historical Record of National Effort during The Great War,
Australia's Roll of Honour, History, Heroes and Helpers.
(NSW edition)

British-Australasian Publishing Service
Melbourne, Australia

foreword by George Foster Pearce

introductory narrative by E. Ashmead-Bartlett

All items courtesy Graham and Marj Elphick

ANZAC Commemorative Medallion

Commemoration medal in presentation box sent to the
family of William Bishop for Service on the Gallipoli
Peninsula

Designed by Raymond Ewers

Issued 1967

Bronze

Commemoration Letter

William Bishop

1967

Corporal William Bishop and Elsie on their Wedding Day
(enlisted as Private)

Service no. 1518

4th Infantry Battalion 3rd Rifles

embarked on HMAT Seang Choon A49, 1914

Dearest compliments, from Jeff and the lads of 24 hut

William Bishop

c.1915

Female Relatives Badge

Issued by Department of Defence to Women of Australia for
Duty Done

1917

AMFA Grantala

Australian Hospital Ship

Group Portrait of the Sick Bay Staff

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia

August 1914

All the nurses were selected from the Royal Prince Alfred
Hospital to ensure they were a cohesive group.

Penrith Nurses:

Front Row: Seated Second, Fourth and Sixth from the left:
Sister Stella Lillian Colless, Sister Rachel Clouston and
Sister Constance Neale

Courtesy Australian War Memorial

Roll of Honor – Messer

In loving memory of my dear brother, FRED, who was killed
in action at Gallipoli on May 18 1915.

Your death has made us sad, dear Fred,

Proud though was your fall;

You died an Australian soldier –

'Tis the greatest death of all;

Deep in the memory still I treasure.

Inserted by his loving sister Elsie

Nepean Times, Saturday 19 May 1917, p. 3.

Female Relatives Badge

Issued by Department of Defence to Women of Australia for
Duty Done

The Female Relatives Badge was issued to the nearest
female relative of those who left Australia for active service
abroad. A bar was suspended below the badge to indicate
additional relatives involved in the war effort. This badge
was issued to his wife Mrs Elsie Bishop.

Belgium Croix-de-guerre

The Belgian Croix de Guerre formally recognised acts of
heroism while on Belgian soil by individuals of any of the
Allied forces during the First World War. Comprising a
bronze cross the medal featured crossed swords and a
disc bearing a rampant lion, and suspended from a bronze
crown. The reverse of the medal bore the letter 'A' denoting
King Albert I.

MAIN GALLERY

HOME / FRONT

COMMUNITY STORIES

LIST OF ARTEFACTS

Memorial Plaque (Dead Man's Penny)

The Memorial Plaque shows Britannia and a lion on the front and bears the inscription 'He died for freedom and honour'. The full name of the dead soldier is engraved on the right hand side of the plaque. No rank, unit or decorations are shown, befitting the equality of the sacrifice made by all casualties. The medallion earned the nickname 'Dead Man's Penny'.

Video List

1. Interview with artist Catherine O'Donnell to accompany Home / Front.
2. Interview with artist Wendy Sharpe to accompany Serving Humanity.
3. Interview with artist Ken Done to accompany Attack: Japanese Midget Submarines in the Harbour.

HOME / FRONT

COMMUNITY STORIES

LIST OF ARTEFACTS

Bullet, Shrapnel, Stone

Gallipoli, keepsakes
1986

Ruby May Price

aged 16
later to become Fred's fiancée
1910
Sepia photograph on card (reproduction)

Fred Messer's Medals**1914-15 Star**

bronze

WW1 Medals

(replica set)
1914-15 Star

Adelaide Maud Kellett

Assistant Matron at Sydney Hospital
1910

Courtesy Arthur Street and Penrith City Library

Arthur Tolhurst

Service No. 3895
30th Infantry Battalion
embarked on HMAT Anchises A68, 1916
Date: Unknown
Photograph

Courtesy Penrith City Library

Constance Neale (far right)

Nurse with the Australian Army Nursing Service
31 July 1915
Photograph

Courtesy Neale family and Penrith City Library

Donald and Mary Leitch

Wedding portrait. Married at Watten, Caithness, Scotland 1915, returned to Australia 1920
Service No. 2687
19th Infantry Battalion
embarked on HMAT Euripides A14, 1915
1915
Photograph

Courtesy Leitch family and Penrith City Library

Junction of High & Evan Street

Looking west. Taken from the top of the St Stephen the Martyr Anglican Church's tower. The open ground would later become the site of the Penrith Fire Station
c. 1906
Photograph

Courtesy Penrith City Library

Penrith Nurses

Include: Stella Colless, (second left, front row), Rachel Clouston (fourth left, front row) & Constance Neale (sixth left, front row)
c. 1916
Photograph

Courtesy Australian War Memorial

Penrith Red Cross Members

Wool Spinning for the Australian Forces
c. 1915
Photograph

Courtesy Len Hutchison and Penrith City Library

Private Stanley George Besley

Service No. 66091
4th Infantry Battalion
embarked HMAT Bakara A41, 1918
Photograph

Courtesy Besley family and Penrith City Library

Soldiers Welcome Home

Kingswood families welcome home returned soldiers after World War I
Arthur Tolhurst fifth from left
September 1918
Photograph

Courtesy Len Hutchison and Penrith City Library

Stanley Holliday and Constance Neale

Married in St Stephen the Martyr Church Penrith
3 April 1917
Photograph

Courtesy Neale family and Penrith City Library

Soldiers and Red Cross Volunteers

Drill Hall, Henry Street Penrith
c. 1918
Photograph

Courtesy Penrith City Library

Soldiers Send-Off by Kingswood Families

c. 1915
Photograph

Courtesy Penrith City Library

HOME / FRONT

COMMUNITY STORIES

LIST OF ARTEFACTS

Sydney and Sarah Evans

Sydney served in the 6th Light Horse
embarked on HMAT Pera A4, 1916
28 December 1915
photograph

Courtesy Penrith City Council

Copy of Defence Department Recruitment Poster

Issued by Australian Geographic
Designed by H. M. Burton
c. 2005 (original 1915)
poster

Private Henry James Locke

Service No. 532
3rd Infantry Battalion
1st Light Horse
11th Australian Light Trench Mortar
Battery
photograph

Image courtesy Philippa Scarlett

Group portrait of officers

Aerodrome Camp
Heliopolis, Cairo, Egypt
1 April 1915
Lt Francis Vere Thompson QM, is seated
Middle Row: fourth from the left.
photograph

Courtesy of Australian War Memorial

Cufflinks

In 1914 Fred Messer Fiancée Ruby May
Price gave him a pair of gold cufflinks on
the eve of his departure for the Middle
East

1914–1918 Memorial Scroll

Original issued 1922
The Memorial Scroll bears the Royal
Coat of Arms and was presented to the
next of kin of those soldiers, sailors,
and nurses who died while serving in
the Australian Imperial Force or Royal
Australian Navy.

'Australia at War'

Nepean Times
8 August, 1914 Penrith, NSW

On loan from Penrith City Library

Letter sent from Gallipoli by Francis Thompson to his wife Hilda 13th Infantry Battalion 1915

Letter reads:

*It must have hit me like this love
path of bullet*

*I was leaning down you see love,
places
marked 'x' are were [sic] the bullet hit
me.*

After the First Day

SEEKING HUMANITY: Portraits and Stories of Australia's Asylum Seekers and Refugees

WENDY SHARPE

SEEKING HUMANITY

Seeking Humanity is presented by the Asylum Seekers Centre. The exhibition portrays the stories of Australia's asylum seekers and refugees through a series of vivid portraits. Archibald Prize winning artist, Wendy Sharpe, sat with 39 refugees and asylum seekers, capturing their likenesses to express their humanity as well as their personal stories in a bid to highlight our common humanity.

While a politically charged topic, the impetus for the exhibition is far from political. The major inspiration for Sharpe and the Asylum Seekers Centre was to put a human face to those who have fled situations of great danger in their home country in search of safety and freedom in Australia.

"This is not about politics. I want to show our common humanity and that they are people like us, with hopes and dreams just like ours. Through these portraits I want to reach out to as many people as possible, especially those who may be confused by the many myths about the issue or feel uncomfortable with what is currently happening," Wendy Sharpe

ARTIST STATEMENT

"Originally, I imagined these portraits in black and white with touches of colour, but when my first model arrived, smiling in gorgeous yellow and red, I realised they had to be in full colour! They were all wearing clothes of their own choice and we worked together to choose a pose that they felt expressed who they are.

All are drawn in chalk pastel. I avoided unusual compositions, any background or symbols so as not to distract from direct engagement with the person in the portrait."

Wendy Sharpe, 2014.



Image: Wendy Sharpe in her studio.

ASYLUM SEEKERS CENTRE

Asylum seekers are welcomed and given the chance to heal in safety and freedom while they rebuild their lives as worthy members of our community.

The Asylum Seekers Centre provides practical and personal support for asylum seekers living in the community.

Our services include accommodation, financial support, health care, legal advice, employment assistance, education, food and social support.

We are a not-for-profit organisation and rely on grants, donations and volunteers to undertake our work.

Our clients come from over 74 countries in search of safety, protection and freedom.

ANCHER HOUSE

SEEKING HUMANITY: Portraits and Stories of Australia's Asylum Seekers and Refugees

WENDY SHARPE

Wendy Sharpe

Jojo: The Gift of Revelation

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"My brother made this dress for me; he wanted me to wear something nice. This is the first time I've worn it here - it's too cold! I'm a pastor. I like preaching and singing and I love children. God blessed me with the gift of revelation. Sometimes before something happens I see a picture of it. It helps me to warn others and if I pray about it really hard most times it doesn't come to pass or is averted. I hope later to preach and help people in the community because that is what I'm doing at home."

Jojo and her son Holzay left their family behind for fear of persecution. Although they would like to be able to share their full story publicly, they are unable to do so until their applications for protection have been processed.

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre

Wendy Sharpe

Holzay: The Pilot

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"I have always wanted to be a pilot. As soon as I got to Australia I applied online to be a navy pilot but a woman called and said you need to be an Australian citizen first. I play football, soccer. I'm very good at soccer. And I know how to run. I love Usain Bolt. I'd like to run with him once - even if he passes me. Like now, my plans are to get into the navy, get married and buy a Lamborghini. Like Usain Bolt: a fast man who drives a fast car. Wendy asked me what I would like to have on my t-shirt and I asked for a 'S' for Superman."

Jojo and her son Holzay left their family behind for fear of persecution. Although they would like to be able to share their full story publicly, they are unable to do so until their applications for protection have been processed.

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre



Image: Wendy Sharpe, *Jojo: The Gift of Revelation*, 2014, oil pastel on paper

SEEKING HUMANITY: Portraits and Stories of Australia's Asylum Seekers and Refugees

WENDY SHARPE

Wendy Sharpe

Shanthini and Raj: A New Experience

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"We have only been here for a short time. We are studying English classes and now we try to get some jobs, any type of jobs. At home, my wife worked in insurance and I was a nurse. I have a lot of experience but I need to do a nursing course here and it is very costly. Australian people are very helpful, very very helpful. It's very different to our country. Especially at our children's school: after two or three days at school, both children got Teacher Awards. The next month the older son got another Teacher's Award and after three months a Principal's Award! Wendy spoke with us so it was easy to sit still for the portrait. It was a nice experience, a new experience for our life."

Shanthini and Raj left their country due to a fear of persecution. They came to Australia seeking to live and raise their children in a safe environment. Although Shanthini and Raj would like to be able to share their full story publicly, they are unable to do so until their applications for protection have been processed.

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre

Wendy Sharpe

Ukaegbe: In Your Heart

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"I want to get my portrait done so in the future I can look back to when I was an asylum seeker and remember this time. I believe faith or religion is in your heart; it is a personal thing. Australian people are kind, calm and peaceful with respect for human beings and for your feelings. They are honest. They tell you the truth. They don't only talk but help in practical ways. This makes you feel real. In the future I would like to study so I can continue to teach children. If I cannot teach I would like to be a nurse. My mother is a nurse; she is always merciful and compassionate."

Ukaegbe had to leave her home country due to a fear of persecution. She left her family behind to seek safety in Australia. Although Ukaegbe would like to be able to share her full story publicly, she is unable to do so until her application for protection has been processed.

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre

SEEKING HUMANITY: Portraits and Stories of Australia's Asylum Seekers and Refugees

WENDY SHARPE

Wendy Sharpe

Antoinette: New Beginnings

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"The first thing that came to mind when I was invited for this portrait was: am I going to be naked? That was a bit of a worry. I am excited to see what I look like; the real me. I enjoy music: listening, singing, dancing. I met my husband at a friend's party - dancing of course! He is addicted to water and I am learning to swim. The first time I went in the ocean I was a bit afraid but because I was in his arms I could feel safe. I think our wedding was the most exciting moment in my life. I had a chance to bring my family here for the first time; my son, my sister and my brother were with me. I am a church person because of the past, the terrible moments I had. I survived not because I was strong but because God was with me, protected me. Is part of me."

Antoinette fled Rwanda to escape violence and political persecution. She believed she had lost everything, her parents, siblings, husband and her sons. After receiving protection, she told her story and it was placed on youtube. Within days a lawyer called her from France to say her boys had also escaped. Antoinette is now an Australian citizen and has recently re-married.

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre

Wendy Sharpe

Elizabeth: Dignity

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"I am human, a woman and a mother. It is a gift, a miracle to be able to create and to nurture a new life with love, with care and with respect. I am a fighter too. But instead of a gun my weapon is dignity, a mother's dignity to bring up her child in safety. Each of us is born and exists on this planet for a different reason - we have a destiny. After so many generations of war and death, I believe that my destiny is to fight to keep my family and future generations alive. I need to protect my son. I won't allow him to become another victim of political games. I hope that my child will learn from the good example we found in Australia because Australia helped us. I hope that he will love life and that his weapon will be wisdom. If people who have lost their humanity could only remember who they are, and the gift of life they have received, I do believe they can change."

Elizabeth fled to Australia with her son due to a fear of persecution. Although Elizabeth would like to be able to share her full story publicly, she is unable to do so until their applications for protection have been processed.

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre

SEEKING HUMANITY: Portraits and Stories of Australia's Asylum Seekers and Refugees

WENDY SHARPE

Wendy Sharpe

Pauline Nguyen: Growth

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"My core values are joy, love, growth, gratitude and courage. Growth is important in everything: in friendship, in business, in mindset. I'm addicted to learning. When you get on a boat and escape a country, or do whatever you can to survive, that's growth in itself. Coming here today to sit for Wendy is very much a case of that, it will grow awareness. It's important not to forget where I came from and what it took to get here. With many asylum seekers you can see it in their eyes without having to relive or retell. However, I no longer have the past weighing me down; it's not my story anymore. I have worked since I was seven years old. I don't believe in the platitude of finding a 'life/work balance' but in living fully and growing each day."

Pauline Nguyen is co-owner of Red Lantern, the acclaimed modern Vietnamese restaurants in Sydney. She is also an award winning author, business mentor, international speaker and mother. When Saigon fell to communist rule in 1975, Pauline's father realised that he had no choice but to escape Vietnam. And the only way that he could do this was to build a boat and smuggle his family out to sea. Pauline was three at the time and her brother was two. So in October 1977, armed with only a rudimentary map and a compass, her father steered a tiny vessel out into the South China Sea. The family spent a very difficult year in a refugee camp in Thailand before finally settling in Australia.

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre

Wendy Sharpe

Susan Varga

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"I was born in Hungary in 1943. Everyone said my mother was mad to have me in the middle of WWII, with Hitler breathing down our necks. On the night I was born my father was sent to a labour camp for Jews. We only saw him one more time. He died in the camp."

At six months I was in hiding with my mother in a remote village with no running water. My mother's milk dried up from fear and anxiety. I became very ill: no doctor, no drugs. My three year-old sister was separated from us, living with Christian relatives.

After the War, Mum met my step-father. He had lost his two little boys, his wife, and most of his extended family in the Holocaust. We left Hungary just as the Communists took over.

Australia was a huge shock. In 1948 it was isolated and insular but people were friendly and welcoming. I invented my own language until I picked up English. We kids tried to fit in quickly. The parents were more traumatised but soon hard work and the excitement of starting a new life took over. We were lucky to arrive in a simpler Australia. But even then 'bloody reffos' was the common term used by many.

My heart goes out to the refugees of today. I have tried to help as much as I can, first with helping to set up Rural Australians for Refugees, then through the Asylum Seeker Centre, so they can establish a new life."

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre

ANCHER HOUSE

SEEKING HUMANITY: Portraits and Stories of Australia's Asylum Seekers and Refugees

WENDY SHARPE

Wendy Sharpe

Riz: Our Human Face

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"Politics has taken away our human face. In our country-Australia - people start to believe what they see through the media: they see asylum seekers and refugees as just numbers. Wendy is drawing real people and giving us the opportunity to talk about our experiences. Many people are frightened so they hide their identity and where they come from to avoid a debate. I don't know why but from day one I've never done that. Even if at first they are shocked to hear that I came by boat from Afghanistan, once people listen to my story they understand and don't feel threatened. To my good luck I have met only supportive and generous people who have helped and encouraged me through every step. Having my portrait drawn by Wendy was amazing, although she did say she hadn't quite done justice to my cheeky smile."

An ethnic Hazara, Riz was 18 years old when he came to Australia by boat. Riz's family suffered and was targeted because of his brothers' involvement in politics. His elder brother was kidnapped and imprisoned for seven years. Two other brothers were already in exile when his father decided that it was not safe for Riz to remain in Afghanistan. In Australia, Riz spent nine months in a detention centre before being accepted as a refugee and released. Riz now runs his own successful printing and design business that employs five people.

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre

Wendy Sharpe

Murray: Giving Back

2014

Oil pastel on paper

"I am studying to be a social worker and I have been working with people in my community, the majority from refugee backgrounds. I develop programs for my community. We started with sport; sport has a language everyone can understand. Particularly soccer, it brings so many people together – you can communicate, you can build friendships through that. The same with music. I have also been working with my community to raise money for Médecins Sans Frontières as there is an Ebola outbreak in my country. When I graduate I want to work part-time while studying for a post-graduate law degree in human rights."

Born in Sierra Leone, Murray was forced to flee during the civil war. He sought asylum in Australia and finally settled in Bankstown. Now a student at the University of Sydney, Murray also runs the Sierra Leone Youth Group, which holds intercultural events and awards nights in Sydney's south west. To date, his role as a Youth Ambassador has spurred numerous positive changes in community building. Murray completed an internship at the Asylum Seeker Centre and, the day before this interview, received a grant from Bankstown Council to take part in leadership training.

Courtesy the artist and the Asylum Seekers Centre

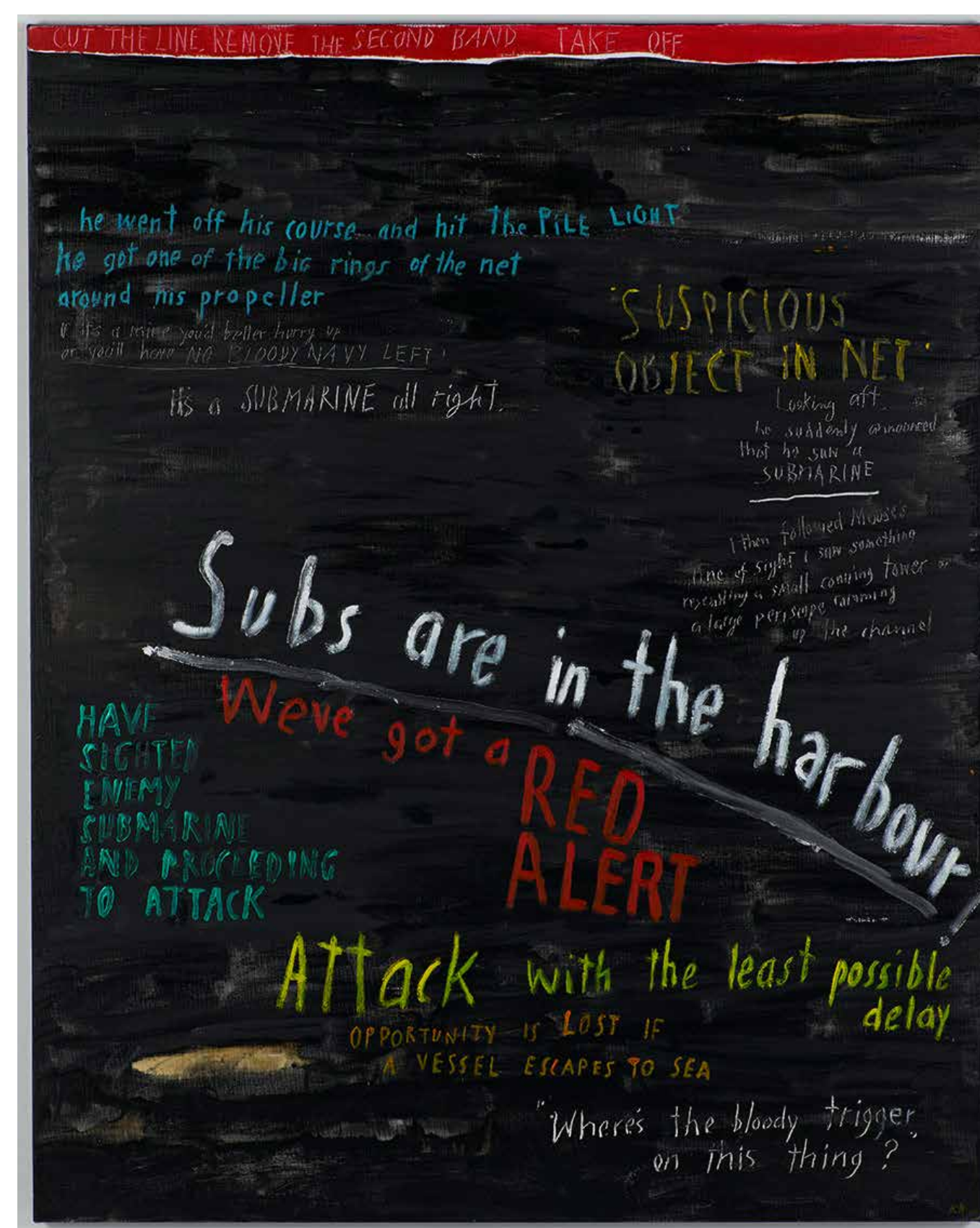
ATTACK: Japanese Midget Submarines in Sydney Harbour

KEN DONE

Over seventy years ago, Sydney, the birthplace of modern Australia came under foreign attack for the first and only time.

On the night of 31 May 1942 three Japanese midget submarines entered the waters of Sydney Harbour – the surprise attack resulted in chaos and panic in the nation's largest and oldest city and left an indelible mark on Australian identity and the course of our history. To mark the 70th anniversary of this event Mosman Art Gallery commissioned local artist Ken Done to interpret and respond to this remarkable story.

More than any other artist, Ken Done's work is synonymous with Sydney Harbour. Done and his art are also well known and respected in Japan. In commissioning him for this project we have aimed to bring the more critical aspects of his artistic practice into the public gaze. Gone are the bright pastels of seascape and the frivolity of daily Harbour life (that the public identifies Done so closely with) to be replaced with a new found energy charged through Harbour nightscapes, etched texts and the funereal.



Above: *Red alert*, 2011, oil and acrylic on canvas, 152 x 122cm

Left: *The funeral*, 2011, oil and acrylic on canvas, 152 x 122cm

ATTACK: Japanese midget submarines in Sydney Harbour is a compelling and sensitive exhibition that deals with empire, self-sacrifice, death, destruction and honour. This is a local story for the Mosman community, but one that has broader national and international significance. Mosman Art Gallery is proud of the leading role it has taken in the development of this exhibition.

John Cheeseman
Director
Mosman Art Gallery

ATTACK: Japanese Midget Submarines in the Harbour is a travelling exhibition from Mosman Art Gallery.

LOUNGE ROOM

ATTACK: Japanese Midget Submarines in Sydney Harbour

LIST OF WORKS

Ken Done
Samurai at the net
2011
Collage and acrylic on paper

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Fleet in the harbor
2011
Acrylic and oil crayon on paper

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
First Sighting
2011
Acrylic and oil crayon on paper

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Attack
2011
Acrylic and oil crayon on paper

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Man in a midget Submarine
2011
Acrylic and oil crayon on paper

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Crew and midget subs
2011
Acrylic and oil crayon on paper

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
War over harbour
2011
Digital print on paper

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Periscope II
2011
Acrylic and oil crayon on paper

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
The plan
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Farewell
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Journey
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Sure to die
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Our mother
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
No cause for alarm
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
No entry
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

LOUNGE ROOM

ATTACK: Japanese Midget Submarines in Sydney Harbour

LIST OF WORKS



Ken Done
Waiting to attack
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Caught in the net
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Red alert
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
The attack I
2011
Oil, acrylic and oil crayon on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
The attack II
2011
Oil, acrylic and oil crayon on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Drowning
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
Roll of honour
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Ken Done
The funeral
2011
Oil and acrylic on canvas

Courtesy Mosman Art Gallery

Above: *Waiting to Attack*, 2011, oil and acrylic on canvas, 152 x 122cm

LOUNGE ROOM

GENERATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE - SERVING COUNTRY

BELINDA MASON

The project was conceived and realised in response to NAIDOC Week 2014 celebration theme, *Serving Country*. Sydney photographer, Belinda Mason was contracted by the University of Western Sydney's Elders on Campus to photograph a series of portraits of twenty Aboriginal Servicemen and women.

First Peoples have a long and distinguished place in Australia's military history - from our fighters in the Frontier Wars to those who have served in modern military conflicts and engagements across the globe.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have fought in every major conflict - from the Boer War in the late 19th century to recent tours in Afghanistan. At least 500 Aboriginal people served in World War I; an estimated 3000 Aboriginal people served in World War II. From WWI to the Vietnam War, Aboriginal people were not asked to state their background. To serve in WWI, a person had to be no more than one quarter Aboriginal to enlist. Men got around this by stating they were Polynesian, Maori or even Indian.



Aboriginal men and women were often treated as equals in the armed forces, only to be treated as second-class citizens when they came home. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander veterans of past engagements have shared stories of reuniting with white comrades at home, only to be prevented by law and convention from sharing a beer with their mates at the local pub or RSL.

In acknowledging the service role of Aboriginal veterans and military personnel this past century, we become part of the seismic shift that is occurring in Australian society as we reconcile with our past, and make a better future.

ARTIST STATEMENT - BELINDA MASON

This project has been an honour to be part of, and a highlight of my career. To both photograph and listen to the stories of these Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Veterans who served and are serving our country was a privilege. Looking into the eyes of these veterans who relayed their stories to me, with humility and dignity, without glorification, was an extraordinary experience that I will never forget.

'Serving Country' would not exist without the guidance and cultural knowledge of all the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have contributed to it.

I would like to thank all the participants of the project, and the University of Western Sydney Office of Aboriginal Employment and Engagement, the University of Sydney Elders on Campus, the Babana Aboriginal Men's Group, the Redfern Community Centre, City of Sydney, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Veterans and Services Association, The Australian War Memorial and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Belinda Mason is a Sydney based photographer.

Left: *David Williams, 2014, photograph on brushed aluminium, 60cm x 40cm*

GENERATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE - SERVING COUNTRY

LIST OF WORKS

Belinda Mason
Trevor Wilson
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Colin Watego
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
**Sterling (Sonny) Joseph
Minniecon**
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Vic Simon
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Mial Bingarape
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
George Bostock
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Roy 'Zeke' Mundie
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Stephen Dodd
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
John Kinsela
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Rob Bryant
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
David Williams
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Cliff Daylight
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Villington Lue
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Beimop Tapim
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Pamela Tapim
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Lateika Smith
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
**Sheryl Cimera (nee
Challinger)**
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Bertram Slape
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
Harry Allie
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

Belinda Mason
**Professor Lisa Jackson
Pulver**
Photograph on brushed
aluminium
60cm x 40cm
2014
Courtesy the artist and UWS

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Front Cover Image: Catherine O'Donnell, *The Cook's Dugout*, (detail) 2015, charcoal on paper.

Right: Catherine O'Donnell, *Dugout at 1st Division headquarters*, (detail) 2015, charcoal on paper.

References:

Carlyon, L. 2014, *Gallipoli*, Pan McMillan
Clark, M. 2005, *Gallipoli*, Pan McMillan
Barwick, A. 2013, *In Great Spirits*, Harper Collins

Home/Front: 100 Year Commemoration of the Gallipoli Campaign

Curator: Dr Lee-Anne Hall

Penrith Community Stories

Curator: Dr Shirley Daborn

Catalogue Essay: William Sellars

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