

Introduction

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In November of 2014, Australians saw the beginning of what is to become a year dominated by Anzac commemorations. In Albany in Western Australia, approximately 40,000 people gathered for a four-day program of commemorative events. The first troops—some 30,000 in total—to arrive at Gallipoli in 1915 were said to have come from Albany; many never returned. In Albany in 2014, people donned period costumes, camped on public land, and slept in their vehicles; pop musicians joined the Royal Australian Navy band at a concert that promised to “stir emotions from the audience”¹, and the Mayor predicted that the commemorations would “put Albany firmly on the map” for Anzac pilgrims.²

This commemorative issue of *The Journal of Australian Studies (JAS)* participates in the commemorative fervour even as it offers a necessary historiographical temperance to those commemorations. On the 100-year anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign, we revisit a series of articles that considered why and how we commemorate Anzac, what we remember, and what is of enduring relevance. This is the first open-access virtual issue of *JAS*, republishing ground-breaking articles that appeared in previous issues, starting from the late 1970s—arguably the beginning of Anzac’s public renewal, and certainly the beginning of social historians’ interest in Australia’s First World War experience.

Professor Peter Stanley, one of Australia’s most prominent military-social historians, opens this issue with a historiographical essay that frames, both historically and intellectually, the articles that we have chosen to republish (and draws attention to others that could equally have been included). The republished articles, Stanley argues, were crucial to defining and advancing scholarship on Australia in the Great War. Much has been done since, but still more begs to be explored.

The selection of articles illustrates the broad and multidisciplinary nature of the journal, but more significantly, the nature of World War One literature in Australia, which transcends disciplinary and methodological approaches. Some signify the rise of war-centred nationalism in Australia, others trace the melancholy legacies of loss. Many are part of ongoing debates and inquiries into Australia’s wartime past, including the enduring power of language to shape popular understandings of war, identity, and masculinity; others point to more recent phenomena, such as the rise of battlefield tourism.

¹ Community Concert with West Australian Symphony Orchestra, Anzac Albany website, <http://www.anzacalbany.com.au>, accessed 15 December 2014.

² Dennis Wellington cited in Trevor Paddenburg, “Anzac Centenary: All eyes on Albany to commemorate 100 years since troops departed for WWI,” *PerthNow*, 31 October 2014.

We have selected articles that we feel represent the diverse thematic and methodological approaches the journal has published, articles that have greatly influenced historical and cultural understandings of World War One in Australia. **A bibliography at the conclusion of this issue lists more articles that have addressed various aspects of Australia's wartime past**, and many of these—such as Robyn Mayes's "Localising national identity: Albany's Anzacs"—have become increasingly relevant in the present commemorative context.³ The articles are presented chronologically to recreate the sequence in which scholarship on World War One has developed, although, as Stanley points out, this "journey through a fertile landscape of history and memory" could equally be considered thematically.

Many of the earliest articles published in *JAS* explore the power of language to shape understandings of war—both contemporaneously and historically. In 1980, Bill Gammage offered an alternative historical contextualisation of war that resisted the prevailing tendency to treat World War One as a discrete historical event, and instead considered it as intertwined with national history and reflective of national identity and constructed values. Two years later, Kevin Fewster gave due attention to Ellis Ashmead Bartlett's reporting on Gallipoli as instrumental to subsequent mythologising of the Anzacs. John Williams also offers contrasting versions of the Anzac in the foreign press, as represented by both "sober" and propagandist reportage. Finally, Richard Ely's 1985 exploration of the press, political rhetoric and poetry positions war as a literary experience, which recognises the transcendental power of language to create myth and legend.

In the 1990s, Graham Seal and Stephen Garton added to a growing interest in the constructedness of the Anzac and its discursive relationship to other identity-building practices. Specifically, Seal considers the "yarn"—a nationalist, xenophobic, anti-authoritarian, self-deprecating, and larrikinistic form of storytelling—as an object of cultural analysis, and as pivotal to forming digger culture. The absence of mateship, sacrifice, loyalty and duty in these yarns is most interesting in light of how the legend is constructed and received in public commemorations today. This article prefaces some of Seal's later work, in which he draws a distinction between the anti-authoritarian digger and the more dutiful Anzac as a public and state-sanctioned figure. Alternatively, Garton explores the discursive relationship between "manhood", race, empire and the nation. Anxieties about manhood coalesced around the legend in the wake of World War One, in the context of a crumbling empire and an obsession with racial stock and fitness; Garton's article analyses the fissures in the version of masculinity offered by the Anzac.

Similarly, the late Hank Nelson traces shifting understandings of national identity, as manifested in a fondness for particular battle sites—in this case, Prime Minister Keating's use of Kokoda over Gallipoli—in an effort to emphasise Australia's search

³ Vol. 27, no. 79 (2003): 15–27.

for a non-imperial confidence. This analysis serves as an interesting counterpoint to the last two decades' reconstruction of the Gallipoli campaign and its central place in the national psyche.

Many articles across our selection explore the home front: war's effect on politics, and the ways in which other segments of Australian society participated in, or were affected by, war. This area of study has been further developed in the years since these articles were originally published, and revisiting them here underscores the importance of looking beyond the frontlines. In particular, R.J.W. Selleck's work on wartime attitudes towards Germans, which poses interesting questions about Australian attitudes to cultural and linguistic difference during times of conflict, contributed to (and tempered) historiographical considerations of assimilationist Australia.

Ann-Marie Jordens's work on anti-war organisations, in an article described by Peter Stanley as "one of the most detailed and important" pieces that this journal has ever published, traces the proliferation of a diverse range of peace organisations during the war, and the alliances formed between them. Some of these organisations were important and politically influential during and after the war, particularly within the Australian Labor Party. Jordens's work prefaces more recent studies on their activities and those of the women within them.

As Peter Stanley observes, operational military history has long been accorded far greater status than studies of the impact and consequences of war; however, a historiographical turn since the 1990s has seen increasing interest in tracing war's aftermath. Melanie Oppenheimer's important primary research into the Red Cross draws our attention to volunteer nurses in France, whose services were not adequately recognised upon return, and whose place within the masculinist iteration of the Anzac legend remains uneasy. Similarly, Elizabeth Nelson scrutinises a hidden aspect of war in her exploration of the premise that war engenders a society of violence. Nelson's potent case study broadens the history of post-war domestic violence, exploring the impact of "wartime codes" and challenging the glorification of male violence during and after World War One.

Our final selection of articles addresses grief, loss, and commemorative practice; some of which Australians have only become familiar and more comfortable in expressing over the past thirty years. Arguably, Australia's commemorative landscape is now dominated by our war dead, and most of these memorials were erected in the immediate aftermath of World War One. Ken Inglis explores the evolution of war commemorations in his 1999 article on the Unknown Australian Soldier, tracing the role of the Australian War Memorial and changing ideas of empire in shaping the public's relationship to the soldier. Inglis argues that the 1993 exhumation, transportation, and re-burial of an unknown soldier in a post-imperial Australia rendered the reformed Hall of Memory a sacred site.

Jen Roberts's (formerly Hawksley's) work addresses individual grief—specifically, the loss felt by parents of deceased soldiers—a rich historiographical vein in studies of Australians and war. Roberts draws on archival records from asylums to explore the varied psychological and physical responses of grieving parents in the post-war era. Similarly, Sue Lovell adopts theories from cultural memory studies to explore artistic expressions of personal grief and loss in post-war Australia. In these artworks, grief is made visual and is historicised, capturing both the grief and the physical loss of the dead, a process in which, Lovell argues, national and personal meanings converge.

Finally, Bart Ziino's 2006 article addresses emergent concerns for the newly intersecting fields of public history and heritage studies: heritage tourism and war commemoration. The battlefields of Gallipoli have long formed a part of Australia's commemorative landscape, and other historians have studied the affective experiences of visitors. Ziino interrogates questions of ownership in relation to evolving ideas about the sanctity Australians attach to the Gallipoli peninsula.

Ziino's article, we feel, is an apt conclusion to this virtual issue because of its focus on ongoing, open-ended, and often uncomfortable questions about ownership and the shifting commemorative landscape. In a sense, Ziino encapsulates our own task in presenting these articles as part of an ongoing historiographical discussion about our relationship with World War One, and in the essay that follows, Peter Stanley captures perfectly the nature and evolution of these discussions.