Our Community

As Australia commemorates 100 years since the Anzacs landed in Gallipoli during the First World War, we remember all Australian service men and women who have served our country in wars, conflicts and in peace keeping operations over the past one hundred years.

This collection of stories, memories and artwork reflects the actions and sacrifice of many Australians. This sacrifice has allowed us to enjoy everything that it is to be Australian, and the Australian way of life that we know today.

Many of the personal accounts in this collection are from people's memories or derived from family documents that have been handed down. They are presented in good faith.

Australia

has had involvement in war from the time of the first settlement at Sydney Cove in the 18th century, to our peacekeeping roles under United Nations auspices and the First and Second Gulf Wars.

Colonial period	1788–1901
Sudan	March–June 1885
South African War (Boer War)	1899–1902
China (Boxer Rebellion)	1900–01
First World War	1914–18
Second World War	1939–45
Occupation of Japan	1946–51
Korean War	1950–53
Malayan Emergency	1950–60
Indonesian Confrontation	1963–66
Vietnam War	1962–75
Iraq: the First Gulf War	1990–91
Afghanistan	2001–present
Iraq: the Second Gulf War	2003–09
Peacekeeping	1947–present

First World War 1914 - 1918

416,809 enlisted to AIF with 331,000 serving overseas
61,720 died
155,000 wounded
4,044 taken POW, **397** died while captive
On average 38 Australian Armed Forces personnel died per day

Second World War 1939 - 1945

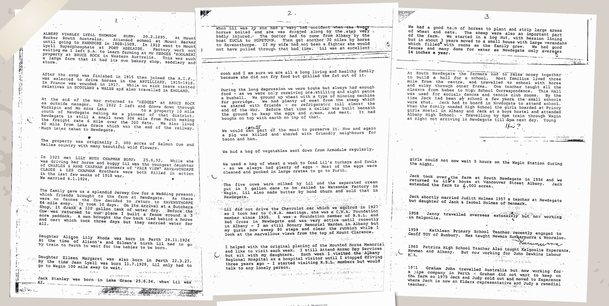
990,000 Served
27,073 Died
23,477 Wounded
21,467 POW, **7467** died while captive

Vietnam War 1962 - 1975

60,000 Served
521 Died
3,000 Wounded

Statistics - Awm.gov.au

WW1 1914 - 1918



WW2 1939 - 1945

Italian Prisoners of War

We had 2 Prisoners of War (POW's) on the farm with us. There was my Pop – WJ Ness, my Dad – WE Ness, my younger brother and myself. Some farmers had only one POW, but we always seemed to have two.

The first two prisoners we had were really nice guys and we all got on well with them. They used to try and teach us kids their language, which we through we were doing pretty well at, but we found out from the next two prisoners that all they were teaching us was swear words.

The Q.M. (Quarter Masters) van used to come once a fortnight to bring them supplies such as spaghetti – a box of spaghetti was about 2 feet long x 6"x6" square, also toothpaste, tobacco, soap and lollies called Q.T's which were like life savers, but all different flavours. The best part was that they used to give us a packet to share. They used to cook tea that night, which was a big pile of spaghetti and cheese.

The POW's were rotated to different locations every so often, not sure for how long. The second two POWs that came to stay were maybe from the North of Italy or maybe Sicily. They were not very friendly. They lived on the properties in a spare camp. There was an army camp in town, between the museum and Kelly's, which comprised of several small tents and a larger marquee. There were several POW's, two troupers armed with .303's and a Lieutenant who always had a .455 Webley revolver on his hip.

I only ever heard of one POW who decided to walk back to Italy, and he was soon picked up. They were usually dressed in orange gear with POW on their back. They were also noted for their stone masonry skills.

Eileen remembers often hearing the neighbours POW's walking home (between farms) after visiting and as a young girl, found it daunting hearing another language being spoken.

This account is taken from Barry Ness, as he remembers the POW's as a 6 – 9 year old boy – 70 years ago.

Barry Ness

Embroidery done by Henry Lloyd during convalesce

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