

Anzac Day

Ka maumahara tonu tātou ki a rātou - We will remember them



A brief history of Anzac Day

The Anzac legend began on 25 April 1915, when around 20,000 soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landed under fire on the Gallipoli Peninsula in Turkey.

For eight long months, New Zealand troops, alongside those from Australia and other allied nations, battled harsh conditions and Ottoman forces desperately fighting to protect their homeland.

By the time the campaign ended, more than 130,000 soldiers had died: at least 87,000 Ottoman and 44,000 Allied soldiers. Among the dead were 2779 New Zealanders.

Gallipoli was New Zealand's first major battle of World War One and the country was deeply affected by the massive loss of life and the return home of the injured.

New Zealanders have marked the landings at Gallipoli since news of the event first reached our shores. Over time there have been changes in the way that Anzac Day is commemorated, reflecting the changing features and concerns of New Zealand society.

Today, Anzac Day promotes a sense of unity and is a time for the nation to pay respects and acknowledge the many thousands of our military personnel who are serving or have served, and who are called upon to support New Zealand in times of war, conflict, and disaster.

As time has passed the meaning of the word 'Anzac' has changed too. Once used solely to refer to those who fought as part of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps, today the term represents the characteristics that are seen as important to New Zealanders and those serving in the New Zealand Defence Forces, including courage, commitment, comradeship and integrity.

