



RSL Hellenic Sub-Branch
Memorial Hall, 14A Ferrars Pl, South , Melbourne Vic 3205



APOSTRATOS

English Newsletter Supplement - March 2013

A Welcome from the President and the committee of the Hellenic Sub-Branch of the RSL.

A special welcome to our newest members:- Mr Peter Halidas, Mr John Avdoulos, Mr Chris Polentas, Mr Floros Katelis, Mr Peter Terzis, Mr Chris Skaliotis, Mr Dimitri Paraskevopoulos, Mr Peter Paxinos, Mr Anthony Drakopoulos, Mrs Zoe Sitzoukis, Mr Peter Yiannoudes and Mrs Harikleia Patisteas.

We congratulate our new Sub-Branch member Mr Peter Yiannoudes for receiving the Order of Australian Medal (OAM) for his services to the Greek Community. Mr Yiannoudes is the third member in our Sub-Branch to receive this Award, the other two being our Treasurer Mr Dennis Patisteas and Past President Mr Peter Stathopoulos.

I hope you enjoy our first 2013 edition of the Apostratos Newsletter.



Steve Kyritsis



This photo was taken at the 2012 Battle of Crete function held on 19th May 2012 at the St Kilda Town Hall.

From Left to Right,
Major General Jim E. Barry
AM MBE RFD ED,
Sub-Branch Secretary
Major Terry Kanellos and
Major General Greg Garde
AO RFD QC.

Both Generals are Honorary Members of our Sub-Branch.



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Date	Milestones and Past Events
15 th December 2012	Hellenic Sub branch Christmas function . Chef Bill Koutras did not disappoint by serving his traditional cuisine to the background Greek folk music played by DJ “Dalara”.
27 th January 2013	Members from our Sub-Branch attended a fund raising picnic at RYE . The event was organized by the Australasian Hellenic Educational Progressive Association Victoria (AHEPA). Proceeds go towards the “Ark of the World” Greek charity which help poverty stricken young Greek children.
10 th February 2013	A bus full of Sub-Branch members and friends enjoyed a picnic at Phillip Island .

Centenary of the Balkan Wars

Despite their relatively short period, the Balkan wars involved many thousands of Greek Naval and Army troops. The wars reshaped the northern Greek region from what it was following the 400 year occupation of the Ottoman Empire. 21st February 2013 is the one hundred year milestone of the liberation of Ioannina. In this edition of Apostratos we bring you the third part of the Balkan Wars:-

THE LIBERATION OF EPIRUS

The war operations of the Greek army in Epirus - October and November 1912

When the first Balkan War began, the Greek Army stationed around the town of Arta in Epirus numbered 10,500 men. The Turkish Army in Epirus numbered about 20,000 men, its main bulk based south of the town Ioannina, west of the Arahthos river and in the towns Filippiada and Preveza. On the 6th October 1912 the Greek Army crossed the Arahthos river attacking the Turkish front line. After many days of heavy fighting, the town of Filippiada was liberated on the 12th of October, Nikopoli on the 20th and Preveza on the 21st.

On the 22nd October 1912, the Turkish forces positioned at Pente Pigadia counter attacked. Over a six day period, Greek Battalions repelled these attacks and conquered Pente Pigadia. Meanwhile, 500 Greek troops moved from Thessaly towards the town of Metsovo and on 31st October 1912 pushed back the Turkish guard. Later, additional troops arrived in Metsovo and altogether advanced west to Ioannina.

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Japanese Surrender ceremony Tokyo Bay 2nd of September 1945

Here is a rare Youtube link to an actual US United News film clip made of the surrender ceremony of the Japanese to General Douglas McArthur in Tokyo Bay on the 2nd of September 1945.

You will see Australian General Sir Thomas Blamey GBE, KCB, CMG, DSO, ED signing the instrument of surrender on behalf of Australia.

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=vcnH_kF1zXc&feature=player_embedded



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Of further interest to our Hellenic Sub Branch members, General Blamey (pictured) commanded Australian and Commonwealth troops in the Battle of Greece.

On the orders of MacArthur and Prime Minister John Curtin, General Blamey assumed personal command of New Guinea Force during the Kokoda Track Campaign.

Congratulations to the following winners of the raffle which was drawn at our Christmas function:-

- 1st prize ticket 1645 - Mr P.Yiannoudes,
- 2nd prize ticket 1650 - Mr G.Vrionis,
- 3rd prize ticket 1202 - Mr B Valanidas,
- 4th prize ticket 1173 - Mr J. Tsipouriaris,
- 5th prize ticket 1486 - Mr A. Cooper.

Commemorating the Hellenic Connection to Anzac

We all think that we know the story of the Anzacs and Gallipoli in 1915. But there's an aspect of the story that rarely gets told – the Hellenic connection.

Since 2011, the Melbourne-based Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee with the active involvement of Melbourne's Lemnian community and the Hellenic RSL Sub-Branch has been working to make sure that this is better appreciated and is appropriately commemorated, especially as part of the forthcoming centenary of Anzac in 2015. This article briefly outlines the Hellenic connection to Anzac and the work undertaken by the Committee to date.

The Gallipoli Campaign was the first major campaign by Australian forces (and the wider Anzac Corps) in the First World War. 50,000 Australian troops took part in the campaign, with over 8,700 killed and 19,000 wounded. The island of Lemnos (pronounced "Limnos") played a critical role in the campaign and an enduring part in the Anzac story. Some of the key facts of the role of Lemnos to the Anzac Gallipoli story are:-

- The island was the principal assembly, embarkation and supply point for the Gallipoli landings;
- The landings at Gallipoli were practiced on Lemnos prior to their deployment at Gallipoli;
- The islands' harbour was a major staging post for naval operations in the Gallipoli campaign, including the submarine campaign;
- It was the location of the major nursing stations for the Gallipoli campaign, the first overseas deployment of Australian Nurses to a war theatre;
- The armistice concerning the allies and the Ottoman Empire was signed on board HMS Agamemnon in Mudros Harbour, Lemnos in 1918; and,
- It is the location of two large Commonwealth War Cemeteries with 148 Australian graves.



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The recognition of Lemnos and its connection to the Anzac legend provides the opportunity to commemorate the active role that Greeks as civilians and soldiers played in the campaign. Some fifty-seven Greek born Anzacs served in the Australian Imperial Force in WW1 including thirteen who fought at Gallipoli. In May 1915 Peter Rados was killed in action and George Cretan wounded, receiving a gunshot wound to the shoulder.

Commemorating the Hellenic Connection to Anzac - Continued on page 5

Date	Future Events
Monday 25 th March 2013	Greek Independance Day. Church Service will begin at 9.30am at St Nectarios Church, Dorcas St Sth Melbourne. There will be two wreath laying ceremonies, firstly 12:30pm at the Australian Hellenic Memorial (Birdwood Avenue near the Shrine of Remembrance). At 1.00pm, we lay wreaths within the Melbourne Shrine of Remembrance. We conclude with a light complimentary lunch back at our club rooms. All members are welcome.
3.00pm Sunday 21 st April 2013	Annual General Meeting to be held at the Sub-Branch. Light refreshments will be provided at the conclusion of the AGM.
Thursday 25 th April 2013	As with every year, all Hellenic Sub-Branch RSL members are invited to march in the ANZAC Day parade . Members are to assemble 12:15pm at the Swanston St staging point (between Flinders and Collins Streets) for an expected 12:30pm start. Cars have been arranged for our more senior members who find the march a little challenging. We conclude with a light complimentary lunch back at our club rooms.

Centenary of the Balkan Wars - Continued from page2

The reinforcement of the Greek Army in Epirus

In the last days of November 1912, the Turks lost the battle of Monastiri against the Serbian Army. Following this defeat, the Turkish Army withdrew and reinforced their Army in Epirus. At the same time, a Greek division arrived in Epirus to be joined in late December by another two divisions numbering about 20,000 men. With these reinforcements, the Greeks battled with Turkish troops positioned in Bizani, Aetorahi and Manoliassa.

The battles for the liberation of the town Ioannina

By January 1913, the Greek Army now numbered 41,000 men, whereas the Turkish 30,000. But the Turks had the advantage of four well organised fortresses and greater numbers of heavy artillery. On the 7th January 1913, the Greek forces commenced their attack but were forced to pause because of heavy winter rain and snow. In near freezing temperatures, the biggest battle of Ioannina occurred on the 20th of February 1913. With a break in the dismal weather, the Greek forces recommenced their final attack. Other than those stationed in the fortified locations, the Turks abandoned their positions and retreated towards Ioannina. Bypassing the heavy resistance, two Greek battalions of special (Evzon) forces reached the outskirts of the town, with the bulk of the Greek force closing in. On the morning of 21st February 1913, two Turkish officers met with the Greek Commander Konstantinos and signed the surrender agreement, thereby liberating the town. On the same day, the Greek Army marched into **Ioannina** to a hero's welcome.

This article was provided by Sub Branch Committee member Lt Colonel Athanasios Masouras.



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Lemnos beaches were used by the Anzacs to practise the landings they would soon make at Gallipoli.

This photograph shows the 3rd Australian Infantry Brigade practising on Lemnos.

Australian War Memorial image PS1447



Private Georgios Pappas born in Ipswich Qld of Greek heritage served in the 13th Battalion and was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for Gallantry for bravery at Gaba Tepe (Dardanelles) on 4th May 1915. He was awarded this medal for successfully retrieving a wounded man to safety under heavy machine gun fire.

Numerous Greek civilians also played critical roles in supporting the Anzacs with supplies and military intelligence from Lemnos. During the landing a number of Greeks with their donkeys served as water carriers and some even established a canteen on the landing beach. There are reports of Greeks helping to build jetties and ferrying supplies to shore in small vessels. A number were engaged as interpreters by the Allied troops.

So the Hellenic role in Australia's Anzac legend is indeed a rich one. Not only is it important that this connection be told for its own sake, but it also has the potential to reinforce the bond between Greece and Australia, which has been so enriched by immigration. This is a story that needs to be told and hopefully the work of The Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee will ensure that it will be told and appreciated by a new generation of Australians and Greeks. The organisation comprises members of the Australian Greek community in Melbourne including the Lemnian community, HACCI, the Hellenic RSL, Members of Parliament, historians and interested members of the community. Mr Lee Tarlamis, MP is the President, Mr Jim Claven is Secretary and Sub-Branch member Mr Lambis Englezos AM is the patron of the Committee.



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The Lemnos Gallipoli group is raising awareness in both Australian and Greek governments and communities of Lemnos and Greece's role in the Anzac story. The Committee has written to the Federal Government and the Centenary of Anzac Commission requesting that Lemnos be included in the 2015 commemorations and on the itinerary of the official ship visit. In Melbourne, the Committee will focus on the design and erection of a **commemorative memorial statue**, dedicated to the memory of the soldiers and nurses who served on Lemnos during that disastrous 1915 campaign. The statue will be designed and made by well-known historical sculptor, Peter Corlett OAM. It will be located prominently in a place of significance to Melbourne's Anzac story. The aim is for this statue to be completed in readiness for the 2015 Centenary commemorations.

To continue to raise awareness, the Committee has initiated a range of publicity measures, will soon launch a website, supports an annual tour of the island (in conjunction with the Victorian Parliamentary Friends of Greece) and the establishment of an annual Anzac Conference on Lemnos organised by the Lemnian authorities. The next tour will take place in April this year. Anyone interested in finding out more about the Tour should contact Lee Tarlamis MP via email - Lee.Tarlamis@parliament.vic.gov.au. Anyone interested in attending the inaugural conference in the second week of July 2013 should contact Mr Jim Claven, via email - jimclaven@yahoo.com.au.

Article submitted by the Secretary of The Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee, Mr Jim Claven

Anyone interested in finding out more about the Lemnos Gallipoli Commemorative Committee or who would like to support its work should contact Terry Kanellos at tkanellos@bigpond.com or Steve Kyritsis at steve.kyritsis@hotmail.com



We are saddened by **the passing of two Greek-Australian WWII Veterans**. The RSL Hellenic Sub-Branch would like to pass on our Condolences to the Polites and Karydis (Careedy) families.

Speros Polites was born on the 17th April 1915 at Vasiliki Lefkada Greece. He served in the Australian Army from September 1942 till October 1945 with the 6th Australian Employment Company. He passed away on the 1st December 2012.

Pictured in this photo, Nicholas Karydis (Careedy) was born on 1st March 1912 at Kythera Greece. As part of the Royal Australian Air Force from October 1942 till January 1946, Leading Aircraftsman Careedy served in Darwin and New Guinea. Nicholas passed away on the 14th October 2012.

Next Edition Apostratos – Due out June 2013