

By Harry Mehew
Year 8

How War Has Affected My Family

My Great Grandfather was a soldier in World War One, his badge number was 2943.

He had entered the war on October 1915 and fought until December 1918 when he returned home to his wife.

My Great Grandmother had received multiple telegrams that he had died or been wounded in battle. My Grandfather had not been born at the time, so my Great Grandmother was alone at home. This did cause her great distress as she had no idea when her beloved husband would return from battle. Even after the war my Great Grandfather suffered PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) this would cause him to wake in the middle of night in a cold sweat. He endured this until his dying day.

Another thing that scarred him from the war was shrapnel. He was caught in an explosion and had shrapnel launched all into his body, even after he passed, they were still finding bits in his system. He left the war, but the war never left him like so many other soldiers. My Grandfather has told me that my Great Grandfather never really spoke much about the war but the little he did tell him was a statement that no man should never do or see what he had to endure. My Great Grandfather was in the Battle of the Somme, Lone Pine and various others on the Western Front which, if you know the history behind these battles, they were very bloody, high casualties and these battles had the highest loss of life in the history of war.

My Great Grandfather was one of the very few lucky ones to return home to his family and be able to work and live a somewhat normal life, reuniting with his wife that he had only wedded six weeks prior to leaving for war and had not seen for four years.

My Grandfather grew up being very proud of his Father making him our own hero within our family which included long conversations I have had with my Grandfather about his Father and what war would have been like. Me being interested in war for the history and the curiosity of war, my Grandfather has passed on the human and emotional effect that being involved in a war can effect generations within a family.

This, I realised when I went to the 100-year expedition at Darling Harbour for the Anzac's. When I walked through with my Grandfather all he kept saying was "It's amazing he ever came home alive". I visited numerous war memorials with my Grandfather reflecting on my Great Grandfather's battles which is a memory I will carry into manhood. We are very proud of Private Joseph White, 2943. Anzac Day is special as it's a time we can reflect on this great man who if he didn't return, I wouldn't be here today.

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ANZAC Day is celebrated every year on the 25th April in Australia and New Zealand. We don't only celebrate but remember all the soldiers that died so that we could have a better life or country. ANZAC stands for Australian New Zealand Army Corp which states that we have a strong alliance with New Zealand.

In Penrith we celebrate ANZAC Day in many different ways, such as

- Memory park
- Dawn services
- Two Up at Penrith RSL

Memory Park

Memory Park was built to commemorate all the people that served for us in World War I. 250 people from the Penrith area fought in World War I and more than 45 didn't come home. This is very meaningful for the people not only that came home from the war but the families and friends of a loved one that has died in the war. It can be a place where they can go to think or remember people that passed in the war.



Dawn Services

The Dawn Services are held on the morning of ANZAC Day. It is a time to show respect for all the troops and wake up at the time that they would have had to everyday that they battled. On ANZAC Day wreaths are laid, the Last Post is played and rosemary is pinned to your pocket. These are just some of the ANZAC Day traditions.



Two Up

Two up is an Australian gambling game that is like heads or tails. You have two coins on a ruler and throw them up in the air and people bet on the game. You are only allowed to play the game on ANZAC Day, and this represents what the soldiers would do during the war to have some fun or entertainment.

