

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 8 November 2018]

p8078b-8093a

Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Shane Love; Mr Roger Cook; Mr Ian Blayney; Mrs Robyn Clarke; Mr Terry Redman; Mr David Michael; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Ms Emily Hamilton; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Peter Katsambanis; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr John McGrath; Mr John Carey; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Janine Freeman;
Dr David Honey

Statement by Leader of the Opposition

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [11.16 am]: I support the Premier in his remarks. With Sunday being Remembrance Day it is appropriate that time to be set aside in Parliament to acknowledge the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. We celebrate our democracy and our freedoms thanks to the sacrifices of those who served our country and that is why it is appropriate that today we acknowledge their sacrifice in our institution of democracy. Every year since 1919 at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, we have stopped to observe one minute of silence to remember those who served our country, and those who died defending our nation and freedoms that are so often taken for granted. One hundred years on from the ending of World War I, Australians, young and old, continue to mark this occasion and reflect on the sacrifices made. Over time many traditions enjoy less support in recognition. I am pleased that the same cannot be said of our acknowledgement, commemoration and appreciation of our service men and women who served our country in conflicts over the years. Our support through the many generations has remained as strong as ever. It is important and appropriate that we continue to remember the sacrifices for they define our nation, explain our history and demonstrate our character.

Charles Bean, Australia's World War I official historian, landed with our troops in Gallipoli in 1915. He was not a soldier, he was a journalist, but he epitomised the Australian spirit. He stayed with the troops on the front line through the entire war and refused evacuation when he was wounded. He was almost killed twice on the same day, 31 July 1916, at Pozzières. It was at Pozzières that a mortally wounded Australian asked him, "Will they remember me in Australia?" More than 102 years after that question, we ask, "Do they remember me in Australia?" We say, "Yes." Australia was 13 years young when it entered the war to end all wars. In 1914 we had a population of fewer than five million people, so the following numbers highlight the impact and significance of this great war. Throughout the course of the war 330 000 Australian soldiers saw active service. Approximately 60 000 were killed, 82 000 were wounded in battle and a further 88 000 suffered a variety of illnesses and injuries. Of the people who attended the war there were 230 000 casualties, or 70 per cent. By December 1918, 104 000 Australian soldiers had returned from service as invalids. These are staggering numbers. They paint a picture of devastation; yet, despite these figures, the war was a success. As described by the Australian War Memorial, after several months of hard fighting on the Western Front, the Allies broke through the Hindenburg Line on 29 September 1918. The German army was beaten and within a few weeks came the Armistice. The Armistice of Compiègne between the Allies and Germany came into effect at 11.00 am, on 11 November 1918. The guns fell silent on the Western Front. After more than four years of unimaginable bloodshed and destruction, the war was finally over.

At home in Australia, large crowds gathered in capital cities to celebrate the end of the conflict. That conflict came at a price—a devastating price—to our young nation, but that was the cost of freedom. It was, after all, the war to end all wars. Let me remind members—60 000 young men were killed, with 230 000 casualties. That was the price of securing our freedom. That price is why we enjoy our lifestyle, freedom and the democracy that we enjoy today. In many respects, those freedoms are taken for granted, which is why it is important that we take the time to acknowledge those events of a century ago. The eleventh of November became known in Australia and other Allied countries as Armistice Day to remember those who died in World War I.

World War I saw more than 70 million people mobilised and left up to 13 million dead. As many as one-third of those people have no grave. The Allied nations chose 11.00 am on 11 November as the time and day for the commemoration of their war dead. The time coincided, as I said, with the fall of the guns. I find it interesting that quite often—this includes Australia—conflicts and wars define a nation. For Australia, it defines us in a positive way. As the Director of the Australian War Memorial, Dr Brendan Nelson, articulated last month —

Every nation has its story. This is our story.

At no time in history has Australia had as great an impact on international affairs as we did in 1918.

It was the year of victory.

But as with defeat, it brought tragedy—65 000 Australian casualties, 14,664 dead.

That was in the year 1918 alone. He continues —

In the blood soaked quagmire of Passchendaele in October 1917, Australia had sustained 38,000 casualties in eight weeks. Thirty five Australians were killed for every metre of ground taken.

In March 1918, the Germans took it all back in just three days.

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Dr Nelson went on to describe the ongoing events leading up to Armistice. He said that Australia's resilience and perseverance prevailed. We punched above our weight and we were a force to be reckoned with. Our role in that conflict has defined us as a nation and as an ally. Dr Nelson told of the bloody aftermath of the war and of young men from all nations losing their lives too young. He described the determination and tenacity of the Australians in the heat of battle, a characteristic that aptly describes our nation today—determined and tenacious. He also quoted Charles Bean, who later wrote of the Armistice —

It is over. The enormous effort of the men—yes, and women and children ... is finished.

...

... Australia will settle down to carve out her new and splendid future.

...

We are free to be happy again. Sixty thousand Australians bought us this happiness with their lives.

It is a profound statement.

It has taken the sacrifice of 60 000 young lives to enable us to enjoy our freedoms today. Regrettably, as we all know, World War I was not the war to end all wars. Conflict around the world has remained a constant since that terrible war. Following World War II, the Australian government agreed to a proposal from the United Kingdom that Armistice Day be renamed Remembrance Day to commemorate those who fell in both World Wars. Since then there have been other significant conflicts. Today the loss of Australian lives from all wars and conflicts is commemorated on Remembrance Day. Armistice Day commemorates the silencing of the guns on 11 November 1918 and the sacrifice of war. Remembrance Day commemorates the loss of Australian lives, and the service of Australians, from all conflicts. On 11 November, we acknowledge the service to our nation of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. We also acknowledge those who have served our nation and returned. Many have returned with injuries—some physical, others non-physical, but certainly debilitating. We owe them all a debt of gratitude and our unconditional support. Our service personnel through the generations have, at the various conflicts in which our nation has been involved, put themselves forward to defend our freedom. They were prepared to lose their lives—many did—so we did not lose our freedom. We thank them from the bottom of our hearts. Such is the fact that international conflicts have been part of our lives through every generation that those who have served our nation include some of our own colleagues in this chamber. I acknowledge and thank those colleagues in this chamber who have served our nation in conflict: the members for Churchlands, Warnbro and Willagee. Their service to our nation is much appreciated by all Australians. We thank you as we thank all who have served our nation.

As members are aware, there is a wonderful floral tribute on the front steps of Parliament House, a two-metre tall wreath of crocheted poppies, which is on loan this week from The Western Australian Returned and Services League. Each poppy has been handmade and is a beautiful addition to the front steps to mark the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the end of the World War I on 11 November. Poppies have become synonymous with Remembrance Day. The remembrance poppy was inspired by the World War I poem *In Flanders Fields*. It is a poem that I hear often on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day events that I attend at schools and the RSL. I imagine every member in this chamber has had that experience. Indeed, I am extremely proud of the effort and commitment of our schools in acknowledging our service men and women on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day. They are reflecting the wishes of the mortally wounded Australian who asked, "Will they remember me in Australia?" I enjoy the recital of *In Flanders Fields* at schools. It is a poignant, sombre poem. The poem was written by Dr Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae from Canada. He wrote the poem in 1915 after witnessing the death of his friend and colleague Lt Alexis Helmer, a fellow soldier, who died the day before. The opening lines of the poem refer to the many poppies that were the first flowers to bloom in the churned-up earth of the graves of soldiers in the spring in the Belgian area, Flanders. It is said that Lieutenant Colonel McCrae was the first person to describe the poppies as a flower of remembrance. It is amazing to see the many poppies growing in the gardens throughout the suburbs of Perth at this time of year. I will conclude by reading into *Hansard*, *In Flanders Fields* —

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie

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In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

Dr McCrae died of pneumonia before the war was over.

Statement by Member for Moore

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore) [11.28 am]: I rise on behalf of the Leader of the National Party to recognise and commemorate the Centenary of Armistice, which, of course, falls on Sunday, 11 November 2018. One hundred years ago, a pact was signed by the Allies and Germany to end World War I, with the order for hostilities to cease at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, a day we now recognise as Remembrance Day. It is a day on which we remember the heroic actions, efforts and sacrifice of all those who served, especially those who lost their lives in war.

Australia's involvement in World War I began on 4 August 1914, the day that Germany and Britain went to war. Prime Minister, Joseph Cook, and opposition leader, Andrew Fisher, pledged their support to Britain. The outbreak of war was greeted with much enthusiasm. For our young nation, it was seen as a great honour to fight alongside Britain and have the opportunity to prove ourselves as a country. Ultimately, the price was very high. For Australia, the First World War remains the costliest of conflicts in terms of deaths and casualties. From a population of around five million people, 416 809 personnel enlisted. More than 60 000 were killed, and 156 000 soldiers of the 331 000 who served overseas were injured or taken prisoner. The First World War had a huge impact on Western Australia. Nearly 40 per cent of Western Australian men aged 18 to 44 years volunteered, enlisted and served in the Great War. This had a significant impact on our fledgling state. The State Records Office of Western Australia states that this period stretched the resources of the state and created both social cohesion and disruption. The deaths of thousands of young Western Australians in war decimated a generation and devastated families and communities.

I would like to reflect on the role Western Australia played in the war, including regional Western Australians. Jeff Hatwell's book *No Ordinary Determination* puts a focus on some of the great heroes regional Western Australia produced in World War I, particularly Percy Black, a prospector from the goldfields, and Harry Murray, a timber contractor from the south west. Hatwell recognises these two extraordinary men who made enormous contributions to the Anzac tradition. Starting as the crew of a machine gun at Gallipoli, their courage and natural abilities took them to high rank and earned them many awards for gallantry. Harry Murray finished the war as the most decorated infantryman in the British Empire, and Percy Black, who lost his life on the Western Front, was regarded as the bravest man in the Australian Imperial Force. These men typified the bravery, leadership, mateship and courage that would become an integral part of the Anzac legacy—a legacy that all Australians still aspire to today.

In the early days of World War I, Australia pledged 20 000 men to the wartime efforts. Western Australia's quota was 1 400, but many, many more volunteered. The first recruits were sent to Blackboy Hill—the present day suburb of Greenmount—for training. These men would go on to help form the 16th Australian Infantry Battalion, and would go on to serve in Egypt, Gallipoli and many operations on the Western Front, including the Battle of Hamel on the German front line in northern France. If Gallipoli was one of our darkest days, the Battle of Hamel was one of Australia's greatest successes in World War I. This operation saw Australian and American infantry, supported by British tanks and coordinated by Lieutenant General John Monash, commander of the Australian Corps and Australian Imperial Force, place a significant dent in the German frontline, capturing the village in just 93 minutes. Tactics used during that battle were able to be replicated at a larger scale and have widely been recognised as a decisive moment in World War I. It saw two Australians—Thomas Axford from South Australia and Henry Dalziel from Queensland—awarded the Victoria Cross for their conduct during battle.

The 16th Battalion trained at Blackboy Hill before heading to the eastern states where they joined with troops from South Australia to train at Broadmeadows, north of Melbourne. On 21 December 1914, the 16th Battalion returned to Western Australia via ship where they anchored in Albany, although the troops on board were not permitted shore leave. It was in Albany that the full convoy of Australian troops assembled, and were joined by another regiment of troops who would go on to make a lasting legacy for themselves—the 10th Light Horse Regiment from Western Australia. The 10th Light Horse Regiment began as the Western Australia Mounted Infantry in the early 1900s, with units existing in Perth, Guildford, Geraldton and Bunbury, and first came together as part of the Boer War. But it was in World War I that it really came into its own, serving as an integral part of the Gallipoli

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campaign. The regiment's actions at the Battle of the Nek were immortalised in the final scenes of Peter Weir's film *Gallipoli*. It was also involved in the Battle of Hill 60, the last major assault of the Gallipoli campaign.

Hugo Throssell, who was born in Northam, Western Australia, received the Victoria Cross. According to my notes, the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* states —

On 29–30 August 1915 at ... (Hill 60) ... Second Lieutenant Throssell, although severely wounded in several places, refused to leave his post during a counter-attack or to obtain medical assistance until all danger was passed, when he had his wounds dressed and returned to the firing line until ordered out of action by the Medical Officer. By his personal courage and example he kept up the spirits of his party and was largely instrumental in saving the situation at a critical period.

Throssell was buried in Karrakatta Cemetery in Perth, with full military honours, and a statue of Throssell is now located in the Avon Street Mall in Northam.

Historical accounts describe the convoy of 10 00 Australian men and 2 000 New Zealanders who shipped out from Albany on 31 December 1914 as one of the finest contingents that ever left Australia. For many of these men, the coastline around Albany would be the last sight of their homeland.

I would also like to acknowledge and pay tribute to the Western Australian Aboriginal servicemen including James Dickerson of Gingin, Larry and Lewis Farmer of Katanning, Charles Hutchins from Busselton, William Jackson of Bunbury, Fred Lockyer from Perth, Randell and William Mason from near Albany, Arthur McCallum from Albany, James Melbourne from York, Gordon Naley from Eucla, Frederick Sayers from Busselton and Claude Shaw from Gingin. At a time in Western Australia's history when Aboriginal people had very limited rights or opportunities, these brave men served and were recognised as equals in the AIF.

Western Australia's political leaders were not exempt from serving during World War I. The Western Australian Parliament has had 122 members serve in either World War I or World War II, with five members, Arthur Abbott, Edward Corboy, Evan Davies, Hugh Leslie and Hubert Parker, serving in both World Wars. Eight members of Parliament undertook active military service while serving in Parliament, including Bartholomew Stubbs who was the first member of the Western Australian Parliament to die in battle—in Belgium in September 1917. Many more were wounded during military service. We thank them for their courage and their service and sacrifice.

I mentioned earlier the Anzac values and how we aspire to live our lives upholding these values. The Anzac legacy truly began at Gallipoli—a military disaster where thousands of young Australians senselessly lost their lives; however, the qualities shown by these young men serves as an example to us all. Patrick Lindsay, in *The Spirit of the Digger*, reflects on what set these Australian and New Zealand soldiers apart. He said —

Soldiers everywhere reflect, and are only as good as, the community from which they are drawn. It follows that Australians have the essence of the Digger within them. The spirit emerges when the individual calls on it in times of need. The image of the Digger is derived from an intricate amalgam of qualities: each has been proven in the heat of battle and has been personified at various times by remarkable members of the tribe. Chief among these qualities are mateship, courage, compassion, endurance, selflessness, loyalty, resourcefulness, devotion, independence, ingenuity, audacity, coolness, larrikinism and humour.

Mateship, courage, compassion, endurance, selflessness, loyalty, resourcefulness, devotion, independence, ingenuity, audacity, coolness, larrikinism and humour—the Anzac legend that began in 1914 lives on today. I will always be eternally grateful to those who fought for our great country. We recognise the 100-year anniversary of Armistice Day and remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Statement by Minister for Health

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [11.37 am]: I want to acknowledge the contributions of the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Moore on behalf of the National Party. I think that they did great honour to this place. They placed on record the significant impact that the Great War had on our community, and the proportion, the sheer magnitude, of the casualties amongst those service men and women both during warfare and on return. It must have had a profound effect on our community. If the experiences of warfare have such a significant impact on our community, the way we respond, acknowledge and remember these events defines us as a community. I must say that as a young Western Australian I struggled with participation in these sorts of services. As a young Western Australian growing up in the shadow of the Vietnam War, and as a staunch pacifist, I was always anxious about what my participation in these sorts of ceremonies did. I particularly feared that it would legitimise the exercise and gloss over the extraordinary wrongness and, as the Premier said, stupidity of warfare. We had very solemn, predominantly male, singularly white events to remember these efforts. I felt they were

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unfairly exclusive and I did not feel I belonged. We had the writings of Wilfred Owen to simply remind us of the impact that the Great War had on individuals. I think it is fair to say that as a young Western Australian I was not a great participant in memorial services, be they Anzac or otherwise. But I have found since that time that as we as a community change and remember these events in different ways—they become more inclusive, they become more human, and they become much more real for me, and I think for many young people in Western Australia.

I am not trying to say I am young anymore, by the way, but for young people in Western Australia they are much more meaningful. From that point of view, I think that these sorts of observances have become much more profound and significant. I acknowledge the words of the Leader of the Opposition, who talked about the role of schools in that process. When I was young we never heard about the Aboriginal soldiers. I want to acknowledge the words of the member for Moore. We never heard about those people who had no rights but went overseas to defend the rights of others within Australia. Of the 183 Aboriginal men who volunteered, 83 of them served overseas. Three of those 83 Indigenous Western Australians who served were recipients of the Medal for Gallantry and 12 of them died on the battlefield, including one soldier at Gallipoli, Trooper Dickerson, as the member for Moore said. It is sad that those soldiers had no rights when they came back from war.

We never heard about the role that women played in warfare. As the Minister for Health, I want to acknowledge the nurses who served overseas. More than 3 000 civilian nurses volunteered for active service during the First World War. Many doctors acknowledged that the care that nurses provided on the battlefield saved more lives than the doctors' medications and operative skills. We hear more about those things today.

I also want to acknowledge the work of John Schnaars from Honouring Indigenous War Graves, which is a small group of returned servicemen who discover the graves of returned Aboriginal soldiers through forensic research. They often have no gravestones or public acknowledgement of their service, so they place humble memorials to their service.

For me, the modern observance of remembrance in events such as the Invictus Games is a much more human, inclusive and modern observance and acknowledgement of warfare. I stand in this chamber today and will stand with the members of the Kwinana community on Sunday to very proudly and, for me, in a fairly recently discovered way, say —

Lest we forget.

Statement by Member for Geraldton

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [11.42 am]: The early stages of World War I began as a clash of twentieth century technology and nineteenth century tactics, which explains the losses. Australia's involvement in the First World War began when Britain and Germany went to war on 4 August 1914. Both Prime Minister Joseph Cook and opposition leader Andrew Fisher, who were in the midst of an election campaign, pledged full support for Britain. As in other places, the outbreak of war was welcomed by many in the community, which seems quite extraordinary in retrospect. Our troops landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 along with troops from New Zealand, Britain and France. They then moved to the Western Front with commensurate huge losses.

As others have said, for Australia the First World War remains the costliest conflict in terms of deaths and casualties. From a population of fewer than five million, 416 809 men enlisted, of whom more than 60 000 were killed and 156 000 wounded, gassed or taken prisoner. It is worth mentioning the losses of some other countries. France lost 1.4 million soldiers; Russia lost somewhere between 1.7 million and 2.2 million soldiers; the United Kingdom lost 744 000 soldiers; and Germany lost two million soldiers. By the time the Australian Imperial Force divisions arrived in France, the war on the Western Front had long been in a stalemate, with opposing armies facing each other across trenches that stretched from the English Channel to the Swiss border. The development of machine guns and artillery favoured defensive over offensive operations, which compounded the impasse that lasted until the final months of the war.

Industrialisation had meant innovations such as heavy artillery that was used from behind lines, trench warfare, tanks—toward the end of the war—and the use of aircraft and gas. It is not possible to talk about Australian involvement in World War I without mentioning the genius of General Sir John Monash, who learnt to coordinate the use of infantry, aircraft, artillery and tanks. He was knighted on the battlefield by King George V. That was the first time that had been done for 200 years. Australians led by Monash were decisive at Hamel on 4 July and in later battles from 8 August at places such as Peron and Mont St Quentin. Those battles played a massive part in Germany's surrender on 11 November.

The effects of the war were also felt at home. Families and communities grieved for the loss of so many men and women increasingly assumed the physical and financial burden of caring for families. Social division also grew, reaching a climax in the bitterly contested and unsuccessful conscription referendums of 1916 and 1917. When the

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war ended, thousands of ex-servicemen and servicewomen, many disabled with physical or emotional wounds, had to be reintegrated into a society that was keen to move on from the past. Internationally, it led to the creation of the League of Nations, which was quite ineffective. It also led to the demise of the four massive empires: the Russian Empire—after the Russian Revolution—the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the German Empire. Russia went on to endure 74 years of communism. The weak German constitution, reparations and the Depression led to the rise of Hitler. Historians argue about the degree to which World War II was a resumption of World War I, but in many ways it was. Noted British historian A.J.P. Taylor made a very telling comment. He stated —

Though the object of being a Great Power is to be able to fight a Great War, the only way of remaining a Great Power is not to fight one.

I acknowledge that 11 November will also be the 100th anniversary of Polish independence. I look forward to attending the service at Villers-Bretonneux on Sunday.

Statement by Member for Murray–Wellington

MRS R.M.J. CLARKE (Murray–Wellington) [11.46 am]: I, too, rise to speak on this significant motion. The date of 11 November 2018 marks an important occasion for all Australians as we commemorate the Centenary of Armistice, and honour all those who have served our country.

Over the four years of the First World War, Western Australia saw almost 20 per cent of its male population enlist for service. Australian soldiers gained a strong reputation for their spirit, mateship and a contribution that was beyond their numbers. It was the first time that Australia played a major role in a battle and took on vital roles in some of the war's most important victories.

Despite not yet having equal civil rights, many Aboriginal men also wanted to contribute to the war effort. From Western Australia alone, 133 Aboriginal men volunteered, with 83 of those serving overseas as soldiers. Although not all were accepted to volunteer because they were not of European descent, those who were accepted served with distinction. Of the 83 Indigenous men who served, three were recipients of the Medal for Gallantry, and 12 were killed in battle.

It was not only men who participated in the war effort. From the beginning of World War I, women were involved in the war. Edith Cowan offered the support of the Western Australian women's movement to the war, and women led the formation of the Australian Comfort Funds, which provided clothes and other comforts to the Australian soldiers fighting overseas, including over one million knitted socks for soldiers and the funding needed to provide over 12 million cups of coffee. This fund was a massive logistical exercise and it was women who managed and administrated it.

Women also played an important role as nurses, with approximately 3 000 Australian nurses serving during the war. The service they provided helping ill and injured soldiers was crucial throughout the war, as well as often dangerous, with four Western Australian nurses dying as a result of their service.

There was, of course, a great cost to Australia's participation in the Great War. A total of 6 000 Western Australians who went to war were killed, and thousands more were injured or contracted diseases. In total, nearly 62 000 Australians were killed in the war.

Almost every person in Western Australia was affected in some way by the war, and the pain that this caused remained in our community for decades following the war's end. A lot of this pain was physical, but much of it was also psychological and emotional pain that was not always seen. This pain affected not only those who served, but also those around them.

At 11.00 am on 11 November 1918, the Armistice that ended the First World War was signed, and the fighting on both sides ended. Armistice was celebrated right across Australia, and many towns now have their own memorials recognising those who served and those who lost. One hundred years on, we honour all those who have served for our country, pay tribute to those who never returned, and recognise how their sacrifice allowed us the freedoms we enjoy today.

A dear close friend of mine, Patricia Briggs, a highly respected member of the community from South Yunderup, wrote a poem that highlights of the importance of Armistice, which states —

The services are over
The band has marched away
The wreaths around the cenotaph
Announce Remembrance Day.
We're here to celebrate the end
Of "The War to End All Wars"
To remember those who fought and fell

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To honour a noble cause.
We glance at the neat engraving
On a column of sculpting stone
And read the names displayed there
And feel they were not alone.
I see the name of John D. Bray
A name I never knew.
I hope his folks were present
To pay their John his due.
He must have been a local
Perhaps from a farming clan,
Who down the busy working years
Have revered this special man.
I wish him fond remembrance
From a family, from home,
Not just his name as a soldier
Etched into cold, grey stone.

On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month, we will remember them.

Lest we forget.

Statement by Member for Warren–Blackwood

MR D.T. REDMAN (Warren–Blackwood) [11.51 am]: I, too, want to make a couple of comments today. I want to acknowledge the very good speeches made by the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Moore and contributions from their respective parties, touching on a range of issues that are very, very valid as we stand here today recognising the 100-year anniversary of Armistice. These occasions trigger different emotions in all of us. Not many of us do not have extended family or friends who have in some way been part of a war in history. I want to talk about one of those today. It is pleasing to see the acknowledgement of the contribution of Aboriginal people, who in recent years have been acknowledged on a broader scale across our nation, a comment the member for Moore made. I have made speeches here before on this subject.

One of the other issues that has been raised and one that triggers emotions in me is that when all those ships left the harbour in Albany, not only were a stack of soldiers on board, but also 7 500 horses were on board. The contribution of horses to the war effort was significant. Some very tragic stories came out of those events.

The Premier touched on one of the points that I want to make today. A number of communities in my electorate are of reasonable size; probably the biggest has 8 000 people. A lot of small communities in my electorate have a war memorial. It never ceases to amaze me when we stop to look at those memorials and see the number of names on them. The number of names often does not reflect in any way the size of those communities. Obviously, some of those communities were bigger than they are now but some were considerably smaller. It always sits strong in my mind the impact that those losses would have had on some of those small regional communities that in many ways were much more isolated than they are today, and to lose family members and in many cases a demographic that was almost predominantly male, young, in their teens in many cases and early 20s, and also our youngest and fittest. I cannot begin to imagine the impact that those losses would have had on people in those very small communities when they got a letter in the mail, a telegram or whatever sort of communication they had, to let them know that they had lost a loved one on the other side of the world. That is terribly tragic. I guess it is these occasions when we drive past those epitaphs when we remember the cost of these wars and conflicts that it goes well beyond those who were on the battlefields; it goes into all our communities and, as has been said today, it has moulded our communities, our nation and our state in many ways.

Of course this is also an occasion to not only just talk about the First World War, but also to reflect on and acknowledge those who have contributed and paid the ultimate price in all the wars that have occurred over time. As the Deputy Premier mentioned, it is not something that any of us want to celebrate but we want to acknowledge and understand how it has moulded our state and our nation. We have our little fights across the chamber. Our freedoms and democracy are the things that others have fought for. We take for granted that we can stand in this place and debate a particular bill that might be going through this place. Those are the things that people fought for and lost their lives for.

Finally, I want to acknowledge all those who are currently serving our country in many areas where there is a level of conflict. In some cases, people are still losing their lives and making the ultimate sacrifice.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 8 November 2018]

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Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Shane Love; Mr Roger Cook; Mr Ian Blayney; Mrs Robyn Clarke; Mr Terry Redman; Mr David Michael; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Ms Emily Hamilton; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Peter Katsambanis; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr John McGrath; Mr John Carey; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Janine Freeman; Dr David Honey

Lest we forget.

Statement by Member for Balcatta

MR D.R. MICHAEL (Balcatta) [11.55 am]: Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak today, a few days short of the centenary of the Armistice in World War I, a war that saw such a sacrifice of life and the lives of Western Australians. On 14 April 1919, only a few short months after the end of the war, a meeting was held at John Tyler's produce store on Main Street and the Osborne Park RSL was formed by returned veterans. Shortly after, the Perth Road Board donated two blocks of land near Cape and Main Streets to the sub-branch for their own hall, and in 1930, thanks to local community fundraising, and with bricks made by their veteran members, it was opened by Sir Talbot Hobbs and still stands today.

It has been a great honour, firstly as a local councillor and now as a local member of the Legislative Assembly, to have been involved with the sub-branch for over a decade. I feel privileged to have had the friendship of World War II veterans such as Fred Birnie, Bill Sullivan, Ted O'Sullivan and Tom Fisher, who would speak of World War I veterans and the history of the sub-branch and the local area.

In 1915, *The Daily News* reported on a send-off for soldiers in the Osborne Park district —

Seldom has the Agricultural Hall at Osborne Park held such an audience as assembled last night to do honor to the "soldier boys" who are booked for the front. Since the commencement of the war, Osborne Park has given its quota, and at the famous landing at the Dardanelles the names of several of the boys appear in the roll of honor. ... A stimulus was evidently given to recruiting in the Park, and last night amongst the 80 odd soldiers tendered a send-off, were gardeners who had given up the spade for the bayonet, woodcutters who had cast aside the axe for the gun, dairy hands who had given up the milk can to handle the "dixie" at the camp, and florists who had laid aside their secateurs for the purpose of "grafting" in Turkey land. The hall was absolutely packed, and even outside there was a big crowd ready to honor the boys from the Park.

Mr Veryard, M.L.A., presided, and as member of the district, said that he had been called upon to participate in many functions in Osborne Park, but the gathering that night eclipsed all others. It showed that Osborne Park was proud of the boys. ... That night many of the soldiers present were on their final leave, and before many days they would be on their way to the front, and it was indeed a glorious tribute to the district to see such a representative body of men eager and willing to fight for their country.

...

Mr. J. Tyler, president of the Agricultural Society, in a spirited address, announced that the society was presenting each man with a fountain pen, suitably inscribed, wishing him God speed and a safe return, together with a parcel of stamped postcards, so that the soldiers from the Park could write to the society, and at its monthly meetings nothing would be more welcome than one of those cards from the boys at the front.

I also note that after tea and coffee and light refreshments had been served, at the call of the soldiers, ironical cheers were given for the Kaiser.

I would also like to pay tribute to the many animals that were integral to the Australian war effort, both in practical and psychological roles, during times of war and conflict. Animals played many roles with our servicemen in the First World War: the donkeys, camels, horses and other animals used as transport for soldiers and equipment; the dogs who located injured soldiers and tracked the enemy; the pigeons used to carry messages; as well as these and other animals that were adopted as mascots and pets providing much-needed companionship and support for our troops. Almost all never made it home.

This Armistice, my family and I will also remember a young Scottish-born Western Australian named James Winning, a 21-year-old orchardist and former secretary of the Bedfordale Agricultural and Horticultural Society, who, along with his brother Douglas and my great-grandfather Hugh, enlisted in 1915. Although Hugh spent most of the war on the Western Front, James was sent to Gallipoli as a member of the 11th Battalion, landing soon after enlisting.

On 6 August, James was shot and killed in the hours before the commencement of the Battle for Lone Pine and he now rests not too far from where he fell at Shell Green.

A few months after this death, James's sergeant wrote to *The Daily News* —

"I wish to give you what little news I can of 'Jim', who, you will have heard by the time you get this, has died like the young hero he was. My time is short, so I will come to the point by saying that, though wounded himself, he deliberately went to the aid of another wounded man, in doing which he was hit

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again fatally. His body was brought in later, and given decent burial. His Bible is in possession of one of our officers, who would be glad to send it on.

On the anniversary of his death in 1928, James's family—my family—put the following verse into a notice in *The West Australian*, which I will finish on, in memoriam not only to James Winning, but to all Western Australians who fought in the Great War. I quote —

Until the day breaks and the shadows flee away ...

Statement by Member for Churchlands

MR S.K. L'ESTRANGE (Churchlands) [12 noon]: Mr Speaker, 100 years ago, over 60 000 Australians lost their lives and 137 000 were wounded in the bloodbath that was World War I. As a percentage of forces committed, this equalled a casualty rate of almost 65 per cent, which is one of the highest casualty rates amongst the British Empire forces. It was the war that forged the Anzac spirit. It was a war that came at an enormous cost to our nation through lives lost, bodies broken, spirits shattered and families and communities devastated. How will we ensure that our society honours the values of those tens of thousands of Australians who made the ultimate sacrifice?

We think that warriors of 100 years ago came from a time of harder, tougher upbringings—they did. Many were just out of school in a time when school included harsh discipline and corporal punishment. Homes were stricter and beds were often thought colder and harder. We may reflect now that our children are raised today by helicopter parents in softer housebound environments and where poor school behaviour gets a young student a counselling team to support and nurture them—not the cane.

Do we have the stuff of those World War I warriors of 100 years ago, today—today in these softer times? Do we, a First World country with an advanced economy—a lucky Australia—still produce the bravest of the brave? The answer is yes. We saw this recently during the Afghanistan War. It was most publicly recognised through the incredibly brave exploits of Western Australia's Victoria Cross recipients, Mark Donaldson, Ben Roberts-Smith and Daniel Keighran. They all showed the highest mark of valour to place their own mortal bodies in the way of bullets and bombs to save others. Many, many lesser known brave Afghanistan and Iraq veterans walk amongst us in our everyday lives here in Western Australia. They have left the army and lead everyday lives and face everyday challenges like the rest of us, like the brave men and women who served in medical evacuation teams in Afghanistan and who were flown in helicopters into hot combat fights, exiting their aircraft onto the battlefield with bullets zipping around and at them while they tried to save the wounded.

Through the actions of Australian soldiers throughout the wars of the last 100 years, we know that what we call the Anzac spirit, which was forged at the beginning of World War I and reinforced on the Western Front, still lives on in the characteristics and qualities of the Australian soldier today, which can be replicated in all walks of life—to be professional; to train hard and practice, practice, practice; to perfect the individual and team drills; to keep your sense of humour; and to be reliable so that you will not let down your mates. To not let down your mates is the most common thread of being an Australian soldier, in danger, in wars over the last 100 years. The one common fear they dreaded the most was letting down their mates. Overarching all of these qualities is courage: courage to believe in and stand up for our country, Australia; courage to volunteer to sign up; courage to train hard; courage to be the best you can be; courage to leave your loved ones at home and deploy to a foreign land and into a combat zone, without really knowing what awaits; courage to do your absolute best, regardless of the conditions, all in the name of Australia; and moral courage, which is something that can be taught from an early age—the courage to stand up against those who may be swayed to do the wrong thing and to set them right.

All these characteristics and qualities are what we must continue to strive to instil in our children, for they are the future. This is what will ensure that our society honours the lives of those tens of thousands of Australians who made the ultimate sacrifice 100 years ago.

Lest we forget.

Statement by Member for Joondalup

MSE. HAMILTON (Joondalup) [12.04 pm]: On Sunday, we remember that 100 years ago, on 11 November 1918, the First World War ended. The guns fell silent and we celebrated, as we have for 100 years, the memory of all those who risked their lives for our safety. We have come to know them as Anzacs—brave Australians who fought four bloody years of brutal conflict. It is through tremendous good fortune that most of us alive today will never face what faced our Anzacs. Most of us will never witness the horrific sights and sounds of battle. Most of us will never be confronted by soldiers and armies trying to slaughter us. And most of us will never be asked by our country to make the ultimate sacrifice. More than 100 years ago, our country did ask this. It asked whether Western Australians and Australians more broadly would be prepared to risk making the ultimate sacrifice.

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Mr Speaker, 416 809 Australians were prepared to do this and almost 62 000 lost their lives. On Sunday, we remember them. We remember that 100 years ago, the First World War ended. It was a war that began when Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914, and Australian Prime Minister Joseph Cook and Leader of the Opposition Andrew Fisher declared that Britain would have Australia's full support. This support was greeted with great enthusiasm. For many Australians, it was unquestionably the right decision. On Sunday, we remember that this decision remains the costliest conflict in terms of death and casualties in Australia's history. Along with the almost 62 000 Australians who died, 156 000 more were wounded, gassed or taken prisoner.

In 100 years, Australia has changed dramatically. The country Australians fought to protect 100 years ago is very different from the country we know today. We do not know what our original Anzacs would have thought of today's Australia but we know what they thought of their Australia. They thought so much of it that they were prepared to risk their lives for it. I know that we all want to live in an Australia where we would be prepared to do the same—to live in a country we are so proud of that we would be willing to make that ultimate sacrifice.

In Joondalup, there was a moving tribute last week. From 1 to 4 November, the City of Joondalup hosted its third annual Kaleidoscope Festival. It is a world-class light and technology festival for which artists from around the world again came together to put on a free event full of light illuminations, projections, art and live performances for over 80 000 people. It is Western Australia's largest light and illuminations festival and there was a spectacular installation that saw Joondalup's Central Park transformed and renamed Armistice Park in celebration of the centenary of Armistice. Visitors were invited to take a single poppy and place it on the poppy wall during the festival and in time for the Remembrance Day service that will be held this Sunday. Yesterday, I was fortunate enough to attend the opening of the Anzac Memorial at Currambine Primary School, with representation from the Joondalup City RSL and my parliamentary colleague Mark Folkard. It is a place for students to reflect and will be used as an outdoor classroom. I am sure students will learn many skills there, including those of our Anzacs. Among these skills are courage, sacrifice, endurance and mateship.

Our Anzacs were courageous. We know that. Our students know that. But it is important they learn that you do not have to be an Anzac to be courageous. In fact, although they may have displayed their courage on the battlefield, that is not where our Anzacs first learnt it. Like the students at Currambine Primary School, they were once young Australians faced with many of the same challenges that young Australians face today. Tomorrow, I will attend a Remembrance Day service at Edgewater Primary School. It is another community, a group of students, parents, support staff, teachers and community members that will stand for a minute's silence to remember.

Although the First World War was fought, in the main, far from Australia, its effects were felt by all Australians. It has become known as the war to end all wars. When the war ended, thousands of ex-service men and women returned. Many were disabled with physical or emotional wounds. Our society was challenged as it considered how to reintegrate these Australians and rebuild. Society did rebuild, but it did not forget. And so we do not forget. We do not forget the Australian men who enlisted in the war or the Australian women who served in trying conditions. We do not forget that 100 years ago we promised to remember them. So, this coming Sunday we will do just that. On behalf of the Joondalup community, I will lay a wreath at the Centenary of the Armistice Remembrance Day service at Central Park in Joondalup, which is from 10.45 to 11.30 am.

Statement by Member for Carine

MR A. KRSTICEVIC (Carine) [12.09 pm]: Near the French town of Fromelles, the scene of one of Australia's worst days of war, stands the almost lifelike *Cobbers* sculpture. The memorial depicts the valour of Sergeant Simon Fraser from the 57th Australian Infantry Battalion, who risked life, limb and court martial by returning to the bloody battlefield to rescue an unnamed fellow Australian soldier during the fighting in Fromelles on 19 and 20 July 1916. The sculpture dramatically highlights the courage of the brave Australians who fought during World War I. According to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra, almost 2 000 Australians died in the Battle of Fromelles. In one night, Australia lost more men in the Western Front conflict than the combined casualties of the Boer, Korean and Vietnam Wars.

This nation's commitment to the cause can never be underestimated. Australia dedicated considerable manpower to the fighting around the world—from Gallipoli in Turkey to the Western Front in Europe. Our commitment to the various battles cannot be disputed. Our World War I soldiers, and those in other international battles over the following 100 years, fought for our freedom—a right all Australians enjoy to this day and one that we should never take for granted. We need to ensure our wonderful country remains free. By doing so, we guarantee that the sacrifices made by those men between 1914 and 1918 were not in vain.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 8 November 2018]

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Dr David Honey

To mark a century since the end of what was supposed to be the “war to end all wars”, this week members of the North Beach RSL sub-branch will conduct a two-day walk from Fremantle to Charles Riley Reserve. They will make that trek in honour of Sergeant Fraser, and, on its completion on Saturday afternoon, the men, who themselves have given service to this country, will unveil a plaque on the branch’s Wall of Honour to mark his bravery in battle. The group of 30 from the sub-branch believe this is the least they can do to thank the veterans who have gone before them. The president of the North Beach RSL, John Rolfe, told the *Stirling Times* this week that, “men returned home during and after the war maimed, diseased and shell-shocked”. Tragically, Sergeant Fraser did not return from France. He was killed on 11 May 1917 and buried, along with too many of his mates, at Bullecourt. His death came just a few days after he was promoted to second lieutenant, a rise reflecting his commitment to his corps.

For most Australian soldiers, particularly those involved in the ill-fated Gallipoli campaign, the final sighting of their beloved Australia was from Albany in Western Australia’s south. So this state has a very strong emotional attachment to the men, and women, who went off to serve all of us in overseas battles.

On Sunday, we mark a Centenary of Armistice—the end of World War I—and reflect on all who made the ultimate sacrifice for this country. Just as we honour the service of Second Lieutenant Fraser, we must remember the actions of all service men and women with tremendous gratitude. I urge all Australians to take a moment during the one minute’s silence at 11.00 am on Sunday to reflect on how wonderful a nation we have become on the back of their Great War effort.

Lest we forget.

Statement by Member for Baldvis

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldvis — Parliamentary Secretary) [12.12 pm]: The Great War changed the world. It is interesting to go back in time 100 years, to this very chamber, in fact, and recall what members in this place said and heard. Courtesy of the Whip, I have a copy of the *Hansard* from 12 November 1918. The day’s sitting began at 4.30 pm, when the then Speaker took the chair and read prayers. The then Premier, Sir Henry Lefroy, then quickly moved a motion to mark the end of the Great War. During the debate on that motion, the Premier made the follow comment —

The time has come when Great Britain and her Dominions with the Great American Republic, and I trust France alongside of us, may be able to say that in the future, or at any rate in our time, the world shall not be devastated again by such a war.

The then Leader of the Opposition, Philip Collier, put similar views. He said —

I hope that now we have peace, it will endure for ages.

Those men would not have known, of course, that barely 21 years after those words were uttered, the world would again be involved in global conflict. That day’s sitting ended barely 45 minutes later. The motion on the celebration of the end of the Great War was put, and, on the call of the then Premier, members sang *God Save the Queen* and *Rule Britannia*.

As I have said, the Great World changed the world. The very fact that I exist today is a result of the endless consequences of this war—the consequences of changed lives, and of lives ended too soon—which continue to echo through the ages. The experiences of one British soldier at the front led to him migrating to Australia, bringing with him a young girl, who would become my grandmother and live to a ripe old age of almost 103 years. My great-grandfather served in the 253rd Siege Battery of the Royal Garrison Artillery. I have a picture of him taken at Aldershot just before they departed for active service in 1916. Another picture shows him with his mates in a French farmhouse near the front, smiling and nursing newborn puppies. It was a moment of joy in a very bleak time. His daughter Nellie Hird was a toddler back in Britain. I still have the embroidered postcards that he sent to her from France. He survived the war, but, like so many, never quite recovered. He had suffered from mustard gas attacks, and doctors advised him to migrate to the fresh, dry climate of Australia for his health. He died in Australia at a young age. But he brought a little girl to Australia who would become my grandmother.

Another consequence of the Great War was the group settlement scheme. This scheme was responsible for bringing my other grandmother to Western Australia from the United Kingdom. The scheme brought to Western Australia soldiers and families looking for work in post-war Britain to become farmers in our south west. The then Premier, James Mitchell, earned the nickname “Moo Cow” Mitchell for his obsession with the scheme as a way of establishing a major dairy industry in Western Australia. My grandmother Irene Hughes was a young girl when she arrived with her family to live in a group settlement near Manjimup. She lived in a tent made of hessian and tin cans, with a dirt floor. There were group settlements across the south west, each identified by a number. Group settlements also brought the first settlers to an area later known as Baldvis, the electorate I now have the privilege

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of representing. In fact, the very name Baldavis was formed from the names of the three ships that brought group settlement families from the United Kingdom to the area—the *Balranald*, *Diogenes* and *Jervis Bay*. Today, major roads in Baldavis are still called Fifty Road, Eighty Road and Sixty Eight Road, all named after group settlements.

As members can see, 100 years after the Great War, our world today is still marked and altered by that momentous and tragic event, with consequences that have echoed through the decades. While we reflect on those consequences, it is only fair that we also reflect on what we now do not have because of the Great War—the men and women who are not in this chamber today because their forebears did not survive the fields of France or the cliffs of Gallipoli. What ministers, Premiers or Prime Ministers did we not have because of that war? What policies and legislation did they not deliver? What did our state and nation not have? Today, 100 years after the end of the Great War, we shall remember them—those who fell, and those who never were.

Statement by Member for Hillarys

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [12.17 pm]: Mr Speaker, on the eve of the Centenary of the Armistice that brought an end to the Great War, it is appropriate—indeed, it is incumbent upon us—to record in this place the events that unfolded 100 years ago. The Great War was one of the epoch events in this country's history. With a population at that time of just under five million, it touched every part of life, every level of society and every family in every town of every state in Australia. Historian Bill Gammage observed in his acclaimed work *The Broken Years* that their lives were changed forever, and on such a scale that the impact on Australia and the world was immeasurable.

Yet for many who boarded the boats that gathered in Albany on that famous first day of November 1914, it began with such promise and enthusiasm. They were bright-eyed and seeking adventure, and, for most, going to distant lands they had never heard of or had only read about in school history books. Gammage noted that when the war was declared, most of that early avalanche of volunteers was roused by a sense of adventure. Great wars were rare, and short, and many eagerly seized that fleeting opportunity.

Over the subsequent years, the struggles at Gallipoli, the extreme heat and terrain of the Middle East, and the muddy waterlogged hell of the Western Front, soon revealed the full horrors of war. Modern warfare and its conduct changed in front of their eyes. The year 1918 began much like the preceding year. During the spring offensive, Operation Michael was yet another setback for the allies. After regrouping, a breakthrough was achieved at the French village of Villers-Bretonneux. Had the second battle of Villers-Bretonneux occurred on any day other than Anzac Day, it is arguable that the feats there would be as well known today in Australia as that of other more well-known campaigns. The Hundred Days Offensive finally brought an end to it all. A young Australian, Lieutenant General John Monash, particularly shone brightly during this time. Having first secured his reputation at the Battle of Hamel, his war plan of a coordinated approach of tanks, aircraft, artillery and machine guns had achieved a brilliant victory for the Allies. Later, this was repeated in a number of other successful battles and provided a template for larger offensives during the final three months of the war, most notably at Amiens and the breaking of the Hindenburg Line, where ultimately, German resistance was left in ruins. Today, Sir John Monash is rightly considered one of this country's finest wartime generals.

The past four years of the Anzac Centenary has seen a welcoming resurgence of interest and recognition in not only the Great War, but also all conflicts that Australians have fought in. Like the original Anzacs we speak of here today, our veterans of more recent conflicts upheld a similar Anzac tradition of leaving our shores to defend the values and ideals of our nation. Poignantly, one day in the not-too-distant future, only veterans from these later wars will fill our Remembrance Day services. What started as an assassination on a Sarajevo street in late July 1914 sparked a war the likes of which the world had never before seen, that only finally ended four years later with the old world order upended, revolution and much of the world's geopolitical landscape reshaped. Around 417 000 Australians enlisted during the Great War. Incredibly, this represented nearly 40 per cent of the male population aged between 18 and 44. More than 60 000 were killed and 156 000 wounded, gassed or taken prisoner. As has so often been the case since Federation, Western Australia punched above its weight. More than 32 000 Western Australians served, of whom over 7 000 were killed, died of wounds or illness. Their names are listed at the State War Memorial forever more and their memory remains eternal. That generation of Australians, those "great-hearted men", as historian Charles Bean called them, are all gone now, but the imprint they left behind and the legacy they etched into the Australian spirit long endured well after their voices fell silent.

Lest we forget.

Statement by Member for Girrawheen

Extract from Hansard

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MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [12.22 pm]: The 100th anniversary of the Armistice of World War I is significant. It was the war to end all wars, according to H.G. Wells. Alas, that proved not to be the case. In recent years, commemorations have moved away from generic declaratory statements about courage, bravery, sacrifice and mateship. Instead, our conversations and stories are much more nuanced. We now ponder the toll of post-traumatic stress disorder and those with shell shock, unfairly branded as cowards. We now appreciate that in battle, our soldiers, despite their courage, followed battle plans and orders from the higher-ups that were sometimes fatally flawed.

More people now know about the travails on the Western Front. Although they are not as well known as Gallipoli, the names of towns like Fromelles, Ypres, Villers-Bretonneux and Hamel are synonymous with the extraordinary efforts of Australian soldiers.

I have a connection with Pozières. Historian Charles Bean famously observed that the Pozières ridge is more densely sown with Australian sacrifice than any other place on earth. In July 1916, three Australian divisions attacked German positions and over the next six weeks incurred 24 000 casualties, 6 800 dead and five Victoria Crosses. One of those soldiers was a stockman from Koolunga in South Australia, John Wilfred Sykes, or Wilf to his mates—my maternal grandfather. He was injured on one of the first days of action there.

Our family has followed his service through the marvellous archive at the National Library of Australia. Original records have been scanned and placed online and that brings the action much closer. We can read the handwritten entries, many in beautiful copperplate, recording injury, transfer to hospital or another battalion, promotion and even the contracting of the dreaded and ubiquitous trench foot on more than one occasion. At Anzac commemorations at Landsdale Primary School, it was terrific to see the work that the students had done to trace their relatives in this way.

Through war, we have bonded with ally and foe alike. We need look no further than the touching words of Kemal Atatürk, the man who defended Gallipoli and became President of Turkey, inscribed at Anzac Cove and at the memorial on the Albany foreshore. Whether a Johnny or a Mehmet, the fallen all had mothers who mourned their loss.

Likewise, Australians have enduring ties with France.

In April 1918, Villers-Bretonneux was captured by the Germans, who prevailed against exhausted British troops. The town was destroyed—houses, the school, everything—and terrified villagers were in the process of fleeing. They were shocked, hurt and unsure where to go or what to do. Everything they owned was destroyed. Where would they be safe? Australians were called to assist to hold the line against the advancing enemy. Witnesses said that forlorn, terrified women leaving the town became overjoyed when they realised that the Australians were arriving. The villagers turned around and retraced their steps, calling out “Vive l’Australie!”—long live Australia!—such was their faith that the Australian forces would hold back the Germans. Reinforcing their confidence was the gruff reassurance from the Australian soldiers, “Fini retreat, madame; beaucoup Australiens ici!”—no more retreat, madam; many Australians here. General Pompey Elliott declared —

I was never so proud of being an Australian as I am today ...

The Australian fighting spirit meant that the town was recaptured. It was a costly battle with 1 200 soldiers lost. That display of courage has forged a lasting relationship between the people of Villers-Bretonneux and Australia. If we visit, despite the passing of years, we will see ample evidence of the town’s great affection for Australians. Each year, just like us, the townsfolk remember Anzac Day with special events. There is an Australian war cemetery and a new museum featuring the stories of the magnificent efforts of Australians in the battles in France and Belgium along the Somme river. What becomes clear to visitors is the many other signs of the close bonds and friendships formed. The school was destroyed in the battle and it was rebuilt with donations from Australia. Schoolchildren helped the fundraising effort and the Victorian Department of Education and Training also contributed. The school was appropriately renamed Victoria. The new school opened on Anzac Day in 1927. “N’oublions jamais l’Australie!”—never forget Australia—is inscribed in the school hall. Woodcarvings on pillars in the hall depict Australian flowers and animals. There are other signs of strong connections. The main street is called Rue de Melbourne and there is a cafe called Restaurant Kangourou.

The grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the saved villagers attending that school have many years later demonstrated that they have clearly not forgotten Australia. In 2009, the children of Villers-Bretonneux raised \$20 000 for a Victorian school that burnt down during the bushfires.

Lest we forget.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 8 November 2018]

p8078b-8093a

Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Shane Love; Mr Roger Cook; Mr Ian Blayney; Mrs Robyn Clarke; Mr Terry Redman; Mr David Michael; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Ms Emily Hamilton; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Peter Katsambanis; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr John McGrath; Mr John Carey; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Janine Freeman; Dr David Honey

Statement by Member for South Perth

MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth) [12.27 pm]: The First World War remains the costliest conflict in deaths and casualties. From a population of fewer than five million people, 416 809 men enlisted, of whom more than 60 000 were killed—as the Premier said earlier, more than 6 000 of them were Western Australians—and 156 000 were wounded, gassed or taken prisoner. World War I is still regarded as possibly the deadliest conflict in history and the question remains: did it have to happen? On Sunday, I will attend the Armistice Day—also known as Remembrance Day—service held each year by the South Perth branch of the Returned and Services League of Australia to recognise those from the district who served in that conflict and, more importantly, those who lost their lives. In more recent years, on Anzac Day at that service we have been joined by young members of the local Turkish community, who express the same concerns about a war that claimed the lives of so many of their forefathers in the battle against the Australian and New Zealand troops at Gallipoli. They, too, ask the question: why? Yes, 100 years ago, World War I had a terrible impact on the South Perth community.

Local historian Anthony Styan has identified 256 First World War servicemen and 14 nurses associated with the community of South Perth. Of these, 34 men were killed in action or died from wounds during the conflict. South Perth men and women served across all theatres and service branches. They received the following decorations and honours: one Victoria Cross; three Distinguished Service Orders; one Royal Red Cross, nursing service; three Military Crosses; two Distinguished Conduct Medals; eight Military Medals; two Meritorious Service Medals; and six mentions in dispatches.

Lieutenant Lawrence Dominic McCarthy spent his early childhood at the Clontarf Boys Orphanage, which is now within the boundaries of the City of South Perth and in my time has always been in the electorate of South Perth. He is believed to have been born in York, where his parents died when he was very young. On 23 August 1918, Lieutenant McCarthy and his D Company sergeant attacked several German machine-gun posts, captured 460 metres of trench line and as many as 50 enemy soldiers. For this feat he was awarded the Victoria Cross and his second Croix de Guerre, a French military honour. Two sets of brothers from South Perth, Ralph and Hugh Barber, and Francis and Pierce McEnroe, were both killed in action during the war. The South Perth mayor at the time, and member of Parliament, Alex Clydesdale was instrumental in establishing the Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers' Association, which despite its odd name became a statewide charitable service dedicated to raising funds and securing employment for returned soldiers and their families after the war. It went on to run the iconic White City attraction on the Perth Esplanade in the postwar period, as well as a similar establishment in South Perth, the Como Carnival.

The South Perth Returned and Services League of Australia was particularly strong, and its concert party The Whizz Bangs toured widely. Henry Kagan "Harry" Kahan, who was editor of the sub-branch newsletter, *The Barrage*, and secretary Morris Mundy were prominent South Perth citizens and instrumental in the formation of civic institutions for the community, such as the community hospital, the Horticultural Society and many others. The Morris Mundy Reserve in Kensington is named in honour of the late Morris Mundy. The Ugly Men's Voluntary Workers' Association was established in Western Australia in 1917 with a membership drawn mainly from the lower and middle working classes. The Ugly Men initially organised busy bees and raised funds and built houses for war widows. Later their fundraising was directed to supporting cases of hardship in the general community, and they provided handouts such as cash, food, bedding, clothing, boots and blankets. South Perth Ugly Men's association members built houses for men who had returned from war and held activities to raise money for war widows. A tiny house built for William Miller Kirk at 49 Arlington Avenue, South Perth, was immortalised in a 1918 photograph as their first job completed.

As a member of this place, I would like to thank Parliament for the opportunity to speak about this important centenary that we will all be remembering on Sunday.

Statement by Member for Perth

MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Parliamentary Secretary) [12.32 pm]: I stand to briefly reflect upon a critical point in our nation's history, marking 100 years since the end of the First World War. I want to acknowledge all the great speeches that we have heard and the detailed stories of many fine Western Australians. As we have heard, the Great War remains Australia's costliest conflict and it would both define our nation, but also have a lasting impact on the lives of the men and women who returned, and their families. Some still say that Remembrance Day or Anzac Day is a celebration of war or that it has had its time. They are wrong because they do not understand what ceremonies like Remembrance Day stand for, what it means for many Australians. At the heart of our remembrance tradition is the critical truth that the peace and freedom that we enjoy today and in years to come has always come at a price. Ordinary men and women made the ultimate decision to give their lives so that we can enjoy the incredible life we have in Australia today.

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The member for Warren–Blackwood said that we all have a family connection to this day and he is right. My father was very passionate about Remembrance Day. He had a dream that one day the *Ode* would be said at every school event and assembly across Western Australia. My father was in the 2/2nd Commandos, which was the predecessor to the SAS—400 men who undertook guerrilla warfare in East Timor. They went to East Timor among the fears of a Japanese advance towards mainland Australia. Hopelessly outnumbered and unable to hold the airfield, they retreated into the mountains from where they would wage guerrilla warfare against the Japanese. With their wits and skills, they tied down thousands of Japanese troops in that campaign, diverting the enemy from heading to the Kokoda Trail. My dad's troop, the 2/2nd Commandos, became the only unit within the entire 8th Division to face the Japanese in early 1942 and remain an integrated fighting force. At one stage, it was considered lost for a year. I always wondered what went through my father's mind during this time. It is fair to say that when he returned from that war, he was affected forever.

Of the men in the First World War, or my father's journey, it is always hard to imagine the personal courage and bravery needed to fight for their life in hostile and foreign conditions, and to lose mates right before them with home and family so very far away. But the one thing we can do—I say this at every ceremony—is honour their service by passing their individual stories on, like my father's, from generation to generation; to take a moment of time every year, whether it is Anzac Day or Remembrance Day, to remember the freedom we enjoy and all those, like my father, who did everything to ensure it.

Lest we forget.

Statement by Member for Kalgoorlie

MR K.M. O'DONNELL (Kalgoorlie) [12.36 pm]: I rise to talk specifically about two soldiers. Private James “Jim” Brennan was born on 9 October 1917 in Laverton. He worked as a stockman at Tarmoola Station in the northern goldfields. He was one of the 5 000 Aboriginal soldiers who served in the First and Second World Wars. He enlisted to serve in the Second World War in August 1940. As part of the Western Australian 2/28th Battalion, he was deployed to north Africa with allied forces at the Battle of El Alamein in 1942. His battalion suffered heavy casualties and he was one of hundreds of Australian soldiers captured and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp in northern Italy. In April 1943, he was transferred with other Australian prisoners of war to work on rice farms. He escaped the prison camp in September 1943 and joined the Italian resistance to fight Nazi forces and Italian fascist militias. In company with another Aboriginal POW from Queensland, Edward Albert, Jim remained on the loose in northern Italy during the winter of 1943–44. They spent seven months avoiding capture with the aid of Italian civilians who provided them with food and shelter. They were recaptured in 1944 and transferred to a German POW camp to serve out the rest of the war. Jim was repatriated. He arrived in Australia in early July 1945 and was discharged before Christmas 1945. He moved to Menzies after the war where he, his wife, Myrtle, and their family played a prominent part in the town's history. He founded the Eastern Goldfields Aboriginal Advancement Council in 1965. In 1984, Jim was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in recognition of his service to Aboriginal welfare. Jim died in the year 2000.

Keith Payne was born in Ingham, Queensland, on 30 August 1933. He attended Ingham State School and then became an apprentice cabinet-maker. During this time, he also served with the 31st Australian Infantry Battalion in the Citizen Military Forces. He joined the Australian Regular Army in August 1951. Following initial training, he was posted to the 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, 2RAR. After transferring to the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, in 1952, he was sent to Japan as an infantry reinforcement. Later that year, he was sent to Korea, where he joined his unit. He served with the battalion until it left in 1953. He then joined the 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade. Later in 1953, he returned to Australia. In December 1954, Keith married Florence Flaw, a member of the Women's Royal Australian Army Corps. In 1955, he was promoted to corporal. In February 1960, he was posted to the 3rd Battalion, RAR, based in Queensland. He was promoted to sergeant in 1961 and deployed to Malaysia in 1963. He was injured during an operation on the Malay–Thai border in October 1964; however, he remained on duty and returned to Australia with 3RAR in 1965. He then spent a brief period with the 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, and was then appointed as an instructor to the officer training unit at Scheyville, New South Wales.

In February 1967, he joined the Second Royal Pacific Islands Regiment in Papua New Guinea. That same year, he was promoted to Warrant Officer Class 2 and returned to Brisbane. In February 1969, he was appointed to the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam. Several months later, he commanded the 212th Company of the 1st Mobile Strike Force Battalion when it was attacked by a strong North Vietnamese force. His company was isolated and surrounded on three sides. His Vietnamese troops began to fall back. Wounded and under heavy enemy fire, Keith remained and held them off by firing his weapons and throwing grenades. Despite being surrounded, he spent the next three hours looking for wounded soldiers, eventually finding 40 men in enemy-dominated

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territory and bringing them back in. He was later evacuated to Brisbane. Keith received his Victoria Cross from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1970. He was made a Freeman of the City of Brisbane. He received the Distinguished Service Cross and the Silver Star from the United States and the Republic of Vietnam awarded him the Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star. Keith has been a strong advocate for the rights of returned soldiers and their families. He spends numerous weeks and days in the goldfields helping Aboriginal communities. Keith Payne is my friend. He is our oldest living Victoria Cross recipient.

Statement by Member for Mirrabooka

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka) [12.40 pm]: I would also like to celebrate the Centenary of Armistice, the end of what was supposed to be the war to end all wars. I would like to commemorate my grandfather who served our country in World War I.

My paternal grandfather, Arthur William Freeman, enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in 1916, two years after the war began and two years after he married my grandmother, Adelaide, who carried the name of her South Australian birthplace, a reflection of her German immigrant heritage. Arthur left a toddler and infant to take the oath of allegiance at Blackboy Hill. After training in field artillery reinforcement in Melbourne, he sailed back to his British birthplace on the SS *Orsova* on 1 August 1916. He began his active service on 3 March 1917. Until 13 February 1918, he served on the battlefields of Bullecourt, Messines, Polygon Wood, Passchendaele and Péronne.

From 8 March 1918 until 18 January 1919, Arthur was sent to the Somme region, Villers-Bretonneux, Hamel, Amiens and the Hindenburg Line. As a member of the Ammunition Columns, he, along with other soldiers and four mules or horses, would cart ammunition, much of the time having to calm the animals because of the bombardment and hazards on the journey to the field guns. Photos reveal the peril they faced, particularly in places such as Hellfire Corner where they were under constant fire by the Germans. Ammunition Columns drivers would have to whip up their horses to get through without casualties. Soldiers would often need to stand between the two lead mules or horses to prevent them from bolting with the cargo of ammunition when there was fire or shelling. Many animals and men suffered the terrifying consequences of their lives being under constant threat. Many died and the men who lived had nightmares that tormented their future dreams.

My grandfather served between March and November 1918 under the command of Lieutenant General Monash. For the first time, the five divisions of the Australian Imperial Forces operated together and they made many of the gains that led to the end of the war and the Armistice. It is an honour that my grandfather made a difference in bringing peace to Europe.

The Armistice may have signalled the formal end to the war, but my grandfather's posting continued beyond November 1918 until April 1919. My father, Arthur, who was named after his father, was seven when his father died, most likely as a consequence of his service. Having lost his father so young, my father often wondered about the Belgian postcards that his father sent during his time in Charleroi, Dinant and Namur. In 2014, my father and mother trod my grandfather's path to learn of his experiences. They were grateful for the warmth of the Belgian people, including Claire Dujardin, a historian who has written about the Australian soldiers who were billeted in Belgium after the Armistice. In her paper she notes that after four years of German occupation, the Australian soldiers were welcomed. They also met with Marie and Bernard Delattre, whom they accompanied to a commemoration service that the then Australian Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, attended in June 2014. My father learnt that his father had bivouacked on open fields west of Bailleul—it would have been cold—where they were ordered to dispose of the mules and horses, which, having served them so well, were not able to return to Australia. My grandfather returned to Australia to work with his Austrian-German father-in-law, Mick Sommer, in his business, the Union Bakery, in Kalgoorlie. Although my Austrian great-grandfather was not interned like so many Australians of German heritage, the reunion of these two people illustrates the futility of war in which ordinary people, such as my British-born grandfather, fought German folk whose mixed ancestry, values and principles of peace and equality were shared by his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

As we remember the fallen soldiers this Sunday, Remembrance Day, we also remember those who returned from war, such as my grandfather, and their families, who came from very mixed backgrounds, and the troubles that came from war.

Lest we forget.

Statement by Member for Cottesloe

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [12.45 pm]: I also support the comments of the previous speakers in recognising the 100th anniversary of Remembrance Day. Similar to the member for Mirrabooka, I want to reflect on the experiences of my family and share some similarities between our stories.

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Remembrance Day is a special day in most of the Commonwealth of Nations to recognise the end of the First World War and, subsequently, the sacrifice that men and women made in defending their nations. When I reflect on this important day and the millions of people killed in war, I have mixed emotions. My father, Peter Honey, served as a mechanic in the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in the Second World War. He had no formal qualifications as a mechanic but had grown up on a farm and, as a young man, had run a garage in Kulin. Like many farmers, he could turn his hand to any mechanical task and repair anything with the proverbial 12-gauge wire. My father served most of his time in New Britain, the main island of Papua New Guinea. In my father's case, joining the army was a pivotal and positive change and something he reflected on positively. He had a strong sense of duty and keenly felt the need to defend his family and country from Japanese forces. He relished the challenge of repairing everything from aircraft to tanks with limited resources and drew on his bush mechanic skills to craft replacement parts from the limited resources available. He loved the interaction with the Papua New Guineans and formed good friendships with members of the local communities. He was a keen fisherman and, along with his colleagues and the local men, built a fishing boat that was used during breaks. My father enjoyed the ordered life of the Army and the camaraderie of his mates. Perhaps the main legacy for his family from his time in war was his abhorrence of wearing hats indoors and reminding us that we would have been on a charge if we had done this in the Army. It was also very important that we did not walk in front of him. We learnt to skip to match his step. He would refer to the time only in the military 24-hour clock and could not stand a lack of punctuality.

My grandfather, David Honey, served in the 10th Light Horse and 3rd Machine Gun Squadron in the Middle East. He was a farmer in Kulin who joined the Army in February 1917. My dad was only 15 months old when my grandfather enlisted. My uncle David was born after he left for Palestine. One can only imagine the enormous distress that my grandmother must have felt with a husband going to war and having to run the family farm and business with two very young children. My grandfather's experience in the Middle East had a much longer lasting impact on his family. He was affected by gas during the conflict and suffered serious respiratory health problems for the remainder of his life. He died at the young age of 65. My mother and aunties told me that the majority of men who came back from the First World War were very badly affected by their experience. They witnessed mass killings and agonising deaths from untreatable illnesses, such as dysentery and sepsis, which today we consider simple to treat. My father mentioned the distress that was felt by soldiers who were required to shoot their horses before they returned to Australia because of quarantine concerns. These were the horses that they had mostly brought from their own farms that had been their faithful companions during the horror of war. We have much better recognition of the issues associated with post-traumatic stress disorder affecting returning service people today; however, at that time, it was typically referred to as "shell shock", and individuals were left to their own devices to cope upon their return from service. My ultimate reflection on this important day is to honour the service of the men and women who have made so many sacrifices to give us the life we have today. We enjoy a quality of life that is the envy of the world.

I also reflect on the important role that we play as representatives of, and leaders in, our community. Our role and my commitment is to do everything that we can to ensure that disputes are resolved by political means and without the need to resort to war.

Lest we forget.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 8105.]