

Fuel for Thought

We Won't Forget

On the hundredth anniversary of the Gallipoli landing, I would like to pay tribute to all those who have made sacrifices in the service of this great country, especially those from our region.



Bruce Andersen
Site Superintendent,
QER

When I look down the roll of honour, I try to imagine what it must have been like for each of those people who farewelled their loved ones a hundred years ago, and sailed into an uncertain and frightening future. They didn't know how long that would be...how long it would be before they saw their families and friends again, if ever.

They crowded into ships for six weeks or more, hastily trained in England or Cairo, and were sent straight into the hellish conditions of Western Europe. There they lived – month in, month out - with constant shelling, gunfire, poison gas, cold, rain, mud, sickness, miserable rations and the deaths of many, many friends.

It's a day of tribute and quiet reflection on their service and that all of those who have served since, right up to today: those serving in Afghanistan and elsewhere in the world. We never celebrate war, but we reflect with pride and gratitude on their resilience; their courage; and their mateship.

We also share quietly in the grief of the families and friends of those who were lost; and those who returned, but will never be the same. That grief was well captured in a poem by John William Streets, a young British soldier, who was killed in action in 1916, soon after writing it:

*When war shall cease this lonely unknown spot
Of many a pilgrimage will be the end
And flowers will shine in this now barren plot
And fame upon it through the years descend:
But many a heart upon each simple cross
Will hang the grief, the memory of its loss.*

On behalf of all of us at QER I want to express our gratitude for the sacrifices of our past and present service men and women, especially those who paid the ultimate price. Lest we forget.



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