

ANZAC Day

ANZAC Day on the 25th April is a prime time to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services to this nation.

Anzac Day is usually an occasion where schools, communities or families come together to share stories, to honour and remember those who fought in wars and especially those who lost their lives in doing so.

This year of course, these activities won't happen. There will be no ANZAC Parade. Covid-19 means that we will honour and remember our Anzacs differently.

This year the telling of these stories depends on each of us. Aboriginal ANZACS are often overlooked in commemorations, but war does not discriminate. Talk to your children or students about what they have previously learned about Aboriginal soldiers and explore some of the activities, videos, links and resources in this feature.

Over 1000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders fought for Australia in World War I despite profound barriers to enlisting.

In proportion to population, no community in Australia contributed more to the war effort in the Second World War than the Torres Strait Islanders. By 1944 almost every able-bodied male Torres Strait Islander had enlisted. However, they never received the same rates of pay or conditions as other soldiers, initially one-third that of regular soldiers, and after a two-day "mutiny" in December 1943 this was raised to two-thirds.

See <https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/encyclopedia/indigenous>

"When my uncle came back from serving in Korea he couldn't even get a beer in a pub let alone a pension, and he wasn't permitted to become a citizen until 1968"

John Kinsella, nephew of Australia's most famous Aboriginal soldier, Captain Reg Saunders MBE.



Did you know that Victorian Gunditjmara man Reg Saunders was the first Aboriginal person to be commissioned as an officer in the Australian Army?

Explore Indigenous Australians' war service.

The [Australian War Memorial](#) site has a variety of online resources (see below), as well as the [Department of Veteran Affairs](#) (DVA). Using the Australian War Memorial's online databases, [investigate](#) the war service of Aboriginal servicemen and women.

Download DVA's [Indigenous Service](#) publications for primary and secondary schools for background and suggested inquiry activities. Search 'Indigenous Service'.

If you're school-based, [contact](#) the Australian War Museum to borrow [Memorial Box 03: Too Dark for the Light Horse](#) for follow up lessons. This site also takes you to online resources and Australian Curriculum links.

Explore the dedicated [AIATSIS](#) site – Indigenous Australians at War.



Group portrait of the special platoon consisting of Aboriginal soldiers, all volunteers, at Number 9 camp at Wangaratta with Corporal Mullett (left), Major Joseph Albert Wright (centre) and Sergeant Morris (right). Major Wright, a World War 1 Light Horse veteran, was in charge of this Platoon, which was the only Aboriginal squad in the Australian military forces. Source: [Australian War Memorial](#)

Bush TV's [Untold Stories](#) about WW1 Aboriginal service men and research the lives of Victorian Koories such as Brabuwooloon private Harry Thorpe. *Why were there such barriers and how did some overcome them?*

Watch a range of videos such as Living Black's [Unidentified Soldier](#), [Indigenous Servicemen through the Years](#) and ABC Message Stick's [ANZAC](#), and discuss issues of equality, identity, recognition and life after service raised.

If you're home-based with kids and family, milk carton lanterns lining your driveway at dawn like the ones pictured below might be a good activity, especially customised to include Koorie perspectives. All you need is milk cartons, candles, markers and creativity.





Group portrait of Aboriginal women and girls knitting socks, jumpers and balaclavas for the war effort at Cummeragunja Government Mission, NSW (opposite Barmah, Vic) on the Murray River. Identified, left to right, back row: Merle Morgan, June Morgan, Weeny Charles, Amy Briggs, Valda McGee, Edna Walker, Sheila Charles, Joan Charles, Elsie Cooper, Midge Walsh, Florry Walker. Front row: Joyce Atkinson, Clare Charles, Alma Charles, Ada Cooper, Nelly Davis?, Elizabeth Morgan, Lauraine Charles, Greta Cooper, Violet Charles, Wynnie Walker, Hilda Walker, Georgina Atkinson, Lydia Morgan, Reta Cooper, Maggie Weston. **Australian War Memorial: P01562.001.**

Check out the range of Aboriginal ANZAC-themed activity sheets on [Wingaru](http://wingaru.com.au).



ANZAC - Aboriginal Diggers

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people have served in every conflict & commitment involving Australian defence contingents since 1901, including both world wars.
Can you find the names of the Aboriginal Diggers listed below?

L D C E A R Z M P B H C A S F I E Z X A
 H E L E N A N N I E M C D O N A L D A P
 O P N E A L D U R I Y D O N R O A D P T
 K P V A W L S N H W H K Y W P S A W V L
 Z H L K A T G S Q U C F C E S Y L F J E
 R I M L U G F Z D E G E K A L X U R E M
 R L H O R L E Q S G E Y J E I L S A R A
 N L K V E B G W D V C N T M K C R N O L
 A I S F G D O U G L A S G R A N T K M E
 K P S B S O K U Q O J U L I X C N F E N
 B M A M A F P L Y H U M B D F T D I L W
 A C S N U W I L L I A M I R W I N S O A
 M L A E N A D N L D B X T X K X A H C T
 N E T G D Q P H C O A C G U Q U L E K E
 O O D G E R O O N O O N U C C A L R E R
 H D M A R I O N L E A N N E S M I T H S
 M W R J S D S X P Y Z M Q K V P W S R M

Douglas Grant	Marion Leanne Smith
Frank Fisher	Oodgeroo Noonuccal
Helen Annie McDonald	Phillip McLeod
Jerome Locke	Reg Saunders
Len Waters	William Irwin

www.wingaru.com.au

Consider participating in the **Shrine of Remembrance Poster Competition** highlighting the participation of Aboriginal service men and women as a class or whole-school activity.

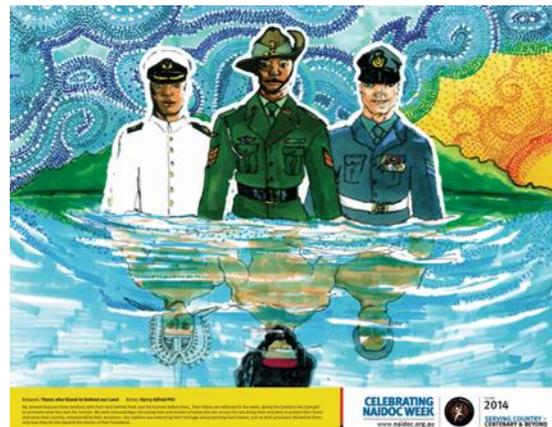
The winning poster will become the official Remembrance Day 2020 poster for the Shrine of Remembrance and will appear on banners and posters around the City of Melbourne. Schools awarded prizes to the winning and highly commended artworks receive a selection of books from the Department of Veterans' Affairs, a personalised visit to the Shrine and are invited to place a flower in the Field of Poppies whilst attending the Official Remembrance Day Service on 11 November.

Winning entries and highly commended artworks will be displayed in an exhibition at the Shrine to coincide with Remembrance Day 2020.

Entry closes, September 2020 (date TBC).

Depending on how things progress over the next coming months as a result of Covid-19, individuals might be interested in attending the annual **Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service** if it goes ahead, held annually at the Shrine of Remembrance on the **31st May, from 11am-2 pm**, with the laying of a wreath on the forecourt.

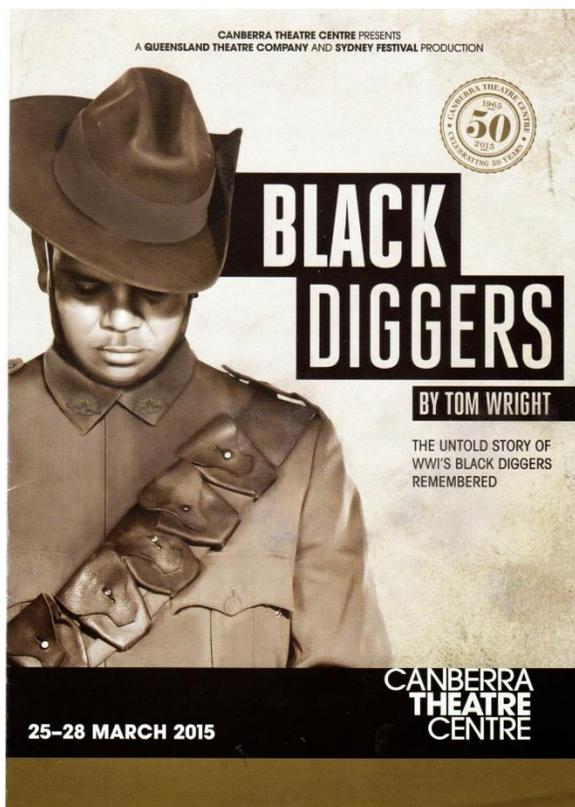
If not, save the date for next year.



NAIDOC 2014 poster see <http://www.naidoc.org.au/poster-gallery>



Watch the promotional video **Aborigines are True Soldiers of the King** (DVA) by clicking on the image and discuss the portrayal of Aboriginal soldiers and purpose of the promotional video.



Black Diggers is a play written by Tom Wright and originally directed by Wesley Enoch. The production is the culmination of painstaking research into the lives and deaths of the thousand or so Indigenous soldiers who fought for the British Commonwealth in World War I. Grand in scale and scope, *Black Diggers* draws from in-depth interviews with the families of

Black Diggers who heard the call to arms from all over Australia, as well as conversations with veterans, historians and academics.

Suitable for study with senior students, click on the [Black Diggers poster link](#) for a preview online, or to purchase a copy of the play. A filmed post-school matinee discussion uploaded by The Arts Centre, Melbourne can be viewed online through this [VCE Drama Teachers' Resource](#).

Victorian Curriculum:

VCHHK062 How they, their family, friends and communities commemorate past events that are important to them: History P-2: Community histories

VCHHC067 Identify the origin and content features of primary sources when describing the significance of people, places and events: History 3-4: Historical sources as evidence.

VCHHK076 Significance of days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia and the importance of symbols and emblems, including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week and National Sorry Day: History 3-4: Community, remembrance and celebrations.

VCHHK094 The different experiences and perspectives of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrants, women, and children: History 5-6: Australia as a nation.

VCHHC125 Evaluate different historical interpretations and contested debates: History 9 - 10: Historical sources as evidence.

VCHHK144 Different historical interpretations and contested debates about World War I and the significance of Australian commemorations of the war: History 9-10: The modern world and Australia, Australia at war (1914 – 1945): World War I.

VCHHK146 Significant places where Australians fought and their perspectives and experiences in these places: History 9-10: The modern world and Australia | Australia at war (1914 – 1945): World War II.

VCCCC027 Examine how national identity can shape a sense of belonging and examine different perspectives about Australia's national identity, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives: Civics and Citizenship 7 – 8: Citizenship, Diversity and Identity.

VCCCG031 Explain the Australian government's roles and responsibilities at a global level, including provision of foreign aid, peacekeeping and the United Nations: Civics & Citizenship 9-10: Government and Democracy.