

Members of Parliament Anzac Day Delegation 2025

Electorate Business Travel Report

17th April 2025 – 29th April 2025



Report by Wendy Lovell MP, Member for Northern Victoria

Other attendees:

Natalie Suleyman MP, State Member for St Albans
Sarah Connolly MP, Member for Laverton
Kathleen Matthews-Ward MP, Member for Broadmeadows
Melina Bath MP, Member for Eastern Victoria
Kim O'Keefe MP, Member for Shepparton

Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives ... You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours ... You, the mothers who sent their sons from faraway countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.

This moving tribute to the ANZACs lost at Gallipoli is most often attributed to Atatürk and remains an enduring reminder of the unique bond formed between Australia and Türkiye through the shared experience that began on the battlefields of Çanakkale (Gallipoli).

Statement of Objectives:

Anzac Day 2025 marked the 110th anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign and I was proud to participate in the annual all-party Victorian Delegation to Türkiye.

The purpose of the trip was to;

- Represent the people of my electorate at Anzac Memorial Services
- Gain a greater understanding of the Gallipoli campaign and particularly the challenges faced by those from my electorate who fought on this land
- To pay respect to those from my electorate who paid the ultimate sacrifice and did not return but who are buried in the cemeteries or commemorated on the memorials on the battlefields
- Foster a stronger relationship with the Turkish Government, Parliament and business community and
- Visit places of cultural significance to gain a greater understanding of the history and culture of Türkiye to enable me to better engage with my local Turkish community.

The 110th anniversary was a significant milestone and to mark the occasion, the Dawn Service at Gallipoli was attended by many dignitaries including Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, The Princess Royal, the Chair of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, the Governor General of Australia and many other international dignitaries.

The international aspect of WWI is acknowledged by a range of commemorative services from the different nations on both Anzac Day and the eve of Anzac Day. It reminds us of the lives lost on all sides and the international friendships and cooperation that emerged from the battlefields of Çanakkale (Gallipoli).

In representing my electorate, I thought it important to visit the graves and pay my respects to some of the local ANZACs who paid the ultimate price and did not return home. Prior to leaving Australia I was able to research the names and grave sites of ANZACs from my hometown of Shepparton and some of the 4th Light Horse from Northern Victoria.

The Gallipoli campaign forged the spirit of the ANZACs – a spirit of mateship, camaraderie and mutual respect, values that now form part of the national identity of Australia, New Zealand and Türkiye. The shared experience that began on the battlefields of Çanakkale (Gallipoli) has also forged a unique bond between Türkiye and Australia.

In the years following the War, Australia and Türkiye have become close friends and share in commemorations on Anzac Day. Thousands of Australians make the pilgrimage to Gallipoli on Anzac Day each year to pay their respects and honour the fallen. Many thousands more visit during the year, which demonstrates the importance of Gallipoli to the people of Australia and the shaping of our nation.

Victoria is proudly home to the largest Turkish community in Australia. My hometown of Greater Shepparton is home to a large population of Turkish immigrants and their descendants, and the G.V. Turkish Islamic Cultural Centre and Mosque is located in Mooroopna.

Delegations such as this provide us with the opportunity to strengthen the relationship between Victoria and Türkiye and develop further economic opportunities for both communities.

Summary of meetings and visits:

Thursday 17th April 2025

Arrive in Istanbul from Melbourne.

Friday 18th April 2025 – Good Friday

The Delegation attended a Good Friday Service at the Church of Saint Antony of Padua Istanbul.

Built in 1725 by the Italian community in Istanbul, the Church of Saint Antony of Padua is the largest Catholic church in Türkiye and is located in Istiklal Caddesi in Istanbul.

Masses are delivered in Italian, Polish, Turkish and English. Pope John XXIII preached at the Church of Saint Antony of Padua between 1935 and 1944 and spoke fluent Turkish. He was sometimes referred to as the Turkish Pope and a statue of him is located in the forecourt of the church.



Saturday 19th April 2025

Meeting with Parliamentary Protocol Team of the Turkish Parliament and visit to Ayasofya Mosque and Topkapı Palace Istanbul

Sunday 20th April 2025

Visit to Dolmabahce Palace

Flight to Ankara

Monday 21st April 2025

Depart Ankara travel to Cappadocia

City Tour of historical sites, including visits to Kaymakli Underground City, The Three Beauties (Uc Guzzeller) and Goreme Open Museum.

Meeting with Mayor Ali Ertugrul Bul and the Deputy Mayor of Municipality of Ürgüp.

Cappadocia is an important historical site that has also developed into a tourism and sporting hub. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor discussed the importance of this evolution and the efforts of the municipality to maintain their heritage but also evolve to expand economic benefits to the area.



Tuesday 22nd April 2025

Ankara

The Delegation visited Anitkabir – Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk where we took part in a Wreath laying service and Minister Suleyman signed the official memorial book on behalf of the delegation.

Anitkabir is a significant site as it houses the final resting place of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk the Founder of the Republic of Türkiye. Our visit was an official visit on behalf of our communities. It was a moving ceremony and an honour to pay our respects to a leader who modernised and brought peace to the region.



Wednesday 23rd April 2025

The Delegation visited the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA).

The TGNA is located in Ankara, the capital city of Türkiye and consists of six hundred members.

During our visit the Delegation attended a reception hosted by HE Halil Eldemir, the President of the Türkiye-Australia Interparliamentary Friendship Group and attended by other Parliamentarians from the TGNA .

We also attended the TGNA General Assembly Special Session for the Anniversary of Foundation of the TGNA and a guided tour of the TGNA. This coincides with National Sovereignty and Children's Day in Türkiye – a very significant day in Türkiye that celebrates democracy and the importance of young people.

We then departed Ankara to travel to Çanakkale.



Thursday 24th April 2025

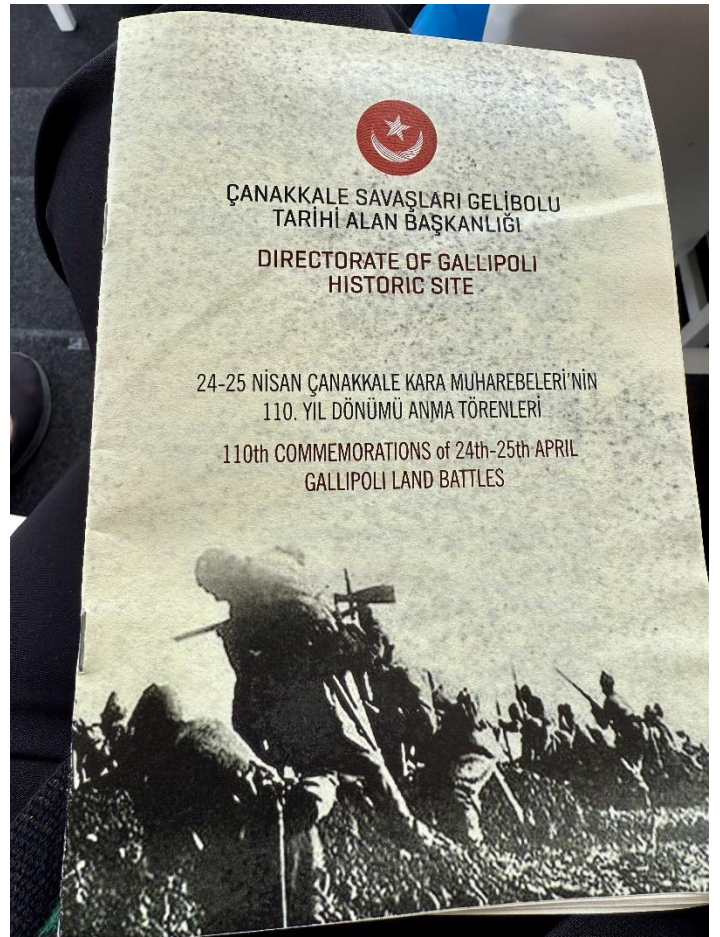
The Delegation attended ceremonies for the 110th Anniversary of the Land Wars of Çanakkale.

Our first ceremony was the Commemoration of the Republic of Türkiye held at the Çanakkale Matyrs' Memorial.

The service was delivered by the Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture Gokhan Yazgi. Speakers at the service included the President of the Gallipoli Historic Site, Mr Ismail Kasdemir, and HRH Princes Anne, the Princess Royal, who made a speech on behalf of the Allies.

The speeches were followed with a military parade by Armed Forces and Veterans including Turkish, and Commonwealth Countries service members. This year the Republic of Türkiye had a special focus of passing the baton for commemoration to future generations and the parade also included representatives of the youth of Türkiye wearing red vests that included a message acknowledging they were there to honour their forefathers.

It was an honour to join the dignitaries and pay my respects to the fallen Turkish soldiers. We were also treated to a demontsraton by the Soloturk Turkish Airforce Aerobatics Team, which concluded the formal proceeding for the Turkish comemration.





Commemoration of the
Republic of Türkiye
Çanakkale Matyrs'
Memorial



24 April Thursday 24th April 2025- continued

The Delegation also attended the Commemoration of France at the French Military Cemetery followed by the Commemoration of the United Kingdom, at the Commonwealth and Ireland Memorial.





In keeping with the theme of passing the baton to the next generation, the United Kingdom service included participation from the children of servicemen and a reading by Mya Graham.

Friday 25th April 2025 – Anzac Day

Dawn Service and Australian National Service

The Delegation attended the Anzac Day Dawn Service at Anzac Cove.

The Anzac Day Gallipoli Dawn Service is jointly conducted by the Australian and New Zealand Governments on 25th April each year at the Anzac Commemorative Site, Gallipoli, Türkiye.

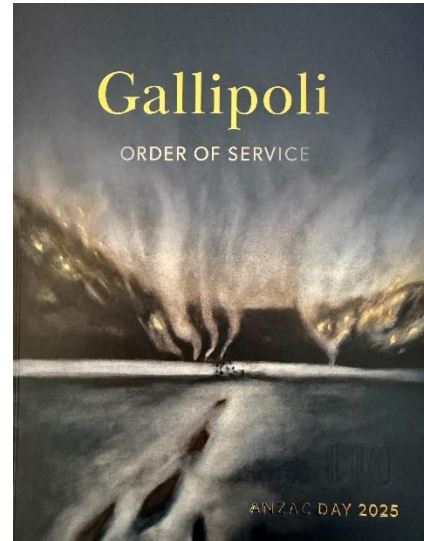
The Dawn Service is an important time for reflection on the service and sacrifice of our state's veterans.

The Dawn Service is a pilgrimage for many thousands of Australians each year and in 2025 there was a record number of Australians attending for the 110th Anniversary. It was an extremely moving service that was preceded by a pre-service program including a band, singers and readings. At one point they read letters from ANZACs and the first letter read was from a soldier from Rushworth, a town in my electorate and not far from my hometown of Shepparton. The reading of this letter was extremely moving.

The delegation attended both the Anzac Day Dawn service, and the Australian National Service conducted at the Lone Pine Cemetery. I was honoured to lay a wreath at the Australian National Service.

This service takes place with the permission and support of the Republic of Türkiye. Holding the services is only possible with the cooperation and generous assistance of the Turkish Government.





Friday 25th April 2025 – Anzac Day – continued

Following the Australian National Service I visited five cemeteries in the Gallipoli Cove area to pay my respects at the graves of ANZACs from my electorate including my hometown of Shepparton and ANZACs from the 4th Light Horse Regiment from my electorate. I am a member of the 4th Light Horse Regiment Memorial Association.

The five cemeteries visited were Lone Pine, Courtney's and Steels Post, Quinn's, Shrapnel Valley and the beautiful and serene Beach Cemetery.

Graves visited

Lone Pine Cemetery

Private William Reymond Bowen
Shepparton Electorate
Australian Infantry 23rd Battalion
Died 13 September 1915 – Aged 22



Private J.A.M. Power
Shepparton Electorate
Australian Infantry 24th Battalion
Died 29 November 1915 – Aged 21

**Trooper S.H. Taylor
Shepparton Electorate
8th Australian Light Horse Regiment
Memorial Panel 8 Lone Pine Memorial**



**Trooper Raymond Walter Patterson
Shepparton Electorate
8th Australian Light Horse Regiment
Memorial Panel 8 Lone Pine Memorial
Died 7th August 1915**



**Private H.B. Graham
Shepparton Electorate
Australian Infantry 7th Battalion
Memorial Panel 28 Lone Pine Memorial
Died 25th April 1915**



Memorialised together

**Trooper Edward, F. P. Hilliear
4th Australian Light Horse Regiment
Died 5th August 1915
Memorial Panel 3 Lone Pine Memorial**

and

**Trooper John Kissick
4th Australian Light Horse Regiment
Died 25th June 1915
Memorial Panel 3 Lone Pine Memorial**



Beach Cemetery

Trooper Harold Aarons
Died 6th August 1915
4th Australian Light Horse Regiment



Private John Simpson Kirkpatrick
Served as Private John Simpson
Australian Army Medical Corps
Died 19th May 1915 – Age 22

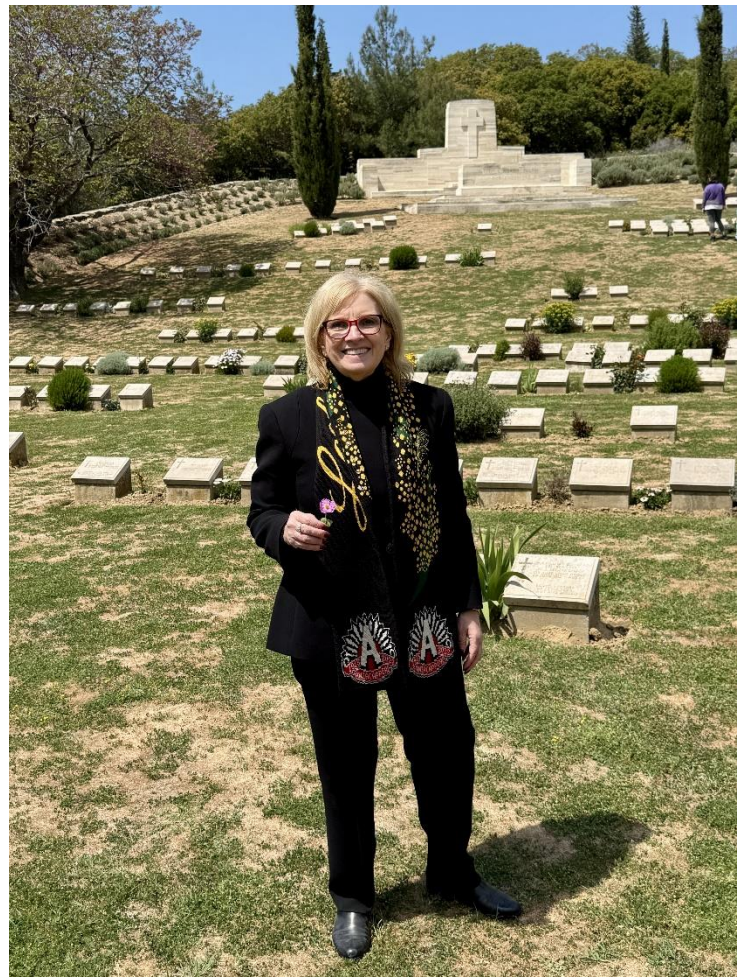
John Simpson was not from my electorate, but it was a special honour to be able to pay respects to the man who we all learnt so much about in primary school through his story of 'Simpson and his Donkey'.



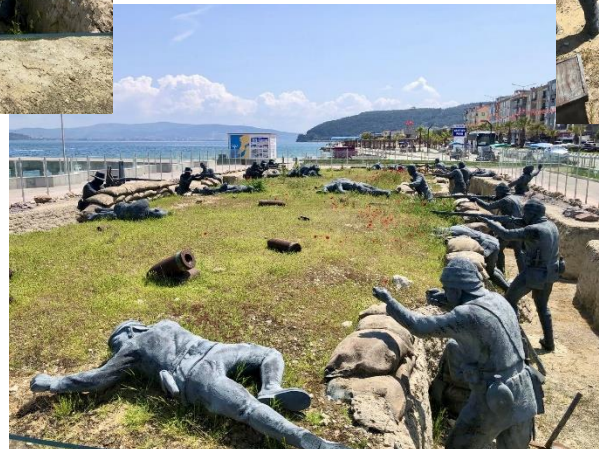
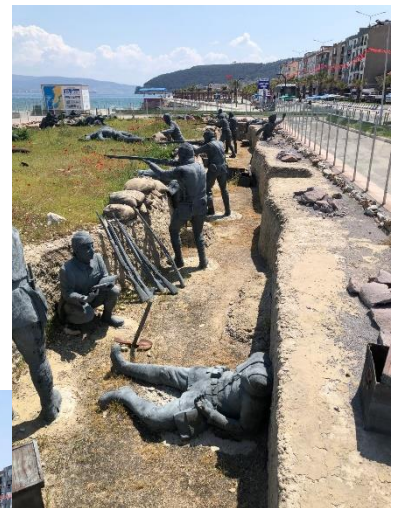
Shrapnel Valley Cemetery

Trooper William Hodge McGregor
4th Australian Light Horse Regiment
Died 5th June 1915

Unfortunately, even with the help of the guide, I was unable to locate the grave of Trooper William McGregor but I paid my respects at the cemetery memorial.



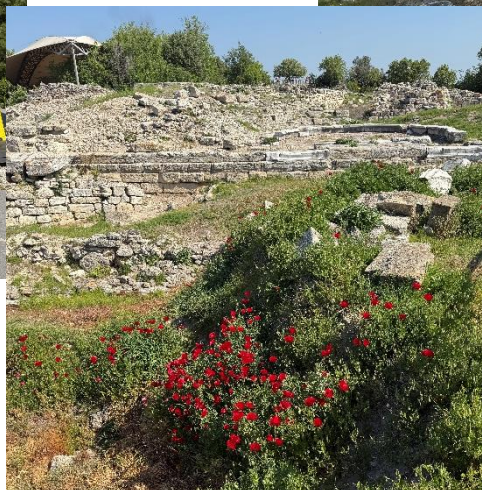
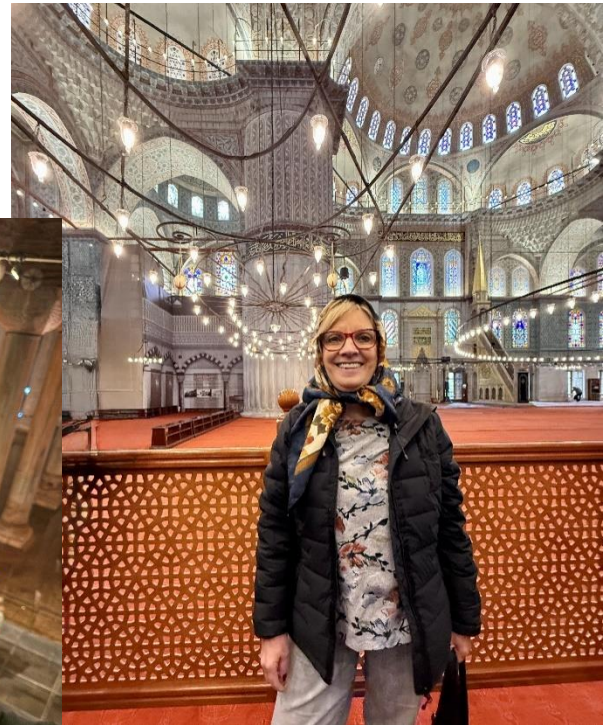
Diorama of trench
battlefields near Ferry
Terminal Gallipoli



Saturday 26th & Sunday 27th April 2025

We travelled back to Istanbul by bus and on the way we visited the Troy museum and the Troy Archaeological site

We attended the Sultan Ahmet Mosque and The Basilica Cistern followed by a boat tour of the Bosphorus. We also visited a traditional Hamam in Istanbul.



Monday 28th April 2025

On Monday the 28th April we had discussions with business leaders and The Council of Foreign Economic Relations of the Türkiye-Australia Business Council.

Our day commenced with a visit to the Grand Bazaar where we met with business representatives, including CEO Mr Enver Cetin. We also had the opportunity to observe the Gold Exchange whilst it was trading.

Later in the day we met with the chair of the Council of Foreign Economic Relations of the Türkiye-Australia Business Council, Mr Steven Young who is an Australian of Turkish heritage based in Istanbul. We discussed the growing business ties between Australia and Türkiye and he noted the opportunities of Türkiye sending a delegation to the World Chamber's Conference in Melbourne 2025.



Tuesday 29th April 2025

On Tuesday the 29th we met with the Maarif Vakfi Dr Murtaza Yetis and members from the Turkish Education Foundation. The foundation currently has a number of schools in Australia, including a school in my electorate in Kilmore, Victoria.

This meeting provided the opportunity to discuss education in Victoria and Türkiye. Maarif Vakfi, spoke of the confidence the foundation has for their schools to operate and grow within Victoria.

Depart Istanbul– Arrive Melbourne Wednesday 30th April



Results and Recommendations:

The Annual Parliament of Victoria Delegation to Gallipoli is an important opportunity for Members of Parliament to pay respect to the fallen, and maintain connection to the ANZACs on behalf of their constituencies. It also provides an opportunity to see firsthand the respect the Turkish community has for the solemn significance of this annual commemorative event. It is encouraging that so many Australians continue to make the journey and pilgrimage to Gallipoli, to pay their respects to our ANZACs.

As a result of participating in this delegation I have a greater understanding of the history and culture of Türkiye and feel better equipped to engage with my local Turkish community.

I also have a much deeper understanding of the challenges our Anzacs faced when landing on the shores at Gallipoli Cove which I can use when engaging with my local RSLs, speaking at Anzac Day Ceremonies, and to educate students when visiting schools.

It is my recommendation that all Members of Parliament who participate in future delegations should research the location of the graves of Anzacs from their electorate who are buried or memorialised in the cemeteries at Çanakkale and pay their respects to as many as possible.

I would also recommend that all Members of Parliament who have a significant number of constituents with Turkish heritage participate in this annual delegation to strengthen Victoria's ties with Türkiye and enhance their ability to engage with these constituents.

I am grateful to the Turkish Parliament, in particular the protocol and security team who supported the delegation with professionalism and the utmost courtesy and I look forward to continuing the friendships forged between our two countries.

Thank you also the Australian Embassy for their assistance with logistics on Anzac Day. Once again I would like to thank the Turkish Parliament as without their support, this important Delegation would not be possible.



ACCOMMODATION

- Ankara (One night 22/04/25) - \$73.09
- Çanakkale (Three nights 23/04/2025 to 26/04/2025) - \$739.41

All other hotel, meals and domestic flights were privately funded, other than some ground transportation and hospitality from the Turkish Parliament.