

International Parliamentary Travel Report

TÜRKIYE AND GALLIPOLI

ANZAC DELEGATION PARLIAMENTARY VISIT

17 April 2025 – 29 April 2025

Melina Bath MP, Member for Eastern Victoria Region
Electorate Business



**Victorian Delegation French Memorial
French Memorial Gallipoli Peninsula**



**John Simpson Kirkpatrick Grave
Beach Cemetery**

Introduction and reasons for travel

During April 2025, I participated in a cross-party Victorian Members of Parliament Delegation to Türkiye to attend ANZAC memorial services, engage with Turkish parliamentarians and agencies. The purpose of this trip was primarily to attend the 110th ANZAC Day services and to represent my Eastern Victorian communities at commemoration ceremonies.

I wanted to deepen my understanding of the Gallipoli campaign, walk on ground considered sacred by Australians, New Zealanders, as well as host the nation, Türkiye. And to pay my respects to our soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice, reflecting on their final resting place.

Türkiye and Australia share a unique bond, rooted in the shared experiences of the horrors of war on the main battlefields of the Gallipoli Peninsula, specifically around ANZAC Cove, Cape Helles, and Suvla Bay, Çanakkale (Gallipoli), two countries which post war are united by an enduring mutual respect.

The main battles that involved our Australian soldiers were:

- Landing at ANZAC Cove 25 April 1915.
- Early battles and the Third Turkish Attack on ANZAC Cove 19 May 1915.
- Landing at Suvla Bay 6 to 15 August 1915.
- Battle of Sari Bair (August Offensive) 6 to 21 August 1915.
- Battle of Lone Pine 6 to 10 August 1915.
- Battle of the Nek 7 August 1915.

It was on these shores that the ANZAC spirit was born. Victoria raised the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th Battalions, which landed in the second wave on April 25. The first wave—comprising the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th Battalions—came from Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia, with the 12th being a composite unit. The third wave included the 1st to 4th Battalions from New South Wales.

The Gallipoli campaign is filled with extraordinary stories—from the bravery of Victoria Cross recipients and the dedication of nurses to the legendary deeds of Simpson and his donkey, whose grave at Beach Cemetery I visited. It also bears the scars of the tragic and avoidable losses, the moments of shared humanity in the face of conflict, and the eventual withdrawal.

This year marks the 110th anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign, a defining moment that forged the ANZAC spirit—characterized by mateship, camaraderie, ingenuity and courage. These values have become deeply embedded in the national identities of Australia, New Zealand, and Türkiye.

As a State Member of Parliament, we are uniquely positioned to represent our communities and, on returning from such commemorations, share our experiences and insights with schools, service clubs, and community groups. I also firmly believe that we must continue to honour the service and sacrifice of Australians who have served and continue to serve our country.

I feel honoured to have visited some of the graves of Gippsland soldiers and said ‘thank you’ for giving up their tomorrows for the rights, freedoms and peace we enjoy today. To witness the care and dignity afforded the monuments and cemeteries, brings comfort that Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s famous message to grieving mothers... *“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”* holds true.

Ataturk led the Turkish forces at Gallipoli and was the founder of the Republic of Türkiye, serving as its first President from 1923 until his death in 1938.

Despite the campaign being an unmitigated disaster, it is worth remembering, the genius of Brigadier General John Monash, who successfully orchestrated the withdrawal of the 4th Infantry Brigade from Gallipoli, a feat of engineering and logistics that ensured the evacuation of 45,000 men without a single casualty. Sir John Monash played a significant role in the development of coal power stations in the Latrobe Valley, in my electorate.

I extend my appreciation to The Hon. Tim Bull MP, Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs, The Nationals Member for Gippsland East, for his efforts in assisting me with researching soldiers' graves. A special mention and appreciation to LTCOL Doug Caulfield, OAM RFD FAIES (Retd) and to the Returned & Services League, Sub-Branche (RSL's) across Eastern Victoria, for sharing the names of and stories of soldiers who fought at Gallipoli.

I would also like to acknowledge the RSL's and local communities across Victoria that continue the tradition of ANZAC Day commemorative services. Their collective effort in remembrance ensures we do not forget the sacrifices of our servicemen and women who have served and continue to serve in the defence of our great nation.



Cape Helles Gate
British Memorial Australian Army Band

Ceremonies

A pilgrimage for thousands of Australians being 110th anniversary, notable dignitaries including, Her Royal Highness, Princes Anne, the Princess Royal, Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, New Zealand Prime Minister and Her Excellency the Honourable Ms Sam Mostyn Australia's Governor-General attended the Dawn Service.

From the Kanaga, the Māori Call to Gathering and the mounting of the Catafalque Party to the Ode of Remembrance, the dignity, solemnity and poignancy of the service held in near perfect conditions, is etched in my mind.

Following the Dawn Service, we paid our respects at the Lone Pine Monument, commemorating the 3,268 Australians and 456 New Zealanders who died in the campaign and have no known grave, and the 960 Australians and 252 New Zealanders who were buried at sea.

This was a significant service with many Delegation members visiting the graves of soldiers from their electorates honoured at Lone Pine. To my gratitude, the afternoon afforded the opportunity to visit other cemeteries of the fallen.



Dawn Service ANZAC Cove



**With Kim O'Keefe MP Member for Shepparton
Hon Wendy Lovell MP Member for Northern Victoria**

On 24th April our Delegation attended the Çanakkale Martyrs' Memorial Ceremony - an amazing spectacle honouring the 'Gallipoli Land Battles', the heroic Turkish soldiers and the revered Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Türkiye.

The service was delivered by the Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture Gokhan Yazgi. A speech was also made by the Director of Gallipoli Historic Site, Mr Ismail Kasdemir. HRH Princess Anne, also made a speech on behalf of the Allies. This was followed with a military parade by Armed Forces and Veterans including Turkish, and Commonwealth Countries service members.

Paying our respects at the Turkish gravesides was a fitting reminder of the tragic losses to all nations.

On the windswept Cape Helles, a moving remembrance for the Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland soldiers followed the French commemorations.



Lone Pine Memorial



Çanakkale Martyrs' Memorial



**Lone Pine Memorial
Wreath laying service**

The Fallen



I visited the Australian War Graves Commission Cemeteries of Courtney's and Steel's Post, Quinn's Post, Lone Pine, Shrapnel Valley and Beach Cemetery, where Gippslanders with a grave or special memorial were laid to rest.



Beach Cemetery

Australian Veterans Graves - Gallipoli War Cemeteries:

Courtney's and Steel's Post Cemetery



Harold Vernon Jordan

Service Number 331

A member of the 14th Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.).

Harold was born on April 10, 1890. Son of James and Elizabeth Jordan, of Ivor Street North Wonthaggi. Harold was Killed in Action, Gallipoli Peninsula, Dardanelles Turkey, 1 May 1915.

Harold is commemorated at Courtney's and Steel's Post Cemetery in Eceabat, Çanakkale, Turkey. Harold is remembered for his sacrifice during the Gallipoli campaign.



Albert Wilkinson

Service Number 931

Albert Wilkinson was a member of the 14th Battalion Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.).

Albert was born in Hollingworth, Manchester, England, in 1888 and later resided in Wonthaggi.

Albert Wilkinson was killed in action on April 30, 1915 during the Gallipoli campaign in Turkey. Albert is commemorated at Courtney's and Steel's Post Cemetery in Gallipoli, Turkey. Albert is remembered for his bravery and sacrifice during the First World War.



Courtney's and Steel's Post Cemetery



Sydney Joseph Statham

Service Number 1073

Sydney Joseph Statham was a member of the 14th Battalion (A.I.F.). Sydney grew up in Leongatha and his occupation was a Labourer and Sydney Enlisted on September 24, 1914, at Broadmeadows, Victoria.

Sydney was Killed in action on May 6, 1915, at Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey. Sydney Joseph Statham is remembered for his service and sacrifice during the Gallipoli campaign.

Special Memorial, Grave 41 Headstone Inscription:

"A DEVOTED SON A TRUSTY FRIEND. HE GAVE HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS"



Quinns Post Cemetery



Arthur Ernest Bolger
Service Number 1338



Arthur Ernest Bolger, service number 1338, enlisted in Warragul served as a Private in the 14th Australian Infantry Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force during the First World War. He was killed in action on 27 April 1915 at Gallipoli, Dardanelles, Turkey, at the age of 21. A draper's assistant prior to enlistment.

Arthurs Headstone inscription reads: *"He Gave God's Greatest Gift To Man His Life"*



Hector McLaren
Service Number 904



Hector McLaren, service number 904, served as a Corporal in the 14th Australian Infantry Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force during the First World War. Hector was born in Moe and enlisted at Orbost.

Hector was killed in action on 27 April 1915 at Gallipoli, Dardanelles, Turkey, at the age of 31. Hectors Headstone inscription reads: *Their glory shall not be blotted out.*



Lone Pine Cemetery

Charles Wilkinson **Service Number 921**

Charles Wilkinson was a member of the 2nd Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.) and enlisted August 17, 1914.

Charles was born Korumburra in 1891 and was Killed in action on May 2, 1915, at Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey and is buried at the Lone Pine Cemetery, Gallipoli Peninsula, Çanakkale Province, Turkey.

Charles is commemorated at the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour, Korumburra War Memorial. Charles Wilkinson is remembered for his service and sacrifice during the Gallipoli campaign.



Edgar James Wilson **Service Number 1571**

Edgar James Wilson was a Private in the 24th Australian Infantry Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). Edgar was born Cliffe, Kent, England and moved to Bairnsdale.

Edgar enlisted and was on October 4, 1915, at Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey and is buried at the Lone Pine Cemetery, Gallipoli Peninsula, Çanakkale Province, Turkey.

Edgar is commemorated at the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour, panel 108.

Edgar James Wilson is remembered for his service and sacrifice during the Gallipoli campaign.



Shrapnel Valley Cemetery



Walter Mcintosh King

Service Number 1970

Walter Macintosh King, commonly known as Wally King, was a Private in the 7th Battalion of the Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.).

Wally was born in Traralgon and was Killed in Action, on 27 August 1915 Dardanelles.

Wally is commemorated at the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour.

Wally King is remembered for his service and sacrifice during the Gallipoli campaign.



William Beresford Stanley Good

Service Number 1571

William Good Enlisted at Wonthaggi and was a member of the 22nd Battalion Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F.). William was born in Archies Creek and grew up in Dalyston and died because of Asphyxiation, mine explosion gas, on October 29, 1915, on the Gallipoli Peninsula, Turkey. William Good is commemorated for his service and sacrifice and is remembered at the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour.



Beach Cemetery

 **James Mackie**
Service Number 2335

James Mackie grew up in the Woorayl Shire and Enlisted and served as a Private in the 6th Australian Infantry Battalion during the First World War.



James was Killed in Action, Gallipoli, Gallipoli, Dardanelles, Turkey, 3 May 1915, at Gallipoli, Turkey. And is laid to rest in the Beach Cemetery, Gallipoli Peninsula.

James's name is located on panel 47 in the Commemorative Area at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra



John Simpson Kirkpatrick:

(Simpson and his Donkey)

John Simpson Kirkpatrick, known as Simpson, is a celebrated figure in Australian military history for his bravery during the Gallipoli campaign.

Though a British citizen, he served as a stretcher bearer with the 3rd Field Ambulance, Australian Army Medical Corps and nicknamed his donkeys Abdul, Murphy, or Duffy—using them to carry wounded soldiers under fire at ANZAC Cove.

John was killed by machine-gun fire on May 19, 1915, while helping two injured men. Simpson remains a symbol of courage and sacrifice.



Other visitations and meetings

While in Istanbul, the Delegation visited several of the city's most iconic cultural and historical landmarks, including Dolmabahçe Palace, the Sultan Ahmet Mosque, the Hagia Sophia (Ayasofya) Mosque, the Basilica Cistern, Topkapi Palace, and the Bosphorus. These sites hold immense historical and cultural significance for Türkiye.

We met with Steven Young of the Türkiye-Australia Business Council, part of the Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEİK), who is an Australian of Turkish heritage based in Istanbul.

Our discussions focused on the growing business ties between Australia and Türkiye, highlighting the opportunities presented by the introduction of direct flights between Melbourne and Istanbul for enhancing trade, tourism, and commercial engagement.

In Ankara, the Delegation had the honour of visiting Anıtkabir, the Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, to pay our respects. Our Delegation leader, Hon Natalie Suleyman, Minister for Veterans' Affairs laid a wreath and signed the 'Book of Honour' at this revered site, which serves as the final resting place of the founder of the Republic of Türkiye.

Proud of their national flag, the Delegation was greeted with a mass display during the National Sovereignty and Children's Day celebrations a significant day in Türkiye that acknowledges the new era of Turkish democracy and value of young people.

We were provided with a guided tour of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Parliament) and an informal Q & A session Deputy Speaker Mr Bekir Bozdağ one of the 600 Parliamentarians representing 87 districts.

We joined a reception hosted by Mr. Halil Eldemir, President of the Turkey-Australia Interparliamentary Friendship Group and Member of Parliament for Bilecik.



Turkish Grand National Assembly – Victorian & NSW Delegations



Turkish Grand National Assembly Q & A



Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

Delegation meeting with Türkiye Maarif Vakfi Foundation

Before departing, the Victorian parliamentarians including the Member for Shepparton, Kim O’Keeffe MP, the Member for Northern Victoria, Wendy Lovell MP, and the Member for St Albans, Natalie Suleyman MP met with representatives from the Turkish Maarif Foundation - a Turkish government-established foundation that operates international schools, including in Victoria. The foundation currently has a number of schools in Australia, including in Kilmore, Victoria. Meeting Australian standards, the schools offer a unique blend of Australian and Turkish education.

Reflection and thanks

It is so important that Australians continue to make the journey and pilgrimage to Gallipoli; to pay their respects to our ANZACs but also to see firsthand the respect the Turkish community has for the solemn significance of this annual commemorative event.

I would like to thank the Turkish Government, in particular the protocol and security team who supported the Delegation with dedicated professionalism and thoughtful care.

Thank you also the Australian Embassy for their assistance with logistics on ANZAC Day.

Other attendees:

Hon Natalie Suleyman, State Member for St Albans
Hon Wendy Lovell MP, Member for Northern Victoria
Kim O’Keeffe MP, Member for Shepparton
Sarah Connolly MP, Member for Laverton
Kathleen Matthews-Ward MP, Member for Broadmeadows



Türkiye Maarif Vakfi Foundation



With Kim O’Keeffe MP - Maarif Vakfi Foundation

Additional information for Parliamentary Services

itinerary of meetings and visits for, dates and locations:

The ANZAC Delegation 2025 took place between April 17-29, 2025, and included visitations, meetings, Commemoration Services and stays in locations of Istanbul, Ankara Cappadocia and Canakkale. This included commercial flights between the locations, airport transfers and transport to the below listed locations.

Date	Itinerary	Location
18/04/2025	Good Friday Service	Church of Saint Antony of Padula, Istanbul
19/04/2025	Meeting Protocol Team of the Turkish Parliament	Ayasofya Mosque, Topkapi Palace, Istanbul
20/04/2025	Dolmabahce Palace visit	Beşiktaş/Istanbul, Turkey
	Flight to Ankara	
21/04/2025	Depart Ankara travel to Cappadocia	
21/04/2025	Meeting with Mayor Ali Ertugrul Bul & Deputy Mayor	Ürgüp Municipality (Ürgüp Belediyesi)
22/04/2025	Wreath laying service Anıtkabir and signing of official memorial book	Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk – Anıtkabir Ankara, Turkey
	Australian Embassy	Ankara, Turkey
23/04/2025	Visit to Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA)	Bakanlıklar, Çankaya, Ankara, Turkey
	Attended TGNA General Assembly Special Session for the Anniversary of Foundation of TGNA	
	Meeting & Reception of the Guest Delegation with Deputy Speaker Mr. Bekir Bozdağ	
	Depart Ankara to Çanakkale	
24/04/2025	Ceremony 110 th Anniversary of Land Wars Canakkale	Çanakkale Martyrs' Monument - Çanakkale, Türkiye
	Commemoration Service of France	French Military Cemetery - Seddülbahir/Eceabat/Çanakkale, Türkiye
	Commemoration Service of the United Kingdom	Commonwealth and Ireland Memorial
	Military Parade of the Armed Forces and Veterans including Turkish, and Commonwealth Countries	
	Visit the graves and pay my respects to the fallen Turkish Soldiers	
	Observed the Soloturk Turkish Airforce Aerobatic Team display	
24/04/2025	Personal Pilgrimage visit to Fallen Australian Soldiers Cemeteries identified from Eastern Victoria Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Courtneys's and Steel's Post Cemetery ○ Quinn's Post Cemetery ○ Lone Pine Cemetery ○ Shrapnel Valley Cemetery ○ Beach Cemetery
25/04/2025	Attendance at ANZAC Day Dawn Service	ANZAC Cove
	Attendance Lone Pine Memorial	
	Attendance Chunuk Bair Memorial	
26/04/2025	Delegation visits to Sultan Ahmet Mosque	Meydanı Caddesi Istanbul, Turkey
28/04/2025	Meeting with Grand Bazaar business representatives	Istanbul, Turkey
29/04/2025	Meeting with Maarif Vakfi Dr Murtaza & Members of the Turkish Education Foundation	Üsküdar, Istanbul, Turkey

Additional information for Parliamentary Services summary of commercial flights and commercial accommodation expenses:

COMMERICAL MODE OF TRANSPORT AND ACCOMMODATION DETAILS

Commercial Flights Australia to Türkiye and return (Domestic Economy)

- TK 0169 Air Flight - Melbourne – Istanbul (16/04/2025 - 17/04/2025) - \$1,194.25
- TK0168 Air Flight - Istanbul – Melbourne (28/04/2025-29/04/2025) - \$1,194.26

TOTAL COST: \$2,388.50

Commercial Flights within Türkiye

- Istanbul to Ankara (20/04/2025) - \$216.16
- Ankara to Çanakkale (23/04/2025) - \$216.16
- Çanakkale to Istanbul (26/04/2025) - \$162.00

TOTAL COST: \$594.32

Commercial Accommodation Locations & Expenses

- Istanbul (17/04/2025 to 20/04/2025) - \$985.88
- Ankara (20/04/2025 to 21/04/2025) - \$136.46
- Cappadocia (21/04/2025 to 22/04/2025) - \$136.46
- Ankara (22/04/2025 to 23/04/2025) - \$136.46
- Çanakkale (23/04/2025 to 26/04/2025) - \$739.41
- Istanbul (26/04/2025 to 28/04/2025) – \$739.41

TOTAL COST: \$2,874.08

Members Objectives

Domestic flights and accommodation within Türkiye were undertaken as part of the official 2025 delegation attending the ANZAC Commemoration Services and associated visits and meetings.

The purpose of this visit and representation was to honour the enduring legacy of the ANZAC tradition, strengthen international ties at diplomatic engagements.

Key components of the delegation's itinerary included a formal visit to Anıtkabir, the Mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, (the founder of the Republic of Türkiye), where respects were paid in recognition of shared historical narratives and mutual remembrance. The delegation also participated in discussions at the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Parliament), fostering parliamentary dialogue and bilateral understanding.

Additionally, a meeting was held with the Türkiye-Australia Business Council, exploring opportunities for economic cooperation, cultural exchange that could benefit communities across Eastern Victoria.

Summary and Conclusion

It is remarkable how the relationship between Australia and Turkey has transformed from the fierce conflict of the Gallipoli campaign to one of friendship and growing economic ties.

Walking the battlegrounds of Gallipoli was a profound honour. Representing my local Gippsland communities to lay a poppy and pay respects at the graves of fallen local men was deeply moving.

Seeing firsthand the challenging landscape that confronted young men during the failed landing was a humbling experience.

These soldiers, who landed in an unfamiliar location with incredible risks ahead, faced immense adversity.

We will always remember the courage of these brave Australian men.



Lest We Forget.