

THE GALLIPOLI GAZETTE

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE GALLIPOLI MEMORIAL CLUB LTD

Gallipoli Art Prize 2022

The \$20,000 Gallipoli Art Prize for 2022 was won by Newcastle artist Dr Deirdre Bean for her oil on canvas painting 'Along the ride to Damascus' which features a sword used by Australian Light Horse battalions in WWI.

The winning work was described by Club President, John Robertson as 'is intricately rendered in oil paint on canvas using ultra-fine brushes. The sword, scabbard and leather-bound whale bone whip featured in the painting belong to a private collector who loaned the items to Deirdre Bean so she could draw and paint them from life.'

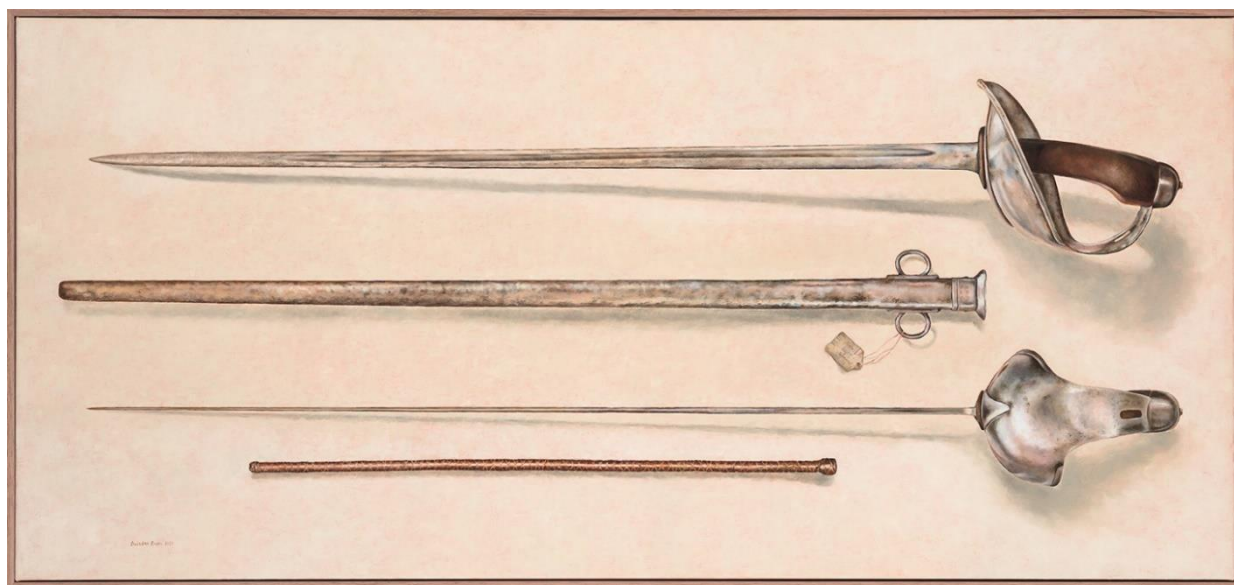
Deirdre Bean said It has been her art practice in recent years 'to rediscover items such as these: precious, meaningful items that are locked away and in danger of being forgotten. My ambition is to 're-love' them by bringing them briefly into the light and, with careful handling, reimagine them in paint on canvas. This sword now has a new alternative life.

The stories it evokes are retold, conversations are had, and information shared. We remember, lest we forget.'

Deirdre's artist statement submitted with the painting explains, *In 1918 following the battle at Beersheba, allied forces including Australian Light Horse battalions advanced towards Damascus, the last stronghold of the Turks. At this time, the Light Horse, at their request, were issued with swords requiring weeks of intensive cavalry training adding to their existing impressive skills. Historians have written of the battle at Quneitra on 28th September where The Australian Light Horse, with swords drawn, attacked the Circassian cavalry, killing, wounding and taking prisoners. Two days later, the Light Horse*

charged the Ottomans 'with the sword' causing the terrified enemy to turn and run. Today, this Light Horse sword, scabbard and leather-bound whale bone whip are stored safely and securely, and presented only on occasion.

Deirdre Bean is a revered botanical artist with a PhD in Natural History Illustration, focusing on mangrove species. Her works are included in the public collections of The Royal Botanical Gardens in London and Sydney as well as Parliament House Canberra. Her awards include one Gold and Silver-Gilt Medals from the Royal Horticultural Society, London and her work 'Major Smith's Petrichor' was Highly Commended in the 2020 Art Prize.



The winning entry

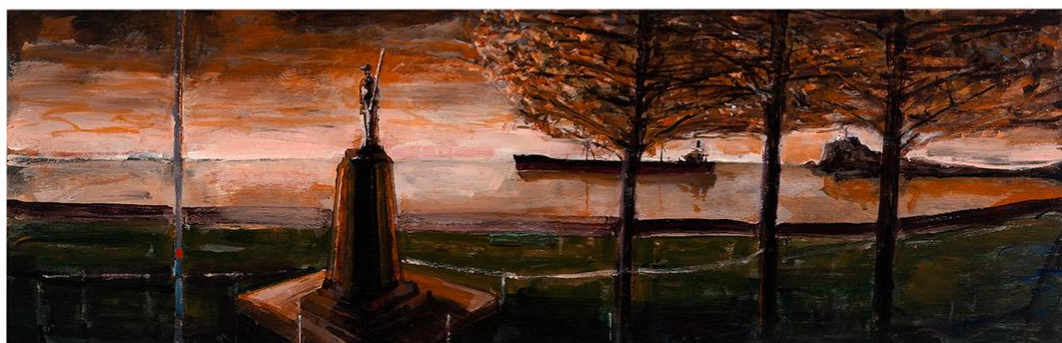
Deirdre Bean's first artist trip to Gallipoli was in 2013 which prompted her to begin painting weaponry and other battlefield relics. In 2017 she was one of twelve artists included in an art expedition to the WWI battlefields in France and Belgium, to explore Australian history and memories of the Great War.

The judges highly commended Geoff Harvey for his painting 'Lest We Forget' made up of four panels depicting a war memorial in different seasons of the year. Harvey said in his artist statement *The seasons come and the seasons go, as the years pass but these statues continue to hold their posts steadfast and reliable*

as silent sentinels of remembrance in an everchanging landscape... Lest We Forget'

Geoff Harvey is the only artist to have won the Gallipoli Art Prize twice in its 17 year history, once in 2012 with *Trench Interment* and again in 2021 with *Forgotten Heroes*.

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Two time Gallipoli Art Prize Winner, Geoff Harvey, was highly commended this year for his painting 'Lest We Forget'

The new Gallipoli Heroes

I am pleased to advise that the “never say die” determination that is part of the culture of the Australian digger which was forged at Gallipoli and in other conflicts is alive and well.

Club members should raise a glass and pay tribute to the 21st century Gallipoli Heroes – the Board of our own Gallipoli Memorial Club.

These Directors have refused to be ground down in the face of a seemingly relentless enemy – the negotiating team from AMP with whom the Club has been talking for over a decade on the redevelopment of the Club premises.

AMP was 65 years old when Australian soldiers embarked to fight in World War One for all the things Australians, and companies such as AMP, stood for.

The AMP Board of 1914 would roll over in their graves if

they were aware of the way today’s AMP staff have treated a Club that was built by Gallipoli veterans to honour the memory of their fallen comrades. In short, it has been un-Australian.

As I recall it, this was the year we should have held the Gallipoli Art Prize opening at the new club. That did not happen because the Board is waiting for discrepancies to be fixed and will not sign off until they are.

I hope we will hold the 2023 Art Prize launch in the new clubrooms, but it must only be after work has been completed to the standards long expected by our Board. They are resilient men, and we must back their judgement and resolve in standing up to the AMP and their ever-changing negotiating team.

Before, I ventured to the wilds of Papua New Guinea 50 years ago my father suggested I talk with the family doctor, the

family lawyer and our AMP man for advice. Such was the standard of respect in the Australian community for that once great insurance company.

You only have to read the finance pages to know what a tangle the AMP has got itself into over the past 20 years – there is talk of another big splitting of the company.

The Australian Mutual Provident Society was formed in 1849 as a non-profit life insurance company and mutual society. In 1998, it was demutualised into an Australian public company, AMP Limited, and listed on the Australian and New Zealand stock exchanges. Holding several AMP policies entitled me to free shares. Thankfully, I sold them on Day One of their listing for \$18 each – 18-times their April 2022 average price.

Thank you, Board members; keep battling for us!



Gallipoli Club Member, Alf Carpenter, who turned 105 on April 22, ventured south from the Hunter Valley to participate in the Anzac Day March. He wishes the Club members well and is keen to join us all for a drink when the Club reopens

Presidents Report

A bit of good news for a change this issue. Not good news weather wise in Sydney at least. Cold and wet, winter is certainly upon us. We have taken possession of the keys to the Historic Building, Number 14 Loftus Street. There is still some confusion with the paperwork, but we are making specific progress. There are also some ongoing issues with the northern ground floor wall, but we will resolve these. We have engaged an independent surveyor who is respected by both sides to resolve our problems with the Deposited Plan and the Certificate of Title for 12 Loftus St, our Museum Space. This will open up the possibility of transfer of title. Also, we have been advised that AMP are approaching a position to give owner's consent for the Development Application, again all positive. I repeat my assurance to you that we will continue working towards an outcome that is of maximum benefit to the members and the Gallipoli legacy.

ANZAC Day was well attended across the country, with very large crowds being able to commemorate in a somewhat normal manner. Vice-president Ted Codd represented the Club at the Dawn Service at the Cenotaph and I represented the Club at the Charles Mance Reserve Memorial, Merrylands. This year the Services were especially honouring the 80th Anniversary of the Bombing of Darwin, the Sinking of HMAS Perth and the Battle of the Coral Sea.

Gallipoli Memorial Club Bursary

John Brogan and I will be attending the AGM of the Gallipoli Scholarship Fund and presentation of the Scholarships on the April 28. The successful recipient of the Gallipoli Memorial Club's Bursary is Stella Artuso. Stella comes from Brisbane and is studying for an Honours degree in Physiology at the University of Queensland. Stella's maternal grandfather was

Neil Murdoch, commissioned in the field, and served in New Guinea and New during WW II.

John Brogan and I have continued to attend meetings of the Building Management Committee for the strata scheme. Our concerns with the breakup and allocation of costs continues, but again we are making progress.

Well, the Gallipoli Art Competition announcement and opening was a resounding success. The Cleland Bond Store is an interesting venue. We had some challenges in preparing the site for an art exhibition (additional hanging rails and additional lighting in a heritage listed building) but, all concerned and present agree that the exhibition is visually exciting. This year's winner is Deirdre Bean with her oil painting, "Along the Ride to Damascus", it depicts a Pattern 08 sword, a sheath, and a leather bound 'swagger stick' as used by the Australian Light Horse towards the end of World War I.



Winner Deirdre Bean, who is represented by Stella Downer Fine Art, celebrates her win with Stella Downer after the announcement by the President, John Robertson



Club President listens to the acceptance speech by Gallipoli Art Prize winner Dr Deirdre Bean

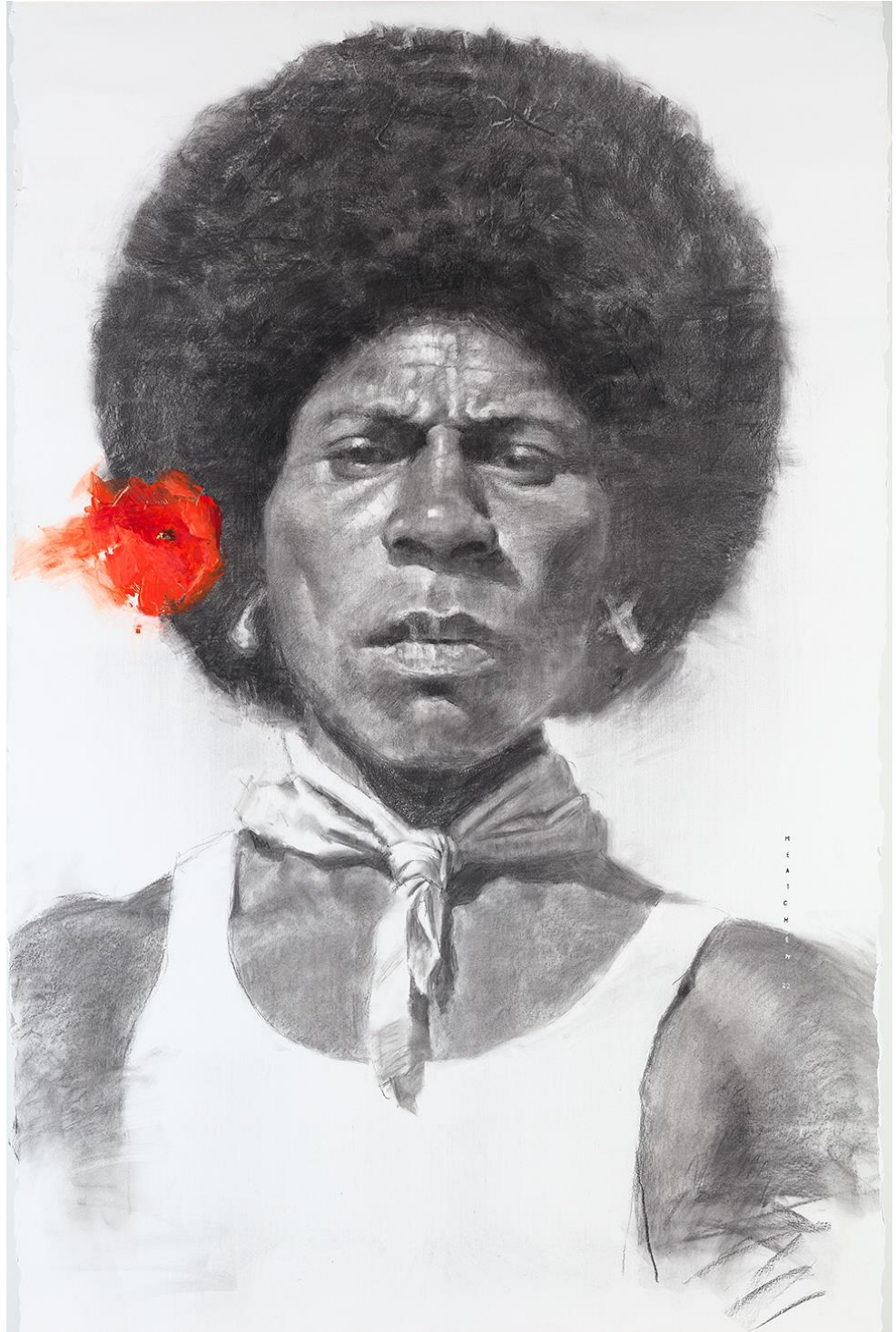
Geoff Harvey's painting "Lest We Forget", a four panel depiction of a war memorial at Stockton across the seasons, was highly commended by the judges. Dominating the room is a portrait of a Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel by Phil Meatchem, but they are all worth seeing. I encourage all members and their families to visit 'The Rocks' and the exhibition before 8 May. Property NSW have provided space for us to receive, judge, store and dispatch the art works in the International Convention Centre in Darling Harbour for which we are forever grateful.

The AGM was successful, this year held at the Commercial Travellers Club. We thank Chairman, David Herlihy for his generosity.

The Board continues to meet regularly face to face where possible and via tele-conference.

Keep safe, keep well (get your triple) and keep smiling.

John Robertson
President



Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel by Phil Meatchem

Gallipoli Art Prize 2022 continued from page 2.

The Gallipoli Art Prize invites artists who have either been born in Australia, New Zealand or Turkey or hold Australian, New Zealand or Turkish citizenship to respond to the broad themes of loyalty, respect, love of country, courage and comradeship as expressed in the Gallipoli Club's creed. (see below).

In his Artists Statement, Geoff said: *The lists of brave men who have paid the ultimate sacrifice are inscribed on the bollards of all War Memorials throughout Australia. With soldiers above standing sombre, silent & respectfully as they reflect on the passages of time and the years of life they were denied. Deeply etched on their faces are the ravages of this time. These stone warriors are fading & their memories are becoming distant in the shadows of grief forgotten. The seasons come & the seasons go, as the years pass but these statues continue to hold their posts steadfast & reliable as silent centennials of remembrance in an ever-changing landscape. Lest We Forget.*

Judging for this year's Prize was conducted by Jane Watters, Barry Pearce, John Robertson and

Elizabeth Fortescue. Previous winners of the Gallipoli Art Prize include renowned artists Euan Macleod (2009), Idris Murphy (2014) and Jiawei Shen (2016). Geoff Harvey won the Gallipoli Art Prize for the second time in 2021 with 'Forgotten Heroes' which depicted Australian 'Waler' horses used by Australian Light Horsemen during the First World War.

Exhibition period

The 2022 Gallipoli Art Prize finalists will be on exhibition at The Cleland Bond Store, 33 Playfair St, The Rocks, Sydney until May 8, 2022.

The Art prize launch attracted more than 60 people. Among them was the Turkish Consul to Sydney, Mr Ali Sevim and his wife, Nadzija



Turkish Consul to Sydney, Mr Ali Sevim and his wife, Nadzija look at dual Gallipoli Art Prize recipient Geoff Harvey's 'Lest we forget' which was Highly Commended by the judges

THE GALLIPOLI MEMORIAL CLUB CREED

We believe that within the community there exists an obligation for all to preserve the special qualities of loyalty, respect, love of country, courage and comradeship which were personified by the heroes of the Gallipoli Campaign and bequeathed to all humanity as a foundation for perpetual peace and universal freedom".

Former Club Director, Terry Ryan, who travelled from Gundaroo near Canberra, was pleasantly surprised to see the face of a departed friend, Harry Judge, in one of the finalist's entries. The oil-on-board work, *Surveyors of Merauke, PNG* depicts her father and three of his colleagues, Sergeant Jim Cavill, Sergeant Tom Sullivan and WO2 Rick Haas, standing in a swamp at Merauke Province which is on the border of what is now Irian Jaya and Papua New Guinea.

The painting was by Harry's daughter, Sylvie Carter, who explained that the survey crew were not charged with fighting the enemy but surveying the jungle and preparing the areas for the Allied forces who would need airstrips and the necessary support of land-based infrastructure in theatres of war across the Pacific. Not being fighters, they are not all remembered and Sylvie used the work to focus people on the team's contribution to the war effort. "They lived in harsh conditions and suffered in their own way...for their love of their country, their loyalty, respect, courage and comradeship and duty as soldiers. I enjoyed capturing their likeness and, in my own way, bringing them back to life".

Another finalist was Turkish born artist Kevser Ugurlu who produced an abstract mixed media on paperwork entitled *Restless Hope Syndrome* inspired by a visit to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. In her artist statement Kevser says: 'I found myself for the first time on the side of the 'enemy' as a Turkish citizen. I felt



Sylvie Carter points out her father in her oil-on-board work, 'Surveyors of Merauke, PNG' to his old friend Terry Ryan, a former Director of the Gallipoli Club



Turkish born artist Kevser Ugurlu with her abstract mixed media on paper work entitled 'Restless Hope Syndrome'

deeply the grief, and broken lives on both sides of war as a commonality that traverses across borders and continues in ongoing conflicts that create

displacement. Using imagery of soldiers combined with bright and dark colour and tone, I reflect on the past and look to the future. Hope becomes the key to survival.

To view the works online visit www.gallipoliartprize.org.au



Christine Wrest-Smith's oil-on-linen features a Purple Poppy in the mouth of the bird. The Purple Poppy is a symbol of remembrance of the animals whose deeds and sacrifices in war were important. It is estimated that 16 million animals were used in WW1 alone

Previous winners

Winner 2021 "Forgotten Heroes" by Geoff Harvey

Winner 2020: "Breathe" by Alison Mackay

Winner 2019: "War Pigeon Diaries" by Martin King

Winner 2018: "Mont St Quentin" by Steve Lopes

Winner 2017: "The Sphinx, Perpetual Peace" by Amanda Penrose Hart

Winner 2016: "Yeah, Mate" by Jiawei Shen painting

Winner 2015: "Boy Soldiers" by Sally Robinson.

Winner 2014: "Gallipoli evening 2013" by Idris Murphy.

Winner 2013: "Dog in a Gas Mask" by Peter Wegner.

Winner 2012: "Trench Interment" by Geoff Harvey.

Winner 2011: "Sacrifice" by Hadyn Wilson.

Winner 2010: "The dead march here today" by Raymond Arnold.

Winner 2009: "Smoke/PinkLandscape/Shovel" by Euan Macleod.

Winner 2008: "Max Carment, War Veteran (The last portrait)" by Tom Carment.

Winner 2007: "Glorus Fallen" by Lianne Gough.

Winner 2006: "Ataturk's Legacy" by Margaret Hadfield.

British beach exercises were an ominous prelude to D-Day

Bob Lawrence visited beaches in Devon and Dorset in southern England where trial landings ahead of D-Day provided disastrous.

In 1940, the coastline at Studland Bay was one of the two stretches of Dorset coast where a German invasion was considered most likely and it was fortified as a part of British anti-invasion preparations of World War II.

In 1942 the hamlet of Goathorn was evacuated and the area taken over by the military. The hamlet was subsequently lost to heathland but the pier, which once boasted a tramway, remains.

The village and beach were used as a training area before the D-Day landing. On top of Redend Point, a small sandstone cliff which splits the beach in two at high tide, is Fort Henry. Built in 1943 by Canadian engineers, it is 27 metres long, with metre wide walls and a 24-metre-long recessed observation slit.

Seven Valentine tanks sank in the bay during Exercise Smash in April 1944, resulting in the death of six soldiers.

On 18 April 1944, King George VI, General Sir Bernard Montgomery and General Dwight D. Eisenhower, met here (at the Knoll House Hotel) to observe the training troops and discuss the plans for the coming battle.

Exercise Tiger, or Operation Tiger, was one of a series of large-scale rehearsals for the D-Day invasion of Normandy, which took place in April 1944 on Slapton Sands in Devon. Coordination and communication problems resulted in friendly fire deaths during the exercise, and an Allied convoy positioning itself for the landing was attacked by E-boats of Nazi Germany's *Kriegsmarine*, resulting in the

deaths of at least 749 American servicemen.

Because of the impending invasion of Normandy, the incident was under the strictest secrecy at the time and was only nominally reported afterwards.

In late 1943, as part of the build-up to D-day, the British government set up a training ground at Slapton Sands, Devon, to be used by Force "U", the American forces tasked with landing on Utah Beach. Slapton Beach was selected for its similarity to Utah Beach in France: a gravel beach, followed by a strip of land and then a lake. About 3,000 local residents in the area of Slapton, now the South Hams District of Devon, were evacuated. Some had never left their villages before being evacuated.



Valentine tanks landing on the Devon coast

Landing exercises started in December 1943. Exercise Tiger was one of the larger exercises that took place in April and May 1944. The exercise was to last from April 22 until April 30, 1944, and covered all aspects of the invasion, culminating in a beach landing at Slapton Sands. On board nine large tank landing ships (LSTs), the 30,000 troops prepared for their mock landing, which also included a live-firing exercise.

Protection for the exercise area came from the Royal Navy. Four O-class destroyers, three Motor Torpedo Boats and two Motor Gun Boats patrolled the entrance to Lyme Bay while three Motor Torpedo Boats were stationed off Cherbourg, where German E-boats were based.

The first phase of the exercise from April 22-25 focused on marshalling and embarkation drills. On the evening of April 26, the first wave of assault troops boarded their transports and set off, the plan being to simulate the Channel crossing by taking a roundabout route through Lyme Bay, in order to arrive off Slapton at first light on April 27.

Friendly fire incident

The first practice assault took place on the morning of April 27 and was marked by an incident involving friendly fire. H-hour was set for 07:30, and was to include live ammunition to acclimatize the troops to the sights, sounds and even smells of a naval bombardment. During the landing itself, live rounds were to

be fired over the heads of the incoming troops by forces on land, for the same reason. This followed an order made by General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the Supreme Allied Commander, who felt that the men must be hardened by exposure to real battle conditions. The exercise was to include naval bombardment by ships of Force U Bombardment Group fifty minutes prior to the landing.

Several of the landing ships for that morning were delayed, and the officer in charge, American Admiral Don P. Moon, decided to delay H-hour for 60 minutes, until 08:30. Some of the landing craft did not receive word of the change. Landing on the beach at their original scheduled time, the second wave came under fire, suffering an unknown number of casualties. Rumours circulated along the fleet that as many as 450 men were killed.

Battle of Lyme Bay

On the day after the first practice assaults, early on the morning of April 28, the exercise was blighted when Convoy T-4, consisting of eight tank landing Ships (LSTs) carrying vehicles and combat engineers of the 1st Engineer Special Brigade, was attacked by German E-boats in Lyme Bay. Nine German E-boats had left Cherbourg shortly after midnight, avoiding the British boats watching the port area and patrols in the English Channel.

Around 0130 hrs six E-boats of the 5. S-Boat Flottille (5th E-Boat Flottilla) saw eight dark ships

with torpedoes: first *Rotte 3* (S-136 & S-138), then *Rotte 2* (S-140 & S-142), then *Rotte 1* (S-100 & S-143). The final three E-boats of the nine, S-Boot Flottille (S-130, S-145 & S-150), saw the red flares for attack (or may have heard the contact report sent at 0203 hrs) and joined the attack. After, within the *Rotte 1* pair, S-100 collided with S-143 and damaged its superstructure, the boats decided to leave, masking their retreat with smoke while sending another contact report. S-145 attacked the ships with gunfire. The attack ended about 0330 hrs. The Germans had been puzzled by the strange-looking ships which did not look like merchant-men. They estimated that they were some type of American landing ship with a shallow draft as the initial torpedoes from *Rotte 3* and *Rotte 2* seemed to miss.

Allied Casualties

- LST-289 was set on fire but eventually made it back to shore with the loss of 13 Navy personnel.
- LST-507 was torpedoed and sunk with the loss of 202 US Army/US Navy personnel.
- LST-511 was damaged by friendly fire from LST-496 (intended to be directed at one of the E-boats which passed between the two LSTs) resulting in injuries to 18 US Army/Navy personnel.
- LST-531 sank within six minutes of being torpedoed with the loss of 424 Army and Navy personnel.

The remaining ships and their escort fired back and the E-boats made no more attacks. In total, 749 servicemen (551 United States Army and 198 United States Navy) were killed during Exercise Tiger. Many servicemen drowned or died of hypothermia in the cold sea while waiting to be rescued. Many had not been shown how to put on their lifebelt correctly, and placed it around their waist, the only available spot because of their large backpacks. In some cases, this meant that when they jumped into the water, the weight of their combat packs flipped them upside down, dragging their heads under water and drowning them. The 248 bodies that were recovered were sent to Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey.

Vice Admiral Kirk of the US Navy immediately realised the huge damage E-boats could inflict on slow-moving landing craft with minimal defences and

feared that the German success in Lyme Bay could be repeated on D-day, with disastrous consequences. On May 4, 1944 he sent a signal to Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay of the Royal Navy arguing for heavy aerial and naval bombardment of Cherbourg:

In my opinion the E-boats must be destroyed or driven from the Cherbourg area, prior to D-day. The only successful defense against the E-boat is to sink it before it can reach an attack position.

Other consequences

The attack was reported to Eisenhower, who was enraged that the convoy was sailing in a straight line and not zig-zagging, that the attack reduced reserves of LSTs, that it indicated to the Germans that the Allies were nearly ready to invade.

As a result of official embarrassment and concerns over potential leaks just prior to

the real invasion, all survivors were sworn to secrecy about the events by their superiors. There is little information about exactly how individual soldiers and sailors died. The US Department of Defense stated in 1988 that record-keeping may have been inadequate aboard some of the ships, and the most pertinent log books were lost at sea.

Several changes resulted from mistakes made in Exercise Tiger:

- Radio frequencies used by US and British forces were standardised; the British escort vessels were late and out of position due to radio problems, and a signal about the E-boats' presence was not picked up by the LSTs.
- Better life vest training was provided for landing troops
- Plans were made for small craft to pick up floating survivors on D-Day.



German e-boats - attack craft that could travel at 80 kph

Official histories contain little information about the tragedy. Some commentators have called it a cover-up, other suggest it was merely 'conveniently forgotten'.

Memorial

Devon resident and civilian Ken Small took on the task of seeking to commemorate the event, after discovering evidence of the aftermath washed up on the shore while beachcombing in the early 1970s.

In 1974, Small bought from the U.S. Government the rights to a submerged tank from the 70th Tank Battalion discovered in his search. In 1984, with the aid of local residents and diving firms, he raised the tank, which now stands

as a memorial to the incident. The local authority provided a plinth on the seafront to put the tank on, and erected a plaque in memory of the men killed. The American military honoured and supported him.

A plaque was erected, in 1995, at Arlington National Cemetery entitled "Exercise Tiger Memorial". In 1997, the Exercise Tiger Association established a memorial to Exercise Tiger veterans in Mexico, Missouri. It is a 5,000-pound stern anchor from an LST of the Suffolk County Class on permanent loan from the Navy. In 2006, the Slapton Sands Memorial Tank Limited established a more prominent

memorial listing the names of all the victims of the attacks on Exercise Tiger.

In 2012, a memorial plaque was erected at Utah Beach, Normandy, on the wall of a former German anti-aircraft bunker. An M4 Sherman tank stands as a memorial to Exercise Tiger at Fort Rodman Park in New Bedford, Massachusetts.



The tank recovered from the ocean floor by Small's supporters is on display at nearby Torcross.



Clare Llewelyn with her daughter Jesamy look at her moving style work 'The Night Quilt' which included spent bullet cartridges and lead squares engraved with facts from the Gallipoli campaign to symbolise a quilt. Clare said "quilts have historically been memory diaries, sewn in geometric patterns. It takes courage to sleep... It takes companionship and sharing to bear the burden of this quilt'.



Tony Le Brun and Vice President Ted Codd looking at James Powditch's acrylic-on-board work 'Empire' in which a faded Union Jack is overlaid on old Australian butter box panels, a Hans Heysen Australian landscape print and fragmented idyllic beach scene



Historian Darren Mitchell who is advising on the Gallipoli Museum talking with long time current and past Board members of the Gallipoli Club, Marc Higgins, Stephen Ware, Terry Ryan and Ted Codd

Putin's War and Russia's Paranoia

By Patrick O'Neill

In 1988, I was a journalist in Moscow reporting on the Reagan-Gorbachev Summit. This was a chance for Russia and the West to put centuries of hostility behind them. Nearly 35 years on, some of the great ideas then thrashed out are now coming unstuck as old rivalries re-emerge.



Patrick O'Neill's Russian Identification paper

Much of this unravelling is due to paranoia — a particularly Russian form of paranoia. So try to understand why Russia seems incapable of living within its very lengthy borders (nearly 58,000 kms), it helps to understand how these paranoias began.

Basically Russia is still terrified of invasion. Russia still sees itself surrounded by enemies, and Enemy No 1 is NATO. This is hardly surprising, as NATO was first set up in 1949 with the deliberate intention of countering a perceived threat as a result of the post war Russian domination of Central Europe.

While a lot has happened since then, a lot has also NOT happened. After Russia emerged from the chaotic collapse of the Soviet Union, the West – NATO in particular - has not seen a need to try and demonstrate to a new, emerging Russia that its former enemy status had changed. Russia was still a nuclear power and while its super-power status had slipped considerably, Russia too was still considered a threat.

Also, Russia eventually came under the rule of Vladimir Putin, a man intent on seeing Russia's super-power status restored. But firstly, let us explore Russia's first paranoia, it's obsession with its 'near abroad' - and those beyond.

For centuries Russia has used this term 'near abroad', (*Ближнее зарубежье*), as a way of describing a cordon of vassal states traditionally circling Russia's Imperial perimeter. With few natural borders, Russia has had a lot of enemies. So, it has sought

to use those border nations as a buffer between itself and rival empires

'We used expansion as a defence' said History Professor Alexander Massov of St Petersburg Maritime University 'We wanted to put as much distance between ourselves and the invading hordes as possible.



Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev meeting in Moscow

‘The best way to understand this fear from a Russian perspective,’ he said, ‘is to turn the map upside down. When we see for example, the arrow from the left (East) we think of Genghis, Nogai or Batu Khan — hence Russia’s expansion into Siberia and into what ultimately became Russian Turkestan’.

‘When we see the arrow from the top (south), we think of *Ali Shah* and the 1804-13 Persian wars.

‘Then there were the Ottoman Turks: 12 wars from the 16th - 20th century; the longest series of wars in European history. While the Caucasus Mountains are one of Russia’s few natural boundaries, with two hostile empires just on the other side, Russia wanted to keep Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia as a buffer,’ he said. ‘We needed to go beyond the volatile Caucasus, to ensure our defence.

‘Then there’s an arrow from the top right across Ukraine and Belarus. We think of Austro-Hungary, Polish/-Livonian Commonwealth, Napoleon and Hitler. So, to think as a Russian, you need Poland, Belarus and Ukraine as buffer states.

‘As for the arrow on the far right (NW) we see the Teutonic Knights, Vikings and Swedes – hence the Baltic States and Finland. So, you see, Russians have very long memories’!

But there is another cause of Russian and NATO paranoia. The Suwalki Gap is a narrow strip of land on the North European plains, which is only 90 Kms wide. This narrow gap lies between Poland, Belarus, the Russian



enclave of Kaliningrad. This is the main land route linking Poland (NATO member) to the Baltic States (NATO members). Belarus is also a neighbour, but is firmly in Putin's camp. The vulnerability of this gap means NATO's armed forces share a border with Russia. This has been one of the principle invasion routes into Russia for the last 500 years. The other invasion route has of course been through the Ukraine, which became a principle battleground for the German Panzers during WW2.

But it still doesn't fully explain why Ukraine is singled out as a particularly significant or dangerous 'near abroad' nation. To understand this, we need to delve into Vladimir Putin's own personal paranoias.

Putin, like millions of Russians, cannot conceive of a Russia without Ukraine, where in 988 AD St Vladimir I (the Great) of Kiev converted Russia to Christianity. Thus was founded 'Kievan Rus', the first Russian Orthodox state (see left). And while the centre of gravity of the first 'Rus' shifted to Moscow in the 15th to 16th Centuries, to Vladimir Putin, *Mother Russia* is not complete without Kiev. This is where 'Holy Russia' was born. *Orthodox Mother Russia*, and Orthodoxy is key to Putin's vision of Russian exceptionalism.

In 2016 Putin unveiled a statue of St Vladimir in Moscow, which now towers over the Kremlin, an act that was not appreciated in Kiev, which claims historical rights to St Vladimir! But of course, it clearly telegraphed to those in the world who understood all this, that Putin was deadly serious in his wish to absorb Ukraine back into *Mother Russia*.

While Ukraine's present status and borders have only existed for 30 years, it's hard to put a date on when Ukraine first started to emerge as a country or an 'ethnicity'.

Ethnically it was a disparate collection of Russian, Tartar, Ruthenian and Cossack tribes, who at various times formed parts of other Empires. But of all Russia's 'near abroad' neighbours, Ukraine and Belarus are the ones with which most Russians have linguistic, family and historic ties. Russia, Belarus and Ukraine are collectively known as 'The Russias', hence the old Tsarist title, 'Tsar of all the Russias'.



Ukraine means 'on the edges', a patronising term like 'the outback', where the 'Little Russians' live. So Putin sees Ukraine in the same way 'Great' Britain sees Scotland and Wales as part of a United Kingdom.

Vladimir Vladimirovitch Putin is much respected in Russia. It was he who stabilised Russia after the chaotic post-Soviet years and restored its self-respect. It would be wrong to associate him just with the old Soviet Union, although he was very much a product of the USSR. As a former KGB man, he was well versed in the dark-arts of totalitarian Soviet and Tsarist Russian repression. Initially Putin reached out to the west. But the west was slow to reach back. And all the time Putin resented the fact that Russia, Soviet or Tsarist was no longer an empire, and no longer a super power.

So over the last 20 years Putin himself has changed. While at first he embraced many elements of European democracy, he has gradually closed it down. Today he rules as an autocrat with a small group of 'Siloviki'; an isolated power group. The Constitutional checks and balances may have been



Putin holds quarantined meetings at his long table

there on paper, but Putin has managed to grab back more personal control to his Kremlin power-group.

So on the eve of the Ukraine Invasion, Russia seemed under the thumb of a very different Putin; an isolated, paranoid Tsar ruling from the end of a very long table.

A better analogy would be Vladimir III 'Tsar of all the Russias', a title used by his hero Peter the Great. There is a portrait of Peter in Putin's office; a constant reminder of a time when Russia was great and not pushed around by other European powers.

Maybe Putin compares himself with this legendary Tsar-Emperor? Maybe he wants to put Peter's Empire back together again. Maybe that was



the hidden message in his famous remark following the 1990 collapse of the Soviet Union, when he decried it was 'the greatest geo-political catastrophe of the century'.

But that's how many commentators see him — Putin the neo-tsar, the hero, who restored order out of chaos, and he has millions of supporters in Russia. Like most Tsars, he's no democrat, despising 'unmanaged' democracy, protests and disorder. He learned that during the Soviet collapse while a KGB officer in East Germany. He has also seen the results of public protests in Ukraine, with its 'orange revolution'. Putin has often used the brutality of Russian thugs to enforce his will. Putin is doubly paranoid about public order and dissent, which he sees as a 'western' disease.

Putin never forgave the west for its triumphalism when Russia was weak; he feels Russia was double-crossed by the west. In February 1990 US Secretary of State, Howard Baker promised Gorbachev that if Russia did not stand in the way of German reunification, NATO would not 'move one inch to the east'. Now most former Warsaw pact nations are members of NATO including former members of the Russian Empire like Poland and the Baltic States, hence Putin drawing a line under Ukrainian NATO membership.

Which brings us to the final paranoia: our own! In short, we have been reading too many Russian spy novels. We tend to look upon Russia as an 'Evil Empire' prosecuting its dastardly deeds with ruthless efficiency. Nothing could be further from the truth. After six visits to Russia, the country's inefficiency and chaos has never ceased to astound me.

We are now many weeks into Putin's war, and it is not going well for him. He was hoping for a lightning air-born raid on Kyiv's airport, to 'decapitate' Ukraine's leadership and force regime change in a couple of days. It failed, and that is when things started to go badly wrong. Soon his attack columns faced serious resistance.

And his army faced major logistic problems. Thanks to logistic incompetence his tanks ran out of fuel. Ammunition ran out and a lack of food left his soldiers hungry.

Morale was a problem with many of the younger Russian conscripts not knowing why they were fighting in the Ukraine. Putin seriously underestimated the ferocity of Ukrainian fighters who certainly knew what they were fighting for!

Thanks to a massive number of western anti-tank weapons, 'dead' Russian tanks litter the roads leading to Kiev surrounded by the heaped bodies of dead Russian soldiers.

His air force failed to achieve air-superiority, and because of faulty guidance systems, it seems many of his rockets failed to hit their targets while Ukrainian rockets have found their marks with two humiliating strikes, sinking Putin's flagship, *Moskva*.



Putin's flagship Moskva burning before sinking



There are reports of over 15,000 dead Russian soldiers including nine generals and over 20,000 wounded. At the time of writing, nearly 600 Russian tanks had been reported destroyed, over 500 captured with a furious Putin sacking many of his commanders.

There are also reports of the arrest of Colonel-General Sergei Beseda head of Russia's 'fifth service', for failing to keep Putin informed of the short-comings of Russia's high command. This would be particularly humiliating for Putin, as a former secret police boss. And soon sanctions will bite. Russians will pay dearly for his adventurism and soon he has to explain why so many young soldiers had to die for his out-dated and very personal dream.

And what of Vladimir III, Neo-Tsar of 'all the Russias'? Has he gambled and lost? He invaded because he thought the west was weak and 'woke', and Europe divided. It's not – or not anymore. He thought the US would crumble. It didn't. He banked on Ukrainian disunity. He was wrong there too. He also thought the Ukrainian army of 2014 would be

the same rabble he faced in 2022. Again thanks to their NATO training, he was wrong. And he totally underestimated Ukraine's President Zelensky who has provided strong leadership.

And Putin seems to have got the demographics wrong too. Russia may have more tanks and weapons than Ukraine, but Putin lacks the manpower. Ukraine has the manpower, but not the weaponry. Again, thanks to the west that's rapidly changing.

But even if Russia does eventually get its act together, and crushes Ukraine through sheer force of numbers, Putin would still never have enough troops to occupy, let alone keep a country the size of Ukraine under constant repression. Putin probably lost this war in the first 48 hours, when his lighting strike on Kiev failed. But there is one final lesson Putin should learn from this whole sorry affair. Often autocrats fall victim to the 'dictator syndrome': 'if you surround yourself with those who only dare to tell you what you want to hear, you will never be told what you need to know'.



Removal of the construction hoarding has shown the world the beautiful facade of the restored Gallipoli Club

"Pride In Our Heritage"



'The Landing' 25th April, 1915

THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN THE BEGINNING – "THE LANDING"

Men of the 1st Australian Division A.I.F. (Australian Imperial Force) landing under heavy Turkish fire at ARI BURNU, 4.30am on 25th April, 1915. The beach was later named ANZAC COVE.

The name "ANZAC" originated in Egypt early in 1915 where the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps were training. The Corps Commander, Lieut. Gen. William Birdwood, used the abbreviated title of the Corps, A.N.Z.A.C., as the code word for the Corps in preparation for the Gallipoli Campaign – a word that was to make history and be revered by Australians and New Zealanders for all time. An "ANZAC" was an Australian or New Zealand soldier who served in the Gallipoli Campaign. The term "an Original ANZAC" identified those men who participated in the initial landing on the 25th April, 1915 – the 1st Australian Division, A.I.F.

The Campaign ended on the 18th December, 1915, following the evacuation of all Allied troops from the Peninsula.

In the 8 months period of the Campaign, Australian casualties were:

Killed in action and died of wounds	8,079
Wounded in action and missing	17,924
Total	26,003

Our Club was originally "The Gallipoli Legion Club" until November, 1967 when it became "The Gallipoli Memorial Club" – a memorial where the legend of GALLIPOLI would be firmly entrenched as an inspiration to future generations of Australians.

It was founded and developed by the GALLIPOLI LEGIONS OF ANZACS, those "ANZACS" who survived the Gallipoli Campaign and following that, the Campaigns of France and Belgium until the Armistice on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918.

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