



ANZAC CULTURE:
A South Australian case study of
Australian identity and commemoration of war dead.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis argues that in South Australia Anzac Day began as a spontaneous expression of mourning for war dead and disability support for wounded soldiers. Subsequent changes made to Anzac Day rituals by the Returned and Services League and antecedent bodies, mirrored changes in the concept of Australian identity allowing migrants from other cultures to participate in Australian rituals commemorating war dead. Successive Australian Governments, both Labor and Liberal, through the Prime Minister's Department and Department of Veteran Affairs utilized Anzac Day commemoration services to foster a sense of Australian consciousness and national identity. Australian collective memory of war dead, together with the Anzac legend, has symbolic representation in soldiers' memorials, war cemeteries, and commemorative days; it also has political significance endorsed by the Commemorations Branch of the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Explanations for all these representations exist within a global network of social transmission in thanatoid rituals and solutions to the problem of the absent corpse resulting in travel to significant sites synonymous with Australian identity both within Australia and overseas. Even though the observation of Anzac Day takes place internationally, Anzac Day is not a replica of an overseas event for Anzac Day is a public holiday of Australia's making.

STATEMENT

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institutions and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

I consent to this copy of my thesis when deposited in the University Library, being available for photocopying and loan if accepted for the award of the degree.

Jamice Gwenllian Pavils

Date: *6th December 2004*

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AD Committee	Adelaide Anzac Day Committee
ADCC	Brisbane Anzac Day Commemoration Committee
AIF	Australian Imperial Force
AWM	Australian War Memorial
CBD	Central Business District
CMF	Citizens' Military Forces
Ex-POWs	Ex-prisoners-of-war
League	Returned & Services League of Australia (S.A. Branch) Inc.
MBE	Member British Empire
MC	Military Cross
NSW	New South Wales
POW	Prisoner-of-war
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
RAF	Royal Air Force
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
RAR	Royal Australian Regiment
RSA	Returned Soldiers' Association of South Australia
RSL	Returned & Services League of Australia
RSS & AILA	Returned Sailors', Soldiers' & Airmen's Imperial League of Australia
RSSILA	Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia
RSSILA SA	Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia South Australian Branch
SA	South Australia
State Memorial	State National War Memorial
TS-OH	Their Service Our Heritage
VP Day	Victory Pacific Day
WDL	Wattle Day League
WWI	World War One
WWII	World War Two

GLOSSARY

Antecedent bodies of the Returned & Services League, South Australian Branch (League).

Formed as Returned Soldiers' Association South Australia in December 1915 (RSA).

In July 1917 the Returned Soldiers' Association South Australia became the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, South Australian Branch.

In 1941, the Returned Sailors' and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia, South Australian Branch became the Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia, South Australian Branch.

In 1966, name changed to the Returned Services League of Australia South Australian Branch.

In 1990, became Returned & Services League of Australia (S.A. Branch) Inc.