Anzac Day 2018

Military history: a quick guide to online resources

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The purpose of this quick guide is to provide parliamentarians and their staff with helpful resources for researching various aspects of Australian military history. This document will be periodically updated when additional resources become available. All hyperlinks were correct as at 12 April 2018.

Online military history resources

The Australian War Memorial (AWM)

The AWM website provides an extensive amount of military history resources, including:

- Unit war diaries and commander’s diaries from the First World War through to the Vietnam War. The diaries in this collection have been digitised and are accessible as PDF documents.
- The official histories of the First World War and the Second World War. These volumes have been digitised and are accessible as PDF documents.
- First World War embarkation roll, nominal roll and Red Cross wounded and missing files, in addition to prisoner of war records for the Second World War. These records enable individual personnel to be researched.
- Information regarding the formation of Australian military units and locations where they served.
- Statistics of Australian casualties from conflicts between 1860 and 2006.

The Department of Veterans’ Affairs (DVA)

DVA offers a variety of resources, ranging from lists of anniversaries and commemorative events, nominal rolls for the Second World War, Korea and Vietnam (with preliminary work beginning on the Gulf War) and information on the Office of Australian War Graves.

The DVA website also contains a research tips guide and approximately 50 media backgrounder fact sheets on various aspects of Australia’s military history, including involvement in wars and conflicts, commemorations and related themes.
DVA has also published the following reference websites *Gallipoli and the Anzacs, Australians on the Western Front 1914–1918, Australia’s War 1939–1945, Australia’s involvement in the Korean War* and *Australia and the Vietnam War*.

**The National Archives of Australia (NAA)**

The [NAA website](http://www.naa.gov.au) contains an array of primary source [military history documents and thematic fact sheets](http://www.naa.gov.au). These include service records, administrative records, internment records and national service records. The NAA [guide to researching war service](http://www.naa.gov.au) provides useful information, as well as a link to the [RecordSearch database](http://www.naa.gov.au). The 376,000 First World War service records have been [digitised in their entirety](http://www.naa.gov.au), following the three-year ‘Gift to the Nation’ digitisation project. Digitisation of other records remains ongoing.

The NAA has also created the [Discovering Anzacs website](http://www.discoveringanzacs.gov.au), featuring profiles of Australian military personnel, an image gallery and a mapping tool highlighting the places of birth and enlistment of those who served in the Boer War and First World War.

**The AIF Project**

This is a [database](http://www.aifproject.com) coordinated by academic historian Peter Dennis which allows the searching of Australian First World War personnel by name, service number or location of birth/place of residence upon enlistment.

**The National Library of Australia’s Trove website**

As a result of the National Library’s [newspaper digitisation program](http://www.nla.gov.au), more than 1,000 different [newspapers](http://www.nla.gov.au) across all states and territories have been digitised, spanning the early 1800s to the mid-20th century. These newspapers are keyword-searchable and provide substantial media coverage of the war front and the home front during the First and Second World Wars.

**The Australian Dictionary of Biography**

This website contains [searchable biographic articles](http://www.ustraliansocialhistory.com) of notable personalities, including those involved in the military. It is an initiative of the National Centre of Biography at the Australian National University.

**ParlInfo**

The [Parliament of Australia ParlInfo database](http://www.parlinfo.aph.gov.au) enables keyword searching across House of Representatives and Senate Hansard, committee reports and proceedings and Bills debated within the Parliament. This database is useful for identifying the parliamentary proceedings during times of conflict.

**Parliamentary Library resources**

- [Commonwealth Members of Parliament who have served in war: the Second World War](http://www.parliament.gov.au) (9 September 2016)
- ‘Our life goes on the same: the Great War at home’, lecture delivered by Professor Peter Stanley (11 November 2015)
Thematic topics

Honours and awards

The Department of Defence website contains information regarding the different types of Australian and Imperial military awards. The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet’s It’s an Honour website provides further details on Australian honours, including the ability to search by an individual or a specific award or medal.

• The Australian Army History Unit website contains primary source materials regarding the Australian Army forces’ contribution to conflicts spanning pre-Federation to Vietnam, support to peacekeeping operations and information regarding unit histories and formations.

• The Royal Australian Air Force website contains overview information of the RAAF’s contribution to Australian military operations. The history of the RAAF is also described, including a list of famous RAAF personnel. The RAAF website also gives information regarding the traditions of the red poppy, the last post, the dawn service and Remembrance Day.

• The Royal Australian Navy website contains reference material regarding the histories of various ships, submarines and naval bases, customs, traditions and navy personnel.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander military service

• The Australian War Memorial website contains an overview of the history of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander military service, including specific sections regarding its involvement in Australia’s various military conflicts.

• In May 2014, the Indigenous Liaison Officer for the AWM, Gary Oakley, delivered the lecture ‘Aboriginals in the First Australian Imperial Force, a Secret History’, as part of the Parliamentary Library’s series Parliament, War and Empire. This lecture can be downloaded as an MP3 file, with an accompanying PowerPoint presentation and slide notes.

• The Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies website has a section on Indigenous Australians at war and also provides details of other online and hardcopy resources regarding the military service of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander personnel. This includes an honour roll.

Soldier settlement

• The Year Book Australia 1925, published on the Australian Bureau of Statistics website, contains an overview of the soldier settlement schemes across Australia.

• The Public Records of Victoria website, Battle to Farm, holds the digitised records for soldier settlers in Victoria from 1919 to 1935.
• *A Land Fit for Heroes?* is a [history of soldier settlement](#) in New South Wales from 1916 to 1939, developed by the Australian Research Council, Monash University, the University of New England, DVA and State Records NSW.