



Amanda Rishworth MP

Member for Kingston

Constituency Statement – Remembrance Day 13 November 2008

This week we observed our national day of remembrance for the many service men and women who left their homes and their loved ones to fight in a foreign land for their country. This year's Remembrance Day also marks the 90th anniversary of the end of World War I, a war in which more than 60,000 Australians lost their lives—at Gallipoli, on the Western Front, in the Middle East, on the high seas and in the air—making their final resting places in foreign soil.

In 2002 I had the privilege of visiting the Gallipoli Peninsula, where I visited the battlefields where many Australians fought and also the cemeteries where many Australians have been laid to rest. On this visit I was particularly struck by some of the photos that sat at the top of the tombstones. What especially struck me was how young some of these men who bravely fought for the country were. These young men paid the ultimate sacrifice on the battlefield, many of them never having the chance to fulfil their full potential or have a family. A further 156,000 men were wounded, gassed or taken prisoner. I think it is very important to remember some of these casualties as well. These figures are immense losses, and striking, considering that Australia had a population of less than five million people at the time.

In my electorate, more and more people are participating in Anzac Day services and Remembrance Day services. This is in part due to the great work that the local RSLs do, and this includes the Christies Beach-Port Noarlunga RSL, the McLaren Vale RSL, the Morphett Vale RSL, the Willunga RSL and the Beachvale naval association, who do a great job in providing education to the wider community about the sacrifices that were made by the Australian service men and women.

As parliament was sitting, I was unable to attend the Remembrance Day services that took part in my electorate in the McLaren Vale memorial park, the City of Onkaparinga Memorial Gardens and the Christies Beach-Port Noarlunga RSL. However, I am informed by people that did attend that these were very emotional and moving services. 11 November is an important day for Australians to remember and certainly, as I have also heard from my electorate, there were many services held in schools around my electorate. I think we need to remember the contribution and sacrifice of the Australian soldiers and their families, and this continues more recently in the sacrifices made by our soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq. Successive generations uphold

the values for which these brave Australians fought and I think we need to acknowledge that the spirit and dedication in Australia lives on. *(Time expired)*