**ANZAC DAY CEREMONY SPEECH**

I haven’t heard it said better than the following excerpt from Michael Scholz’s speech at our local ANZAC day service at Wilberforce cenotaph. Michael Scholz is the Captain of Wilberforce Rural Fire Brigade.

*This day marks the 100th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli. Like hundreds of thousands of our fellow citizens, who gather at memorials in cities, suburbs and towns across Australia, we have come here to commemorate one of the most significant events in our national calendar.*

*In recent years some commentators have expressed amazement at the fact that the observance of ANZAC day continues to draw record crowds. However, those who are surprised by this fact show that they understand very little about our national character and the way in which it comes to affect all who settle in this country, even those who have lived here for just a short while.*

*For younger generations, it is sometimes difficult to understand why it is with gratitude that we should remember, but we have enjoyed the benefits of the peace and easy existence, which was purchased at the cost of many lives. Few of us have ever had to risk everything ourselves, or chance our loved ones to the dangers of war. But, for older generations of Australians, remembering such things is easier. War and death came far too frequently into their lives as, in the past, the men and women of our armed forces saw active service in places such as Belgium, Borneo, France, Korea, Malaya, the Middle East, New Guinea, Palestine, Turkey, and*

*Vietnam.*

*Today, a new generation of our soldiers, airmen and sailors are serving in troubled locations, around the globe. It is now a long standing tradition that on ANZAC*

*Day we all pause to remember those that offered up their life in the defence of their nation and community, which is the greatest contribution any citizen can make. This tradition is as relevant today as it was when our troops landed on the beaches of Gallipoli in 1915. We only have to recall those Australians that have died or been injured in recent years on operations overseas and within Australia to protect Australia and its national interests.*

*There is something very Australian in coming together for such a cause. As we have over recent years with numerous natural disasters. Our natural disposition is to stick together in adversity and support each other. I like to think that this flows from the deepest springs of our national character and a belief that happiness is the right of all people in this country.*

*Future generations need to be reminded that happiness has a price. For surely if happiness is the product of freedom, then freedom is the reward of courage. We should be grateful to those that have helped preserve our nation and way of life through their sacrifice. In doing so, we keep bright the memory of those lives. It is in the remembrance of these things that communities across the nation come together on this day.*