

A Word from Ted cont.

Shortly before 6am the sun started to rise to the accompaniment of amplified lapping waves on the shore. At the same time a flotilla of 8 ships from half a dozen countries came into view sailing across our line of sight. A magnificent spectacle!

After that we had the mounting of the Catafalque party followed by speeches, the Last Post, Ode etcetera. Then we were stood down and set off to Lone Pine for the Australian Service 3 hours or so later. At this stage we became aware of the major security effort mounted by the Turkish government for our protection. Proceeding up the last couple of K's to Lone Pine we passed groups of 2 Turkish soldiers with guns every 25 metres or so. We took a much needed toilet break as we approached Lone Pine.

Lone Pine is the location of one of the most terrible engagements in the Gallipoli Campaign. Australian and Turkish forces opposed each other with as little as 5 metres separating them. The slaughter was horrific. Nearly 2,300 Australians were killed or wounded in the Lone Pine Battles. The Turkish Army lost double that- for an area the size of approximately 2 tennis courts.

The Lone Pine Ceremony was less formal than that of ANZAC Cove, and seating was easier to find. Paul Bennett took the opportunity to make some new English friends and took a selfie featuring himself and the sixth person in line for the British throne. Staunch Monarchist Tony Abbott PM was there but thankfully I managed to keep away from him. After the Ceremony we had several hours before our bus would pick us up, during which time we were able to walk over and around the battle area. Even today there is much evidence of the battles that took place there 100 years ago. You can see the lines of trenches opposed to each other across the width of a narrow 2 lane road. You can also see magnificent views back toward ANZAC Cove and the Dardanelles due to the elevation of the area. Lone Pine was about as far as the Australians got.

The Gallipoli Battles are also of major significance to the Turkish people. They repelled a major invasion by the British and their colonies and the French and their successful General Kemal Ataturk later became the founder of modern Turkey and a revered historical figure. The Turkish 57th Regiment, members of which met the first wave of the invasion have an annual Observance which takes place a week before our ANZAC Day.



Photo: Paul and Ted with the wreath, laid on our behalf.

While waiting for our bus we had the opportunity to interact with our fellow travellers as we did on the return journey. I caught up with a Viet Nam Digger who was at 1 Australian Logistic Support Group Vung Tau when Malcolm Robertson, son of past President of Monbulk RSL Jim Robertson was tragically, accidentally killed in 1969. We got back to Istanbul about 8.45pm just in time for a cleansing ale or two before catching up on some well-earned rest.

Acknowledgements:

Because so many people make contributions to our ANZAC Day activities it can be difficult sometimes to remember them all.

In this context we wish to specifically acknowledge the following contributions.

John Niemann loaned us for the day the King's Penny given (I think) by the British Government to