

## The Legacy of the Anzacs

by Dr Robb Musgrave

We have just celebrated the anniversary of the Anzac landings at Anzac Cove in Turkey. The first engagement of Australian troops was in the Great War of 1914-18 and annually we celebrate their legacy. Interestingly, the day has become much more than a public holiday in Australia but, in fact a way to show that their sacrifice and courage defined what we value as a nation. Once again it demonstrates that what we value becomes our legacy: a celebration of the human spirit, not of war.

The Anzacs didn't win the battle, in fact their engagement led to disaster and a stalemate. The only success from that battle was in fact the successful operational withdrawal of all the soldiers some 8 months later with no loss of life. Unfortunately, by then, too many young men had paid the ultimate price with their lives.

The landing by the Anzacs occurred over 90 years ago and Australians have fought in many subsequent battles including involvement today in Iraq, yet that first engagement is recognised as the defining moment of nationhood for Australia. Not the charter establishing the country and the first parliament in 1901, but the engagement of troops supporting Britain on a foreign shore.

This legacy that has lasted over 90 years is still not forgotten. In fact, if numbers attending remembrance services are any guide, the legacy is bigger now than ever before. The legacy is bigger now, stronger now, yet with none of the original participants alive. Is this because the younger generations have taken the values epitomised by the ANZAC legacy and applied them as values they recognise and want to adopt and continue.

I found it interesting that the movie industry recognised the pull of the Australian war legacy to recently make and release the movie on the battle for Kokoda in Papua New Guinea, where Australian soldiers (mainly reservists) defeated the Japanese forces for the first time in World War II, possibly saving Australia from Japanese occupation. I found it a very confronting movie, visually and emotionally. Again it was the stories of individuals that came from these battles and engagements that have supported and enhanced Australia's ANZAC legacy. But the stories are representative of values that continue to resonate with people, which is why the legacy continues to develop and as more people are involved, they add subtle developments to our understanding, which of course are passed on.

The final scene from the movie is at the actual battle memorial on the Kokoda track and it shows the distilled values that identify the soldier's legacy from Kokoda. At Legenis, in our Reflected Life program we discuss an individual's Valgenics®, their dominant values, which allows people to focus on and develop their personal legacy. These are the 4 value pillars of the Kokoda monument; the Valgenics® of the ANZACS if you will. They are:

**Endurance, Courage, Mateship, Sacrifice**