

FAITH LUTHERAN SCHOOL

# Premier's Anzac Spirit School Prize 2010

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Sergeant Leslie William Lindner  
1896-1917



Shane Rosenzweig

Using the story of a fallen South Australian World War 1 serviceman/woman on the Western Front,  
describe what the ANZAC spirit means to you.



In one day the young life of Sergeant Leslie William Lindner changed forever. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 1917 Sergeant Lindner was wounded in action and died later that day. This young man was promoted to sergeant only eleven days prior to his death. He was only 21 years of age. We can find this man's name on the Memorial Scroll, but who was Sergeant Leslie William Lindner and how did he contribute to the Anzac Spirit?

Mr. Leslie William Lindner was born in Tanunda, South Australia, on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May, 1896. He had two younger brothers, Harold and Frederick Lindner who died on the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1918, eight months after Sergeant Lindner. He was the son of Johann Ernst Lindner and Christiane Elisabeth Lindner. In 1910, both Harold and Leslie moved to Woodville and started work at a small goods factory. After enlisting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1915 Mr. Lindner joined the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion, with the service number of 3718. His medical report read as follows;

**AGE:** 19 years 2 months  
**HEIGHT:** 5 feet 8 ½ inches  
**WEIGHT:** 139 lbs  
**CHEST MEASUREMENT:** 32-35 inches  
**COMPLEXITY:** Fair  
**EYES:** Hazel  
**HAIR:** Brown  
**RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION:** Lutheran

Once in Egypt, Mr. Lindner was allotted to the 48<sup>th</sup> Battalion and was sent to fight in France on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May 1916. The 48<sup>th</sup> Battalion was part of the 'doubling' of the AIF

and was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ray Leane. It was made up of Gallipoli veterans from the 16<sup>th</sup> Battalion and roughly half of the battalion were new reinforcements from regional South Australia. This new battalion joined the 12<sup>th</sup> Brigade of the 4<sup>th</sup> Australia Division. The 48<sup>th</sup> Battalion was commonly known as the 'Joan of Arc' (the Maid of Orleans) because it was 'made of all Leane's!' (1)

Poizieres on the Western Front was the first major battle of for the 48<sup>th</sup>. Their job at Poizieres was defending ground that had been previously captured by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division. It also entered the firing line from the 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> of August. During this period the battalion encountered the heaviest artillery barrage ever experienced by Australian troops. The battalion suffered 598 casualties. (2) During the year of 1917 the battalion fought in two major battles, the first, Bullecourt, France and the battle of Passchendaele in Belgium, where Sergeant Lindner was killed. The 48<sup>th</sup> Battalion went on to be a crucial player throughout the war, blocking the main road into Amiens and then fighting with the Allies in the Battle of Amiens and in the battle to seize the Hindenburg outpost line. (3) Although Sergeant Lindner died before this vital mission, he would have been very proud of the achievements of his battalion.

Sergeant Lindner now lies at the Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery, Belgium. He was awarded the 1914/15 Star, British War Medal, Victory Medal and The Military Medal. This coming October will mark the 92<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Sergeant Lindner's death. Is his death still important to us today? Yes, we can never forget the Anzacs for their efforts during the war. Without the glorious nations of Australia and New Zealand would not be the same.

Australia's relatively short history, as a country under the Commonwealth, began with a blank name on the map of the world and ended with a new name, that of Anzac. The Gallipoli Campaign, April to December, 1915, has been described as the moment of birth of the nationhood of both Australia and New Zealand. Gallipoli took place only fourteen years after Australia's Federation and it was the first international event that saw Australians taking part as a contingent, flying the Australian flag with pride, even if they generally served under the Union Jack. This major battle was the defining moment for Australia as a new nation, forging a sense of national identity and character.

Former Australian Defence Minister, Brendan Nelson stated that the Anzacs “forged values that are ours and make us who we are, reminding us that there are some truths by which we live.” He also went on to say that the story of Simpson and his donkey “represents everything that’s at the heart of what it means to be an Australian.” (4) Simpson also embodied the Anzac Spirit with his commendable deeds – putting others before oneself - it also encompasses the laughter, the pride and the love of life that is in every Australian. The Anzac Spirit, according to official war historian C.E.W. Bean “stood and still stands for reckless valour in a good cause, for enterprise, resourcefulness, fidelity, comradeship and endurance that will never own defeat.” (5) Hundreds of thousands of men were eager to assist the ‘Motherland’; the Anzac spirit imbued the volunteers as they dashed off to the war and formed the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. These ‘colonials’ were the equal of any other fighting force in the world, perhaps even, the greatest fighting force this world has ever known – the Anzacs. On the twenty-fifth of April the Anzac Spirit was kindled, it flared with a previously unknown almost super human strength.

The Anzacs now belong to the past but during the war all the energy was concentrated on the future. The influence of the Gallipoli Campaign upon the national life of both Australians and New Zealanders has been far too deep to fade. It was on the twenty-fifth of April 1915 that the consciousness of nationhood was born. Today, Anzac Day parades are growing stronger every year. This year in Canberra alone, rain and blistering cold winds could not have deterred over 20,000 people to the dawn service.

These men set out on an adventure; many of them had never left home, let alone their country. When the men arrived in the trenches of the Western Front they were faced with total and absolute horror, death and unbelievable, appalling physical and mental conditions.

The Anzac Spirit continues today in times of hardship such as cyclones, floods and particularly bushfires. At these times, Australians and New Zealanders come together to rescue one and another, to ease suffering, to provide food and shelter and to reassure the victims of such devastating circumstances that they are not alone in their hour of need. It lives in schools, in the local sport clubs, in fact it lives all over these two great countries of Australian and New Zealand. As the Anzacs fell they threw the torch to the

next in line so their quest would maintain its strength. That torch of freedom has continually been thrown from the falling hand which has kindled a zeal, a desire for both our own liberty and our country's as well. This burning desire has been passed on with the memory that burns as brightly as the flame which first kindled it. This torch makes us determined for freedom - freedom of speech, of worship, freedom to live and think and do as we will, without hurting others. The Anzac Spirit burns within the hearts of every Australian and New Zealander. We feel a warm, tender, fiery ideal that sparks intense patriotism in our innermost souls.

Many of the original Anzacs died on the battlefield, but they left future generations with the glorious challenge of catching the torch. This challenge still shouts loud and strong to all. Their goal, freedom for the land they loved, is still our goal today.

## Footnotes

1 - 3: Australian War Memorial 48<sup>th</sup> Battalion, viewed on the 5/09/2009,  
[http://www.awm.gov.au/unit/unit\\_11235.asp](http://www.awm.gov.au/unit/unit_11235.asp),

4-5: Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Burke, The Spirit of ANZAC Explained,  
<http://www.azacday.org.au/spirit/spirit2.html>, viewed on the 15/08/2009

Records from <http://www.naa.gov.au.html>