

ANZAC YARNS - TUBE THEM OR LOSE THEM

While much of the ANZAC story has been recorded in the annals of our national history, the yarns passed orally from generation to generation risk being lost over time, warns RSL National President Major General Bill Crews.

But Major General Crews believes the meteoric rise in popularity of social networking and social media sites could be one way for Australians to capture and share their family stories.

“People just don’t seem to have the time nowadays to put pen to paper to record their family history. Many families are hard pressed to find time to really relax together. But people are finding time to get online and put up clips and snippets about almost any topic,” he said.

“Why not get online and tell your family’s service history. Kids and parents can work together to create some really interesting material. This has got to be an opportunity to not only capture our diggers’ stories but also a wonderful opportunity for families to work together to create a lasting record.”

The idea of using the web as a medium to capture family yarns about Gallipoli is supported by the organisation behind the annual Sands of Gallipoli promotion.

Stephen Davie, who created Sands of Gallipoli in 2004, says people want to share their stories but are often not confident as writers.

“I get a lot of people who ring because of our Gallipoli commemorative collections but end up talking about their own ties to Gallipoli. When I suggest they add their yarn to our online forum the usual response is, “I’m no writer”,” Mr Davie said.

“By using new web tools like YouTube people could record clips, add images and have a bit of fun building an audio visual presentation from old photos, music and by talking. All you need is a computer, online access and someone under 17 years old to drive it.”

“I will happily host links to the stories created on the SandsofGallipoli.com.au web site - keeping the memories alive is a big part of what Sands wants to achieve.”

The idea for annual Sands of Gallipoli commemorative collections was born after Mr Davie met with Australia’s last surviving Gallipoli ANZAC, Alec Campbell in early 2002. Mr Campbell had hoped future generations would connect to the memories of Australian’s wartime history and service.

Mr Davie said he wanted to capture a part of the Gallipoli experience that people could easily appreciate and feel positive about. “This is where the idea to integrate sand collected from the landing beaches into annual collections marking different elements of the Gallipoli experience came from. It’s a simple way to let people connect to the place as they commemorate.”

In memory of Alec Campbell who died May 16 2002, and in recognition of the work the RSL does to help Australia’s diggers, Sands of Gallipoli donates 10 per cent of proceeds from each collection to the RSL, with over \$500,000 generated to date.

The 2009 Sands of Gallipoli collection; *Prominent Medals of Gallipoli*, is available from Australia Post outlets or online at SandsofGallipoli.com.au

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