



How did Indigenous Australians help in the Defence of Australia in World War 2?

WHAT DOES THIS TELL US ABOUT CITIZENSHIP?

We do not know much about Indigenous service in the Australian armed forces.

However, we are now starting to discover more as interest in Australia's Indigenous history grows.

In this unit we have gathered together information and evidence about Indigenous Australians' service in World War 2, and in particular their involvement in the northern Defence of Australia.

By looking at this information and evidence you will be able to explore the two great themes we have been presenting in the Defence 2020 program this year:

- Citizenship, and
- Role Models.

Plaque at Rocky Creek, Atherton Tablelands, Queensland



Your task

Your task is to look at the sources presented on the next pages, and to use them to answer the sorts of key questions that are part of any historical inquiry. You can use a table like this: →

Conclusion

When you have completed your summary table from all the sources decide on your answers to these questions:

- Did Indigenous Australians show good citizenship during the war?
- Did Indigenous people provide good role models that we could follow today?
- Did non-Indigenous Australians show good citizenship towards Indigenous Australians?
- Did the Australian Government show good citizenship in its treatment of Indigenous people?

The evidence has been scrambled, so you will need to look at it carefully to sort it and use it to answer the questions in the table.

You might do this by working through all the evidence individually, or you might have an individual or a small group work on a page of evidence and report on it to the rest of the class.

Note that the information has been taken from www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/aborigines/indigenous.asp unless otherwise specified.

Indigenous involvement in the Defence of Australia in World War 2	
Who was involved?	
What did they do?	
When did they do it?	
Where did they do it?	
Why did they do it?	
What were the impacts of the involvement?	
What were the consequences of the involvement?	

Further Reading

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Kartinyeri, Dr. Doreen. *Ngarrindjeri Anzacs*. South Australian Museum and Raukkan Council, S.A., Gillingham Printers 1996

Powell, Alan. *The Shadow's Edge: Australia's northern war*. Carlton South, Melbourne University Press, 1988

SOURCE 1 Captain Reginald Walter (Reg) Saunders, MBE

The son of a First World War veteran, Saunders was born in western Victoria on 7 August 1920 and brought up by his grandmother. Having attended school only sporadically, he found work as a sawmillier but imagined himself going to fight in South America for the poor and oppressed, with whom he felt a kinship.

Very conscious of the service of Aboriginal men during the First World War, Saunders enlisted on 24 April 1940 and, after his initial training, was sent to the Middle East. Having survived several encounters with German aircraft in North Africa, Saunders embarked on the ill-fated Greek campaign. After Greece his unit fought on Crete where Saunders experienced his first close combat and was forced to remain hidden on the island for twelve months after the German victory.



After escaping Crete in May 1942, Saunders returned to Australia before rejoining his battalion in New Guinea — now as a sergeant. He fought through the Salamaua campaign, remaining in action until mid-1944 when his commanding officer nominated him for officer training.

For the remaining months of the war, Saunders fought as a platoon commander in New Guinea. He was in the Wewak area when the war ended and was repatriated to Australia to a welcome tinged with sadness for his younger brother who had been killed in action. By now tired of living rough, Saunders sought work in the city and, for the next five years, worked as a shipping clerk and, later, a builder's labourer.

A well-respected soldier and leader, Saunders died on 2 March 1990.

www.awm.gov.au/people/302.asp

"I remember from when I was a kid, Dad used to take me to the Dawn Service. Every year I'd see him cry. I used to think at one time that he was just crying for Uncle Harry because he had a lot of regrets that his brother died. They were close as kids, they grew up together, they worked together but they didn't get to spend their lives together. But I realised later he was also crying for all the mates he had lost ..."

"There were a lot of complaints after they came back from the war, especially in the Western Districts. The Soldier Settlement Scheme, for instance, wasn't available to them. Dad never got soldiers' land. He was a tram conductor, he swept railway stations, he worked in iron foundries, timber mills. Then he got a job with Aboriginal Affairs. He was one of the first Koories to be employed there."

Alick Jackomos and Derek Fowell,
Forgotten Heroes. Aborigines at War From the Somme to Vietnam,
Victoria Press, Melbourne, 1993 pages 21-22

SOURCE 2 RAAF

Throughout the Second World War the RAAF, with its huge need for manpower, was less restrictive in its recruiting than the army. However, little is known about Aboriginal aircrew. Aborigines were employed for surveillance in northern Australia and to rescue downed pilots.

SOURCE 3 Kamuel Abednego

The United States Navy recruited about twenty Torres Strait Islanders as crewmen on its small ships operating in the Torres Strait and around Papua New Guinea. Kamuel Abednego was given the rank of lieutenant, at a time when no Aborigine or Islander had served as a commissioned officer with the Australian forces.

SOURCE 4 Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion

The Torres Strait is the 150 km of crystalline water that separates the southern coast of New Guinea from the tip of Cape York in Queensland. During the Second World War this shallow area of water dotted by coral cays and islands, proved to be a vital strategic point for the American and Australian forces pushing northwards through New Guinea. By the conclusion of the first 12 months of the Pacific War, 830 Torres Strait Island men, almost every man of eligible age in the area, would volunteer to serve their country. Thus was formed the Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion, the only Indigenous Battalion ever to be formed in our nation's military history.

By July 1942, the Torres Strait Company was utilised in a counterattack role, still defending the previous mentioned positions on Thursday Island, however, numbers would soon grow to allow members to be stationed on neighbouring Horn Island.



SOURCE 5 Enlistments

Although they were not classed or treated as Australian citizens, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander servicemen and women fought and died for Australia during World War II.

The Australian Army [and] the Royal Australian Navy both . . . excluded persons 'not substantially of European origin or descent' until the threat of Japanese invasion necessitated the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. The Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) was more lenient, accepting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders early on because of a critical shortage of manpower due to the demands of the Empire Air Training Scheme.

Despite the early ban on their enlistment, a number of Aboriginal volunteers either claimed another nationality or just renounced their Aboriginality. Some recruiting officers either through indifference or confusion allowed Indigenous Australians to slip through. Outstanding soldiers such as Reg Saunders and Charles Mene were able to join and demonstrate that fears of disharmony between black and white personnel were unfounded. In some other instances, however, some who were keen to enlist were sent home.



In mid-1941, changes in attitude towards Indigenous Australians enabled numerous Aborigines to enlist in some of the smaller units of the services where they were able to integrate and sometimes to become NCOs, commanding white soldiers. In these smaller units the Indigenous Australians were able to leave the prejudices of their civilian world behind them and be accepted as Australian servicemen.

<http://www.ww2australia.gov.au/allin/indigenous.html>

SOURCE 6 Uncle David Williams

"When you're serving, things are pretty equal. You do your job well, your mates respect you and you get promoted. It's when you get back that it gets hard on the black Digger."

David Williams, president NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Veterans Association

SOURCE 7 Donald Thomson and the Northern Territory Special Reconnaissance Unit

Donald Thomson was an anthropologist from Melbourne who had lived with the East Arnhem Land Aborigines for two years in the 1930s. In 1941 he set up and led the Northern Territory Special Reconnaissance Unit, an irregular army unit consisting of 51 Aborigines, five Whites, and a number of Pacific and Torres Strait Islanders.

The members of the unit were to use their traditional bushcraft and fighting skills to patrol the coastal area, establish coastwatchers, and fight a guerilla war against any Japanese who landed. Living off the country and using traditional weapons, they were mobile and had no supply line to protect. Thomson shared the group's hardships and used his knowledge of Aboriginal custom to help deal with traditional rivalries. The unit was eventually disbanded, once the fear of a Japanese landing had disappeared.

The Aborigines in the unit received no monetary pay until back pay and medals were finally awarded in 1992.

SOURCE 8 Torres Strait Light Infantry

During 1943, the Torres Strait Light Infantry Pioneer Company was formed, with a complement of 160 men. The reason for this formation was twofold. The first reason was due to the high numbers of Torres Strait Islanders volunteering for the Battalion, thus providing an excess of numbers. The second reason was to assist engineering units in the area with the construction of installations. The main engineering unit to be assisted by the new company was the 17th Australian Field Company, with jobs such as the Thursday Island wharf, water scheme for Horn Island, and a variety of buildings being undertaken. This Company came under the command of Major Mitchell, a veteran of the Middle East.



SOURCE 9 RAN

As well as an unknown number of formally enlisted Aborigines and Islanders, the RAN also employed some informal units. For example, John Gribble, a coastwatcher on Melville Island, formed a unit of thirty-six Aborigines which patrolled a large area of coast and islands. The men were never formally enlisted and remained unpaid throughout the war, despite the promise of otherwise.

**SOURCE 10 Len Waters**

Leonard Waters was an Aboriginal airman who flew 95 missions in his Kittyhawk fighter, *Black Magic*, against the Japanese in New Guinea, Morotai and Tarakan.

He was the only Aboriginal fighter pilot.

After his discharge from the Air Force, Len looked for civilian employment. Still keen to fly, he hoped to establish an aerial taxi service in western Queensland in partnership with a St George businessman and bookmaker. Given the deplorable state of western Queensland roads, an aerial taxi service looked to be a good business proposition. His bookmaker partner would use the service to visit country races.

However, Len was not able to use his wartime skills to further his post-war career. His attempts to obtain a civil pilot's licence were frustrated by lengthy bureaucratic delays, and he lacked the financial backing to buy his share of an aircraft and start a taxi business. He was forced to give up his dream of flying to return to his pre-war life of shearing and bush work.

Robert Hall, *Black Magic: Leonard Waters — Second World War fighter pilot* in *Aboriginal History*, Vol 16 1992 page 80

SOURCE 11 Discrimination after the war

Walgett was a tiny town [in outback NSW] with a huge reputation for racial discrimination ... our sights were set on [a] striking example of racial discrimination. What better than the local RSL Club, which refused Indigenous ex-servicemen membership, allowing them in only on ANZAC Day, and sometimes not even then.

Though the exclusion of Indigenous ex-servicemen from the Walgett RSL Club was perhaps a small matter compared with the massive problems in housing, health and education confronting Indigenous people at the time, it had great symbolic importance.

For it was in the commemoration of war that Australian popular culture found its most profound sense of nationhood. This was as true in Walgett as everywhere else, where, as is so often the case, the war memorial stood at the centre of town.

And so, on 15 February 1965, we students lined up outside the Walgett RSL and held up our banners ... Just imagine it, a line of city students standing in a small country town on a hot day, carrying banners, saying 'good enough for Tobruk, why not Walgett RSL' and 'Bullets did not discriminate', and so on. What a shock we were to the local population, black and white. One bystander called out 'who the hell do you think you are?' My diary records: 'People gathered round, many jeering, many just watching. The RSL characters offered us cold drinks, but we refused them. At lunchtime many heated discussions broke out. Pat Healy recalls that 'Charlie [Perkins] spoke, very well I thought, about the treatment of the black servicemen who weren't allowed to use or be members of the Walgett RSL'.

Professor Ann Curthoys, *The Freedom Ride — Its Significance Today*
http://arts.anu.edu.au/nih/FreedomRide_notes.pdf

SOURCE 12 Kapiu Masai Gagai

Kapiu Gagai was a Torres Strait Islander from Badu Island. He was a skilled boatman and carpenter and was working on pearling luggers when he joined Donald Thomson in Arnhem Land during the 1930s. In 1941 he again joined Thomson, this time in the Northern Territory Special Reconnaissance Unit. As bosun of Thomson's vessel, the *Aroetta*, he patrolled the coast to prevent Japanese infiltration. Later he accompanied Thomson on patrol into Japanese-held Dutch New Guinea, where he was badly wounded. Gagai never received equivalent pay to White soldiers, which was also difficult for his family during and after the war.

SOURCE 13 Discontent in the Torres Strait Light Infantry

In 1943 issues had been festering since the formation of the Company and subsequent Battalion. These problems were:

- the inequality of payment for the Indigenous soldiers — they received one third of the pay of non-Indigenous soldiers, only increased to two-thirds after a short 'strike'
- family problems — elders left the villages to enlist, resulting in a lack of leadership and a decline in living conditions the villages
- food shortages in villages — inflation meant food was more expensive, and the hunters were away
- Malays and whites in the same units were paid allowances and allowed alcohol, while the TSIs were not.

SOURCE 14 After the war

In World War I the Lovetts provided five sons who between them saw overseas service in all the fronts: Gallipoli, France and Palestine. All survived the war.

In World War 2 Edward, Frederick, Herbert and their brother Samuel all served. In all there have been 19 members of the Lovett family who have served Australia in the armed services.

Their ancestors had lived in the area that became Lake Condah Mission for many thousands of years. On 25 September 1945 they learned that the Mission area was to be broken up and sold as farms to returned soldiers. Herbert wrote to the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Board requesting a block. But the Lovetts, like so many other Aboriginal people, were forgotten heroes. They were denied a soldier settlement block in the area where they had been brought up.

Alick Jackomos and Derek Fowell, *Forgotten Heroes. Aborigines at War From the Somme to Vietnam*, Victoria Press, Melbourne, 1993 pages 1-3

SOURCE 15 Enlistment

At the start of the Second World War Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders were allowed to enlist and many did so. But in 1940 the Defence Committee decided the enlistment of Indigenous Australians was "neither necessary nor desirable", partly because White Australians would object to serving with them. However, when Japan entered the war increased need for manpower forced the loosening of restrictions. Torres Strait Islanders were recruited in large numbers and Aborigines increasingly enlisted as soldiers and were recruited or conscripted into labour corps.

SOURCE 16 Pay rates

In 1944 a special government conference decided that legally Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal servicemen were entitled to full rates of pay. However, payments were not to be made. Their reasons included the enormous cost of back payment at the full rate, the second was if the men were paid at these rates, which were far higher than what they achieved in civilian life, it would cause trouble when they left the Army. It was decided however to grant the Torres Strait Islander soldiers an increase, raising their pay to 66 percent of that which the white soldiers were paid. The War Cabinet approved this raise on the 20th March 1944, with the proviso that payment would not be paid directly to the men, but to the Director of Native Affairs.

**SOURCE 19 Enlistment numbers**

Between 830 and 850 Torres Strait Islanders served in the Army. No document sets out the number of Aborigines who served as formally enlisted servicemen and women, [but] I estimate that between 1500 and 2000 probably served. Of the total Australian population, about one person in every 7.5 had served at some time in one or other of the Services during the Second World War. By contrast, about one in every 4.7 Torres Strait Islanders had served.

Among Aborigines the ratio is difficult to establish. Because of the large nomadic population, figures for the total Aboriginal population during the war period are highly suspect and calculations like those above become almost meaningless. Nevertheless, a very rough estimate suggests that about one in every 40 or 50 Aborigines served as a formally enlisted serviceman or woman. However, it should be remembered that some Aborigines gave military service without the benefit of formal enlistment and that many more, perhaps as many as 2000 to 3000, gave intimate support to the war effort as civilian labourers. These labourers freed enlisted servicemen to perform more important military duties. Unlike most white Australians, the dependants of Aboriginal de facto servicemen and labourers in northern Australia also found themselves living in the war zone and in close contact with day-to-day military operations.

The part played by Aborigines and Islanders in the Second World War represents a significant contribution to the Australian community by these people. It is all the more remarkable for being a contribution for which Aborigines stood to gain much less than white Australians. Most of those who served as enlisted servicemen, de facto servicemen or as labourers, did not possess the [vote] and many received less financial rewards than whites. Some remain unpaid, or underpaid, to this day — a matter which continues to irk them. Yet Aboriginal and Islander servicemen saw themselves as contributing equally with whites in the struggle to defend Australia. Despite their efforts, they were to find that the fruits of victory were not to be divided equally. As the war came to a close, State and Commonwealth Governments generally moved quickly to reassert, as far as possible, the pre-war conditions which Aborigines and Islanders had endured. Little attempt was made to recognise the contribution made by Aborigines and Islanders in the war, and today many Australians remain ignorant of it.

Robert A. Hall, 'Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in the Second World War', in Desmond Ball (ed.), *Aborigines in the Defence of Australia*, ANU Press, Sydney, 1991 pages 58-9

SOURCE 17 Australian Water Transport Company

To assist the myriad of vessels traversing the waters of the Torres Strait, the 2nd Australian Water Transport Company was formed in early 1943. This Company had 108 personnel, which was a mix of Torres Strait Islanders, Aborigines and Malays. This unit was instrumental in guiding water craft through the treacherous waters of the Torres Strait. The vessels they assisted included the RAAF rescue launch, which plucked downed airmen from the waters of the Torres Strait. They also directed cargo boats throughout the islands with vital supplies and equipment for troops stationed on remote outer islands. Others were charged with piloting American PT boats through the Torres Strait. Ray Cook recalls his time in the unit: 'There was never any discrimination in those days. We all lived, ate, slept, and worked together and never a cross word was spoken. Everybody was jovial and full of joking. We all shared the clean and dirty work, whether on the boats or at the land camps.'

SOURCE 18 Labour units

During the Second World War the army and RAAF depended heavily on Aboriginal labour in northern Australia. Aborigines worked on construction sites, in army butcheries, and on army farms. They also drove trucks, handled cargo, and provided general labour around camps. The RAAF sited airfields and radar stations near missions that could provide Aboriginal labour. At a time when Australia was drawing on all its reserves of men and women to support the war effort, the Aboriginal contribution was vital.

The army began to employ Aborigines in the Northern Territory in 1933, on conditions similar to those endured by Aboriginal workers on pastoral stations: long hours, poor housing and diet, and low pay. Pay rates remained low. The army tried to increase pay above the standard 5 shillings a week and at one stage the RAAF was paying Aborigines 5 shillings a day. But pressure from the civilian administration and pastoralists forced pay back to the standard rate.



SOURCE 20 Women

Aboriginal women also played an important role. Many enlisted in the women's services or worked in war industries. In northern Australia Aboriginal and Islander women worked hard to support isolated RAAF outposts and even helped to salvage crashed aircraft.

**SOURCE 21 Enlistment after the war**

Once the intense demands of the war were gone, the army re-imposed its restrictions on enlistment. But attitudes had changed and restrictions based on race were abandoned in 1949. Since then Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders have served in all conflicts in which Australia has participated.

SOURCE 22 To serve or not to serve

In 1939 Aborigines were divided over the issue of military service. Some Aboriginal organisations believed war service would help the push for full citizenship rights and proposed the formation of special Aboriginal battalions to maximise public visibility. Others, such as William Cooper, the Secretary of the Australian Aborigines' League, argued that Aborigines should not fight for White Australia. Cooper had lost his son in the First World War and was bitter that Aboriginal sacrifice had not brought any improvement in rights and conditions. He likened conditions in White-administered Aboriginal settlements to those suffered by Jews under Hitler. Cooper demanded improvements at home before taking up 'the privilege of defending the land which was taken from him by the White race without compensation or even kindness'. Cooper wrote to the Government in 1939:

'I am father of a soldier who gave his life for his King on the battlefield and thousands of coloured men enlisted in the A.I.F. They will doubtless do so again though on their return last time, that is those who survived,

SOURCE 23 Unmarked graves

When Aboriginal Diggers died the Department of Veterans' Affairs often failed to provide plaques for their graves as it was supposed to do for all veterans who died of war-associated causes.

SOURCE 24 Two comments

'I don't think being an Aborigine in the Army made any difference. We got on pretty well, we were treated pretty much the same. Everyone was joining up. I saw the big march in Melbourne when the diggers were going overseas. I thought, that'd be good, to go overseas, go to Egypt. When you're young, you know.'

'The war meant comradeship to me. The Army suited my way of life too. It was hard to get a job before the war. You worked here, worked there and it was hard to save up your money to buy your tucker or buy clothes. In the Army everything's free, and the pay was five shillings a day. A man was made. Coming from my background, it was a lot more security.'

Bill Egan and Jack Kennedy, World War II veterans in Alick Jackomos and Derek Fowell, *Forgotten Heroes. Aborigines at War From the Somme to Vietnam*, Victoria Press, Melbourne, 1993 pages 30-33

SOURCE 25 The RSL and after of the war

At the war's end, the RSL continued to lobby for citizenship — as it had done in the early days of the war — and for the easing of controls over the lives of Aboriginal servicemen. In 1946, the League put to the Prime Minister that, 'in view of the high service rendered by Australian Aborigines whilst members of the Defence Force, their subsequent treatment as civilians is not in keeping with the high regard the general public has for their service in wartime'.

The RSL continued to argue for the grant of full citizenship, and for the abandonment of restrictions on the consumption of alcohol for Aboriginal ex-servicemen into the 1950s. By the late 1980s, however, commentators were observing that the RSL seemed to have forgotten its obligation to Aboriginal ex-servicemen.

were pushed back to the bush to resume the status of Aborigines. The Aboriginal now has no status, no rights, no land and nothing to fight for but the privilege of defending the land which was taken from him by the white race without compensation or even kindness. We submit that to put us in the trenches, until we have something to fight for, is not right.

'My point, Mr M'Ewen, is that the enlistment of natives should be preceded by the removal of all disabilities. Then, with a country to fight for, the Aborigines would not be one whit behind white men in value. Can you not get my point ... It will cost nothing to give the native born in the land the same rights, not merely of the persons of European blood, but of Maoris and people of Chinese, Japanese and other Asiatic peoples, who may happen to be born in Australia, but it will give a great asset to Australia and the addition of a valuable unit of additional population.'

Alick Jackomos and Derek Fowell, *Forgotten Heroes. Aborigines at War From the Somme to Vietnam*, Victoria Press, Melbourne, 1993 pages 9-10

SOURCE 26 Returned soldiers

Wartime service gave many Indigenous Australians pride and confidence in demanding their rights. Moreover, the army in northern Australia had been a benevolent employer compared to pre-war pastoralists and helped to change attitudes to Aborigines as employees.

Nevertheless, Aborigines who fought for their country came back to much the same discrimination as before. For example, many were barred from Returned and Services League clubs, except on ANZAC Day. Many of them were not given the right to vote for another 17 years.

SOURCE 27 The right to vote

In March 1949 the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* was amended to give the federal vote to Aboriginal returned servicemen. Other Aboriginal people did not receive this right until 1962.

SOURCE 28 Life on the home front

The war brought greater contact than ever before between the Whites of southern Australia and the Aborigines and Islanders of the north. For the Whites it was a chance to learn about Aboriginal culture and see the poor conditions imposed on Aborigines. For the Aborigines the war accelerated the process of cultural change and, in the long term, ensured a position of greater equality in Australian society.

SOURCE 29 The Coloured Digger

He came and joined the colours, when the War God's anvil rang,
He took up modern weapons to replace his boomerang,
He waited for no call-up, he didn't need a push,
He came in from the stations, and the townships of the bush.

He helped when help was wanting, just because he wasn't deaf;
He is right amongst the columns of the fighting A.I.F.
He is always there when wanted, with his Owen gun or Bren,
He is in the forward area, the place where men are men.

He proved he's still a warrior, in action not afraid,
He faced the blasting red hot fire from mortar and grenade;
He didn't mind when food was low, or we were getting thin,
He didn't growl or worry then, he'd cheer us with his grin.

He'd heard us talk democracy —, They preach it to his face —
Yet knows that in our Federal House there's no one of his race.
He feels we push his kinsmen out, where cities do not reach,
And Parliament has yet to hear the Abo's maiden speech.
One day he'll leave the Army, then join the League he shall,
And he hope's we'll give a better deal to the Aboriginal.

by Sapper Bert Beros, a non-Aboriginal soldier in WWII.
Written about an Aboriginal soldier, Private West.

From *The fuzzy wuzzy angels, and other verses*, by Sapper H.E. Bert Beros,
Sydney, F.H. Johnston Publishing Company, [1943].
www.awm.gov.au/education/box/03_res_book.pdf

SOURCE 30 Black Anzac

They have forgotten him, need him no more
He who fought for his land in nearly every war
Tribal fights before his country was taken by Captain Cook
Then went overseas to fight at Gallipoli and Tobruk

World War One black Anzacs were there
France, Europe's desert, New Guinea's jungles, did his share
Korea, Malaya, Vietnam again black soldier enlisted
Fight for democracy was his duty he insisted

Back home went his own way not looking for praise
Like when he was a warrior in the forgotten days
Down on the Gold Coast a monument in the Bora Ring
Recognition at last his praises they are starting to sing

This black soldier who never marches on ANZAC Day
Living in his Gunya doesn't have much to say
Thinks of his friends who fought some returned some died
If only one day they could march together side by side

His medals he keeps hidden away from prying eyes
No-one knows, no-one sees the tears in his old black eyes
He's been outcast just left by himself to die
Recognition at last black ANZAC hold your head high

Every year at Gold Coast's Yegumbah Bora Ring site
Black ANZAC in uniform and medals a magnificent sight
The rock with Aboriginal tribal totems paintings inset
The Kombumerri people's inscription of LEST WE FORGET

Cecil Fisher, Aboriginal Australian who served in Korea.

www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/history/anzac-day-digger-march.html

