



COOK ISLANDS RSA RELEASE

Friday 17th April 2020

Celebrating ANZAC Day 2020 – not the usual celebration

Saturday 25 April 2020 marks the 105th anniversary of the landing of Anzac troops at Gallipoli.

This year's Anzac Day in Rarotonga will take a vastly different shape; for the first time in living memory there will not be an official ANZAC commemoration service in Rarotonga this ANZAC day.

The Cook Islands RSA is following the lead of the Royal New Zealand RSA and cancelling the services normally held to mark the day. Instead people are invited to commemorate the sacrifice of our service people by standing at the entrance to their properties at 6am; and organisations that wish to, are welcome to lay a wreath at the cenotaph later in the day.

The president of the Cook Islands RSA – Mr Henry Wichman – says, “Although so far there are no reported COVID-19 cases in the country, in keeping with the ‘stay at home rules’ and ‘physical distancing’, and in the spirit of doing ‘the right thing,’ to halt the spread of this terrible virus around the world, we will not hold our normally very well attended dawn service.

But that does not mean we are discouraging the public from acknowledging and remembering and commemorating our veterans and service personnel who have served our country and, in some cases, given their lives during their service, in times of war, conflict and disasters”.

At 6am on Saturday 25th April, we encourage everyone to stand at dawn on their roadside for a few minutes to remember in silence our service people.

Organisations and individuals who wish to lay a wreath or a poppy at the National War Memorial to honour our fallen soldiers, may do so on an individual basis at their leisure on ANZAC Day. Alternatively, people might like to place flowers or a wreath at the graveside of a person who has served.

“This is going to be a unique ANZAC Day. Unique too will be the fact that this year we will not be having a Poppy Day. But we still encourage you to wear a poppy (if

you have one or indeed make one) or perhaps place one on your social media profiles.

“These are not normal times, maybe next year when this cloud has lifted off the world, we can meet again.”

Lest we forget.

ENDS