

REMEMBER THE AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER

by Captain Lisa Ride

Australian Army Reserve 1981-2016

I am an Australian soldier; I stand tall and proud and true
I train and fight for freedom; I honour my country and I protect you
Tradition back to Sudan and Boer where I've always served you well
As National Servicemen, volunteers and conscripts we've often been through hell
Right back to our fateful landing upon the ANZAC shore
The mateship that we honour is for company, regiment and corps



To the Aussie soldier courage, teamwork and initiative are barely but a start
For professionalism, loyalty and innovation are clearly in our heart
Since World War I where Australia mourned the loss of so many fine young men
And the role of women forever changed as we stood in support of them
From World War II and wars beyond, from Vietnam to peace keeping today
Australian soldiers are deployed around the globe from their families far away

And I know each soldier joins the ranks because they feel it too
It's the spirit of the Aussie digger; it's what we call *true blue*
But *contact front* can take a life; a new name to cast upon the wall
In bronze to forever commemorate another loss too great to call
In Afghanistan we lost Russell, Pearce, Locke and Wood, McCarthy, Lambert, Marks
And forty-one names for me to recite; please keep them in your hearts

For green on blue is not the way a soldier is meant to die
As any loss of life through war is hard to justify
And those returning still live the hell, the smell, sights sounds and fear
That follow them in thoughts and dreams- some take it to despair
Sadly the number of soldiers affected by PTSD who are taking their own lives
Are far outweighed by the names cast in bronze, those men we highly prize

This growing toll also sacrifices so that we may live in peace today
Please stand tall and proud to honour that gift; God bless their souls I pray
And give strength to those who loved them best as we remember them always
We will honour their ANZAC spirit to the very end of days
But in life's passing their mateship is here with you; I believe it's standing by your side
All I ask is that you remember the Australian soldier with love and hope and pride



I would be honoured if you read my poem at any Anzac, Remembrance or other service. Please always acknowledge the author.

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Mark Knight of the Herald Sun