ANZAC DAY CENTENARY SERVICE 2015
MAYOR'S SPEECH

VIPs

Service personnel/RSL:

- Mr Alex Pirie – President Burwood RSL Sub-Branch
- Mr Graham Green – President, Club Burwood RSL
- Colonel Professor Robert Lusby
- Captain Michael Jasny
- Lay Minister, Rosemary King – St Paul’s Anglican Church

Local Members:

- The Hon. Ernest Wong, MLC
- Ms Jodi McKay MP – State Member for Strathfield

Councillors:

- Cr George Mannah – Deputy Mayor
- Cr Tony Doueihi – Representing the Federal Member for Reid, Mr Craig Laundy
- Cr Lesley Furneaux-Cook

Burwood Anzac Centenary Years' Commemorative Service Committee:

- Alex Pirie - Burwood RSL Sub Branch
- Andrew Anderson - Club Burwood RSL
- Tony Bell - Burwood RSL Sub Branch
- John Bennett - Burwood RSL Sub Branch
- Bill Hunt - Burwood RSL Sub Branch
- Denis Joyce - Burwood RSL Sub Branch
- Merv Stewart - Burwood RSL Sub Branch
- Russ Kenny - Enfield / Croydon Park RSL Sub Branch
Opening Speech:

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests,

It is an honour to be here this morning outside the iconic Burwood Memorial Arch as we come together to mark the centenary of the Australian Imperial Force’s landing at Gallipoli in 1915.

This morning, we remember those who have fallen in defence of our freedom, in particular, these men and women from the Burwood, Enfield and Croydon Park districts and their families.
Today’s centenary service does not seek to glorify war, but rather acknowledge the sacrifice of these 937 local men and women, and pass on the values they espoused to younger generations in our community; values of **courage**, **endurance**, **sacrifice** and **mateship** which are now synonymous with the Anzac Legend.

On this day, 100 years ago, more than 1,000 men landed on the shores of Gallipoli, unaware of what their future would hold but fully committed to protecting our nation and its freedoms.
Some of these men were only 16 years old, yet they were willing to leave their family and homes for what they saw as a greater cause.

As a father of four children, some of whom are now teenagers, I could not imagine how tough it would be to say goodbye to your child who had enlisted to go to war, never knowing whether they would return.

I was fortunate enough to visit these shores and attend the Dawn Service at Gallipoli last year. Not only was it deeply moving on a personal level, but it was also pleasing to see so many young Australians make the journey.
This dedication shows that although we become further removed from the atrocities of World War One as the years’ progress, young Australians still understand the important sacrifice our forefathers made and continue to keep their legacy alive.

As a society, we have come a long way since these large scale conflicts in the early twentieth century. The advent of modern technology has made us much closer as a global community. More than ever, we are connected through our similarities, fighting for positive change rather than conflict.
However, despite this, recent events highlight that there are still threats to the freedoms and values we enjoy in our society. Across our nation, there are still many brave men and women who are willing to make the sacrifice our past service personnel made to ensure that these freedoms and values are upheld.

I’d ask you to take a moment to think of our current service personnel in peacekeeping operations overseas, especially the 330 men and women who were recently deployed in Iraq.
I would like to extend my gratitude to all of you in attendance today, including the Burwood Anzac Commemorative Service Committee, Burwood RSL Sub-Branch, Master of Ceremonies Michael McMahon, Burwood RSL General Manager Andrew Anderson, local schools and churches, World War Two Jeeps NSW and Council staff for your involvement in the service. Your contribution throughout the years has ensured that the Anzac legacy is never forgotten.

I look forward to your continued support for the next four years of our centenary commemorations.

Thank you.
Unveiling of Statue:

Following several months of anticipation, I am pleased to finally reveal *The Bugler from Burwood* sculpture on behalf of Burwood Council, Burwood RSL and the Anzac Centenary Years Commemorative Service Committee.

There are many stories which make up the sculpture, but overall, it serves as a symbol of the young men who defended our nation during the Great War.
One of the stories which inspired this sculpture is of a local man, born in Burwood, whose perseverance, love and commitment helped immortalise his tale in Australian folklore.

The word fate is often thrown around in modern times, but Leonard Francis Hall’s story of survival cannot be expressed without believing in some form of destiny.
Born in Burwood on the ninth of May 1897, Leonard Francis Hall experienced a regular childhood which, like many kids, included playing an instrument. Unknown to Hall, it was his mastery of the bugle which would eventually take him on a journey across the world and change his life forever.

At the age of 16, Hall’s bugling caught the attention of the Major of the Light Horse Regiment. Impressed at his ability to play the instrument, the Major asked Hall to join the celebrated Tenth Light Horse Regiment.
Hall was too young to serve, but like so many young men at the time, the allure of the call-to-arms to defend our nation was too great, so he lied about his age and enlisted to serve.

Hall stood at the Fremantle wharf, still just a boy, bugle in hand, in an oversized uniform, ready to embark on the journey to the unknown. It was at this point he noticed a girl in the crowd.
He then plucked an emu plume from his slouch hat and thrust it in her hands. Whether it was the hormones of a teenage boy or the actions of someone who was too young to understand the horrors he would soon face, this pure and sweet gesture shows just how young some of the men were who would never return home from the Great War.

The Regiment arrived in Egypt where Hall learnt how to ride a horse and prepare for conflict, however, this would be the last time he would play his bugle, leaving it behind before his first campaign.
When Hall landed at Gallipoli he was the lead machine-gunner in the impossible assault of the Battle of Nek. This was the worst battle of the Gallipoli campaign with 879 of his fellow diggers killed.

Unfortunately for those Australians who survived, this only signified the end of the battle, not the war. After evacuating the Gallipoli peninsula, Hall fought in the Battle of Beersheba in Ottoman Syria in 1917 where he was injured by a bomb which killed nine out of his 14-man crew and his horse, Q6.
The courage he showed during this campaign saw him picked by Thomas Edward Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) to help the British Empire in the Capture of Damascus in 1918.

These experiences are enough to break the strongest person. Hall lost his treasured bugle, a symbol of his youth and innocence, his beloved horse and many of his fellow Diggers. He endured significant physical wounds and experienced inhumane conditions. But despite all these losses, he battled on, in true Aussie spirit.
Whether it was fate or fortune which guided Hall throughout these enduring times, it was what happened next which makes Hall’s story unique.

When Hall marched back into Australia in 1919, he was approached by a woman who said:

Excuse me sir, would you like your plume back?

There she was. The young girl who stood at the wharf four years ago, plume grasped firmly in her hand for safekeeping as if it never left her hand since that day in Fremantle.
Two years later, Hall married his plume’s caretaker, Younnis Lydi-AT, and they had two children together.

This plume features in this sculpture as a symbol of how hope, love and purity are more powerful forces than adversity.

Even later in life, Hall exemplified the values we aspire to, returning to Gallipoli in 1990 with an open heart and carrying no grudges against the Turkish forces he faced 75 years earlier.
Leonard Francis Hall died in Perth on 24 February 1999, aged 101 years.

I would like to acknowledge the tremendous work of the sculptor, Bodo Moo-Ka. It was with great sadness that I was informed by Bodo’s wife, Robyn, that Bodo recently suffered a stroke. Bodo was still able to provide instructions from afar to his team of master artisans to ensure that the sculpture was ready for today’s service. Our thoughts and prayers are with him for a speedy recovery.
Bodo and his wife had their own personal inspiration for this sculpture, as the grand uncle of his wife was a Light Horsemen corporal who served during the war. Tasman Vale trained in Egypt and fell in the Dardanelles campaign. His likeness has also been reflected in the bugler.

This sculpture represents the stories of Leonard Francis Hall, Tasman Vale, and the hundreds of others in our local community who were affected by such tragic events in our nation’s past.
This sculpture is for all the local men and women, and their families, who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for our nation, to ensure that we keep their legacy alive and share their stories with our younger generations.

The sculpture will keep guard of the Burwood Memorial Arch and the sanctity of the surrounding area, forever watching over the 937 local men and women who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our nation.