



# ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE

## Podcast Transcript

### In Conversation – ANZAC DAY

**Host:** FLTLT Dean Squire

**Guests:** CPL Robert Scott, WOFF Stephen Weaver and FLTLT Ryan Mostyn

#### FLTLT Dean Squire

Welcome to In Conversation, from the Royal Australian Air Force. This episode is devoted to our national day of remembrance. Every April the 25<sup>th</sup>, we gather at dawn services in Australia and around the world for Anzac Day. Originally, a commemoration of the First World War landing in 1915 of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Anzac Day, of course, has grown into a national day of remembrance of all Australians and New Zealanders who served and died in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations and the contribution and suffering, of all those who have served. In this episode, will meet three Air Force members with remarkable Anzac Day stories. A proud Indigenous man, whose career in uniform was inspired by watching the dawn service on Ambulance Hill in his hometown as a five-year-old.

Then there's the snare drummer from the Federation Guard who marked the centenary commemoration of the end of the First World War at the scene of one of its final battlefields. First, an Air Force band member who was a lone piper, played at the graveside of a fallen family member in Gallipoli. Corporal Robert Scott has literally travelled the world to play a significant role in Anzac Day commemorations.

#### CPL Robert Scott

I've taken part as a clarinetist in the Anzac Day, Gallipoli, the Dawn Service 2017, along with the Lone Pine Service later that morning. I've also done that same service a couple of years later as the Lone Piper for the dawn service, along with the Lone Pine Service as well.

#### FLTLT Dean Squire

Gallipoli is the epicentre of all acts of remembrance. It's even more significant, is it very emotional when you're there?

#### CPL Robert Scott

Definitely, surrounded by all the various cemeteries scattered throughout the whole peninsula. Being able to see them where the ceremony is held, where I'm piping from, looking down on the beach that those troops landed at all these years ago. It's definitely a lot more emotional than doing a dawn service in this country, that's for sure.

#### FLTLT Dean Squire

You get a sense of history by being there?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Oh, yeah definitely.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

History is part of the event for you in 2019 because you went back to Gallipoli and visited the grave of your great, great Uncle who lost his life in that conflict. What was that like?

**CPL Robert Scott**

To see his headstone there, not just to see it, but to be at the whole cemetery and also play there for him that was very special part in my career so far. You wouldn't really get the chance to do that. I can't imagine without being in the Defence Force, especially around the time of Anzac Day.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

What do you know about him?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Well, he was a farmer who grew up in East Gippsland, where I'm from. He enlisted. He enlisted the same day as his brother, which is my Nanna's father. So he was actually in Melbourne at the time of his enlistment. On his way back to East Gippsland, the story goes he was heading back home to have a chat with his brother to decide which of the two would enlist and head off to war.

**CPL Robert Scott**

But he thought he'd save the problem of trying to decide who goes and the other brother would stay home and look after the parents. So he decided he'd enlist in Melbourne on his way home. By the time he got back by horse (that is), it's a four hour drive, but he did it on horseback. By the time he got back, his brother had the same idea and went into town and enlisted on the same day.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

The tragedy of losing his life was worse for your great Granddad as well, because he, you know, played a role in identifying.

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah. So they, they were Gallipoli at the same time and unfortunately had to identify the body, which, well I can't even begin to imagine how hard that would have been.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

So life comes full circle because a great, great Uncle who was paid a visit by yourself, with a plaque and there's something special about the wood as well?

CPL Robert Scott

Yeah, so that bit of timber that was from a tree. So my Grandfather served in the Second World War and with his deferred pay, once he got back, he purchased some cypress trees as a gift to the neighbour, which they planted along the shared driveway. So, yeah, before I went over in 2019, I grabbed a branch and cut it up into a little plaque and inscribed a little message for him that was pretty special to bring some of East Gippsland over and leave there for him.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

You are part of the Air Force band and obviously used to these occasions as we kind of touched on, but you're a piper, which is quite unusual. I think you're the only piper for Air Force band and you had an opportunity to pipe for your great, great Uncle.

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah, that's right. We didn't have a piper prior to my enlistment, so I joined as it clarinettist and then picked up the pipes, once I realized the band didn't have a piper. So I've been lucky enough to do a lot of quite significant trips.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

What did you play for your great Grandfather?

**CPL Robert Scott**

I played Waltzing Matilda, which I thought was quite fitting and also another pipe tune the Battle of the Somme, because his brother went on to fight in that battle.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Was it difficult? Were you very emotional?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah, I guess when you visit any relative's grave, it can get to you. And not having had much to do with Gallipoli in the past, trying to focus on what I was doing. But do a decent job of it as well.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

And you live with that pressure all the time because you're very often the very centre or the focus of the service or ceremony.

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah, I guess that comes with being a lone piper for wreath laying, mainly in those services. It's pretty much dead silent before I start up.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Do you get nervous?

**CPL Robert Scott**

For those sort of events? I think anyone would definitely, the nerves are there.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

The other side of it, I mean, although the events themselves might be pretty tragic and things that you wouldn't wish to participate in, but your role, the music is really such a poignant moment.

**CPL Robert Scott**

Especially with the pipes, they carry so far. Anyone within any vicinity of the venue has no choice but to hear it. And quite often people come up to me afterwards and comment on how moving it was to have that in the background during the service.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

And for you, the other side of making that moment, I mean, a sense of pride, obviously, but as a performer, that must be quite satisfying?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Oh, for sure. It's not every day that you're able to support a service like that and work for your country in this sort of way to play music, let alone in Gallipoli or France or Middle East or anything like that. So it's definitely a sense of pride.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

How hard are they to play?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Well, coming from a clarinet background, I'm used to playing the chanter, which is what you play the notes from similar to a clarinet, but completely different notes. That aspect wasn't too hard to adapt from the clarinet, but the main thing was being able to control the air pressure with your arm rather than your diaphragm. That took a little bit of getting the hang of.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Where did the interest come from? Because you are the only piper in Air Force.

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah. Like, I guess it's one of those things that for a long time I've had in the back of my mind. I'd love to try that one day, but it wasn't until I joined the band and I think we had a couple of Army pipers doing some services with this. Local services. So I realized we didn't have a piper. So I thought, I'll give that a crack and see if I can make something of it.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

So you joined a kind of elite part of the Air Force because there was only one band. You enjoy the experience that that gives you of travel, ceremony, sense of occasion. Quite a good gig. I mean, you're very good as a qualified musician. What a great thing to do.

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah, well, for any musician to have a full time wage to do what you love, that's one thing. But to serve your country while doing it all over the world as well. That's an amazing experience.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Where have you travelled to?

**CPL Robert Scott**

I've done Gallipoli a couple of times. We did a trip through Belgium and France for the Centenary of Armistice, a few trips over to the Middle East, all through UAE and Afghanistan and Iraq, all the states and territories a few times over in this country as well.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

It's an instrument of either love or hate, the bagpipes, and I imagine difficult to get music for it. Is there a big catalogue of things that you can (inaudible)?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Oh, there's centuries of music written for it. There's definitely no shortage of pipe tunes. It's just picking which one that would suit the occasion. That's what I love about it, is that many to choose from and just to try and do the service justice as well, playing something that's suitable.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

You dabble in writing yourself?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah, I've written a piece on the pipes, which I play sometimes for work functions. Do a lot of dining in nights, where slow marches are needed for the official piping requirements of a dining in night. So, I wrote a slow march while I was in a Herc flying over Afghanistan.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

But there's more to that, isn't there. There was something about the noise around you?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah, well, the drone of the Herc is very similar to the drones, the bagpipes. So you couldn't help but think of melodies, while I was sitting there waiting to land. So I got my little notebook out and started writing down some notes and ended up with a tune by the end of the flight.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

And it's not just about the Anzac Day sense of occasions, it's so much more that you get involved with?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah, well, that's right. There's plenty of other services that we do, graduation parades for the new recruits, we do dining in nights, we do a lot of other parades. A couple of weeks ago we were up in the Northern Territory doing a colour parade. As a clarinet player, we've got a clarinet quartet which we travel around and do dinner music.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

So your ancestor came back and set up a family life in East Gippsland, you're still there as a family?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Yeah, so he came back to a place called Raymond Island. That's where my Mum's family grew up and my Grandfather, who was in the Second World War, he came back to Lakes Entrance which is also in East Gippsland. That farm has been in the family for about 100 years.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

So you've got a sense of history in terms of the where you live, but also the profession, because you're in the military, you went to pay tribute to fallen member of the family. Also in the military, was your grandparents. How do your family feel about that?

**CPL Robert Scott**

They're definitely proud. Also having a music background right through the generations as well. It's been a big part of my life as well, growing up surrounded by music, so I definitely have them to thank for my career as a musician.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

I wonder if I can almost second guess how you might answer this almost final question. Anzac Day and Service, still relevant?

**CPL Robert Scott**

Oh, a hundred percent. It's not just relevant as a current serving member of the ADF, it's a privilege to be able to remember not only the troops that went over for the Anzac landing at Gallipoli, but all the conflicts since, especially various family members that I've got, that have served over the last hundred years.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Thank you so much. But we can't really let you disappear without a sample of you doing your day job. So I'd love to hear the rendition of the music that you've written before.

You're listening to In Conversation from the Royal Australian Air Force. That was the pipes of band member Corporal Robert Scott. So how many of you, as a five year old, decided on your lifetime career? It's exactly what happened to Warrant Officer Steve Weaver choosing a life of service in Air Force blue. And it all started with childhood memories of Anzac Day.

### **WOFF Stephen Weaver**

For me, the earliest memories of Anzac Day are quite easy to recall because I remember that, you know, the exact sort of date and time where I was sitting on Ambulance Hill in a small community township called Gundagai, where I was watching the cenotaph parade and the guard mounting the cenotaph. There were four young chaps from Kapooka and the reason I know they were from Kapooka, was because they were dressed in Army greens at the time. The same ones that we used to wear to Vietnam, all the way back in the day. And they did a ceremonial drill with self-loading rifles or the SLR. I remember sitting there on the hill, I was about five years of age, just watching the ceremony in awe, just wanting to be a part of that. I knew from that day and that time I needed to serve something greater than myself. Whether that was in the Air Force as I am now, whether it was in Army, didn't really have an idea of what the Navy was, particularly at the age of five. But whatever service it was, I always wanted to serve something greater than myself in that moment. I continue to go back to today and reflect upon all those years ago making a decision as a young five year old, based on watching something that was bigger than myself.

### **FLTLT Dean Squire**

That's an amazing way to get yourself into a career, and unusual because you're a very proud Indigenous guy. Probably difficult back in the day, more so than now?

### **WOFF Stephen Weaver**

Yeah, going through school, my grades weren't always the best and my behaviour at times didn't match those, but growing up as a young Indigenous boy, there wasn't a lot that was expected from you. And I think that's what was the message that was sent to me by my teachers. Look, you know, if you end up being a tradie, or working in a warehouse or doing something where you can earn minimum wage, that's the best that you could expect. And I think my grades followed that narrative that I wouldn't amount to much. In actual fact, I remember one particular teacher actually saying that to my face when I was early teens going in high school. That drive that I found as a five year old, I think lit a fire in me that no one could put out.

### **FLTLT Dean Squire**

Tell me a bit about your community and the people who you lived with as a boy?

### **WOFF Stephen Weaver**

Growing up in Gundagai is a bit of a bit of a strange thing, so you had to have a level of sporting ability. If you weren't sporty, you weren't going to survive and you were in the community. So you had to be able to play cricket, you had to be able to play football, you had to be able to excel in that, no matter what sport. Because if you didn't excel at a sport, like I said, academically, I didn't really fit in with the academics. So I had to find a mob, I had to find a tribe that I fit in with and that for me was the sporting community. So I'm not a large guy, so you know, I was always the smallest one running around on the football field. But I ended up captaining my football team. I ended up captaining the swimming club and things like that because of my ability to fight and to prove who I was as an individual. So and I think that comes back to my

Aboriginal heritage as well. Being a survivor, but being resourceful and being resilient is built into my DNA.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

So, what would have been slightly unusual all those years ago is an Aboriginal guy wanted to join the ADF and the Air Force. What did your mum think about it when you told her?

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

Extremely proud. Dad was more the silent sort of, you know and you had to be growing up as a father back then, so more the silent, emotionally disconnected sort of guy that was a hunter gatherer. So he went out to work and things like that. But one of the most important things about that, I think, is Dad's overt pride from me and me joining up. You know, he came to my graduation at IRTU, that's something Dad had never done before. So, mum's from the non-Indigenous side of the house. So she's of English heritage and to be more emotionally connected is what you got from your mother sort of thing. So she was always proud and always overt with it. What really struck me joining up, was Dad being so proud and trying to be at every single one of those milestones that you've done. You know, he was at my PTI graduation, my physical training instructor graduation. He was at my recruit graduation and things like that as well. You know, from Dad's side of the house, he just saw me as highly successful and for him to see that growth in me as a young Aboriginal man, to the point where I joined the Air Force, I think he was immensely proud of that.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

As was the community, because you're almost rock god status aren't you, when you return?

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

Oh, I wouldn't say rock god status, but whenever I go back to community, particularly for important days that are in our military calendar, like Remembrance Day, Anzac Day, the community embrace me and welcomed me home. They go above and beyond to make sure that I feel welcome in my hometown, which is extremely humbling for me.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

As a five year old, Anzac Day was kind of the launch of a direction of travel, being in uniform and taking part in Anzac Day, how different is that as a feeling?



**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

I don't know whether it's too different. I think what joining up has done for me and being in uniform is, it's just kept that fire stoked and kept it burning hot and bright. But when I am in uniform, and if I do take part in an Anzac Day activity particularly at home, as I am marching up to the cenotaph at Gundagai, I always look at Ambulance Hill, up to the left and see young kids sitting on that hill. And I imagine a young Steve sitting there, looking down 52 years ago for me and thinking about what those five year olds are thinking about. Are they inspired by what's happening at the moment? Do they want to serve something greater than themselves? Has that lit a fire in them? Being a part of that, where I am marching in uniform with my medals. I feel privileged that an organization, has accepted a young Indigenous man and given me platforms where all I do is succeed. Within Defence, you know, you find that you belong to something that's greater than yourself, but everybody else does as well, so the segregation is less. The discrimination is less, everyone has signed that silent pact to look after themselves but look after their mates at the same time.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

The experience you just described is modern current day. Was it different, was it harder yards as a young indigenous person in the 1980s?

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

I don't know whether it was harder. Being a light skinned Aboriginal afforded me the opportunity to fit in, better. That's not to say that back in the 1980s, particularly the mid 1980s, when I joined up, that discrimination wasn't evident within the military. There were racist jokes, there were exclusion. There was moments in time where you found yourself nervously laughing along with an inappropriate comment, because you didn't know how to deal with it. There were no mechanisms there to go, hey look, that's not right, or what you thinking and feeling is wrong. And as a young Aboriginal man you were always taught to hide your heritage and your Aboriginality because of the fact that you know, when my grandfather was a boy he wasn't even included in the Census, he was not allowed to speak, his language is not allowed to place his music or anything else like that, it was illegal to do so. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders could only enter town for specific reasons and specific purposes. So you learned to hide who you were. Now you're taught to celebrate who you are through your culture and through your heritage. And now it's easier to call out those behaviours that existed in the eighties that we know now as a modern Air Force in a modern military, that it takes a village and it takes a tribe to grow our capability.

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

And by that it means everyone matters. No matter what your culture is, no matter what your sexual orientation is, no matter who you identify as, everyone matters in that continuum of building capability. And me now as an Aboriginal man, I'm more able to celebrate who I am.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

It's significant events like Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, The (inaudible), because we are, as you say, we are all that tribe, we're walking in the footsteps of hundreds and thousands of people who've been here before us. Do you get that sense when you are on parade?

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

Yeah, absolutely I do. You've only got to have a look at any parade now and you'll have a variety of headdress for different religious types, facial hair growth based on your religion or based on your cultural beliefs and things like that. So more than just a feeling, you can actually look at a parade now and you can see the diversity. Because we used to hide our diversity before, everyone had to be the same. You had to wear the same headdress. You had to be all clean shaven. You weren't allowed to wear your hair differently. But now I think the ADF is embracing what it truly means to be culturally rich and diverse no matter what your culture is, no matter what your religion is.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

An interesting comment about Air Force setting you up to succeed, Air Force has certainly made you travel around the world. What sort of places have you been where you've celebrated Anzac Day?

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

So the 100th anniversary of Anzac Day back in 2015, I was lucky enough to be in the Middle East at the time and Australians have got an enduring presence in the Middle East all the way from the First World War before, up until modern conflicts in the Middle East. So I was lucky enough to spend Anzac Day 2015 at our main operating base in the Middle East, so that for me was a very solemn occasion where I had the ability to be where Australians have been before, for over the last 100 years, and a whole bunch of domestic parades all the way from city parades in Sydney to Brisbane, small country town parades where everyone, including the animals, come out to witness the parade and that sort of stuff.

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

So every single Anzac Day I feel extremely privileged.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

It's a very military thing, Anzac Day, but we kind of don't own it. Are you surprised by the public would turn out to witness history?

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

I'm not surprised by it. I'm extremely proud that the young Australians are showing up more than ever. My Anzac Days, if I'd traced the last ten years of Anzac Days, the crowds have gotten deeper, the crowd has gotten younger. The sense of appreciation that the Australian community have got now for the military, is all the way back to what it used to be back in the 1940s, 1930s.

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

These younger generation know that people have put their life at risk for their own security and their own safety. That's not lost on them.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

How important is it to remember your fallen, to remember those who've made sacrifice?

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

It's probably the most important part. It's the most important part of our service.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

You're very emotional.

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

Yeah, we stand tall on it. We stand tall on the shoulders of giants. Oh, I only achieve what I achieved now because of our forebears, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, those that choose to wear the uniform or those that choose to serve in a civilian dress in terms of Australian Public Service or Defence industry, all those people that make what we do and provide us the safest ability and platforms to do that from, is amazing.

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

So two of our ADF values, service and courage. They are in every single man, woman and person that chooses to serve, reaching all the way back to the Boer War something greater than myself. It takes a unique individual to do that. Whether you do four years or whether you do 40 years, it still takes an individual to sign a blank check, to go my life is worth my country's safety.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

So all those years ago, a five year old on Ambulance Hill, if you could speak to yourself again, what would you tell that young guy?

**WOFF Stephen Weaver**

I'd tell that young guy and every young Indigenous person within Australia, you are worth it, you're worthy and you can achieve whatever you set your sights on. I would tell them not to hesitate in terms of joining up. I would tell them that you will find a new mob when you join up and that mob will be as strong as your family and as strong as your tribe, because you will join a tribe of tribes.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

This is In Conversation from the Royal Australian Air Force and an episode devoted to Anzac Day. Final guest of this podcast is Flight Lieutenant Ryan Mostyn, who's had quite a career so far. In fact, he's had three. Starting as a Firefighter, he's now an Environmental Health Officer, but his sights were firmly set on being a member of the Federation Guard to play a significant role in the centenary of Anzac Day.

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Australia's Federation Guard is a key ceremonial tri-service unit for the Australian Defence Force, there's Navy, Army and Air Force personnel there and we do all the guards overseas, here in Australia and provide ceremonial support and services down there in Canberra and around the country.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

On show all the time?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Yes.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

What's that like?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

It can be stressful, it can be long as well. Standing there for very long periods of time not moving.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

And when I say 'on show' because and you say ceremony, you're in front of very often, very important people, prime ministers, politicians, royalty and that provides a sense of occasion?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Yeah, it makes you feel very proud to be part of that unit, at least for me it did. Getting to be on stage in front of thousands of people, dignitaries.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

So you went running at that opportunity because you were, in the start of your career, a Fireman and chose the Federation Guard for a very good reason?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Yes, I chose the Federation Guard, knowing that it was our 100 year Centenary of the war. So I went there to try and commemorate that and hopefully, to eventually be selected for opportunities to travel around the country, even getting to go overseas. And I was able to go to Gallipoli and Turkey in 2016 and then also selected to go to France in 2017 and 2018 as well.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Let's talk about 2018 because that was really the catalyst for you to join, was that Centenary of the end of the First World War. You're in Villers-Bretonneux?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Yes.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

What were you doing?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

That year, I was the Catafalque party drummer. I played the snare drum to march the Catafalque Party up on to the memorial.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

And what was that occasion like for you? Because you put the effort in to be there, obviously thinking it was going to be something really special, a significant anniversary. Clearly it was. Did it measure up?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

It was a very special moment. It was stressful to be there and knowing that the world was looking on, it felt like there was 100,000 people there. And when I was the only sole snare drummer, the stress was on.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

You said it measures up, how about other occasions, does Anzac Day bring that sense of pride and emotion?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Yeah. All Anzac Days have brought a sense of pride and emotion in me. I remember when I was even a kid attending Anzac Day nearly every year that I possibly could, and now I've grown up being able to join the military, getting the opportunity to be selected to go on those trips as well was a once in a lifetime moment.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

A little bit more of the story for you, is that you discovered you had a relative who was in the battle, beginning of the end of the First World War. When did you learn about him and what do you know about him?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

My father spoke about him whilst I was at Australia's Federation Guard, so I started to do a little bit of research on him. Then I found out that he was my great Uncle. He was actually initially in the Boer War as a soldier. Then he commissioned as a dentist and he was killed in France. An artillery shell came in, he was wounded and apparently to the stories that I've read and heard about him, he was alive for another 30 minutes.

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

And then, yes.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Do you know his name?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Albert Edward Campling.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

And as a dentist, you wouldn't have expected him to have been so close to that kind of action.

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

No, that's right. Yeah. He was right there. He was in a pit just having a break with a couple of other officers and maybe soldiers as well, when the shell came and hit them.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

It's a big deal. It's a big deal, I get that. What were your kind of thoughts when, on that Centenary in Villers-Bretonneux that you were within, kind of a short car drive from where your relative had lost his life in the war?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

It was definitely humbling to be there, the actual moment of getting to think about him as well. Whilst I was there, that was definitely in my mind. I do remember that.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

And in essence that's the actual point of Anzac Day now.

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Yeah, it is.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

That's the real reason.

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Yeah. Oh I was there to, you know, obviously commemorate all the soldiers, airmen, Navy sailors that had passed away in the war and I was there thinking about him at that time.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

From the centenary, so before that, you'd been to Gallipoli as well? Which was obviously was kind of the epicentre of our remembrance, so the start of it. What was that like for you?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Gallipoli was my first trip internationally to commemorate Anzac Day. To see the hills that the soldiers were supposedly meant to run up with guns and backpacks, I honestly don't know how they did. Rocked up on a beach to be fired down upon. When you're there and you really see it, the experience is surreal. One thing that did stick with me when I was there, I remember visiting the grave sites around Lone Pine.

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

There were two tombs, side by side and on them both was from a lady back here in Australia, and she said 'Here, lay my husband and my only son, the two loving people'.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

That's heartbreaking.

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Yeah, yeah it is. It was heartbreaking. I tried to resemble what she would have felt when she found out that her partner and her son had passed away. The two most important loves of her life gone, vanished.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Tell me a bit about the ceremony then, that you're involved with. I mean, obviously I get the emotion involved, but nerves there as well?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

For Gallipoli, I was there to hand over some wreaths. The nerves were definitely there a little bit, knowing that there's a lot of TV cameras around, but it was nothing compared to what I experienced when I was there for the hundredth anniversary at Villers-Bretonneux in France.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Are you surprised by the occasion itself in terms of the number of people and formality in the ceremony?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

I was surprised, yes. It's great to see that so many people from Australia and New Zealand go to those areas. It just shows that there is a level of respect still there in the communities, in the wider Australian and New Zealand communities as well.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Is it still relevant?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

I believe so, yes.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

And what makes it so?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

You need to remember, you know, it's just one of those catastrophic events that have happened in history that should be commemorated. So therefore, later on we try to prevent other wars from happening, knowing how severe it can get.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Your career has developed in interesting ways since your time with the Federation Guard. What do you do now?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

I'm an Environmental Health Officer now. I commissioned from Federation Guard after completing my studies. I did a Bachelor of Natural Science in Environmental and Health Sciences, and I was posted to Amberley as a pilot officer, and now I'm based here in Richmond.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

How many years?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

I've done thirteen years in the Air Force.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Thirteen. And three very different careers?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

Yes.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

From Fireman through to Federation Guard to Environmental Health Officer. So is that the beauty of Air Force, if you like, that sort of variety of opportunity?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

It is. There is a lot of great opportunity in the military, especially the Air Force as well. Making my career diverse and driving it the way I want, is what has kept me in as long as it has.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

I wonder where you go next then, because you talk about the Anzac Day commemoration with the Federation Guard as being a career highlight. Do you see yourself returning?



**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

I could definitely go back to Australia's Federation Guard, yes. It's one of my considerations for another future posting, so I'll see what the future brings.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

And in the meantime, what is Anzac Day like for you?

**FLTLT Ryan Mostyn**

I think Anzac Day, now that I'm out of Australia's Federation Guard, is still about going out there and commemorating and remembering those before us who have passed away in uniform, but also getting out there with your friends who also serve.

**FLTLT Dean Squire**

Flight Lieutenant Ryan Mostyn brings us to an end of this Anzac Day episode. Our thanks to him and our other guests, Corporal Robert Scott and Warrant Officer Steve Weaver and thanks, of course, to you for your time. I hope you'll join us again for another edition of In Conversation from the Royal Australian Air Force.