

Our story begins on the 10th August 1914 when 19 year old Roy Thompson and his brother Claude were on their way to the Recreation Ground in Geraldton to play for the Rovers Football Club. As Roy and Claude were passing by the Army Drill Hall they noticed a large crowd gathering outside. WWI had been declared on 28th July 1914 after Germany invaded Belgium, and England was calling on its colonies to help defend their allies in Europe. The boys never made it to the football game and by the end of that day had both enlisted with the 11th Battalion. The following morning they were on a train to Perth to begin their training at Black Boy Hill.

Roy had been employed in a Music Shop in Geraldton and was a member of the Geraldton Town Band. On enlistment, he was issued with a bugle which went with him when the Battalion left Fremantle.

On 31st October 1914 the brothers were aboard the 'SS Ascanius' which set sail from Fremantle and joined a convoy of 43 other ships coming from Albany. Roy commented in a letter to his parents that the fleet was a '*grand sight to watch*'.

Although they were never sure of their destination, Roy thoroughly enjoyed the journey. He had been promoted to Acting Sergeant and after a month at sea concluded his letter home with

PS: Claude and I are in perfect health and have up to today had a glorious and exciting though dangerous trip.

The troops eventually arrived in Alexandria, Egypt via the Suez Canal and commenced training at Mena Camp about 10 miles from Cairo. 3 months later they were transported to Lemnos Island, still not knowing their ultimate destination.

As dawn was breaking on 25th April 1915, Roy and Claude were among the 20,000 Australian troops that landed at Gallipoli. They were met with heavy defences from the Turkish Army that was dug in deep, high above the beach. 620 Australians lost their lives on that dreadful day. Roy and Claude both survived unhurt. Sadly however, 3 days later, Roy was killed in action and is one of over 3,000 Australians with no known grave.

Claude survived the war and returned to his family in Geraldton bringing with him Roy's bugle.

Geraldton City Band Member Mr Joshua Duff will now play The Last Post the bugle that was with Roy on that fateful day in Anzac Cove.