

# Australia: Understanding a Nation

By Mari Garcia

Australia is a young nation, celebrating 100 years in January 2001. In that time we have been involved in many conflicts. The majority of these conflicts have not been on our shores however, they form the basis of a singular Australian image: the Anzac.

To understand the roots of this image and how it has become an Australian myth, we need to consider two important factors.

The first factor involves an understanding of the Australian psyche brought on these shores by the English and European settlers, products of the Age of Enlightenment. As we heard earlier, Australia was settled with the hopes and aspirations of those who wished to found a new society devoid of the evils of existing in Europe e.g. hunger, poverty, serfdom, etc

As a consequence, the native born Australians developed a self-image as the 'Coming Race'<sup>1</sup> – which implied a physical superiority to their English and European counterparts. Hand in hand with this, came an egalitarianism which poured scorn on both authority and subservience. All were created equal and all had equal opportunity to aspire to any level of society.

The second factor involves an exploration of the incident which has come to be a defining moment in Australian history – the birth of an identity and its evolution into a collective myth.

And what has war to do with this? War, is the ultimate blood sacrifice of any nation and its people. Nations go to war to defend themselves, extend their borders, their influence or their wealth and to exact revenge.

The Concise Oxford defines war as:

*quarrel usually between nations conducted by force, a state of open hostility, and the suspension of ordinary international law, prevalent during such quarrels.*

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<sup>1</sup> Buongiorno, Dr Frank as quoted at [www.anzacsite.gov.au](http://www.anzacsite.gov.au)

# Australia - Referendum

## Natal Chart

31 Jul 1900

7:00 AM AWST -8:00

Perth, Australia

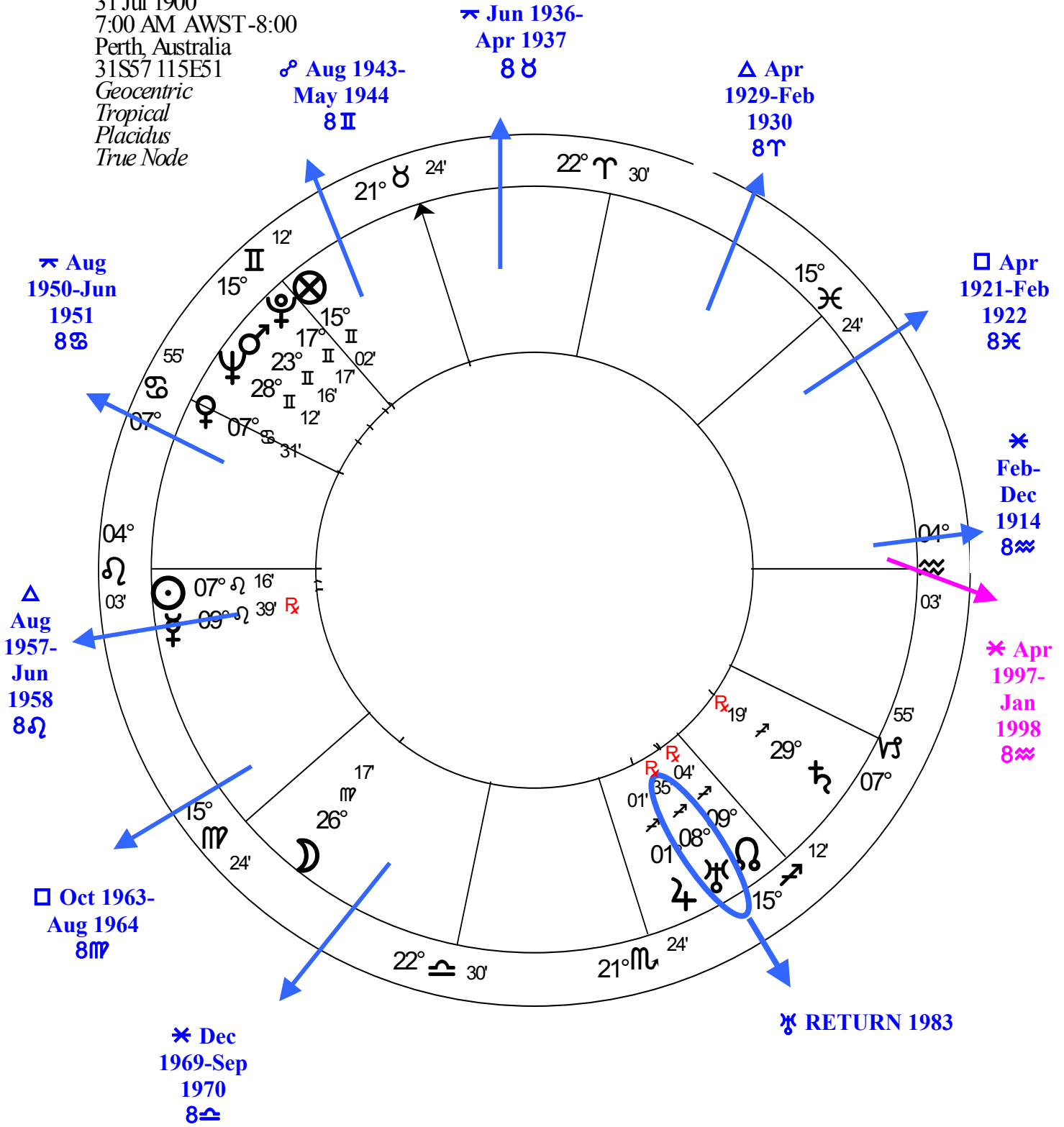
31S57 115E51

Geocentric

Tropical

Placidus

True Node



When Australians made the momentous decision in 1900 to band together as one nation there was little sense of a national identity let alone national pride.

In fact, in 1877, commentator James Brunton Stephens proclaimed of Australia, 'She is not yet',<sup>2</sup> implying the lack of unity, cohesion and identity.

In order to see this, let us first look at a 'picture' of the Australian collective represented in the Australian Referendum Chart. [details 31<sup>st</sup> July 1900 7:00 am AWST –8:00 Perth WA 31S57 115E51.

This chart was 'born' at the Referendum on the 31<sup>st</sup> July 1900 and the result was Federation. Therefore, this chart describes the collective aspirations, dreams and ideals of a people who made a collective decision to form an Australian nation.

I want to demonstrate this unfolding image and its development into a national myth via the ♃ cycle.

The planet ♃ represents independence and originality. It is a collective drive to develop a distinct and original identity and individuality. The ♃ cycle describes the ways in which that identity is expressed and how the individuality develops. It also describes the rise of the myth from the collective unconscious into conscious awareness and acceptance.

For just as ♃ is a thunderbolt out of the blue, the effects of a cycle of a collective take a long time before they take a form which is accepted and nurtured. Jung believed it took about 80 years for something new to work its way through the different levels of society.<sup>3</sup>

The ♃ cycle is 84 years in length and fits in with Jung's idea on the emergence, unfoldment and acceptance of an idea by the collective. ♃ describes the unfoldment of this identity and its expression.

♃ in the Australian Referendum chart:

- ♃ ♂ ♃ ♃ in the 4<sup>th</sup> house
- ♃ △ ☉ ♃ and Ascendant

♃ is also the modern ruler of the chart's 7<sup>th</sup> house of alliances, foreign affairs and international treaties. By the △ to the Ascendant, ♃ is plugged into the Cross of Matter suggesting that the drive for this identity seeks some physical expression.

When Australia went to war in 1914, most white Australians believed that their Commonwealth had no history, that it was not yet a true nation.

In western culture, sacrificial death - blood sacrifice - was widely recognised as the foundation of nationhood. Up to that time, the only wars which Australians had fought in were either the wars waged against the Aborigines, which were not recognised or even documented and the wars in which individual states had sent troops to, such as the Boer War. And although there were casualties and sacrifices, this was not part of a collective experience.

What was different about Gallipoli was that it was a national experience – it resonated at a collective level.

When Australia responded to the call of Great Britain for troops, the feeling in the country was one of optimism, adventure and opportunity.

*“...in Melbourne nationalist sentiment is running high with eyewitness reports of wild enthusiasm and patriotic song taken up by crowds in the streets.”<sup>4</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> Sourced at: [www.anzacsite.gov.au](http://www.anzacsite.gov.au)

<sup>3</sup> Greene, L *The Outer Planets and their Cycles* CRCS, 1983.

<sup>4</sup> report from the newspapers of the day as quoted in *Australia through Time*, Random House, 1995. Page 198.

This occurred as ☿ sextiled its natal position in the Australian Referendum Chart at the CRESCENT PHASE between Feb and Dec 1914.

The events at Gallipoli occurred only a few months later in April 1915 and the sense of blood sacrifice of a nation and its people was made evident.

More than 60 000 soldiers died as a result of World War I but Gallipoli stands as a poignant image of that sacrifice.

Many Australians came to recognise 25 April 1915 as the day their young Commonwealth had come of age. The Gallipoli campaign was a defining moment for Australia as a new nation.

At the same time, Gallipoli expressed Australians' sense of a dual loyalty: to Australia and to the Empire, of which Australia was a part. Australians were fighting for their Commonwealth, but they were also fighting for their Empire. They were 'independent Australian Britons'.

Note that the ☿ ✕ occurred in the Australian Referendum's 7<sup>th</sup> house of alliances, foreign affairs and treaties.

Let us now consider how the Anzac legend develops, unfolds and becomes an integral part of the Australian psyche.

To do this we will apply the concept of phases to the ANZAC Landing chart. The time for this chart was sourced at [www.anzac.gov.au](http://www.anzac.gov.au) and gives a time of 4:05am when the soldiers were rowed to shore in tenders or small boats.

# ANZAC Landing

## Natal Chart

25 Apr 1915

4:05 AM EET -2:00

Gallipoli

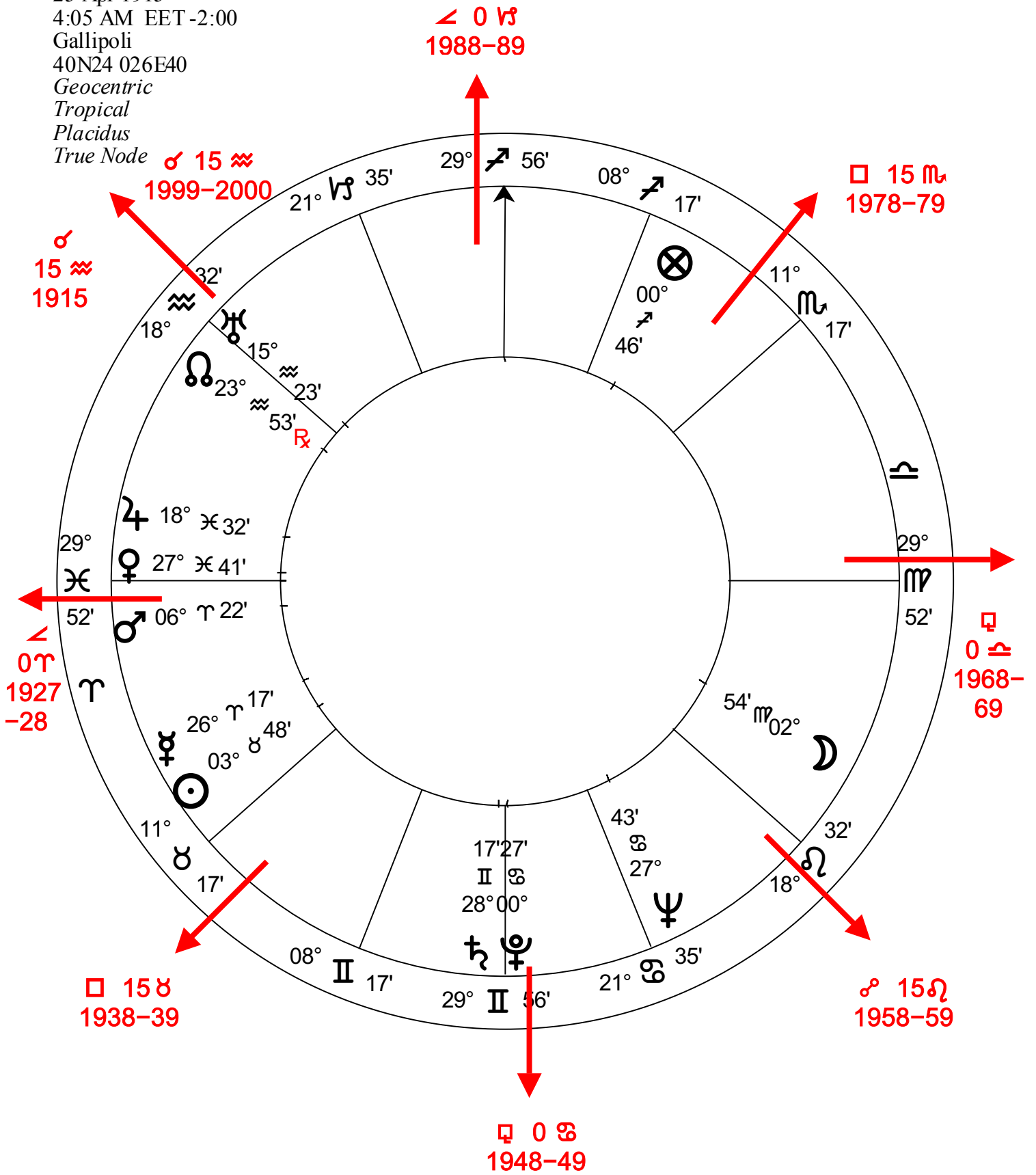
40N24 026E40

Geocentric

Tropical

Placidus

True Node



The chart shows ☿ 15♌ just about to go into the 12<sup>th</sup> house.

The chart has ☿ rising, which is interesting as a statement of the sacrifice for which Gallipoli is noted.

♂ ♀ in the 1<sup>st</sup>, I believe symbolises the bravery shown and is also descriptive of the assault on the beach at Gallipoli and also the carnage.

Two other important points which also make major connections to the Referendum chart is that the ANZAC Landing chart has the MC at 29♌ a the Referendum Chart's ♃ and implying a nation's sense of duty and responsibility (♃) was the objective (MC).

The fact that the Australian Referendum ♃ is represented so strongly in the Anzac chart as the MC also describes the ruthless and callous act by commanders to use the infantry as cannon fodder against the enemy.

Also, the ♃ in the ANZAC Landing chart is at 2♍. It is interesting to note that two of the charts used for Australia (Sydney Cove Landing and, the Referendum) also have a ♍ ♃ again perhaps underscoring the sense of physical sacrifice.

Australia's involvement in wars throughout the past two centuries have been in support of its allies whether it was both World Wars, the insurrections in Malaya and Indonesia, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, the Gulf War and East Timor. All these conflicts have one thing in common: Australians went to the aid of their 'mates'. And I believe this is the essence of the Anzac legend which is such a major part of Australian collective mythology.

The cycle born with this chart describes that which is yet to develop. It describes the potential. If we consider the arrows they are at the points where the phases occur. Thus the landing at Gallipoli describes the 'birth' of an image.

Many historical commentators are at pains to point out that the Anzac legend was the construct of press reports and that of the official war historian, C E W Bean who first used the term in 1915. However, it hit a chord with the Australian public. It came to stand for courage, honour and above all mateship. The mateship ethos forged by the swagmen, bushrangers and convicts of the previous century, had now been christened in fire and blood.

The first aspect made is the Crescent phase formed when ☿ < the natal position of the ANZAC Chart and this occurred in 1927-28 at 0A just in the 1<sup>st</sup> house.

*The Crescent phase is the urge to manifest, to emerge*

Up to this time, Anzac Day was not celebrated nationally. There had been memorial services and monuments but it wasn't until this period that the observance of Anzac Day became ritualised and Rudyard Kipling's words '...lest we forget..' became enshrined in the national psyche.

We have here the energy of the Crescent phase asserting itself on the environment. It is also during this period that the War Memorial in Canberra was established. This is the time when the first expressions of identity become manifest in a physical form.

If we look at the Australian Referendum Chart ☿ was at the waxing d in 1921-22. This saw the beginning of the push to erect Anzac memorials nationally and action was being taken to recognise the valiant 'sacrifice' made.

Next is the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter phase formed when ☿ □ the natal position in the ANZAC chart and this occurred in 1938-39 at 15♌ in the 2<sup>nd</sup> house.

*The 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter phase is about action. Testing of the momentum.*

The 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter phase demands action. Also the □ implies a challenge. The 1<sup>st</sup> quarter is a symbol of a growing independence and confidence in the direction taken. In this period, WWII broke out in Sep 1939 and Australia once again volunteered to send troops to the aid of allies.

The then Prime Minister John Curtin had a monumental battle with Churchill demanding that a battalion of Australian troops en route to Europe be re-routed back to defend Australia after the Japanese attacks on Singapore and the Philippines.

It was also during this time that Australia declared war. In an article in a newspaper dated 9 December 1941:

*“This is the first time such a declaration has been made independently of Britain. When the war against Hitler began, the announcement was that Britain was at war with Germany, and therefore a state of war existed between Australia and Germany. ...It is the only time Australia has exercised its self-governing rights in internal affairs..”<sup>5</sup>*

Looking at the Australian Referendum Chart, we see ☿ ☿ its natal position in 1937 and conjuncting the MC when war broke out. The ♀ occurred in 1943 at the time when the war effort was at a critical balance.

The outcome of this phase was that the Anzac came to become an enduring image not only of the soldier but of a particular image of Australian masculinity. The bronzed, laconic hero with a devil-may-care attitude, unemotional and taciturn.

The Gibbous phase as ☿ ☐ its natal position in the ANZAC chart occurred in 1948-49 at 0♁ in the 4<sup>th</sup> house.

*Direction is pursued intensely*

The Gibbous phase comes on the heels of the first independent acts and describes a period of consolidation and stabilisation of the image.

This saw Australia's involvement in the Malaya crisis but more especially in the Korean War as part of a joint UN force. It is interesting to note that although the involvement in this war was fully endorsed by both sides of Government it had every little impact on the Australian landscape.

As the Gibbous phase is about expression, we see the Anzac image extremely prominent in the Australian social life through Legacy, the RSL and a national holiday, Anzac Day.

However, the Korean War was different – the soldiers were regular army they were not, as was traditionally experienced, recruits to a glamorous expeditionary force. There was not the same glamorisation of mateship which was evident in both WWI and WWII.

As a result, the Korean War is known in the annals of Australian military history as ‘the forgotten war’ with little official recognition.

The Full Moon phase occurred at the ☿ ♀ of the ANZAC chart at 15♁ in 1958 – 59 in the 5<sup>th</sup> house.

*This is about fulfilment*

At the Full Moon phase, the Anzac image was redolent throughout Australian society. It was the symbol used to enshrine courage, tenacity and loyalty in the face of great odds. It also came to be seen as the ultimate bond men could have with one another. To be a ‘mate’ was to stand together in times of adversity, to defy the odds together but never to betray that bond. The Anzac tradition stood for this and to question it was considered a crime.

At this point the Australian Referendum Chart was experiencing ☿ ☽ the Ascendant, the ☉ and ☿. This signified the beginning of a time of questioning the identity of the nation and the basis of this identity.

Here we have the Full Moon phase when the Anzac image is in full light – all it stood for was fulfilled but it was also more prominent than ever. There is a sense of fulfilment as a result of the waxing phases which describe the growth and expansion of the Anzac image. Everything is now seen in an objective light.

<sup>5</sup> report from the newspapers of the day as quoted in *Australia through Time*, Random House, 1995. Page 309.

With the Full Moon there is then the beginning of assimilating what has happened at the same time a questioning of whether what has developed, grown and been produced. The questioning centres on what is satisfactory and what can be done to help it evolve into something more meaningful. It is the beginning of disintegration and decay of what has become obsolete and is a counterpoint to a growing understanding and awareness.

So, on the one hand, Australians were seeing the Anzac myth in its full glory but at the same time questions were being raised of its relevance. This was the beginning of the questioning and the disintegration of the 'forms' and the evolution of a discerning awareness and understanding.

This point is highlighted by two events in that period:

The play *One Day of the Year* by Allan Seymour was first staged in 1961. It questioned the validity of Anzac Day and asked whether it had just become an excuse for drunkenness and self-glorification. The play caused controversy as critics accused the writer of misreading Australian cultural heritage and failing to understand the dignity of the 'diggers' and their contribution to society.<sup>6</sup>

On the other hand, in 1965 the Post Office issued a special set of 8 stamps each bearing the figure of Simpson and his donkey to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gallipoli landing. When this idea to issue special stamps to commemorate Gallipoli was first mooted in 1935 (20 years after Gallipoli), the losses and suffering were still within living memory and the idea was rejected. The issue of this stamp saw the re-awakening of this legend. As an image of war, it is benign. It speaks of compassion amid chaos and the triumph of the spirit in adversity.

The Disseminating phase in the ANZAC chart occurred when ☿ ☐ at 0 ♁ in 1968 – 69 in the 7<sup>th</sup> house.  
*The struggle to understand.*

This was at the height of the Vietnam War and the moratoriums organised in protest. If we consider that at the Disseminating phase has the flavour of a struggle to let go of form and understand and synthesise their meaning. This was a period in which the Anzac tradition struggled for relevance.

Vietnam was the first war in which Australia did not fight alongside Britain. Without the traditional link, the Australian experience of Vietnam was heavily overlain with American images -- images with which Australian society was not wholly comfortable. The soldier who had fought in Vietnam became known as a veteran, a sign that the Australian experience was seen through American eyes. There were no more references to the Repat or the Returned Soldier.

Vietnam also was the longest war in which Australian troops served from 1962-1975.

It was a war that many wanted to forget and yet those who took part did not want to be forgotten. Many soldiers were greeted with abuse and derision on their return.

In the Australian Referendum Chart this period was the waning ☿ square and it also ☽ ♃ 26♁ in the 2<sup>nd</sup> house. The values of the nation were undergoing radical change and upset. The people (♃) were rising up and breaking (☿) with traditional values (2<sup>nd</sup> house).

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter was the waning ☿ ☐ in the ANZAC chart occurred at 15♁ in the 8<sup>th</sup> house in 1978 – 79.  
*Reorientation*

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter phase and it is a time of reorientation and relinquishing. The dedication to an ideal sparks a crisis and old assumptions must be questioned and transcended. During this period we saw a gradual decline in the attendance and observance of Anzac Day.

The collective response to the Anzac tradition was that it glorified war and violence. But it was also a time when the Anzac tradition was being scrutinised.

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<sup>6</sup> report from the newspapers of the day as quoted in *Australia through Time*, Random House, 1995. Page 387

Witness the song by John Williamson, *And the Band played Waltzing Matilda* an emotive piece which described the experiences of a young soldier who goes to battle in WWI, a classic Anzac, his experiences in the trenches and the loss of his legs. He sits at the end of his days watching an Anzac Day march:

“...tired, old men from a tired old war...and a shout from the crowd ‘what are they marching for?’ and I ask myself the same question...”<sup>7</sup>

The waning ♃ square is about being put on notice. Hence this phase is about asking the difficult questions, “what else is there”. At this time the evolution of the Anzac identity had reached a point where it either had to find a new validity and relevance to society or simply die off as the original ‘diggers’ were dying off.

During this period we see a collective soul searching to find that relevance and also to explore the reality behind many of Australia’s military encounters. It was during this time when Australia started coming to terms with how public memories of war dwell on some episodes and erase others.

A good example of this is the Boer War. In 1980, the film *Breaker Morant* put that conflict on the agenda and gave us a new perspective. We also saw the making of the films, *ANZACS (1985)* and *Gallipoli* which sought to capture the reality behind the Anzac image.

Another interesting landmark in the evolution of this identity was the recognition of the Australian wars fought between Aboriginals and white settlers. The anthropologist W E H Stanners labelled the nation’s failure to recognise these conflicts as “the Great Australian Silence”. In 1984, the first of the memorials to Aboriginal fallen was erected at Kalkadoon between Cloncurry and Mount Isa in Queensland. The inscription reads: *One of Australia’s historical battles of resistance.*

This coincided with the balsamic period in the Australian Referendum Chart when ♃ ♀ IC and returned to the natal position in 1983 with its emphasis on closure and release of the old and the start of a new cycle. The ♀ to the IC also describes the reassessment and resurrection of a heritage which up to the time remained largely ignored and forgotten.

The Balsamic phase in the ANZAC chart was ♃ ♀ its natal position and occurred at 0V3 in 1988-89 in the 10<sup>th</sup> house.

*Release*

This came exact in Feb 1988, but a few months earlier on 3 October 1987, Australia finally welcomed home its Vietnam veterans. It had taken 15 years for this to happen and in the words of one of the veterans,

“We could feel the bitterness, the hate and the misunderstanding wash away with every step we took”<sup>8</sup>

In 1988, 200 coffin poles from around the Northern Territory were installed at the national Gallery in Canberra and are said to represent

“all the Aboriginal people who, since 1788, have lost their lives defending their land.”<sup>9</sup>

This Balsamic phase also saw a resurgence in interest in Anzac Day. In 1992, the Vietnam Memorial was officially opened in Canberra.

The Balsamic energy of acceptance and release has seen the evolution of the Anzac image to its logical conclusion. The shedding of the Anglo-saxon might and right to include all who fought in defence of their land, whether they be indigenous, or born elsewhere.

In the Australian Referendum Chart this coincides with the New Moon period, signifying a new beginning to our concept of a nation and national pride.

<sup>7</sup> Redgum *And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda*

<sup>8</sup> report from the newspapers of the day as quoted in *Australia through Time*, Random House, 1995. Page 493.

<sup>9</sup> Inglis, K *The Forgotten Heroes* article which appeared in *The Australian* newspaper 25/4/00.

The New Moon was the ☾ Return which occurred in the ANZAC chart at 15<sup>th</sup> in 1999-2000 in the 11<sup>th</sup> house.

### *New beginning*

Here we see the re-birth of the Anzac image but now as part of Australian collective mythology. It is not just about soldiers in war, or Australian masculinity.

The potential of this new cycle is not yet evident. We still have many 'ghosts' of the previous cycle to lay to rest. The unfinished business of the past must be overcome as well as be integrated into this new cycle in order to enhance the development of the identity.

This period saw the establishment of a memorial to those who served in the Korean War, 47 years after it ended!

The new cycle coincided with Australia's peace keeping force in East Timor as well as renewed interest not only in the Anzac landings at Gallipoli but also in a re-definition of the legend and its place in our collective psyche.

This was reflected in an editorial in *The Australian* on Anzac Day 2000:

*"Today, when the physical evidence of those conflicts is no longer apparent, it is a paradox that we remember Gallipoli not just for the legend of the Anzacs, but for the contribution to nation building it made."*<sup>10</sup>

The importance of the Anzac tradition is now not only an image but it has become a part of the nation's mythology.

Timor saw the first wave of female defence personnel employed in a battle zone. They went not just as nurses or entertainers, as they had in previous wars but rather as mechanics, engineers, pilots and navigators.

On Anzac Day 2000, at Gallipoli, one of the last surviving Anzacs handed over an Australian flag to 6 young members of the Australian Defence Forces in a symbolic gesture the passing on of a sacred trust – a sanctification if you like of the qualities that are enshrined in the legend and which are now part of our collective myth.

It represents a brave sacrifice, a reckless indifference to danger, valour under fire and a legacy which has been handed down to subsequent generations.

Thus the birth of the Anzac legend was an identity forged in war and its unfoldment has been punctuated by Australia's involvement in war. This involvement has been in aid of the allies and 'mates' in time of need. Paul Keating, former Prime Minister expressed it thus:

*"... the heart of the Anzac story... is a legend not of sweeping military victories so much as triumphs against the odds, of courage and ingenuity in adversity. It is a legend of free and independent spirits whose discipline derived less from military formalities and customs than from the bonds of mateship and the demands of necessity."*<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *The Australian* 25/4/00

<sup>11</sup> Former Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon Mr Paul Keating, at the Entombment of the Unknown Soldier at the Australian War Memorial 1993