

SALUTING MONASH COUNCIL



THE SALUTING MONASH COUNCIL'S OBJECTIVE IS TO ACHIEVE THE POSTHUMOUS PROMOTION OF GENERAL SIR JOHN MONASH GCMG KCB VD* TO THE RANK OF FIELD MARSHAL BY 11 NOVEMBER, 2018.



WHO WAS GENERAL SIR JOHN MONASH?

General Sir John Monash was an outstanding senior soldier of WWI. Monash had all the qualities of a fine military leader. He had a sharp innate intelligence, a keen analytical mind, and meticulous attention to detail. He was an outstanding student at Jerilderie Primary School and Scotch College, where he was equal dux at the age of 16 in 1881; and the University of Melbourne in Engineering and Law. He was also very interested in the Arts and was a fine musician. He rose rapidly through the ranks in the Citizen Militia (the equivalent of the Army Reserve of today) through sheer ability and commitment. He was audacious in battle and prepared to take considered risk. He showed great empathy for his troops which was unusual for a General in those days.

This garnered tremendous respect for him and no doubt contributed to the Australians' successes on the battlefield. Monash was clearly a creative thinker who was continually learning. He learnt a great deal from poor decision making by Commanders during the Gallipoli Campaign. He went on to apply the lessons he learned to the battlefields of the Western Front.

In 1916, alongside the Suez Canal, he ran a major ANZAC Day service in the field; and it is generally construed to be the first ANZAC Day service ever held in the field. New Zealand ran the first services a few hours earlier on 25 April 1916.

There could be no denying Monash's impressive achievements and, as a result, he was able to withstand continued anti-Semitism and sustained prejudice from superior commanders. It seems that the influential war correspondent Charles Bean and the journalist Keith Murdoch were both determined to have Monash removed from command at one stage. Monash was a Reservist, not a Duntroon or Sandhurst graduate. This did not enamour him to his professional soldier commanders. He was regarded as an outsider, untrustworthy and overly ambitious, all code words for being a Jew.

The Australian Prime Minister, William 'Billy' Hughes, was fearful of Monash's allure to the Australian Public and was probably jealous of all the attention he was getting, including from King George V. Monash was knighted on the battlefield by the King. Fortunately for all of us, Hughes was persuaded by Monash's many supporters, who had directly experienced his outstanding performance, which he should remain in command.

cont'd >

*GCMG - Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George
KCB - Knight Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath
VD - Volunteers Decoration replaced by ED Efficiency Decoration then RFD Reserve Forces Decoration

Please help Saluting Monash Council's running costs.

All donations are gratefully accepted. Please make cheques out to: "Saluting Monash Council"

Mail to: Major Frank Woodhams, Treasurer, Saluting Monash Council, 3/800 Military Road, Mosman NSW 2088.





After WW1, Monash led the State Electricity Commission in Victoria for 10 years, spearheaded the development of the Shrine of Remembrance and became Honorary Vice Chancellor of the University of Melbourne; amongst many other community contributions. He stated openly that he wished to give back to the community. Yet, by all accounts, he remained humble and quietly spoken.

You don't have to make a lot of noise to be effective. His was the life of conviction, commitment and selfless service to Australia.

What more could we ask of a citizen? His life should be a lasting inspiration to all Australians. In the Great Depression he declined to lead a coup, saying the only hope for Australia is the ballot box and good education. Sir John Monash's magnificent statue, by Peter Corlett OAM, was unveiled at Monash University in 2015.

Monash said 'Adopt as your fundamental creed that you will equip yourself for life, not solely for your own benefit, but for the benefit of the whole community'. Building the nation in lifelong learning was his credo. Sir John Monash is an inspiration for all Australians. We should never take for granted the defence of our nation. Let us remember what Australian sailors, soldiers and airmen have sacrificed to allow Australia to grow in peace and prosperity as a vibrant multicultural democracy. Let us particularly remember those men and women who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in wars past. May they rest in peace for evermore.



General Sir John Monash and General JJT Hobbs passing the saluting base outside Buckingham Palace in London in 1918.



The statue of General Sir John Monash was erected in King's Domain, Melbourne in 1950.

WHAT IS THE RANK OF FIELD MARSHAL?



The rank of Field Marshal is the highest military rank which can be bestowed by the Governments of Commonwealth countries on its senior soldiers. The origin of the rank of Field Marshal dates to the early Middle Ages, originally meaning the keeper of the king's horses (from old German Marh-scalc = "horse-servant") from the time of the early Frankish kings. Upon their promotions, Field Marshals were traditionally awarded a decorative baton, which they carried as a symbol of their high rank. They were often studded with jewels and inlaid with precious metals.

The Badge of Rank

WHY WASN'T JOHN MONASH AWARDED THE RANK OF FIELD MARSHAL?

Clearly the jealousy of then Prime Minister, W M Hughes, is the main reason Monash was frozen at the rank of Lieutenant General from 11 November 1918 to 11 November 1929, along with the indifference of Prime Minister S M Bruce, who followed Hughes. It caused Albert Jacka VC MC (Bar) to convene a special ANZAC Day dinner in salute of General Sir John Monash at Melbourne Town Hall in 1924; arising from the fact Monash received NO Australian Government awards after World War 1. Throughout his military life the fact he was a Reservist, not a Duntroon or Sandhurst graduate; and that, at age 50 when he was at Gallipoli, was considered to be too old, were aspects held against Monash.

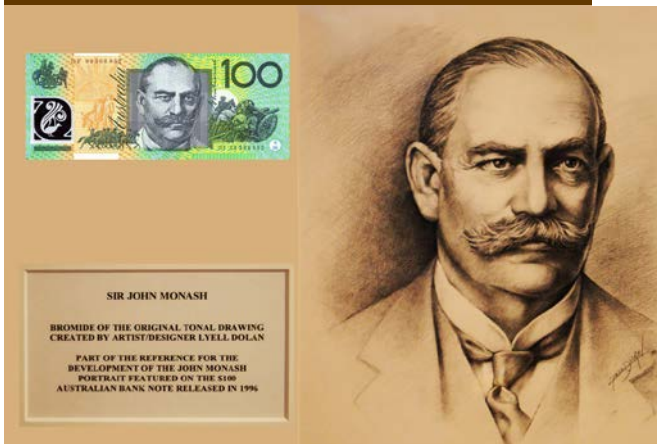


A Field Marshal's Baton



General Sir John Monash bust by Paul Montford.

GENERAL SIR JOHN MONASH IS THE MAN ON AUSTRALIA'S \$100 NOTE



HOW CAN YOU HELP MAKE IT HAPPEN ?

If you want to see this happen, you can do so with focus and strategy. All available elements should be activated, together with a sequencing that would make the 'Maestro General' himself proud. The proposal needs to be honed and stated repeatedly along simple lines that will cut through and head-off inevitable criticisms that it will open floodgates for posthumous promotions. The proposal and objective is really all about the following, and best stated with these words:

As a salute to all members of the AIF in World War I and as a salute to Australia's greatest general and an extraordinary citizen, steps be taken to provide for the posthumous promotion of General Sir John Monash one step in rank to the rank of field marshal, effective 11 November 1930, exactly one year after he eventually became a general, in accord with the Blamey precedent, where Blamey was placed on active service for one day to allow his field marshal promotion to proceed.

In turn this should be conveyed to local federal members of the House of Representatives and to senators on both sides. This can be done by letters, emails, delegations of small groups or simply by politely accosting every MP on every occasion encountered. Emails and letters should definitely not take the form of a circularised letter but be individually drafted and reflect your own angle and thoughts on the matter.

This action detailed above will not be enough in itself so an attempt should be made to concentrate the fire, so as to speak, to hit-up MPs and senators in particular months, notably early February at the start of the parliamentary sitting year, April as in the month of ANZAC, July as in the Month of the anniversary of the Battle of Hamel and November as in the month of Remembrance or Armistice Day.

A small group of say ten electors seeking a fifteen minute only appointment with their local federal MP will rarely be turned down, especially if the topic of Monash is clearly stated and the request asks specifically for fifteen minutes. MP's appreciate delegations that have focus as they are genuinely busy with much ground to cover.

Further, local RSL sub-branches or other community organisations can convene community conferences and forums and such like to discuss the issue of AIF recognition and the particular promotion proposal with regard to Monash. All this type of activity would be best done, not under the umbrella of any particular political party, but with a more broad-based approach.

MAJOR SUPPORT RECEIVED SO FAR

The Jerilderie Shire Council unanimous resolution, carried October 2015:

Jerilderie Proposition: As a salute to all members of the AIF and following on the outstanding contribution of General Sir John Monash to State and Nation before, during and after WW 1 and reflecting the fact that Sir John Monash received no Australian Awards or Honours post 11 November 1918, the Prime Minister approve by Government Gazette publication, the posthumous promotion of one step in rank of General Sir John Monash to the rank of Australian Field Marshal, with effect 11 November 1930, one year after General Sir John Monash was eventually promoted to the rank of General, in accord with the Blamey precedent, where Blamey was placed on active service for one day to allow his Field Marshal promotion to proceed.

Another indirect precedent was created in the US when in 1976 George Washington was posthumously promoted from four star general to five star general of the armies, the equivalent of a field marshal when he had been dead 176 years.

The Returned and Services League of Australia

In 2014 the South Australian Congress of the RSL resolved unanimously to support the posthumous promotion of General Sir John Monash, one step in rank, to Field Marshal.

In 2016 the New South Wales State RSL Congress adopted the following motion from the South Western District Council:

That the Returned and Services League of Australia (New South Wales Branch) recommend to RSL National, as a salute to Australia's greatest General and an extraordinary citizen, steps be taken for the posthumous promotion of General Sir John Monash one step in rank to the rank of Field Marshal, effective 11 November 1930, in accord with the Blamey precedent, where Blamey was placed on active service for one day to allow his Field Marshal promotion to proceed.

- **Supporting Argument 1.** Monash was considered by many the best General on the Western Front in Europe. He possessed real creative originality, and the war might well have been over sooner, and certainly with fewer casualties, had Haig been relieved of his command and Monash appointed to command the British armies in his place.
- **Supporting Argument 2.** In 2008, the late Rusty Priest, then President of NSW sub-branch of the RSL publicly supported the posthumous promotion of Monash, arguing further that had Monash been promoted earlier on the Western Front that many Allied soldiers' lives would have been saved.
- **Supporting Argument 3.** The consort of the Queen of Australia, Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, remains an Australian Field Marshal and will do so for the entirety of his life. The rank exists, there are people alive with the rank and in any event Charles, Prince of Wales and or his son, Prince William, in succeeding to the throne one day, will be made a Field Marshal.



General Sir John Monash died in Melbourne on 8 October 1931 from a heart attack. He was given a state funeral with an estimated 300,000 mourners attending, the nation's largest funeral crowd at that time, coming to pay their respects. After a Jewish service, and a 17-gun salute, he was buried in Brighton General Cemetery.

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“...EQUIP YOURSELF FOR LIFE, NOT SOLELY FOR YOUR OWN BENEFIT BUT FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.”

– General Sir John Monash –



General Sir John Monash was buried in Brighton General Cemetery. In a final sign of humility, despite his achievements, honours and titles, he instructed that his tombstone simply bear the words “John Monash”.

FURTHER READING

Recently released books: “Maestro John Monash: Australia’s Greatest Citizen General” by Tim Fischer and “Monash: The Outsider Who Won a War” by Roland Perry.

This brochure is only a summary of the Saluting Monash Council’s plans. A very good summary of Monash at war is shown in the DVD “The Forgotten ANZAC” now on YouTube®.

“Prominent among the heroes... has been the Western Front commander of the Australians... General Sir John Monash. As Mr Fischer and others are seeking, it would do well for the... Government to promote Monash posthumously (to Field Marshal) in recognition of his achievements and sheer humanity.”

- The Australian Editorial 11 Nov 2008

COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLIONS AVAILABLE

Descendents’ and Supporters’ Commemorative medallions are available for purchase at www.salutingmonash.org.au.

FUND RAISING

This brochure is to help people understand the roles this great man played in Australia and WWI. It will be available for download from our new website (www.salutingmonash.org.au) covering his many military and civilian successes and specifically sets out the case for his promotion.

There are costs in setting up Saluting Monash Council. Currently, personal funds are being used.

We are seeking your financial support in contributing to what we regard as a very worthy cause. It is anticipated that the Field Marshal’s baton and rank be presented on a date on or before 11 November 2018 at a Parade.

The ideal place for the Parade will be at the Forecourt of the Shrine of Remembrance with the baton escorted to other capitals soon after. It will be a fitting tribute to his legacy and to the WWI soldiers. Once achieved, supporters of the campaign will be able to look back and say they were part of making Australia’s WWI history.

DONATE NOW

All donations are gratefully appreciated.

Please make cheques out to: “Saluting Monash Council”

Mail to:

Major Frank Woodhams

Treasurer, Saluting Monash Council

3/800 Military Road

Mosman NSW 2088

A Certificate of Recognition will be presented for all donations over \$1,000. This certificate will be signed by the Saluting Monash Council Chairman, The Hon Tim Fischer AC.



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Formally established in July 2016

ABN 51 470 772 335

Patron	Professor Roland Perry OAM F Monash
Chair	The Hon Tim Fischer AC
Deputy Chair	Dr Judy Landau
Chief Executive Officer	LTCOL John Moore OAM RFD ED (Ret’d)
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