

Douglas Grant

Ngadjonji man, Douglas Grant, was initially rejected for overseas service due to regulations restricting Aboriginal people from serving. In 1916 he successfully enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF). On 11 April 1917 Douglas was wounded and captured at Bullecourt, along with 1,170 other Australians. He impressed his captors with his intellect, while his Aboriginal appearance made him an object of curiosity to German doctors and scientists. Douglas was popular among his fellow prisoners and given the responsibility of receiving and distributing Red Cross parcels. He became a vital link between prisoners in Germany and their families in Australia.

Frank Fisher

Wangan and Jagalingou man, Frank Fisher, was one of 47 men from Barambah Aboriginal Settlement who enlisted in the First World War. He embarked from Sydney to serve overseas in December 1917. Trooper Fisher trained with the 4th Light Horse Training Depot in Egypt before joining his comrades in the field. While he was away his wife discovered she could not draw on her husband's military pay as it was controlled by the Aboriginal Protector. He is the great grandfather of the Olympic gold medallist Cathy Freeman.

Helen Annie McDonald

Helen Annie McDonald enlisted with the Australian Women's Army Service on 18 October 1943 and was discharged on 22 January 1946.

Jerome Locke

Darug man, Jerome Locke, was the first Aboriginal man to serve in a colonial military force. Jerome was not only a member of the Windsor Corps but was one of the Corps' more accomplished marksmen. In 1916, despite being over age, he also served in WW1.

Len Waters

Gamilaraay man, Len Waters, was the first and only known Aboriginal fighter pilot during the Second World War. He flew a Kittyhawk plane called "Black Magic" and completed 95 missions. By the end of the war he had risen to the rank of warrant officer.

Marion Leanne Smith

Darug woman, Marion Leanne Smith, is the only identified Aboriginal Australian woman to serve in the First World War. She served on the No.41 Ambulance Train. These trains were specially fitted to transport injured troops from casualty clearing stations on the front to base hospitals.

Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker)

Noonuccal woman, Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker), Aboriginal activist, poet and writer, enlisted in the Australian Women's Army Service in 1942 after her two brothers were captured by the Japanese at the fall of Singapore.

Phillip McLeod

Monero man, Phillip McLeod, was a Sapper under the Royal Australian Engineers and was 19 years old when he served in the Vietnam war. He spent 2 years fighting for Australia, serving on a ship known as the Clive Steel. He was the only Aboriginal person in the squad.

Reg Saunders

Gunditjmara man, Reg Saunders, was the first Aboriginal commissioned officer who fought in the Middle East, North Africa, Greece, Crete and New Guinea, and in the Korean War.

William Irwin

Gomeroi man, William Irwin, served in the 33rd Battalion during the First World War. In August 1918 his company was involved in intense fighting at Road Wood, near Bouchavesnes in France. Leaving his battalion and acting alone, William captured the enemy machine-gun posts and their crews, one after another. When he tried to capture a fourth, he was severely wounded.