



Sutton Veny Churchyard (Photo from CWGC)

Pupils pay respects

Pupils at a west Wiltshire primary school laid flowers on war graves of Australian and New Zealand soldiers maintaining a tradition going back more than 80 years.

All 128 children, aged four-11, at Sutton Veny School made the posies from flowers donated by local businesses to commemorate Anzac Day on April 25.

The day honours the First World War dead from the two countries, many of whom are buried at Sutton Veny, which was a military hospital during the conflict.

Captain Cameron Richardson from the Australian Army spent attended a church service and read the pupils stories based on the 1915 Gallipoli landings in Turkey, which cost the lives of thousands of Australian and New Zealand troops.

Many others, who were injured on the Western front, were sent to Sutton Veny, but a lot subsequently died from their wounds, while a flu epidemic as the war ended claimed many more lives.

While the school and village as a whole has marked Anzac Day since 1918, the links with Australia and New Zealand are maintained all year round.

Nicky Barnard, who co-ordinates Anzac links at the school, said: "The service in the afternoon featured the children reading poetry they have written for the occasion. The younger children have stories that obviously don't go into the battles graphically, but the older ones understand the realities of war".

"It's a very solemn occasion but it's done so nicely."

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