'Gallipoli and Anzac after 100 Years - Lessons and the Prospects for Peace Today

Counter and complementary narratives:
1. The establishment (birth) of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.
2. The conscription referenda and anti-war feeling in Australia - WW1 and 1920s-30s.
3. The development of the WILPF vision/mission 1915- to date. Why peace +freedom?
4. Conclusion – lessons learnt and prospects for peace
1. The establishment (birth) of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

- 28 April 1915: International Congress of Women met in The Hague – c1300 women from 12 countries discussed how to end the war and eliminate causes of future war.
- Formed International Women’s Committee for Permanent Peace – urged heads of state to establish a peace commission.
- 2nd meeting Zurich 1919. Opposed punitive terms of Versailles Treaty - ‘revenge sowing the seeds of another world war…’; adopted constitution - Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).
- Permanent office opened Geneva, Switzerland; worked with League of Nations also established 1919. 25+ sections by 1921.
Sisterhood of International Peace
Melbourne, March 1915

• Meeting of 30 women at the Australian Church - Eleanor Moore, Vida Goldstein prominent leaders
• Opposed military training of schoolboys, conscription
• Affiliated with Women’s Committee for PP (WCPP)
• 1919 three leaders attended Congress in Zurich
• Eleanor Moore worked with others in setting up WILPF Secretariat in Geneva
• Australian WILPF Section established early 1920- Sisterhood affiliated with WILPF International
The conscription referenda 1916, 1917

Both referenda failed, but votes close.

• The Sisterhood and the Women’s Peace Army opposed conscription but were not alone

• Conflict over conscription revealed bitter divisions in:
  – communities
  – congregations,
  – families
  – those who went and those who stayed home
  – immigrant groups e.g. Irish Catholics
  – accentuated class conflict. (See Beaumont ‘Broken nation’ 2013).

• [Note only some 30-40% of men 18-44 years old joined up]
Post 1918 - 20s and 30s proliferation of peace groups in Australia and worldwide

“Our hearts had told us the war business was all wrong; now we begin to see it with understanding also’ E.M. Moore

• 1926 ‘No more war ‘ demonstration sponsored by Quakers, attended by 15 other organisations.
• 1920s Armistice Days = occasion for well-attended peace rallies.
• League of Nations Movement (LNU) - worldwide disarmament movement joined others- WILPF, Uni Melbourne peace group, Student Christian, movement to demand end to war.
• WILPF International initiated petition ‘Declaration on World Disarmament’. In Australia secured 118,000 Australian signatures presented to the Australian PM 1931.
• 1932 8 million (WILPF 6mil) sent to the World Disarmament Conference 1932 in Geneva
• 1937 Australian Peace Congress in Melbourne attended by 4000

From their beginning WILPF saw that more than demonstrations against war would be needed

• ‘In order to achieve peace and freedom, the causes of war must be eliminated, and economic and social systems based on profit and privilege must be transformed to societies based on political and economic equality, participation of women and men, and justice for all – regardless of race, sex or creed.’
An integrated approach

Focus on peace + freedom critical to our operation

• **An integrated approach** works against compartmentalising:
  – peace
  – security
  – disarmament
  – justice
  – development and human rights in the international system
  – building capacities at the grassroots, national and international levels

• All these areas are critical to establishing conditions conducive to conflict reduction and sustainable peace.
WILPF programs

• Disarmament—*Reaching Critical Will*

• Women, Peace and Security —*PeaceWoman*

• Human Rights Program

• Crisis Response

Carried out at UN and Geneva working with other NGOs, UN agencies, and with WILPF sections worldwide
UNSCR1325 +

• Resolution stresses the importance of women’s equal and full participation as active agents in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace-building and peacekeeping.

• Calls on member states to ensure women’s equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and

• Urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspective in all areas of peace building.
Lessons and prospects for peace

- ‘I know that the idea that lasting peace can be gained through war is nonsense.’ Eleanor Moore
- Peace is not just the absence of war.
- Security is a humanitarian concern, not limited to military defence issues, i.e. security = freedom from the threat of violence, food security, human rights, etc
- Working for peace is hard work