

## The Story of writing “Echoes of Gallipoli: For those left behind” for Framlingham College

I love telling stories and I've yet to meet an audience who doesn't love listening to stories.

This story begins with me in the middle of WW2 in nappies! That possibly needs a little explanation, and *that* is the art of British understatement!

I was born on the east coast of England in January 1939 when there was a “Madman with a Plan” on the loose and ravaging Europe.

With his help, some of the first words I learned to say were, ‘Messerschmitt’, ‘Heinkel’, ‘bomb’, ‘siren’, and ‘Doodlebug’. Little did I think that at the end of my life, there would be another “Madman with a Plan” on the loose and ravaging Ukraine.

This story is the short version of the journey of my writing a book called, “Echoes of Gallipoli: For those left behind”, and it began like this.

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, I attended an Anzac Day Dawn Service, (Remembrance Day equivalent representing the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps), in our little village. It was sufficiently inspiring for me to want to write a story about a young Australian going to war. So, I created Patrick Jackson who lived with his parents in Winton in rural Queensland. I had him going off to WW1 with a couple of mates, being sent to Gallipoli, and being killed there. A sound enough story, so I set it on one side and moved on.

It wasn't until August 2020 that I realized his parents would have been devastated by their loss, and I wrote their stories too, as well as that of a Kiwi family.

At that point, I came up against two major barriers in my writing. One was the known and precise military history of the Gallipoli campaign, (that's, ‘who’ was where and when, and doing what). The other was the cultural context of the ten nationalities who joined in the Allied forces a century ago. These included the Aussies and the Kiwis, the English, Welsh, Scots, and Irish, the French, the Canadians, Indians, and Jews. So, if I didn't get both military and cultural frameworks right, then my stories would be frivolous and have no credibility. It took 18 months of hard slog researching to get my stories into a proper background where they would, hopefully, stand up to scrutiny. I so nearly gave up, but the calls for recognition from the Mums and Dads ‘left behind’ were loud.

You will see what I mean if I were to ask you to write a story of a Mum, Dad, and their son living in St, Johns, Newfoundland, in Canada in 1915. You don't know the

feelings they had when their son left for war, how they made a living, what they did for the war effort, nor what their reactions were when their son was reported killed. Each fictional story had to fit into their prevailing culture with all those questions, and more, answered.

So, I wrote my book of 25 stories of shattered bodies, minds, and emotions. Then came the publishing and presentation, and many more decisions. You will know that the prevailing trend is e-books on Kindle, or paperback books. You sell 300-400 and consider that a success.

I was surfing for WW1 information on the net when I came across a picture of a leather WW1 journal that was secured with a leather thong. A lightbulb went off in my head and gave me an idea that I 'purloined' from those high-end art galleries who sell limited edition prints.

Some Indian artisans in Jaipur made me 500 such leather covers with the gold-embossed title, and Ocean Reeve Publishing in Brisbane made me hard-cover books with the same, gold-embossed title, and a sequential number out of a thousand on the back cover. There was a page for the book's number and date, the recipient's name, and my signature in this limited edition of just 1000.

This beautiful presentation would allow me to charge enough to donate some funds to our veterans still in need, on behalf of the purchasers. Many of those purchased were given as gifts, and others were bought to keep as a family heirloom.

Please visit, [www.chrisshawauthor.com](http://www.chrisshawauthor.com) for more information about this book, and what some nice people had to say about it, and other work I have done and had published over the last twenty years or so.

