

# **Battlefields Under Threat**

**By David Wilson – 1 December 2018**

In this presentation, battlefield guide and historian David Wilson will examine a number of significant battlefields that are under threat by late 20th or 21st Century encroachments. The causes of these intrusions usually range from growing industrial development, urban expansion or straight out mismanagement by well-meaning groups or individuals whose sometimes grandiose plans should never be allowed to come to fruition. Without going into the fine detail of each battle or engagement, we will look at eight separate keynote battlefields around the world. These are only a few of the many currently under threat, beginning with Agincourt (1415) in France and working forward to the modern day, highlighting some well-known examples from Europe, Turkey, Africa and America. Several sites with Australian connections will be included.

Some of these battlefields have avoided threats to their very existence through opposition by ‘people power’ or in the very latest genre of protest, by the use of expansive social media outlets. We will touch on some of the excuses used by government bodies or other organisations to override community protests. We will identify some resolutions made at certain sites that have been carefully and sensitively managed to obtain a suitable outcome for all parties concerned. Other sites are still under threat, with issues unresolved and subject to either ongoing litigation in courts or intervention by high-level government determination.

The presentation will be followed by a short Q&A and discussion session. Here the audience may wish to identify other sensitive sites under threat and discuss the role of the individual, corporate bodies, government bodies and even diplomatic intervention to resolve issues at individual sites, particularly those which are of significance to Australian history.



**Battlefield Under Threat - Isandlwana Battlefield, Zululand, South Africa**

## Biography – David Wilson

Lieutenant-Colonel David Wilson, BA (Military Studies) UNSW,  
MSc (Instructional Systems Design) Florida State University USA, *psc (n), jssc.*

David Wilson graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1975 into the Royal Australian Infantry Corps. He has completed 47 years of service in a variety of Regular Army and Army Reserve postings. These include operational tours of duty in Uganda with the Commonwealth Military Training Team (1983) and in Cambodia with the United Nations with UNAMIC and UNTAC (1991-92). In 2006-07 he was deployed as an operations analyst in both Iraq and Afghanistan, working out of the Australian Joint Task Force HQ based in Baghdad. He also served as the Australian Liaison Officer to the USMC-led headquarters and with other international assistance forces based in Thailand during the tsunami relief operation in 2004-05. For this work he was awarded the US Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal.

David's keen interest for military history is long-standing and widely varied. This includes being involved as a specialist technical adviser to the movies "*Breaker Morant*" and "*Gallipoli*" which were filmed in South Australia in the early 1980s where he was posted at the time. He has been regularly guiding as a battlefield historian since 2006 and his specialty areas for tours are Gallipoli, France and Belgium, Agincourt 1415 and the Colonial-era forts of NSW. In 2017 he became an Accredited Member of the International Guild of Battlefield Guides (Badge No 81). He is a member of the Gallipoli Memorial Club, a member of the NSW Chapter of the American Civil War Round Table and is a committee member of the 18th Battalion Memorial Rifle Club at Hornsby. He has recently been enlisted as a member of the Victoria Barracks Corps of Guides.

As well as being a battlefield guide, David is a published author and is the co-author of "*Fighting Nineteenth*" – *History of the 19th Infantry Battalion, AIF*" one of the many untold stories of the Great War, published in June 2011. As a result of this work, he has set up his own business: AIF Research Services which assists families and other interested groups to track their First AIF ancestors. David is regularly booked to speak to local historical societies on a variety of World War One and other military history topics.



**David Wilson**