The Military History Society of NSW presents
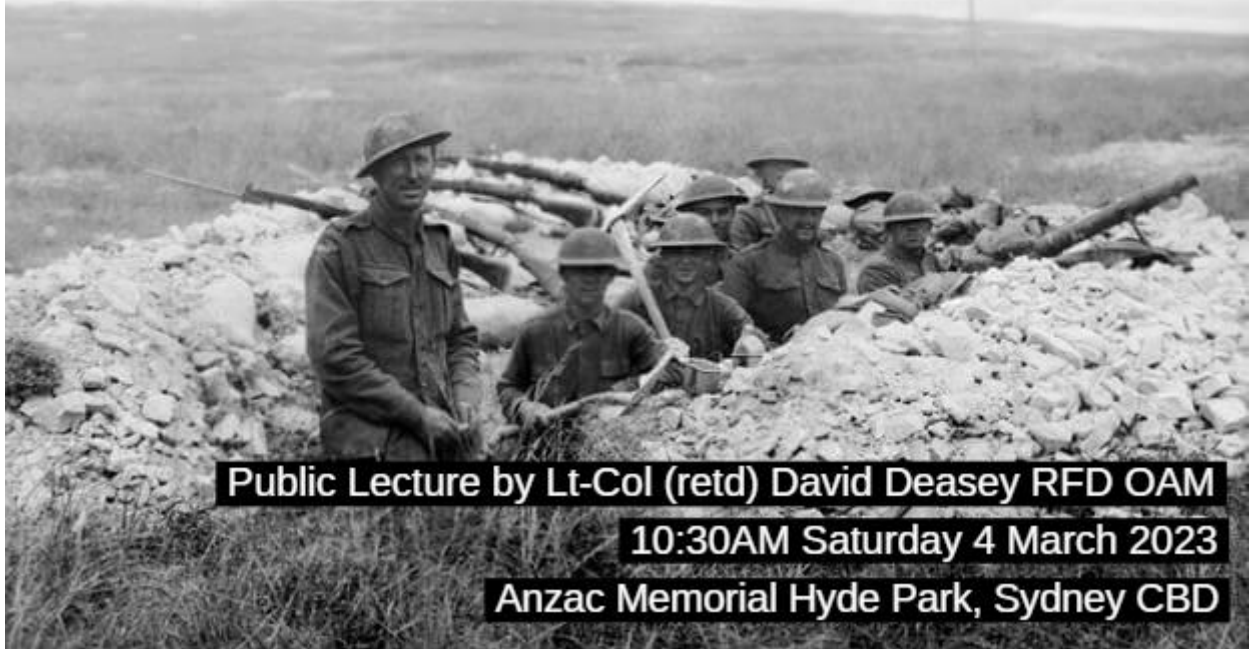
DOUGHBOYS UNDER DIGGERS
American Divisions Under Australian Command In World War I

Public Lecture by Lt-Col (retd) David Deasey RFD OAM
10:30AM Saturday 4 March 2023
Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Sydney CBD

One of the contentious issues in Australian military history is the use of American troops in operations during World War I. Many Australian historians have taken their lead from a comment by Australia's Official War Historian, Charles Bean, that Monash expected too much from two very fine divisions and they accuse Monash at least of misusing the Americans if not implying that he had no authority to have them at all. Author Les Carlyon, in his work *The Great War*, titles his chapter on the Hindenburg Line 'An American Tragedy' and writes of the handling of the American troops: *Here was proof that Pershing ... had been right to insist that, wherever possible should fight as an independent army and only when they were properly trained.* Through all this the myth has grown that somehow the situation of the Americans with the Australians was abnormal and these divisions were completely untrained.

In fact, upwards of 20 American divisions served under foreign command, with three, the 27th, 30th and 93rd, never at any point serving under American command. Two of those, 27th and 30th (and the US II Corps HQ) as well as the 33rd Division, all served under John Monash's command between July and October 1918. At Hamel (still commemorated by United States successor units), at Amiens and the Hindenburg Line, American units contributed to Australian success although not without controversy.

This lecture will look at how three US divisions and a corps headquarters ended up under Australian command and some of the operational problems that that presented.

TIME AND VENUE

10:30AM Saturday 4 March 2023 at The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Hyde Park South, corner Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Admission is free of charge but a donation would be appreciated. For info call 0419 698 783 or email: president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au

Speaker − Lieutenant Colonel (retd) David Deasey RFD OAM

Lieutenant Colonel (retd) David Deasey RFD OAM served in the Australian Army Reserve for 33 years before retiring, and between 1995 and 1997 in the capacity of Commanding Officer of the University of NSW Regiment. He is the co-author of *The History of the University of NSW Regiment 1952-2006* (2009). David is also a retired teacher having taught English and history at various schools for 37 years. In 2019 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) "for service to community history" particularly in connection with his work as chair of the National Boer War Memorial Association's NSW Committee. He is a member of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) for Defence and Security Studies, New South Wales. He has spoken and written widely about military history.

Our Venue