

# SHARON WELGUS

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## DAWN SERVICE AT WILLIAMSTOWN

The spot-lit cenotaph is at the water's edge,  
where you can see the lights of the city  
across the bay in the pre-dawn darkness.  
Figures are coming from the streets—  
young, old, in families, alone, so quietly,  
pulling coats closer in the stiff breeze.

Mothers whisper hush to children, young men  
help old ones find seats, more soft whispers.  
Still the crowd grows, standing ten deep.  
Then the crackle of the microphone and light  
glints on the medals of an ancient one  
who greets us and the service begins

Ninety-five years since the ANZAC landing  
and still we come to mourn the dead,  
to uphold those who still serve, to remember  
who we are. A piper plays, someone speaks,  
we take the ode, the bugler plays  
and each one remembers.

Giving your life is no small thing.  
For mates, for honour, for country—  
whatever the reason we grieve for  
fathers, lovers, sons, daughters, wives  
who never returned, who protected us  
all in a time of danger.

We secretly hope that we could be fighters  
if the time came again, but wonder if we could  
make the sacrifice. Would our courage fail?  
Wreaths are placed, and it's over. Today  
it's all right to be proud, to belong,  
to live our lives that they died for.