



Decade of service to Gallipoli commemorations recognised

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She was presented recently with a Defence Meritorious Service Medal by Chief of Defence Force Air Marshal Kevin Short at a ceremony in Wellington.

The New Zealand Defence Meritorious Service Medal (DMSM) recognises exceptionally meritorious service by any member of the NZDF.

Her citation said she had had a significant influence on shaping the Gallipoli Anzac Day services, which had evolved from well-attended occasions with informal planning and delivery arrangements to ones where New Zealand and Australia had

well-attended occasions with informal planning and delivery arrangements to ones where New Zealand and Australia had fully developed event management structures, with a strong emphasis on providing a positive visitor experience in a safe and secure environment.

Not only had Ms Myers-Davies focused on delivering dignified, safe and appropriate commemorations, she had also sought to modernise and bring a particular "New Zealandness" to the ceremonies. This included an unconscious blend of Maori and Pakeha, a greater sense of what it is to be a New Zealander, and an inclusive approach to the Turkish side.

For the 2015 Centenary celebrations she shared responsibility with the Australians for planning and delivering the Anzac Day Dawn Service, and was the New Zealand Services Director for the ceremonies on Chunuk Bair.

The ceremonies were an outstanding success, leading one noted historian to write: "This was something different both in format and a sense that while the emotion flowed, there was a sense of celebration in being New Zealanders. It was a special day."

Ms Myers-Davies, who works for Veterans' Affairs in Wellington, is from a military family — she was raised at Waiouru Military Camp — with her father, uncle and husband all serving in the New Zealand Army.

She joined the NZDF as a civilian in 1981, while trying to figure out what career to pursue.

"I was thinking about becoming an astronaut or a teacher," she said. "But I ended up staying with the NZDF because I really enjoyed being with the people."

"I've never regretted staying and serving as part of an organisation that values its people and the work we do."

She said she was humbled to be recognised in this way and was grateful for the opportunities she had been provided by NZDF.

"I have taken many with me on each journey I have made to Gallipoli, both spiritually and physically," she said. "I think of all those, including my great-uncle, who are resting in foreign soil, and I see this award as my way of remembering them, now and always."

Ms Myers-Davies is not the first in the family to be honoured for their service — her father and husband both received the NZMSN for their service to the Army.

"I'm really proud to come from a family so rich in military history and if my parents were still here today, I am sure they would be pretty pleased with the way I've kept that legacy going," she said.

Date

15 July 2019

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Last Modified: 15 July 2019