



# HELM



## Heritage of East Lake Macquarie

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APR-MAY

# LEST WE FORGET

2024

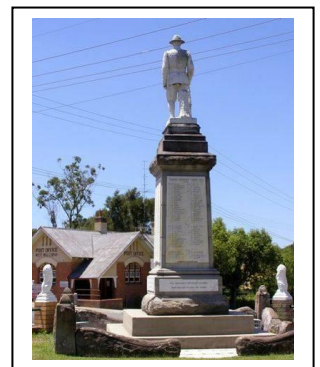
War Memorials have been established to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice defending our freedoms. On Anzac Day we offer a special salute to more than 60,000 Australians who lost their lives in the Great War of 1914-1918. More than 400,000 men enlisted, 150,000 were injured, and most carried mental scars for life. Australia's population was only around 5 million at the time. Almost every family was affected. *"It is not only for ourselves that we have erected this visible remembrance of great deeds, but rather that those who come after us and have not experienced the horrors of war, or realised the wanton destruction and utter futility of it all, may be inspired to devise some better means to settle international disputes other than by international slaughter."* **His Excellency, Governor of SA, Sir Alexander Hore-Ruthven, 25 April 1931.** Across Australia many types of memorials remind us of the impacts of war; and each has a special story to tell. They range from museums and cenotaphs to statues, sculptures, walls, silos, murals, and cairns. Some offer a practical aspect, such as parks, halls, pools, and hospitals.



The distinctive "Rising Sun" sculpture on **Swansea** Channel adjacent to the RSL Club was dedicated on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Australians landing at Gallipoli. Designed and built in Gidgegannup WA, it's positioned so the sun rises through the middle of the arch every ANZAC Day. Carrying the inscription, "WE WILL REMEMBER THEM", the iconic steel rising sun stands 4.5 metres tall, and 8 metres wide. An identical sun memorial was dedicated in Onslow, WA, 2008.

Many families in East Lake Macquarie have ties to the **West Wallsend** district. This Soldiers Memorial is located opposite the Post Office and is a sandstone obelisk with 4 white marble plaques which reveal an Honour Roll for the 59 soldiers who died during WWI on the forward side; whilst the other 3 panels pay tribute to the returned soldiers and show when they enlisted.

A further 2 stone block walls were erected on either side of the Soldiers Memorial to honour those who served in World War II; the occupation of Japan; Malaya; Korea and Vietnam. Four marble panels have been placed on each side of the walls, for the 287 who served in those conflicts, grouped by their branch of service.



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The **Pelican** Memorial Park next to the RSL features a black granite wall with the insignias of the Army, Navy, RAAF, British Commonwealth Forces, & Merchant Navy. Plaques on the reverse side remember those who paid the supreme sacrifice. A memorial field gun which had been in the park had to be removed due to its poor condition. *Sources: Monument Aust; War Memorial Register*

**Thank you to Pat Conroy and staff, kindly supporting our community; and encouraging the preservation and sharing of our heritage.**

## REDHEAD PUBLIC SCHOOL MEMORIAL GARDEN

The school worked with the Redhead Sustainable Neighbourhood Group on this ANZAC Centenary project. The three main concepts were to research the soldiers from Redhead involved in WWI; erect a plaque in the school's memorial garden to honour the 3 ex-students who were killed in WWI; design and paint four murals. The memorial garden features a lone pine, rosemary bushes, and the Australian flag. Railway tracks symbolise the connection of the small community of around 50 miners' cottages which had developed along the railway line built to transport coal from the local mine to Newcastle. Many enlisted due to the mood of patriotism, the promise of adventure and travel overseas, and being paid. Many were miners, some were members of the Redhead Surf life Saving Club which had been established in 1908. A number were assigned as tunnellers due to their mining backgrounds. They endured poor conditions; diseases were rife; and they were inexperienced. A **PLAQUE** set on a sandstone block honours the three **students who died**.

**Pte Herbert Bradley**, #2818 36<sup>th</sup> Battalion, was killed at Messines, Belgium, June 1917. The miner and founding Surf Club member was only 19 when he enlisted a year earlier. He is one of over 6,000 Australians who has no known grave as their bodies were never found in the Flanders mud. He is recognised at the Menin Gate Memorial, Ypres, Belgium.



**Pte Robert Wilson Croker**, #6711 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion, was killed in action Passchendaele, Belgium, October 1917, aged 28. His occupation had been as a horse breaker for the mines. After arriving in France, Robert spent many days in hospital and did not see much active service



before he was killed. His sacrifice is also commemorated at the Menin Gate Memorial. His brother, William, Lance Corporal #6804 14<sup>th</sup> Battalion, also served and was awarded the Military Medal. He returned home badly wounded, dying relatively young at 45 years old.

**Private Harold Foster Moore**, #2848 35<sup>th</sup> Battalion, a labourer/wheeler at the mine, enlisted in October 1916. Aged 20, he was determined to join the war effort. After failing the preliminary medical twice due to varicose veins and chest problems, he was finally accepted. A year later, October 1917, he died at Villers Bretonneux and is buried in the Adelaide Military cemetery in France. His personal effects listed as being letters, photos, cards, wallets, razor, fountain pen, cigarette case, mirror and 2 service stripes were being returned to his family on the SS Barunga. However, the transport ship with 800 sick and wounded on board was hit by a torpedo from a German submarine off Cornwall.



Destroyers in the area rescued the survivors and crew. Regrettably, all personal effects sank with the ship. The four **MURALS** were painted on the walls of a small building at the back of the garden.

On the northern wall a haunting pair of soldier's eyes survey the scene. Overlaid are a sketch map of Gallipoli and the Hunter Valley. The western mural depicts the silhouettes of soldiers framed by a sunset. It evokes an image set by the Ode of Remembrance – "At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them." The eastern wall features ANZAC Cove and Matron Grace Wilson, of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian General Hospital from 1915 to 1919, who arrived on Lemnos Island after learning her brother had been killed in Gallipoli. The southern wall is one of hope painted with red poppies which were flowering when the ANZACS landed 1915. As a result, a commemorative **BOOK** was compiled and published, "*Marching for Honour, Recognition and Adventure - The story of the participation of Redhead soldiers in World War 1.*" by Robert Neil Bowd. Sources: Robert Neil Bowd; AWM; National Archives Aust.; Redhead Village Newsletter.



**GOSTWYCK CHAPEL**

*ontheroadmagazine.com.au*

The chapel is part of Gostwyck Station near Uralla, south-west of Armidale. The station was part of the grazing and pastoral land held by the Dangar family, well-known in the Newcastle and Hunter Valley areas. The chapel was built in 1921 by his wife in the memory of Major Clive Collingwood Danger, who died of injuries sustained during WWI in Gaza, Palestine. Clive was born at Baroona, near Singleton. After attending Armidale School



Clive joined Duke of Wellington's Riding Regiment and served in the Boer War, England, and India. He returned to Australia to wed; and develop the merino sheep and Durham cattle stock at his Gostwyck property. In 1915 he returned to his old regiment in England, accompanied by his family. His wife, Nora, volunteered with the Comforts Fund and the Red Cross. He became Brigade Major with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Australian Light Horse. In April 1917 he was seriously wounded at Gaza. After hospitalisation he returned to duty, but a year later was admitted with acute kidney malfunction. Ordered home to recuperate, his journey ended suddenly in Melbourne, where he died before reaching home.

The Chapel was constructed of bricks made and fired on Gostwyck Station. The stone wall around the chapel was built to protect it from floods from the nearby Salisbury Waters. Covered by Virginia Creeper, the chapel has an avenue of 200 giant Elm trees as a backdrop, creating a spectacular display in autumn.

**LEGERWOOD MEMORIAL TREES. TASMANIA.**

During WWI a number of young men from the small dairy farming and timber harvesting communities around Ringarooma and Legerwood in NE Tasmania enlisted. Seven did not return, dying in the fields of France and Belgium. In 1918 a ceremony was held during which relatives planted trees in an avenue to honour each of the fallen soldiers. Most had worked in the sawmill; other occupations were - farmer, railway porter, tenor. In addition to the seven trees, another tree at each end represented Gallipoli, and the ANZACS. Unfortunately, in 2001 the trees (Douglas firs, Giant Sequoias, Deodars, and Weymouth Pines) were condemned as unsafe. To preserve their town's memorial, the community engaged Eddie Freeman, a chainsaw carver, to transform the remaining stumps of the trees into sculptures of each soldier, reflect their lives, and various scenes from WWI.

							
Pte A Andrews 19 yrs 2mths	Pte E Edwards 35 yrs	Pte W Hyde 27 yrs	Pte R Jenkins 28 yrs	Pte J McDougall 20 yrs 2 weeks	Pte G Peddle 25 yrs	L/C J Riseley 36 yrs	Gravesites AWM Ages died



Sources: "Chainsaw Carved WWI Memorial Trees"; *discovertasmania.com.au*; Flickr; National Archives of Aust.

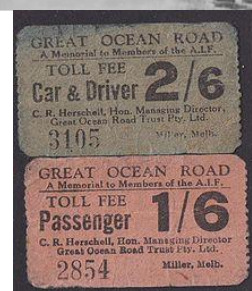
## GREAT OCEAN ROAD

Many of us have travelled the Great Ocean Road along the south-west coast of Victoria as tourists. It is considered to be the largest war memorial in the world stretching from Torquay to Allansford near Warnambool, some 240 kms. The road was constructed as a memorial to the Victorians who served in the first World War. The project provided work for soldiers who survived the war, many still carrying physical and mental scars. Soldiers who built the road had returned from the war to having no jobs; and needing a purpose in life to transition back to a civilian life. Many were able to utilise their recently acquired skills with explosives and demolition; and digging trenches. There was also a practical purpose to the design: connecting the small communities along the coast which could only be accessed by sea or a rough bush track at the time, and constructing an important transport route for timber and other industries. Approximately 3,000 workmen toiled manually carving the road out of the coastal cliffs using picks, shovels, and explosives; horses and carts. They lived in tents, with a communal spirit similar to their war years. The men were no strangers to being in difficult terrain and harsh weather. Their task was completed in 1932 after 13 years.



The first section from Torquay was opened in 1922 – a single laned, unsealed road, mostly one way with few guard rails. It was gradually widened and partly surfaced with gravel in 1934. Toll gates were constructed near Cathedral Rock and became a memorial arch. It was demolished in 1936 when tolls were removed. A second arch was built at Eastern View in 1939, but concerns that it was too narrow and dangerous proved to be correct, when it was hit by a truck in 1970. The third arch enjoyed a fairly short lifespan from 1977 to 1983, when it was destroyed by the Ash Wednesday bushfire. Rebuilt yet again, today it stands with 2 mounted plaques: one for Major W. McCormack, the engineer of the road; one for those who served in the Great War.

Torquay remains the official starting point of the Great Ocean Road. At Point Danger, a recent black granite wall and an earlier cairn set in a reserve have been constructed in memory of fallen comrades of World War I, World War II, Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam, accessed by the circular Anzac Drive.



Sources: Monument Australia; Great Ocean Road Authority; Lorne Historical Society; Visit Great Ocean Road.