



THE AIMING POST

The Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society Of Western Australia Newsletter

Issue 2/2001

May 2001

President's Annual Report

I have great pleasure in presenting my Report to Members at the 2001 Annual General Meeting of the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society of Western Australia.

Last Saturday evening I attended the Chief of Army's Centenary of Federation Dinner in Canberra. The all ranks affair was attended by 1901 guests in the presence of the Rt. Hon. John Howard, Prime Minister of Australia. The VIP's included 3 VC Winners – one being a Gunner, Sir Roden Cutler. The Dinner was preceded by a parade comprising a representative of every Army Unit in Australia and witnessed by some 10,000 people along the parade route. The occasion was used for the presentation of the new Army Banner by His Excellency Governor General Sir William Deane and the Banner was later paraded at the Centenary Dinner.

You are probably wondering what these activities have to do with the RAAHS of WA. Simply, I wish to convey that the commitment by you the Members to retain our Military Heritage is so important to the ongoing functioning of the Australian Army. As I looked around the tables at the Dinner and observed the facial expressions on soldiers of all ranks and all ages it was obvious that everyone was proud to recognise the Army contribution to the well being of this great country. We would not have been able to celebrate the event had we neglected or ignored our past and I for one was delighted to know that organisations such as ours had and continue to make such a significant contribution.

Without laboring the point, it was a most moving experience to be involved in singing along with the Army Band such songs as “It’s a long way to Tipperary” and “Bless ‘Em All” – to especially see the involvement of the younger serving Members actually knowing the words and then the finale of “Waltzing Matilda” by around 2000 voices. Ladies and Gentlemen, this was very powerful and left no doubts that the Australian Army is alive and well and already preparing to take us forward to another century of achievement. I was particularly pleased that I chose to travel to Canberra to attend the Dinner at which I saw and chatted with many fellow Gunners that I had not seen for some time. At the conclusion I spoke with our former Governor Maj Gen. Michael Jeffrey who asked to pass on his very best wishes to you all here this evening.

In commenting on the achievements of the RAAHS of WA during year 2000 it is difficult not to repeat the accolades stated previously. The quality of the restoration work performed on the various projects at the Karrakatta Workshop is widely acknowledged and has bestowed great credit on the team of enthusiastic craftspeople. Well done and thank you.

Within the many and varied activities associated with the Karrakatta annex - the photographic and publications library, the accessioning, the cataloging and the oral history recording are of the highest order and members are to be congratulated for their continued efforts in the production of quality work – you are a truly remarkable group and on behalf of the Management Committee, I thank you all for your dedication and application to the tasks.

To the members who contribute to the content, production and distribution of the Society Newsletter “Aiming Post”. If the positive feedback and complimentary comments are the measure by which we can judge acceptance of the publication then you have done a marvelous job – thank you.

To the Leighton Battery Heritage site at Buckland Hill, thanks go to the band of committed volunteers who participate in the “busy bee” sessions, carry out building and exhibit maintenance, provide the guided tours on the first Sunday of each month (except January) – and on other pre-arranged occasions, provide the visitor liaison services and contribute so

much in giving visitors to the site – a memorable experience. This is our public showpiece and we can all feel very proud of what has been achieved – thank you again.

To the Members of the Management Committee, I wish to record my personal thanks for your interest in serving on the Executive, for your attendance, for your involvement in planning for the future, for your commitment in ensuring that the Society operates on a sound financial and administrative basis and for your wonderful support. Your service is greatly appreciated.

The success and standing of the organisation has been due to a total team approach thus the reason for not mentioning individual efforts in any of the achievements. However, I do wish to record formally, the effort of one Member of the Management Committee who is not seeking re-election tonight. To Helen Glyde in her role as Secretary – ever reliable the total professional approach and attention to detail that has us with an administrative record of which we are justly very proud. Thank you Helen for being a great contributor.

So what of the future. I feel that the future for the Society looks good – the one aspect that is guaranteed is that there will be change. Not necessarily because we will seek to make changes – in the main they will be forced upon us. Changes such as the way we acquire our revenue – particularly funding grants. These I anticipate will be more difficult to access. Changes in where we will be located – the future of the Annex facility and indeed the future of this very venue – all will come under the microscope at defence assesses and reviews its property requirements. The recent experience with Artillery Barracks in Fremantle should serve as a reminder that we live in a fluid environment and that influences outside our control will operate.

Our challenge is to recognise these potential changes and prepare ourselves both in financial and operational sense. To meet this challenge a priority should be to increase our membership base by attracting the next generation of Gunners and friends of Gunners to provide the necessary resources to meet our needs. I am confident that these challenges can be met and I look forward to continuing to lay the foundation for these during the ensuing year.

In closing I would like to acknowledge member Richard Lawler AM – for receipt of the Australia Medal in the recent Australia Day Awards – congratulations. Also, Richard will assume the position of Colonel Commandant RAA Western Region – taking over from me in that capacity at the end of April. Again congratulations.

Finally, I wish you to know that I regard it a real pleasure to serve you and the Society as your President and thank you for your support and encouragement and take this opportunity to wish you all a healthy and rewarding year ahead

UBIQUE

I submit my Report for your consideration and move for its acceptance.

(Signed) RAY BIRD

President

RAA Historical Society of WA

14 March 2001

Military Sites Field Trip to the Wheatbelt

Last year, the Defence Heritage Committee of the National Trust of Australia (WA) decided to commence on an inventory of military sites broadly associated with the Golden Pipeline project. Because of the nature of many of the sites, ammunition and ordnance depots, this article are included as being of interest to the gunner fraternity.

WWII sites in the Wheatbelt

During WWII major ordnance (supply) and ammunition depots were located away from the coast by the defence strategic planners. Access to infrastructure in the form of road, rail, water and communications were obviously key considerations. They also had to be sited sufficiently inland to minimise the risk of air observation or attack from enemy aircraft carriers.

The water pipeline became central with bases to be found to its north and south in an arc exceeding 150 miles inland from Perth. Sites were selected and developed at Nungarin, Nokaning, Merredin, Booraan and Ardath to store extensive tonnages of munitions and supplies for army and air force use. Merredin also became the location of a major army hospital when the

2/1st Australian General Hospital (AGH) returned from the Middle East before following the troops into the Island campaigns. As well as these important base camps were the many sites hired by defence for use by the local Volunteer Defence Corps (VDC), Voluntary Air Observer Corps (VAOC), Prisoner of War Control Centres (PWCC) and airfields for training, emergency landings and aircraft dispersal. Existing drill halls and rifle ranges became important organising and training areas.

Data on Hand

The Army Museum of WA had completed a draft Military Sites in Western Australia report in December 1999 which had drawn on the important works done by fellow committee members Lindsay Peet in his WWII, WA Military Aviation Sites Survey and Nadine Gibbons in her WWII Defence Hirings in WA Database. These and many other sources had been compiled into listings based on local authority areas. This report currently has 2,280 entries and is a dynamic document growing and consolidating as new information becomes available.

The number of sites in the shires surrounding Merredin indicated an obvious starting point for a field visit. This region has the potential for a Golden Pipeline tourist heritage track centred on the former Defence role.

The Field Trip

On 5th June 2000 Helen Birch and I headed for Merredin with the fuel card, maps, lists and cameras to test the voracity of the data and to confirm and photograph and as many of the sites as we could locate. We interviewed staff in the shires of Cunderdin, Kellerberrin, Merredin, Bruce Rock and Quairading. The strategy was to obtain copies of military sites on Municipal Inventories, seek actual street addresses from lot number locations, obtain information on current site uses from the rates clerks and get names and contact details of current owners and their permission to visit and photograph. Additional information was obtained from the municipal libraries and local museum contacts and in some cases by interviewing locals with living memory of the sites in use. We would both do the interviews then Helen would check through the local historical references in the library while I drew down the details from the rates register.

Rob Endersby of the Merredin Military Museum was particularly knowledgeable and helpful with directions and introductions to farmers with sites on their land. The Merredin Military museum is a credit to those who have assembled an excellent collection of the moveable wartime heritage of the region.

As expected, country people were friendly and happy to assist. Eighteen sites were located and photographed in the Shire of Merredin. These varied from the extensive RAAF Ammunition Depot and camp at Nokaning with over forty concrete explosives storage bunkers to the car park of the local shopping centre, where once stood the Duffs Arcade shop that had housed the Australian Comforts Fund (ACF). Three sites were located in Kellerberrin and four in Quairading including a second site for the Prisoner of War Control Centre that a local Councilor (who had served in the VDC) was able to show to us.



One of forty remaining ammunition storage facilities at the former RAAF Ammunition Depot at Nokaning. Photo: P Bridges and Helen Birch

The Ardath Ammunition Depot in the Shire of Bruce Rock was a treat to visit, as we ran into a local who was happy to explain the tented camp layout and show us the camp's water supply. This consisted of two long low stone walls along the base on a large rock outcrop, which directed run-off to an excavated dam. All this was constructed by Italian PoWs. This location, on a farming property, also contained the only Army wartime purpose built timber frame building left on any of the sites we visited. After having walked over the footings, broken concrete floors and rubble in bush settings of most camps it was a pleasure to find and record this ablution and laundry building still standing.

Returning via Cunderdin we visited the extensive complex at the airport being the old RAAF Elementary Flying Training School. Singaporean Air Force trainee pilots train from this airfield and it was disappointing to find the original buildings in a neglected state. The trainee pilots are housed in caravans on the edge of the complex but with a little capital and vision the buildings could be conserved and used in a manner compatible with their original purpose.



Ablution and laundry building, Ardath Ammunition Depot, Shire of Bruce Rock
Photo: B Bridges / H Birch

After viewing shire plans and using the hirings information provided by Nadine - which gave, in some cases, only plan, lot and location numbers – we were able to consolidate these with sites where only a street name was known. We were then able to amalgamate those sites, which had multiple listings in the Military Sites in WA list. The sites at Nungarin and Booraan were not visited this trip. Interviews uncovered some unrecorded sites requiring further investigation. Overall 29 sites were located and photographed in four days before we ran out of time and returned to Perth.

Field trip conclusions:

- The National Trust is well positioned to work with pipeline based local authorities to record and preserve what remains of our important defence heritage.
- The Golden Pipeline is central to a large inland military defence buildup in WWII - the legacy of which makes an exciting adjunct to the pipeline story.
- Merredin is well located to break the long journey between Perth and Kalgoorlie.
- This task should be tackled while people with living memory of events are still with us.
- Country people are interested in their military heritage and welcome its study and recording.
- Field trips should be less extensive than the area we attempted to cover and allow more time for interviews.

Paul Bridges, May 2001

Postscript

Paul Bridges and Helen Birch are both members of the National Trust Defence Heritage Committee and are volunteers with the Army Museum of WA who have worked on the military sites project. They are currently committed to campaigning to retain the entire Cantonment Hill / Artillery Barracks, Fremantle precinct in public ownership and as the permanent home of the Army Museum.

Coast Artillery Searchlights

Reg Kidd writes: The article on Coast Artillery Searchlights, last year brought back to me a flood of memories and much nostalgia. I joined the 35th Fortress Coy. RAE in June 1941 when not a great deal of war activity was noticeable in Australia but the Coast Defences were being strengthened, particularly at Fremantle.

The German raiders 'Altmark' and 'Kormoran' were active in the Indian Ocean and German submarines had sunk shipping en route to the UK. In fact it was known that the 'Kormoran' was in the shipping lanes off Fremantle and later was picked up by a Rottneest searchlight as this raider circled in Gage Roads on its way north to an ill-fated rendezvous with HMAS Sydney.

After intensive recruit training I was allocated to the Coast Artillery Searchlights (CASL's) supporting Bickley Battery. These three searchlights were 90 cm Aust Mk V units and were powered by three cylinder Lister diesel engines direct coupled to generators. These units were installed in concrete 'pill-boxes' with no attempt at camouflage. The searchlights were the eyes of the Coast Artillery in the hours of darkness.

At sundown the Manning Parade was dismissed and two operators went to each searchlight where the shutters were taken down and everything readied for the night's performance. One Engine Hand went to each Engine Room located in the bushy scrub some distance behind each searchlight. The engine was started and run for a brief period and then shut down.

The night's exposure times were communicated to each of the then operational batteries, Arthur's Head, Swanbourne, Bickley and Oliver's Hill from the Fire Command Post in a three story building, still standing near the lighthouse on Rottneest. These exposure times were top secret and were changed every day.

A few minutes before the exposure time the appropriate engine was started, brought up to correct speed and voltage and the power switched through to the searchlight emplacement. The method of starting the diesel engine was to first release the compression in each cylinder by means of a compression relief valve. The engine was then turned over with the crank

handle and at the appropriate speed the compression relief valve on No. 1 cylinder was knocked in and the engine would then theoretically fire on one cylinder. Then progressively the other two compression relief valves would be engaged and the engine would attain full speed controlled by a governor. This did not always happen. If the first attempt to start the engine failed then the Engine Hand would try again but with much diminished vigour. Often a frantic telephone call to the searchlight would see one of the two operators dash down to the Engine Room to help out.

The Searchlight 90 cm Aust Mk V was a messy unit. Each morning the carbon rods had to be re-packed in their holders with powdered graphite as the lubricant, then re-gauged. The smoked glass sight glass had to be cleaned and everything made ready for the evening. During exposure the operator had to hand feed the negative carbon keeping it within the limits shown on the sight glass or the arc would break and the searchlight would go out with dire consequences.

When the Japanese entered the war the arrival of the American Sperry 150 cm searchlight with the US 197 Coast Defence Regiment in January 1942 ushered in a new era in CASL operation. The Sperry unit with its 800 million candlepower output was superior to the 90 cm Aust Mk V in every department. It was almost trouble free, had an automatic feed and was powered by a sturdy mobile trailer mounted power plant consisting of a six cylinder Hercules petrol engine coupled to a generator and switchboard and it had an electric self starter.

The writer was sent to Geraldton in early 1942. A Japanese landing was expected at any time on the coast north of Perth and two US 4 inch naval guns were emplaced at Bluff Point just north of Geraldton. Emplacing the 90 cm Aust Mk V searchlights was a real problem. The ground was flat down to the water's edge and the railway line followed the beach. A brilliant scheme was evolved. The two searchlights were emplaced in wooden shacks with a platform leading from the rear of each shack to the railway line about 20 ft. distant. On this platform was placed a fettlers' s length runner trolley. In fact each emplacement was a fettler's workshop. Aerial photographs confirmed this. At Geraldton the first mobile power plants appeared - a Ford V8 motor mounted on a four wheel trailer and direct coupled to a generator and above all an electric self starter and switchboard.

The Geraldton Coast Defence Battery awaited an attack, which never came. It was emplaced in great haste and in absolute secrecy the details being known only to all the barmaids in Geraldton Hotels. It was withdrawn equally as quickly early in 1944. The Sperry Searchlights did not immediately replace the 90 cm searchlights but did so progressively during 1943/44.

During 1942 nineteen Mobile Coast Batteries called the 'Letter' batteries were hurriedly formed to bolster Australia's Coast Defences against Japanese attack. They were called 'Letter' batteries as they were named 'A' through to 'U' with the exception of 'I'. Fourteen of these batteries saw service in Papua New Guinea and two - 'J, and 'K' Batteries were stationed on Garden Island and Point Peron respectively. These batteries were all equipped with two 150 cm Sperry Searchlights with Electric Control Directors (DEC's) to enable them to be operated from a remote position and mobile generator trailers.

The old concept of concrete emplacements for the searchlights and engines was abandoned. Time and urgency would not permit this luxury. At Milne Bay, Oro Bay, Buna and Lae in Papua New Guinea the searchlights were emplaced on platforms built high up in trees. To do this the searchlights were completely dismantled, hauled up piece-meal and re-assembled. The photographs graphically illustrate some of these makeshift locations.

In late 1944 Coast Artillery was largely disbanded both in Australia and Papua New Guinea. The Japanese were in full retreat and also newly developed Coast Defence Radar could do the work of the Coast Artillery Searchlight. In fact 'Q' Aust Heavy Battery in the Torres Straits is credited with being the first Coast Battery to fire a practice series at night with complete radar support for location of target and fall of shot.

What happened to the 90 cm Aust Mk V searchlights and the many Sperry 150 cm units? Very little is known of their disposal and none appear to have survived to be displayed in Military Museums. In conclusion a 150 cm Australian searchlight was designed and some passed into production. I saw one in 1943 at the School of Coast Artillery at Sydney. It was plagued with problems mainly relating to the casting and polishing of the glass reflector mirror and I doubt if any were ever put into service with Coast Artillery batteries.

The writer became a Coast Artillery Officer and then converted to Field Artillery, serving with a Field Regt in the Bougainville campaign.

Reg Kidd

The photographs referred to may be found in the book - 'The History of the Letter Batteries' co-authored by the writer and Ray Neal of Sydney who are the owners of the copyright. A copy is available in the Society's Library

History of the Honour Avenue, Kings Park

The planting of trees as a dedication to individual Service personnel who gave their lives whilst serving their countries in time of war seems to be an Australian innovation. This unique practice originated in Ballarat, Victoria when in 1917 Mrs. Tilly Thompson of E Lucas & Company, clothing manufacturers, proposed to her 500 'Lucas girls' on the staff that they raise funds to plant an 'avenue of trees' to honour the local men who had been killed in World War I. This they did and by 1919 they had planted 3,912 trees along 22.4 kms of the Western Highway. In all at least 128 avenues were planted in Victoria between 1917 and 1921, virtually every one a community effort.

The idea was taken up in Western Australia by Mr. Arthur Lovekin, a veteran journalist, editor and owner of the Daily News. He was also an original member of the Kings Park Board and in August 1918 submitted to the Board a design for the planting of trees as an Honour Avenue in May Drive. What is known as 'May Drive' today, which runs from the Lord Forrest statue to the Nedlands end of the Park, was originally known as 'Circular Avenue' because it virtually encircled the entire park.

Turning back to 1901, prior to Mr. Lovekin's idea, the link with the Royal family and the Honour Avenue was established. In that year the then Duke of Cornwall & York, Alfred George Saxe-Coberg Gotha, grandson of the recently deceased Queen Victoria and son of the reigning monarch, King Edward the 7th, visited Perth. He was accompanied by his wife the Duchess Victoria Mary Augusta Louise Olga Pauline Claudine Agnes of Teck, affectionately known as Princess May.

The Duke and Duchess were visiting Australia to open the first Federal Parliament, which was in Melbourne. However, whilst in Perth on 27th July, he re-named Perth Park to 'Kings Park' in honour of his father, and laid the foundation stone of the Fallen Soldiers Memorial (now the Boer War Memorial) and re-named part of Circular Drive as 'May Drive' after his Princess.

Another interesting but tenuous link to the Avenues was through the first President of the Park, John Forrest. He was a Surveyor General, renowned explorer and the driving force behind the east-west railway, the first State Premier of WA, a founding father of the Federation and its first Minister for Defence. In this latter capacity he was instrumental in the raising of the first Commonwealth overseas contingents after earlier being involved in the integration of the six colonial forces. Later, in one of his terms as Federal Treasurer, he authorised the payment of monies for the raising of the 1st Australian Imperial Force (AIF).

When Arthur Lovekin visited England in 1914 he was struck by the grandeur of the Royal Oaks in Windsor Great Park. With Kings Park in mind he took the liberty of writing to Princess May, who was now Queen Mary, Consort of His Majesty King George the Fifth, requesting acorns from the Great Park for planting in Kings Park. Because of the affiliation with Kings Park she agreed to send at a later date a parcel of acorns from the Royal Oaks.

When the Royal acorns arrived the Park superintendent had them planted and although most of them sprouted many failed to thrive and eventually died. Perhaps as few as 11 of the Royal acorns survived. Replacement acorns were hastily obtained from Archbishop Riley who had an oak in the Bishop's House garden which had been planted by Bishop Hale some 60 years earlier.

The Park Board had accepted Lovekin's design for the Honour Avenue and the intention to create the Honour Avenue was publicised. Applicants would be required to pay 10/-, made up of 1/- for the tree, 2/- for labour for the hole, which would be 5' wide and 5' deep, 6/6d for the plaque and 6d for the paint. The Board carried out all the work including the acceptance of applications and allocation of the trees to the applicants. The opening

of the Avenue was planned for 3rd of August 1919, the fifth anniversary of the declaration of World War I.

The verges on either side of May Drive were cleared and most of the timber burnt to avoid the cost of cartage. Fertilizer in the form of manure, most of which came from the Swan Brewery stables on Mounts Bay Road, was donated to the Park. Unemployed ex-Servicemen did much of the preparatory work.

This important project would not have got underway at all had not Lovekin donated 500 pounds (about \$25,000 in today's value) to cover the initial costs. In 1920, Arthur Lovekin and Sir William Loton, another Board member, each donated 500 pounds to clear and plant with sugar gums what was then known as Forrest Avenue. In 1931, after the death of Lovekin, it was renamed Lovekin Drive in honour of the architect of these magnificent avenues. Lovekin is estimated to have donated funds of more than \$100,000 in today's value.

The preparations for the original planting ceremony had not gone too well. The reduced number of oaks, 404 in all were required, and the inability of the Park to obtain sufficient suitable kurrajong and tuart trees as replacements, saw the inclusion of Brush Box, Eugenia, Camphor laurel and hardy Cork elm to the list of suitable trees. Applicants were invited to supply their own trees but in the end most trees were reported to be 'True British Oaks'. There were problems with the casting of the plaques as well and the quality of many left a lot to be desired.

The long awaited 3rd of August arrived with torrential rain and howling winds lashing the thousands whom attended. At a timed signal relatives and friends planted the trees despite the weather conditions. In front of each tree was the plaque and in many cases miniature gardens had been created. After the planting the people assembled at the highest point of the Drive – known as the Circle – and in the presence of His Excellency the Governor Sir William McCartney, the Minister for Education the Hon. HB Colebatch, the Minister for Mines JP Scadden and President of the Kings Park Board Arthur Lovekin made their speeches and after all had spoken the Governor, during a particularly heavy downpour, declared the Avenue to be well and truly planted. A message from Queen Mary was read to those assembled.

Her words were,

“May these fine oaks grow and flourish for many years, and stand as a reminder to generations to come of the devotion and loyalty of those brave sons of the Empire who gave their lives in the cause of justice and freedom”

Governor McCartney in his address to several thousand umbrellas, with an uncanny prescience, reflected thus...

“That when this age had become a matter of history, and its incidents the subject of academic discussion, it might happen, perchance, that the children and grandchildren of the present generation might come on a pilgrimage to the Avenue of Honour in that beautiful park, to claim with filial pride kinship with some one or other of the trees which had been planted that day, and to draw from those silent monuments of a people’s trust to brave men and great deeds, the inspiration to emulate them if ever, in the future, in Her Majesty’s words the Cause of justice, freedom and right were threatened.”

This planting, which consisted of that portion of May Drive from the Forrest statue to the Saw Avenue (Tobruk Memorial) entrance, and subsequent ceremonies the following year in the remaining section of the Avenue which had been planted with Oriental Plane trees, saw the total number of plaques rise to almost 800. This includes a further 100 plaques placed on the sugar gums at the beginning of what is now Lovekin Drive.

In 1922 the Returned Services League (RSL), through a committee of its West Perth Sub-Branch, accepted the responsibility for the maintenance and preservation of the plaques. The Sub-Branch, later known as the Public Service Sub-Branch, amalgamated with the Press Sub-Branch in 1973. In 1976 it combined with the Highgate Sub-Branch.

In the early 1940’s the oaks, many of which had died or even failed to reach a height of more than 6 – 7 feet after 22 years, together with the similarly afflicted plane trees, were removed from May Drive with the approval of the RSL. They were replaced with Bangalay (Eucalyptus Boitryoides) the seeds of which were all propagated from one large tree in the Circle. That tree is still standing. There is one oak left standing – at the corner of May and Lovekin Drives, adjacent to the Forrest statue. It is

not known whether it came from Windsor Great Park or the Bishop's House. Eucalyptus Callophylla – Flowering Marri trees now replace those trees that die.

The replacement of the oak and plane trees was the idea of the Kings Park Superintendent at the time – JE Watson. He was Superintendent from 1939 to 1962. He was a Gallipoli veteran and was awarded the Military Medal whilst serving with the 28th Battalion AIF.

After World War II many requests for trees were received for dedication to Servicemen who died in that war and the Kings Park Board asked the RSL to arrange a dedication ceremony for the remaining 300 sugar gums in Lovekin Avenue. The authority for this was delegated to the Public Service Sub-Branch.

The Sub-Branch formed a committee to allocate the trees and arranged the service. The committee consisted of Messrs. LJ Parkes, President, AM Brice, Secretary, WL Boyd, Treasurer and HB Hayles, MJ Offer and Secretary of the Kings Park Board JE Watson as Members. On 5th December 1948 in Lovekin Drive before a very large gathering His Grace the Archbishop of Perth Dr RWH Moline MC DD dedicated the avenue to the memory of those who fell in 1939-45 War. His Excellency the Governor Sir James Mitchell GCMG also attended. The total number plaques required for this dedication could not be produced in time. Consequentially additional, smaller ceremonies were held in 1950 and 1952. Since those ceremonies others have taken place as and when suitable and approved applications have been submitted.

The total number of plaques as of June 2000 is 1158 , made up of the following:

World War I 808; World War II 349; Korean War 1

Royal Australian Navy	16
Australian Army	996
Royal Australian Air Force	107
British Units	19

Included in this total are those are in memory of two Victoria Cross winners – Lt C Pope, 11 Battalion, at Lowell on 15 April 1917, and Pte AS Gurney, 2/48 Battalion, at Tel-el-Eisa on 22 July 1942. Also Pte J Simpson, 3 Field Ambulance, ‘the soldier with the donkey’, who died at Gallipoli on 19 May 1915, is remembered with a plaque dedicated by Perth Girls School.

Supplementary Notes

Ages when killed/died of those Remembered

<u>Age</u> (yrs)	<u>WWI</u>	<u>WWII</u>	<u>Total</u>
17	1	-	1
18	18	1	19
19	43	6	49
20	57	28	85
21	50	28	78
22	61	36	97
23	73	34	107
24	55	24	79
25	48	19	67
26	47	14	61
27	48	20	68
28	49	13	62
29	29	18	47
30	21	15	36
31	20	9	29
32	24	9	33
33	18	7	25
34	21	9	30
35	11	5	16
36	13	4	17
37	12	4	16
38	2	7	9
39	11	1	12
40	8	1	9
41	7	4	11
42	8	4	12
43	7	5	12
44	6	1	7
45	8	-	8
46	2	1	3
47	3	-	3
49	2	-	2
51	-	1	1
53	1	-	1
54	2	-	2
56	1	-	1

Bravery Awards WW1& WWII

Victoria Cross (VC)	2
Distinguished Service Order (DSO)	2
Military Cross (MC)	9
Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)	3
Distinguished Flying Medal (DFM)	2
Military Medal (MM)	9
Meritorious Service Medal (MSM)	1
Mention in Dispatches (MID)	1

Unit Colour Patches

A number of years ago, some units added colour patches on the posts supporting the plaques. As an ongoing project, unit colour patches are being added to standardize the appearance of the Avenues. Except for the Commando section, memorials are not grouped by unit, theatre, rank or date of death.

Memorials to gunners of both World Wars are distributed throughout the Avenues as are collective commemorations emplaced by unit Associations.

Commemoration

The Honour Avenues are one of the most commented on features of Kings Park. In addition to the ongoing maintenance by the Honour Avenue Committee, the memorials are regularly visited by relatives and schools particularly in the weeks leading up to Anzac Day and Poppy Day. They remain living memorials both senses of the word.



NOTICE BOARD

BUSY BEES

The next busy bees at Buckland Hill are scheduled for:

30 JUNE 28 JULY 25 AUGUST

LEIGHTON BATTERY OPEN DAYS

The Leighton Battery Heritage Site is open on a regular basis on the first Sunday of every month from 10 AM to 3:30 PM with tours of the tunnels every half hour.

Groups are welcome at other times by prior arrangement. Please contact the Society for booking details.

The Aiming Post is published by the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society of WA (Inc) as a service to its members. It has an additional role of making information and material relating to Australia's artillery and defence heritage available to individuals and groups who share the Society's objectives.

**Articles, editorial comment or book reviews for publication should be submitted to the Editor, Robert Mitchell at:
Royal Australian Artillery Historical Society of WA,
PO Box 335,
Leederville WA 6903**

**Phone: 93809388 Fax: 9380 9399
Or E-Mail the Editor at rbmitch@inet.net.au**