



### Highlights:

- Great War Avenues in Germany
- Birdwood's tree
- The Quamby's

### Dates to remember:

- Sunday February 21 – Working Bee and BBQ for anniversary of 2nd planting
- Sunday March 21 – Working Bee

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### Working Bees – Feb 21, Mar 21, April 18 and May 16

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We have a number of working bees planned over the coming months and would dearly love anyone able to lend a hand. We still have over 350 number plates to place and with some good crews we could get 100 placed each working bee. Just bring a glue gun! No experience required – one person holds the metal plate, number 2 puts glue on it and then places a short piece of tape to stabilise it in place till the glue cures. Plates, tape and glue all supplied.

*February 21 – this will also be a short commemoration days after the 91<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the second planting which occurred on February 15, 1919. Everyone is invited at about midday to visit your tree, join everybody for some memories and have a BBQ.*

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### Birdwood Tree

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In March 1920, General Birdwood, one time commander of the AIF visited Hobart as part of an Australian tour. In many places, he unveiled war memorials and dedicated honour boards and buildings. During his Hobart visit, he addressed a gathering on the Regatta Ground at the bottom of Davies Avenue where traditionally the temporary 'cenotaph' was placed for Anzac Day. After talking to the gathered veterans and sharing a few jokes, he also presented some with decorations. For the Avenue an important part of his visit was to dedicate a tree adjacent to the Avenue in remembrance of those who died, mark his visit and acknowledge the avenue as a memorial.



Contemporary descriptions only give a general notion of where this tree was. The HCC map dating from the 1930s gives a general location around what is now the Davies Avenue turn-off and underpass. Aerial photographs from 1947, the earliest, show some outlying trees in this area but given some of the changes make it hard to fix a definite location.

The Committee has discussed what to do about the 'dignitary' trees planted by Governor Francis Newdegate and his wife, and that planted by General

Birdwood. They are not memorial trees i.e. commemorating a fallen soldier but are important in adding broader perspective on the history of the Avenue. The additional trees and sites at the Soldiers Memorial Oval are needed to accommodate the soldiers – the clear need and priority is for memorial trees.

During the discussions, it was noted that there might be at least one if not two cedars on a bank next to the Tasman Highway between Davies Avenue and the Carriage Drive. A check by the Council arborist, Andrew Robert-Tissot, revealed this was indeed the case and what's more they are 'of an age' (see his photograph previous page). In spacing the distance from the outer row of trees is about the same as the distance between rows in the Avenue proper. It seems the solution was in sight all the time. It now offers some possibilities for dedication, and alerting people, on the lower path to the Botanical gardens, to the existence and purpose of the Avenue just up the slope.

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## Avenues in Germany

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Most of what has been written both here and elsewhere about Avenues focuses on the English-speaking world. The spread of Avenues across the English-speaking world was helped by the publication in 1916 of 'Roads of Remembrance' by the Home Office in the United Kingdom. This was more a symptom, rather than the cause, of a desire to use trees in commemoration. In the US, trees had been planted in some towns after the Civil War and there are isolated examples from elsewhere. In Australia, the USA and Canada groups variously known as tourist and progress associations were joined by groups of foresters, local councils and others who were all committed to planting trees to beautify and civilise towns that may have otherwise presented a fairly bleak picture, especially in an Australian summer. Many descriptions of Avenue plantings note the practical benefits of planting trees for shade in summer.

Commemoration in Germany needless to say often took different forms compared to commemoration among the victors. It was more difficult in the post war era to remember in the same way and there was more emphasis on depictions of soldiers' qualities of courage and endurance. Some differences were also driven by cultural traditions about the symbolism and quality of the soldier – often harking back to medieval times in both form and values. That is not particularly German – one can see British soldiers depicted as crusaders, the war as a crusade and there is always St George dragon-slayer.

The older forms that could once be found in Germany included the use of boulders and monoliths as well as mounds. For us the most important however were the *Heldenhain* (heroes' grove) and *Ehenhain* (grove of honour). The 'inventor' of this form of commemoration was a landscape architect from Berlin, Willy Lange, who in 1914 recommended 4 elements: 'Germanic' oak trees planted for each fallen soldier (names inscribed on boulders by the tree), a raised central point with a linden tree (symbolising peace or the Kaiser), a circular festival ground and embankments or trenches marking the outer perimeter and all this separating from its surroundings. In 1922, he created a grove for Soltau near Hanover covering 4 hectares and including 271 oaks. This idea was very popular and was picked up nationally and by many local communities through landscape gardeners and memorial committees. As in some other places however, there were local adaptations that undermined the original concept – the separation of names from individual trees and a focus on community and camaraderie.

Throughout Germany the 'heroes' grove' was linked to older traditions such as the 'holy grove' dating back to pre-Roman times. And just as in Tasmania, where the avenues were to represent into the future our 'deathless army, evergreen', Willy Lange wrote of 'centuries of Germanic ages looking into the future'. In both cases, this was evolving – both a reminder of continuity and a memorial in progress: a space designed for contemplation and self-communion.<sup>1</sup>

As in all places, there were some not so taken with the idea of planting trees for the fallen. In Germany a sculptor, Hermann Hosaeus, led the charge. His first of 10 commandments for memorials was 'You shall not plant Heldenhain'.<sup>2</sup> This attitude was not restricted to Germany and

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<sup>1</sup> Stefan Goebel *The Great War and Medieval Memory* CUP Cambridge 2007 pp75-79

<sup>2</sup> *ibid* p78

was not just early twentieth century – ask many Australian councils! He argued the tenuous nature of trees (subject to fire, disease and drought) meant they were not suitable for a lasting memorial – especially as the memorial was to be a surrogate cemetery. As we have found a memorial to the dead consisting of dead trees is not a good look and naturally a sculptor would prefer rock. For Germans, though many of their dead fell relatively close to home, these surrogate cemeteries were very important given the fate of war cemeteries especially in France and Eastern Europe. There are few German war cemeteries in France for example. Some are collections of bodies in mass graves from smaller cemeteries. Some war cemeteries were bulldozed or the bodies exhumed and dumped in old pits and quarries by French authorities. Those that remain contain a fraction of the fallen. Eastern Europe presents an even bleaker picture.

Alas, what I can discover to date about the fate of the German groves does not extend much further and it is not clear how many succumbed to Nazification, war and de-Nazification.

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## Remembrance Day Wednesday November 11<sup>th</sup>

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On November 11 a total of 29 plaques were dedicated with our patron, His Excellency Peter Underwood AC, Governor of Tasmania, presiding. Alderman Rob Valentine, Lord Mayor of Hobart, and Allan McCallum, Chair of the Tassal Group Ltd, our major sponsor and a great supporter of the Avenue joined him. Allan comes from a service background himself and reiterated Tassal's support for, and belief in, this project to restore the Avenue. Students from Sacred Heart College and Mt Stuart Primary School also joined us. Cmdr Grente from FS *Vendemaire* was another special guest and

dedicated one of the plaques. Members also placed poppies at all plaques as part of our Remembrance Day commemorations.

The ceremony began with a choral item from Sacred Heart College after which our patron, the Governor, was introduced. The Governor spoke of the importance of the avenue and recounted details of the stories of a number of soldiers. He also read a complete list of the names, units and dates of death of the soldiers for whom plaques were being dedicated. He is a frequent visitor to the Avenue and keeps a keen eye on all the



changes and progress. After the speeches, all official guests including the Governor joined families, students and others in individually dedicating each plaque. Among the groups involved was the Royal Australian Engineers Association who dedicated a plaque, which they funded, for L/Cpl Charles Smith 13<sup>th</sup> Field Coy, killed in action in Bapaume on 31 March 1917. The group has funded and been present at dedications for a number of engineers on the Avenue. The ceremony concluded with 'For the Fallen' by Laurence Binyon, which includes 'The Ode' read jointly by SHC students and Chris Oakes, the RSL representative on the Committee.

While we know that the soldiers of the first AIF were brave and fearless fighters, they have also often been portrayed as undisciplined and lacking respect for others. Maybe we need to give a thought as to the backgrounds of some of these boys. Not all came from loving and supportive families. Several of the boys on the avenue experienced hard lives in a system that often saw families split apart through death or illness. One such person was John Thomas Quamby.

John Thomas Quamby was the son of Henry Francis Quamby and Agnes (Gertrude/Jane) Sullivan. He was also the grandson of Ephraim Quamby who arrived here in 1847 on board the convict transport Pestonjee Bomanjee. Ephraim Quamby's colonial record is not without blemish and he ended his life in the Hobart Gaol having been found guilty of manslaughter.

Undoubtedly life was hard for many of the convicts who arrived here, separated from their families and social networks. Some seemed to have adjusted better than others, and gone on to create new lives here. Despite marrying in 1855, Ephraim Quamby does not appear to have made the transition. He did father a child to Mary Ann Taylor who was born on 9 September, 1863, but for whatever reason which is not clear Henry Quamby/Taylor was forced to spend part of his life in the Queens Orphan Schools and later the Industrial School at New Town with none of the influences that a loving family would have provided.

History unfortunately was destined to repeat itself with the next generation. Henry fathered three sons to Agnes Sullivan, Henry born 1893, John born 1896 and Leslie in 1899. She had had a similar experience to Henry, being placed in St. Joseph's Orphanage when her mother became ill, then in the boarding out system as a ten year old when the family were split up and finally into the service of Mr. Bethune of Brighton aged eighteen years. The couple did eventually marry but it did not last. By 1901 Henry found himself with three small boys to bring up on his own, Agnes having left and moved to Launceston. From a report it appears that he had no idea about looking after them and after a couple of incidents all three boys found themselves in the Industrial School until they turned sixteen years of age.

When World War I broke out, John Thomas was the first to enlist. Putting his age up by a year and being a tall young man standing just over 5ft 10 and weighing nearly 13 stone, he was soon passed as fit for service on 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1914 and allotted to 'C' Company 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Joining the AIF no doubt gave John Quamby an opportunity not only to escape from his past but to partake of a big adventure. Unfortunately his adventure ended on the beach at Gallipoli when he was initially listed as being wounded and missing. An inquiry held at Alexandria the following year concluded that he had in fact been killed in action.

Quamby's actions while a member of the AIF would bear out all the comments, both positive and negative ever made about this group of men. He and his brothers, Henry Lawrence (21<sup>st</sup> Bn) who enlisted twice, the second time under an assumed name of Harry Jackson (12<sup>th</sup> Bn), and Colin Leslie (12<sup>th</sup> Bn), all fought on the front line and took on the enemy, suffering the privations and sickness that all had to endure. All three brothers would incur the wrath of their officers being brought to account for their misdemeanours.

Much about the family circumstances can be gleaned from the records. As mentioned John Thomas, like so many put his age up by a year and being a tall man already easily passed as being older. Henry had forged a new identity when he married in London in May, 1918 as Harry Jackson, the son of Henry Jackson, a captain in the mercantile marine, deceased. He gave five different people as next of kin on enlistment including claiming that Leslie was his half brother. Leslie seems to have lost touch with his father by 1917, claiming that his father's address was unknown and instead gained the consent of Charles Seager, acting secretary of the Neglected Children's Department when enlisting. Henry was often a hard man to track and seems to have had frequent moves around the centre of Hobart. He applied for the war gratuity belonging to John Thomas Quamby but his application was not successful. Despite claiming not to be a well man and suffering from his earlier work in the mines, Henry Francis lived long enough to see the next world war begin.

The name of Private John Thomas Quamby #347 appears on the Lone Pine Memorial, Turkey and the Soldiers Memorial Avenue, Hobart (Tree # 11).

### 3 August 2010 Dedications and Completion of Plaques on the Avenue

The committee has started planning for the final dedication of plaques scheduled for 3 August – the 92<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the first planting of trees. This set of trees and plaques will complete the northern section of the Avenue on the western side of the Soldiers Memorial Oval. It will also complete the first stage of restoring the Avenue with plaques stretching all the way from Aberdeen St to the Cross Roads.

Some time ago it was found that we had some trees for which there was no name and some names with two trees – we needed 10 names. To track the missing names, the first point for reference was the Hobart Town Hall Honour Board. This ended up giving us more names than trees, about 25. The H trees on the new Avenue are planted for these ‘extras’.

The following is the list of names and numbers. For the ‘ordinary numbers’ these are, in all except 3 cases, original names and trees. The numbering of the H trees is provisional. The names in bold are trees for which a plaque has already been dedicated – the plaque will be installed in July and a tree dedicated on 3 August.

Tree#	First	Family	DOD	Unit
31	James	Sullivan	11/08/1918	19th Bn
33	Edward	Sweeney	11/08/1918	3rd Bde AFA
<b>53</b>	<b>John</b>	<b>Miller</b>	<b>25/04/1915</b>	<b>12th Bn</b>
57	William	Flood	18/08/1918	3rd Light Horse
262	Thomas	McPartlan	16/06/1917	3rd Bde AFA
436	Alfred	Slade	06/10/1917	12th Bn
438	Robert	Hill	05/06/1918	12th Bn
440	Francis	Charles	26/02/1917	12th Bn
442	George	Billinghurst	12/10/1917	40th Bn
444	Charles	Cox	23/04/1918	12th Bn
446	Charles	McGiveron	13/10/1917	40th Bn
448	John (Jack)	Peacock	23/06/1918	12th Bde AFA
450	Charles	Dickens	20/09/1917	10th Bde AFA
452	Hedley	Bowden	23/07/1915	3rd Field Co Aust Engineers
454	Cecil	Clark	09/08/1918	26th Bn
456	Andrew	Matzen	06/10/1917	12th Bn
458	Richard	Sharp	07/05/1917	3rd Field Ambulance
460	Herbert	Johnson	18/07/1918	40th Bn
462	James	Levis	29/07/1916	26th Bn
464	Leonard	Pike	27/10/1915	26th Bn
466	William	Taylor	22/08/1916	47th Bn
468	Joshua	Hodge	08/08/1916	15th Bn
470	George	Dale	20/06/1915	5th Bn
472	John	Horne	03/09/1916	52nd Bn
474	Arthur	Gilham	10/08/1918	1st Mg Bn
<b>476</b>	<b>Frederick</b>	<b>Hazell</b>	<b>30/09/1917</b>	<b>12th Bn</b>
<b>478</b>	<b>James</b>	<b>Frier</b>	<b>28/05/1918</b>	<b>26th Bn</b>
480	Thomas	Dunn	05/04/1918	47th Bn
482	Lyndon	Page	13/11/1916	26th Bn
<b>484</b>	<b>Constant</b>	<b>Dalco</b>	<b>11/06/1918</b>	<b>40th Bn</b>
486	Frederick	Holder	17/08/1918	12th Bde AFA
488	Joseph	Finch	22/07/1918	55th Bn
<b>490</b>	<b>William</b>	<b>Scull</b>	<b>14/07/1918</b>	<b>40th Bn</b>
492	John	Freckleton	01/09/1918	3rd Tunnelling Coy
<b>494</b>	<b>Audubon</b>	<b>Palfreyman</b>	<b>23/05/1918</b>	<b>27th Squadron RFC</b>
495	Thomas	Freeman	23/08/1918	7th Bn
497	James	Ward	06/08/1918	15th Bn

498	Archibald	Collins	24/07/1918	12th Bn
499	Hector	Lord	25/08/1918	12th Bn
511	Leslie	Corrigan	24/10/1918	3rd Light Horse
H01	Max	Woodberry	25/04/1915	12th Bn
H02	Ernest	Hawke	01/05/1915	Canterbury Regt NZEF
H03	Gordon	Wallack	23/05/1915	2nd Bn
H15	John	McMurchie	02/09/1915	Otago Mounted Rifles
H16	John	Harris	10/04/1917	12th Bn
H17	Robert	Anderson	06/04/1918	4th Pioneers
H18	Andrew	Brewer	08/08/1918	20th Bn
H19	Frank	Dixon	18/09/1918	12th Bn
H20	Harry	Boon	08/02/1919	12th Bn
H21	Joseph	O'Doherty	09/02/1919	Anzac Div Train AASC
H22	Frank	Sheppard	22/02/1919	51st Bn
H23	Albert	Mears	07/03/1919	12th Bn



Left: Barbara Sattler prepares to lay the Avenue wreath at the Cenotaph on 11 November in remembrance of all the men on the Avenue. Her uncle Bmdr John Daly Kilmartin KIA 1/6/1917 is commemorated by tree#257.

Below: Members of the Royal Australian Engineers Association before dedicating the plaque for L/Cpl Smith KIA 31/3/1917 Tree#209.



**Many thanks to Duncan Kerr MP SC, Federal Member for Denison and his staff for photocopying this newsletter**

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