

## Friends of Soldiers Memorial Avenue Inc Newsletter Issue 30: January 2007



### Highlights

- Official Launch of Tassal Sponsorship
- Remembrance Day ceremony
- Tax Deductibility Status
- Crossroads Oval Landscape Plan

### Dates to remember

February 15<sup>th</sup> – next Dedication Ceremony

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## President's Report

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I hope that all members have had a joyful Christmas with family and friends and that you have all been able to relax over the holiday season. I would like to pass on the thanks of the committee to all members, descendants, sponsors, donors, supporters, volunteers and friends for their assistance and help throughout 2006. This is a big project and without the help we receive, in large or small measure, we could not achieve what has been done to date. Our last dedication ceremony on Remembrance Day was a great success and thanks to all the committee, volunteers and supporters who made it possible.

Hobart City Council has approved the draft landscape plan for the Crossroads Oval and we will be working closely with them this year to see works commence. This year is also important for FOSMA as we have just received approval of our Deductible Gift Recipient Status from the Australian Tax Office. We hope to spread the word far and wide and encourage many people and businesses to make donations. More details in this newsletter. While all this warm and sunny weather is great for visits to the beach, it is not good news for the trees on the Avenue. Following what has been one of driest years on record, the cedars will be struggling this summer. We must hope for good rains in Autumn (if not before!). I look forward to seeing you all at the February dedications.

Regretfully, I have to advise that John Panton has resigned from the committee owing to work pressures. I would like to thank John for his work over the past years and wish him well for the future.

John Wadsley

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## Official Launch of Tassal Group as Major Corporate Sponsor

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At the Remembrance Day Ceremony, Mr Nick Burrows, Company Secretary and General Manager Finance and Administration, of the Tassal Group Limited formally announced his company's sponsorship. It is wonderful to see that a major Tasmanian business is willing to get behind our work and get involved with a community

activity.

The genesis of Tassal's involvement came from a meeting between Nick and Adrian Howard, when they discussed the background of the soldiers. As Nick stated in his address, "...It turned out that many came from the communities within which Tassal currently operates – Hobart, the Huon, Cygnet, Southport and Dover regions, Nubeena, Port Arthur and the West Coast. There were fisherman, factory workers, fish smokers, and farmers and so on. So Tassal considers we have a strong linkage with the Avenue and so in assisting the push to restore it to its former glory and heritage icon status within our community."

As part of informing Tassal staff about this sponsorship, some direct links were discovered. Nick continued, "...Private Walter Hutton (Tree # 358) of the 12<sup>th</sup> Battalion, aged 27 years and 2 months was killed in action in Belgium by a single shell, along with 5 other men, whilst manning a machine gun post. Private Hutton was the great, great uncle of Shane Hutton who works with Tassal at our Margate site. Shane and members of his family are here this morning as part of today's dedications."

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## Remembrance Day Dedications

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The Wellingtons under the direction of Richard Gardham

Our last dedication ceremony on Remembrance Day was a great success. We had a wonderful attendance (estimated at 80-100 people). The Wellingtons opened proceedings with a beautiful rendition of *"In a Field in France"* as a lament to Russell Bosisto who was killed in action at Pozieres in 1916 and whose remains were unearthened in 1997 (see Newsletter #29 for the full story).

The Lord Mayor of Hobart, Ald Rob Valentine delivered the main speech and dedications, along with Nick Burrows of Tassal (see story below). 20 plaques were funded by Tassal, with the remainder funded by private family donations, the South Hobart Progress Association, Hobart City Council, Claremont RSL Women's Auxiliary and The Examiner newspaper. Morning tea was very popular and thanks to Banjo's for their support.

Following the main ceremony a number of families carried out their own dedication ceremonies. It was a real privilege to witness these very personal dedications, and it reinforces the very reason why we are so passionate about restoring the Avenue.

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## Thursday 15 February 2007 Dedication Ceremony

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The next dedication ceremony will be held on Thursday 15 February 2007. Tassal, our major corporate sponsor, has contributed 15 of the plaques, with the remainder funded by private family donations.

The main ceremony will start at 10.00 am on the Avenue (near Tree #88) adjacent to the Tasman Highway above the Davies Avenue underpass. Our Patron, the Governor of Tasmania, William Cox AC RDF ED will deliver the main address. We invite all members of FOSMA to attend this important day.

### Following is the list of dedications for 15 February

Tree No.	Name	Unit	Date of Death
65	Cpl Ernest William <b>Larkins</b>	12th Bn	DOW 23/8/1918
69	Dvr Leslie Norman <b>McLaren</b>	8th Bn	KIA 23/8/1918
73	Pte Frederick Henry <b>Pelham</b>	12th Bn	KIA 23/8/1918
85	Pte Thomas Robert <b>Seymour</b>	12th Bn	DOW 26/8/1918
89	Pte Alfred <b>Edwards</b>	12th Bn	DOW 12/8/1915
93	Pte Carl Frederick <b>Bentin</b>	19th Bn	KIA 29/8/1918
94	Pte Henry John <b>Holmes</b>	2nd Pioneer Bn	KIA 29/7/1916
95	Sgt Wallace Douglas Guthrie Fraser <b>Ross</b>	26th Bn	KIA 29/7/1916
97	Pte Abraham <b>Lyden</b>	8th Field Co Aust Engineers	DOW 30/7/1918
98	Pte Reuben (Rupert) John Henry <b>Christie</b>	26th Bn	KIA 29/7/1916
99	Pte Alexander Neil <b>McKendrick</b>	26th Bn	KIA 29/7/1916
100	Pte Douglas Stanley <b>Say(e)</b>	12th Bn	DOW 25/5/1915
101	L/Cpl Joseph Clyde <b>Weavers</b>	3rd Field Co Aust Engineers	KIA 22/7/1915
103	Pte William Ronald <b>Herbert</b>	26th Bn	DOW 2/8/1916
106	Spr Kenneth Gavan <b>Ray</b>	13th Field Co Aust Engineers	KIA 4/8/1916

Family dedications will be held separately for the following soldiers.

365	Bmdr Albert Edward <b>Scurrah</b>	12 <sup>th</sup> Bde AFA	DOW 21/3/1918
487	Pte Frederick Augustus <b>Self</b>	12th Bn	KIA 11/8/1918
494	Capt Audubon Eric <b>Palfreyman</b>	27th Sqd RFC	KIA 23/5/1918
503	Pte Albert Herculean Augustus <b>Pearce</b>	40th Bn	KIA 7/1/1917

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## Ramset and Nubco help out

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As a further example of local businesses coming on board to help our cause, Ramset Fasteners and Nubco have provided great discounts on the fasteners we use to attach the plaques to the concrete plinths. With this support we will be able to achieve a lot more. Thanks to Chris Schuth at Ramset and the team at Nubco Derwent Park for their help. Please support these businesses.

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## Pte William John Montague Conway

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Pte William John Montague Conway was born in Portland and grew up around Avoca. He was the eldest child of 7; son of William John and Laura Emilie Conway (nee Tilley). He was educated at Perth State School and worked as a labourer before becoming stationmaster at Penguin. He married Lillian Eileen Hardstaff and they began their family: William John, Beryl Helen (Bette), Jean Emily and Reginald Norman.

He enlisted on June 6<sup>th</sup> 1915 and embarked on September 9<sup>th</sup> 1915 with the 8<sup>th</sup> Reinforcements for the 12<sup>th</sup> Bn. He arrived on Mudros on November 27<sup>th</sup> 1915 but did not go to Gallipoli as at this time the evacuation was being planned and preparations were already underway. He contracted influenza and was hospitalised rejoining his unit in January. Training in Egypt followed as well as the expansion of the AIF. He embarked with the 1<sup>st</sup> Division and arrived in France on April 4<sup>th</sup> 1916. The Division, with the 12<sup>th</sup> Bn was committed to the battle of the Somme in July and William was killed in action near Pozieres on July 25<sup>th</sup> 1916. His widow moved to Hobart and lived at 13 Jordan Hill Rd, North Hobart.

A plaque to Pte Conway (tree #504) was dedicated by his family on Remembrance Day. The following poem was written by Lindel Barker, daughter of Jean Barker (nee Conway) in honour of her Grandfather, Pte Conway, to be read at the ceremony. Unfortunately Lindel was unable to attend the dedication.

### **“To the Grandfather we never knew” by Lindel Barker**

Grandfather, we never knew you,  
We never heard your old man’s voice  
Welcoming us to a warm home,  
For you were never old.  
The home was never there,  
Your bereft wife Lily and children  
Shattered. Scattered.  
So young.

Grandfather, we knew your name  
William John Montague Conway –  
I would sometimes roll it on my lips.  
A grand name, a fine name -  
A name I was glad belonged to our  
Grandfather.

That Mum never knew her father’s face,  
Haunted her all her life.  
If only she had been able to lift her  
Baby fingers in memory  
To trace your beloved mouth and  
Nose and chin,  
Comfort could have filled her being.

Grandfather,  
Grandfather, the absence of your face,  
Your body, the smell of you  
When you came in from the garden  
Is more of a presence to me now than if  
I had known you.

William John Montague Conway  
Grandfather, father, husband,  
brother, uncle and friend.  
Died in battle, Pozieres, France  
25th July 1916 aged 27  
May we honour you today  
In this quiet avenue of trees.  
May you rest in peace.  
May you feel our love,  
And our gratitude for  
The gift of your life  
Across the years.



Descendants of Pte William Conway gathered at Tree#504 for the dedication on 11/11/2006 (Photo: Gae Williams)

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## Tax Deductibility Status Achieved

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The Australian Tax Office has advised that our application for Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status has been granted and backdated from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2008 (effectively for two years). This has been a long drawn out process and thanks to Glenn Hardwick and Adrian Howard for their efforts in moving this through the bureaucratic maze.

What does this DGR status mean for FOSMA, its members and donors?

All donations received from 1 July 2006 to 30 June 2008 will be tax-deductible for the donor. Note this does not cover general subscription fees, it is only for general donations towards work on Soldiers Memorial Avenue or for specific donations in honour of a particular soldier commemorated on the Avenue.

FOSMA will issue a receipt (including our ABN) to all those making donations, so that these can be claimed in the relevant tax year. However, we will need a return address from you. *(Note if you have already made a donation since 1 July, you should receive a receipt within the next weeks.) Please contact Glenn Hardwick, Treasurer if you do not receive a receipt within 3 weeks.)*

FOSMA can accept cheques or money orders made out to “Friends of Soldiers Memorial Avenue Inc.” (Please make sure you indicate that your payment is a donation, specify the soldier/tree number if necessary and include a return address). Direct deposits can be made from your savings or cheque account via the internet with the following details (unfortunately we cannot accept credit card payments):

Bank: Westpac Banking Corporation  
Account: Friends of Soldiers Memorial Avenue Inc.  
BSB No: 037-001  
Account No: 356817 (Gift Account)

(Please ensure that you indicate in the notes section your name and if your donation is for a specific soldier, please note their name/tree number. If there is not enough space, please send us an email to [info@soldierswalk.org.au](mailto:info@soldierswalk.org.au)).

This is an important breakthrough for FOSMA, and we need to encourage as many people and businesses as possible to make use of the DGR status over the next two years, If you are considering a donation, or know of someone who may be interested, please spread the word.

## Crossroads Oval Landscape Plan



The Hobart City Council has just approved the draft Landscape Plan for the reinstatement of the Soldiers Memorial Avenue at the Crossroads Oval on the Domain.

The Plan has been subject to consultation with stakeholders and interest groups over the past two months and will be finalised early in 2007. FOSMA has been working closely with Council over the draft plan. A copy of the draft plan is shown below. Essentially it involves a circular path constructed around the lower sports ground at the Crossroads, incorporating the original remaining trees near the road intersection. This will allow the planting of some 110 new cedars, hopefully commencing in Autumn 2008. These trees will not only replace those that were lost when the crossroads tip was constructed in the 1960s, but will also allow for reinstatement of other tree sites lost along the Avenue. The HCC is already growing a large number of Lebanese cedars at its nursery in preparation for replanting. (Photos appeared in Issue #26 June 2006).

The Canine Obedience Clubrooms will have to be relocated closer to the upper oval, but we understand they are very supportive of the plans. The new circular path will be connected to the existing Avenue with a staircase, which includes a major landing and interpretation point providing wonderful views down the Avenue, as well as providing a place for people to rest. The Council also believes that the new path will become popular with people wishing to exercise on a level pathway, as well as for disabled people who may not be able to access the remainder of the Avenue.



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## Book Reviews – by Andrea Gerrard

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*Gallipoli* by Les Carlyon (Pan MacMillan Australia)

*The Great War* by Les Carlyon (Pan MacMillan Australia)

Over the last 20 odd years, I have read many history books and journal articles both for pleasure and as part of university studies. These books have covered a wide variety of topics within the field of history from medieval England and France to the modern history of South Africa. War is a topic frequently covered in many history books. Few of these books are as readable and at the same time informative as *Gallipoli* and now *The Great War*.

It seems that so often history books are written by academics for other academics or students of academia. These two books fit neither mold. Les Carlyon, is a former journalist and editor with several leading newspapers including the Melbourne Age and with an interest in World War 1. A check of the bibliography for both books indicates extensive research and includes many primary sources - letters and papers from those who were there - officers and soldiers alike. He has also drawn on the monumental work of C.E.W. Bean, Australia's official historian who was also an eye witness to many battles, while not a combatant and Ashmead-Bartlett, war correspondent.

As part of his research Les Carlyon has traveled to the battlefields of the Gallipoli Peninsula and France finding the sites of each battle or engagement. He describes in detail what these places look like now to any tourist who may wish to visit as well as what they looked like during World War 1. Fromelles is a typical village in French Flanders, smart and clean with red geraniums growing in flower boxes. The land that was once a scene of death and destruction has now healed itself and life has moved on. Any romantic attachments to war that may have been held by some were changed here forever.

Carlyon's style of writing is one of telling a serious and disturbing story, but with the Australian laconic sense of humour often present. Did our men trip off to the other side of the world to a war that they thought would be like a game of rugby or that of a carefree debutante going to a ball, not knowing what to expect, but rather be there than stay home wondering? Australia's involvement changed our history forever. A sense of mateship didn't begin at Gallipoli, it was already there in 1915 and now it jumped to a new level. *'Him and me are mates, an' we're going' over together.'*

The daring deeds and tragedy are never far away and the reader is clearly left with a sense that those on the front line were little more than canon fodder trying to do the impossible against impossible odds set in place by those in high and remote places. Carlyon is clearly no fan of those in command, even General Birdwood, revered by many Australian soldiers, is criticised for his role in the second battle at Bullecourt. Maybe, Carlyon over estimates the ability of men such as Birdwood and Gough to influence those higher up the chain of command.

*The Great War* looks like a daunting task given the number of pages, but both are well worth reading for anyone with an interest in World War 1.

**Many thanks to Duncan Kerr MHR for photocopying.**

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