

Friends of Soldiers Walk Inc: Newsletter

Issue 5

April 2003

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CSM C E Wilkie DCM



Database release

On Thursday April 24th at 11 am the Soldiers Walk database will be released and a copy handed over to the Department of Veterans Affairs. The handover will take place at the Gunpowder Magazine. The research for the database has taken about 800 hours to date and made use of Broinowski's Tasmania's War Record, the Australian War memorials on-line databases (the nominal roll and the roll of honour), the Mercury newspaper, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and embarkations rolls for the 1st AIF. The exercise has revealed the names of 5 men who were missing from the Walk map (HCC 1920s) and the lists on the plinths near the Aquatic Centre. The task was complicated by differences in spelling, dates of death and ranks between sources.

The database also uses entries from Wendy Knolle's Indexes so people can source photographs and articles that appeared in the Tasmanian Mail and Weekly Courier during the Great War. The references will allow people to order the relevant sections from the Archives Office of Tasmania. Work will continue on the database adding more information from the embarkation rolls and other sources. The database has been developed with the assistance of DVA who provided a Local Commemorative Activities Grant to Adrian Howard in 2002. Many thanks to the Minister Danna Vale for making the grant and to Senators Abetz and Calvert, Duncan Kerr MHR and the RSL for supporting the application. The database will be supplied on CD-ROM in Filemaker Pro and Excel. More on distribution to members later.

ANZAC Day Exhibition of the Walk and WW1 memorabilia: Gunpowder magazine from 12 noon April 25th

Draft Management Plan

This is not too far off. One more meeting is planned to set the basic plan up and it is hoped this will go to Council in June. We will have a special issue when it is released. As noted last issue, it is looking very positive.

Burning Off

Under the Council fire management plan for the Domain, a number of burns are planned for this autumn. The areas to be burnt, weather permitting, cover the southern section of the Walk up to the house on Carriage Drive and the topside of the northern section between the TCA, the Athletics Centre and Cross Roads oval. We have emphasised the importance of a good firebreak between the Walk trees and the area to be burnt.

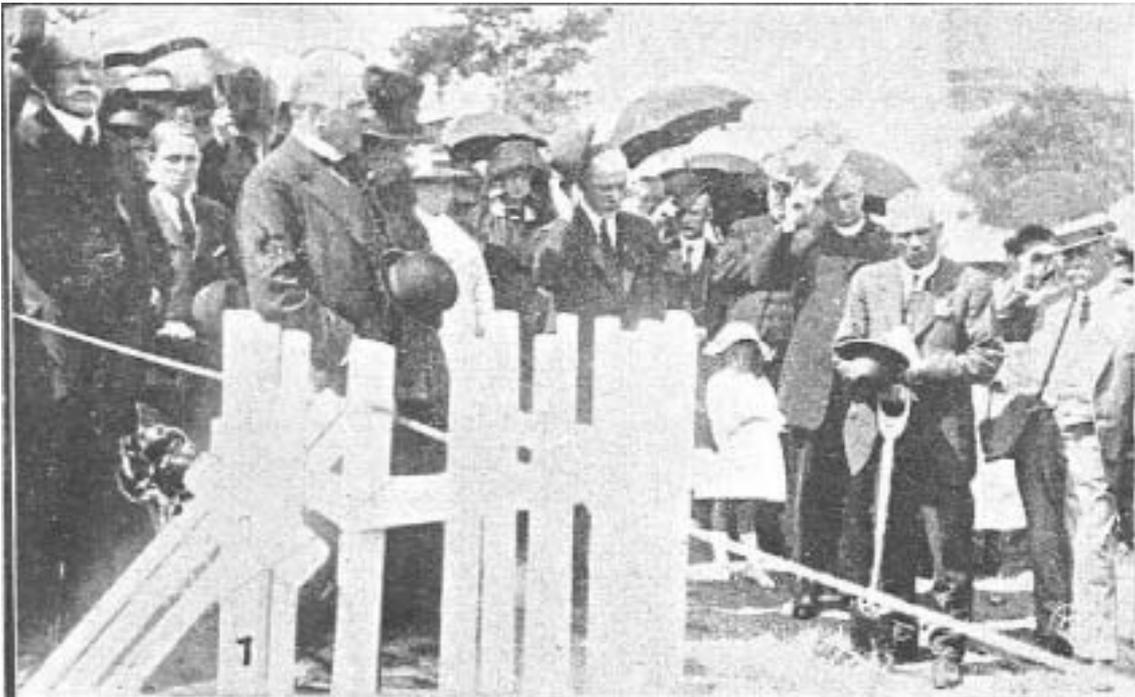
Second Planting Day

More work in the Archive office revealed a description of the second day of planting in February 1919 when an additional 100 trees were planted. The speech makes interesting reading given the subsequent history of the Walk.

Soldiers Avenue ***100 Memorial trees planted***

Speech by the Governor

Delightful weather, complete arrangements, and the beautiful surroundings conspired to make the second tree planting ceremony in the Domain on Saturday most successful. The Governor and Lady Newdegate, attended by Captain Stopp, were present and commenced the ceremony by each planting a tree at the city end of the avenue near the railway station. The attendance was not as large as on the first occasion owing to the numerous other functions taking place. On Saturday the ceremony took place in the calm of peace and the relatives of the glorious dead and the heroic living undertook their task with the calm serenity of victors, knowing well that the men whose memories were to be honoured had not given their lives in vain.



After having banked the earth up around an oak that had sprung from an acorn from Gallipoli, His Excellency said:- The words I shall say will be few. It was a great disappointment to my wife and myself not to have been present when the planting of this avenue first took place. I was unable to be present and my wife did not like to be there without me. I think that whoever suggested the planting of these trees, as a memorial to our fallen soldiers was possessed of a very beautiful idea. We all of us want to show our respect, esteem and gratitude to those men who have given up their lives for what they considered their duty. They have, by their actions and their heroism, saved our country and our Empire from the terrible things which might have befallen us had not our gallant youth of the Empire come to the rescue and fought their battles in the way they have fought them. Their memories will never be lost in their own families, nor will they ever be

lost in the minds of all who know what is good and glorious in the history of our country and the Empire.

It is easy to put up monuments of stone to their memory, and we are glad to do so, but I think the idea of planting trees, which, as the years go on, will grow and increase, is splendid, because when people come and walk along your beautiful domain they will see those trees growing, and will always be reminded that they were planted in memory of those who, without fear, had gone and done what they considered their duty.

The sympathy of all of us goes to the families who have lost members in this war. I think it must be a source of pride to them to think that they are able in the neighbourhood of the city from which many of these gallant men enlisted, to plant trees which they will be able to look after always, and which will stand as a memorial to those men who have gone.

I feel very grateful to a friend of mine in Victoria, Mr Winter Cook, who has given me this little oak tree which you see here. It was brought by a nephew of his who has Tasmanian blood in his veins - Captain Cook a member of the Victorian army - as an acorn from the Gallipoli peninsula, a small corner of the world which will always be remembered in history



as the place where the gallant men of your 1st Division did such stirring deeds. This little tree actually comes from an acorn that grew on the peninsula and here it is planted in your beautiful domain. I am sure it will be a labour of love with the people of Hobart to see that the trees are properly looked after. I think and hope it will be of interest to you to have this little tree actually springing from an acorn, which came from that place, which has given us such glorious history. May I say, as the King's representative here, that I am only doing in a small way what he would have done himself. He glories in his soldiers and sailors and the fine spirit which has gone through all classes, grades, and sections of the British army, and he always wishes to do honour to our soldiers and sailors who have done so much honour to our history and traditions. By the grace of God, we hope this war is now over, and we trust that those who are to come after us will not have to go through the hard times that the youth during this war, with their fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters, sweethearts and wives, have had to go through during the past few years. I think we can only thank God that at the end of this war victory has been given to our Empire and our brave Allies.

Tree 3147 for Pte Walter Alfred Hurst 12th Battalion of 12 Arthur St. His cousin Dvr Edward Sweeney of 10 Arthur St also died.



I feel very deeply the honour of having planted this tree in your Domain. I think that the whole of this Avenue as it grows

and becomes more beautiful as years go on, will point to future generations of Tasmania how the young men of today so nobly did their duty, and gave their blood for the cause they considered right, because they thought it was their duty to do so.

Lady Newdegate then planted a laurel from the forum in Rome.

The tree planters then went up over the hill to the portion of the Avenue opposite Government house, where 100 cedars within new guards awaited them. Little family groups gathered around these, and packed the earth about the young trees. His Excellency and Lady Newdegate each planted a Moreton Bay fig at the Government House end of the avenue, which is the only portion of the avenue incomplete. It will take about 50 more



trees to complete the scheme. It is hoped to have them planted by the winter. All trees planted to date are thriving splendidly.

*Mercury
Monday
February 17th
1919 p2*

Family group next to tree #184 for Cpl Alex Teulon Beamish Bruford, the next tree in this row was planted for his brother Lt Harry Beamish Bruford. Both served in the 26th Battalion.

Missing in Action

A few days before the planting a list of soldiers and tree numbers was published in the Mercury and study revealed a soldier who was later lost from Walk lists. He was Driver Harry Augustus Petterd whose tree was planted by the New Town Council and is unfortunately under Crossroads Oval. He served with the 27th Battery of the 7th Australian Field Artillery Brigade and died of wounds on October 22nd 1918. A carpenter by trade he had served, like many young Australians of the time, in the cadets. He had attended convent schools for his education. Harry was born in Campbell St and had at least one brother A G Petterd who served in the 12th Battalion and won a Military Medal. He was 20 years, 9 and half months when he died. His parents, James and Elizabeth Petterd, lived in Charles St Moonah.

Soldiers Tales: Charles Edward Wilkie DC

This issue we feature C E Wilkie an ancestor of Michael Wilkie, one of our Committee members. The first letter is from Charles' commanding officer, the original handwritten letter in pencil, is a real treasure. The second is official and typewritten.

Western Front
23/12/16

Dear Mrs Wilkie

I regret the circumstance which has prompted me to write to you, but having been your late husband's company commander, and also one who has been associated with closely for over twelve months. I thought you might like to hear the few Particulars I am able to give concerning his death. He was in the trenches at the time and on the morning of the 13th Nov your husband was slightly wounded in the neck. He did not evacuate as perhaps he should have done but instead - as was very characteristic of him - he remained on duty Unfortunately he was again struck - the same day - by a large piece of shell, and death was instantaneous.

I can sincerely express the deep regret we all felt - particularly myself - at his untimely end.

Your husband was perhaps the best non-commissioned officer we had in the Battalion and he left a vacancy that will e very hard to fill.

He was badly wounded at Armentieres last May and had only joined us again a few days before he was killed. He might have remained in England for several months longer - he had not quite recovered his usual good health and strength - but he thought his duty was at the front - so he came back. He left Tasmania with me and has been my right hand supporting in many a tight corner both on Gallipoli and in France and I was always able to perform my own duties with greater confidence when I had him with me. A man that can show a merry smile and crack a joke when things look their blackest and the odds are ten to one against us is a Priceless asset to any Bn in the line, your husband was one of the very few who possessed that one quality, and many a time n the trenches he has raised the morale of the men by his great courage and cheery manner. His Bible and Prayer book were handed to me for safekeeping when he was wounded last May and I have had them ever since. I am now forwarding them on to you under separate cover and trust they reach you safely. I will ask you kindly accept these few lines on behalf of the members of your late husband's company and myself as a small token of our sympathy and also as a small tribute to his sterling qualities both as a soldier and a comrade. If we had a few thousand more of his calibre this wretched was would soon be ended. I am

Yours sincerely
W H Gray Capt
O C D Company
26th Bn AIF

Department of Defence
Base Records Office AIF
Melbourne 29th December 1917
No 64179

Dear Madam,

It is with feelings of admiration at the gallantry of a brave Australian soldier who nobly laid down his life in the service of our King and Country that I am directed by the Honourable The Minister to forward to you, as the next-of-kin of the late No. 1838 Company Sergeant Major C. E. Wilkie, 26th Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, the Distinguished Conduct Medal which His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to award to that gallant soldier for his conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty while serving with the Australian Imperial Expeditionary Force.



I am also to ask you to accept his deepest personal sympathy in the loss which, not only you but, the Australian Army has sustained by the death of Company Sergeant Major C E Wilkie whose magnificent conduct on the field of battle helped to earn for our Australian soldiers a fame which will endure as long as memory lasts.

I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me know whether it comes safely to you by signing and returning the attached receipt slip.

Yours faithfully

*(signature unclear) Major,
Officer i/c Base Records*

The citation for Charles' Distinguished Conduct Medal reads:

" For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. Although himself wounded, he rescued a wounded officer from 'No man's Land' under heavy fire."

Fundraising: Badges and Quiz night

Over Easter the committee will be producing badges for sale. These will be a limited edition replica of the original badge from 1918 (see our logo) and will be on sale at the Gunpowder magazine on ANZAC Day,

A quiz night is planned for late May or early June. More on that in time for you to get your pennies together.

Victoria Cross Memorial

The new Victoria Cross memorial is to be dedicated on Sunday May 11th at 12 noon. The memorial commemorates the 13 Tasmanians who were awarded the decoration. They include Stan McDougall and Jack Dwyer both of whom survived the war and had relatives on Soldiers Walk.

Stan's brother Pte Wallace Carlyle McDougall (#682) served with the 40th



Battalion and was killed on June 7th 1917 and is buried in Messines Ridge British Cemetery. Tree #176 for him was planted on February 15th 1919 and is behind the house on Carriage Drive. Neither the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour or the Commonwealth War Graves Commission sites carry any additional information about next-of-kin, address or occupation. The Roll of Honour card completed by next-of-kin does not appear on the AWM site.

This photo was taken in the 1930s of Stan at Wallace's tree. Government House appears in the left background.

Jack Dwyer's cousin, Driver William John Dwyer #6242 served with the 10th Australian Field Artillery Brigade and died of pneumonia on October 31st 1918. He had been awarded the Military Medal for conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty during the fighting around Creisy August 18th 1918. His tree is #208 in the lower row 8 trees along from Wallace's.

Tasmanian Avenues

Research has uncovered many other Avenues of Honour in Tasmania. According to the AWM, 12 were planted in Tasmania after the Great War; we have found a lot more than that through archival research. Some have gone (like Dysart only recently, though that is to be replanted). There are a few WWII avenues as well.

Apsley

Avoca

Bagdad

Barnes Bay (St Peters)

Bellerive	Bothwell	Bream Creek	Broadmarsh	Burnie
Bushy Park/Macquarie Park	Dysart		Ellendale	Franklin Village
Glen Dhu (WWII)	Glenora		Goulds Country	Gretna (WWII)
Hamilton	Huonville (Boer War)		Jericho	Kempton
Longford	Macquarie Plains		Mangana	Melton Mowbray
Montague	National Pk	Nubeena	Ouse	
Port Arthur/Carnarvon	Queens Domain		Randall's Bay (WWI & II)	
Rokeby	Ross	Snug (WWII)	St Nicholas (Fingal)	
Stanley	Taranna	Westbury		

If you have any information about these Avenues please contact us.



Stan McDougall in the 1920's (centre) with his wife, Martha and sister in law, Elsie Watson, to the right and John and Martha Harrison to the left. The tree was planted for Private John William Harrison #1549 26th Battalion, killed in action July 29th 1916. He had attended St Mary's Boys School and was a member of the permanent forces and is not listed on the plinths at the start of the Walk; another missing in action name only recently discovered along with this photo. The Harrison's lived at 42 Lochner St West Hobart

Our cross of crosses last remembrance Day features on the DVA website under Commemorations/photo gallery/remembrance day 2002 or <http://www.dva.gov.au/commem/rememb/rem02.htm>

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