

Friends of Soldiers Memorial Avenue Inc. Newsletter Issue 35: January 2008



Highlights

February Dedications

Ted Sweeney - A Gunner on the Western Front

Sorting out our Membership

Dates to remember

Dedication Ceremony, 15th February 2008, 9.00am



President's Report

On behalf of the FOSMA committee, I would like to wish all members all the best for the New Year. I trust that the holiday season has been an enjoyable time to catch up with family, relaxing or doing whatever takes your fancy. If you've had to work over the Christmas break, well done, you've kept the engine room of our economy fired up!

Many thanks to all those who attended the November dedications. The weather was kind again and we had an excellent turnout, particularly from all the families who came to make their own private dedications. Thanks to all those individuals and organisations who helped make the day a success.

Can I also thank those who purchased wine through our promotion with Prospect Wines before Christmas. We raised nearly \$600 for FOSMA activities. Well done. And for those of you who didn't buy last time; don't worry we will be doing it again this year.

This year will be a very busy one for FOSMA and I know the committee is looking forward to the many activities planned. Apart from dedication ceremonies in February and April, we will be working closely with the Hobart City Council on the construction of the first stage of the Avenue extension around the lower Crossroads Oval. It is expected works will commence in early February with a Green Corps team supervised by the Council. All being well the first stage will be completed in time for the 90th Anniversary commemoration on Sunday 3rd August, when the extension will be officially opened. We hope to make this a very special day, and as the year progresses we will update you on the various events to be held as well as a major dedication ceremony.

The popularity of our displays at the Gunpowder magazine was certainly shown again in November and so we hope to organise further displays around Anzac Day.

In 2008 there will be many occasions remembering the 90th Anniversary of battles and events in the last year of the Great War, particularly the major Allied successes on the Western Front and in Palestine. Through our work on Soldiers Memorial Avenue, we hope to add to these events and remember those brave boys who paid the ultimate sacrifice as well as take pride in what they achieved for our young nation. I look forward to seeing you at our dedications and events this year.

John Wadsley

Stop Press – We have a Treasurer!!

After a long search, we have a new Treasurer. Ian Latham has kindly offered to take on this important role and he has spent the summer coming up to speed with our financial situation and what improvements can be made to our administration of funds.

Welcome on board to Ian. And many thanks to Andrea for looking after the finances for the last few months.

February Dedications

The next dedications ceremony is planned for Friday 15th February 2008, commencing at 9.00am. Our patron, His Excellency Governor, William Cox AC RFD ED will be attending and making the dedication address. The plaques have been funded by our major corporate sponsor, the Tassal Group Ltd and a grant from the State

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Government. All are invited to a morning tea on the Avenue, following the main ceremony (weather permitting). The dedications ceremony will be located approximately 200m north of the TCA Ground. Parking will be available at the carpark on the northern side of the TCA Ground. If you know of anyone who is related to these soldiers, encourage them to come along and/or contact FOSMA. The list of dedications is as follows:

Tree	Name	Unit	Date of Death
311	Sgt George Hedley Venus	12 th Bn	KIA 25/3/1916
315	Sgt Robert Rennie	1 st Bn Canterbury Regt	DOW 20/7/1916
319	Lt Charles Daniel Lucas	12 th Bn	KIA 25/7/1916
322	Pte William Charles Delaney	33 rd Bn	KIA 30/9/1917
323	Pte Hector Clarence Pacey	26 th Bn	KIA 5/8/1916
326	Pte John(Jack) Henry Lewis	12 th Bn	KIA 7/10/1917
327	Pte Montague Bertram Street	26 th Bn	KIA 5/8/1916
330	Pte Richard Devine	40 th Bn	KIA 12/10/1917
334	Pte Harry O'Brien	40 th Bn	KIA 10/4/1917
335	Pte Cyril Vivien Partridge	12 th Bn	KIA 19/8/1916
337	Pte Alexander Reading	12 th Bn	DOW 13/10/1917
341	Gnr Eric Henry Murray Windsor	1 st Bde AFA	DOW 17/10/1917
342	Pte William Tapner	40 th Bn	KIA 4/10/1917
345	L/Cpl Roy Frederick Stirling	40 th Bn	KIA 13/10/1917
346	Gnr Clyde Leonard Jones	1 st Bde AFA	DOW 16/10/1917
347	L/ Cpl Leonard Christopher Lucas	52 nd Bn	KIA 4/9/1916
349	Pte Sydney Moor Lake	4 th LH Field Amb	KIA 1/11/1917
350	Gnr George Thomas Clyde Williams	2 nd Bde AFA	DOW 26/10/1917
356	Pte Horace Edward James Calvert	12 th Bn	DOW 22/12/1917
357	Cpl William Richard Cooper	40 th Bn	KIA 12/12/1917
359	Pte Ernest William Hall	12 th Bn	DOW 22/2/1917
360	Gnr Leslie Corbett	2 nd Bde AFA	KIA 14/3/1918
361	Gnr Louis Cleaver	3 rd Div MTM Bty	KIA 10/2/1918
363	Pte Roland Maurice Chessell	51 st Bn	KIA 2/4/1917
366	Pte Herbert Richard Patterson	2 nd Pioneer Bn	DOW 22/12/1917
367	Pte Harry Alfred Rossendell	12 th Bn	KIA 6/4/1917

Working Bees and Events

We will be holding the following working bees during Autumn. It would be great to see more people come along and give a hand. If you would like to help give us a call. More details to follow in next newsletter

Weekends of 19/20 and 25/27 April Public Displays , Gunpowder Magazine

April Dedications (day to be confirmed) Far northern end of Soldiers Memorial Avenue

Working Bees Sunday 16th March and Sunday 18th May.

Sorting out our Membership and Receipts

As with any community organisation, our records can sometimes get out-of-date. We have been reviewing our membership lists to identify those people who may not be current financial members. Many of you have been very prompt in renewing your membership or taking up the opportunity of "membership paid for life", and we hope that our records now reflect all those that have paid up. As has been our practice, if a family has paid for a plaque, the family will receive one membership to FOSMA for two years free of charge. Thank you to all who have joined recently or renewed. To help people we will include the membership form with each newsletter, as well as being available on our website.

However, we still have a number of people who have not renewed and still receive the newsletter either as hard copy or via email. With the delivery of this newsletter, those people will have been given a reminder that unless they pay, this will be the last issue they receive. We encourage all who are not financial to renew their membership to support us in our efforts.

You may also have receipts attached to this newsletter for membership and/or donations payments. We have endeavoured to catch up with our receipting and providing any receipts where required for payments received over the past two years. Remember that our tax deductibility status is still active, but only until 30 June this year. So if you intend to make a contribution towards a plaque, now is the best time to pay it.

Edward 'Ted' Richard Sweeney - A Gunner on the Western Front

(prepared by John Trethewey and Andrea Gerrard)



Tree No. 33 on Soldiers Memorial Avenue is dedicated to Driver Edward Richard Sweeney, 3rd Field Artillery Brigade, 1st AIF. Edward, a 22 year old driver on enlistment, was the son of Edward and Oceana Sweeney of 10 Arthur Street, North Hobart. Ted, as he was known, was the third generation to join the military forces and continue a proud family tradition. Just a few months short of his 14th birthday, Ted enlisted in the Derwent Regiment in February, 1906. In 1907, Ted transferred to the artillery, joining the 16th Battery where he served until 1911.

Trumpeter Sweeney, Service No. 1938 of the 9th Field Battery embarked on the S.S. Geelong with Tasmania's first contingent on 20th October, 1914, reaching Albany, Western Australia on 26th October after a fairly rough trip across the Great Australian Bight. After a brief stop to take on water, the S.S. Geelong joined the convoy of 36 troopships leaving there on 1st November and on the 9th witnessed the cruiser 'Sydney' careering off at great speed over the western horizon to engage in battle with the German warship 'Emden,' successfully running it aground on Cocos Island and taking its surviving crew as prisoners.

Brief fuelling stops were made at Colombo and Aden before berthing at Alexandria on 9th December, 1914. By 12th December, over 20,000 troops of the 1st Australian Division – infantry, artillery, ambulance transport and divisional Light Horse had arrived at Mena Camp by the pyramids, about 10 miles from Cairo. After a three and a half month intensive training period, often involving night manoeuvres to avoid the heat of the desert, the battery left for the Dardenelles campaign, unfortunately leaving Ted and a number of other drivers behind to care for the brigade's horses that were seen as superfluous to army requirements, given the steep and unsuitable terrain on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

While Ted battled against the heat, flies and mosquitoes of Egypt, two of his best friends and neighbours Eric Hall (Sgt 12th Bn [later 52nd], KIA 18/10/1917, Tree # 344) and his brother Norman (L/Cpl 12th Bn [later 52nd], KIA 14/8/1916, Tree # 120) were pitting their strength against the might of the Ottoman Empire. All three boys wrote letters home when they could. Norman had promised a letter to his neighbours, the Sweeney family and kept his word sending the following letter:

'Gallipoli, Dardenelles, September 20, 1915.

'Dear Mr and Mrs Sweeney and family.

Just a few lines to let you know that I am in the best of health at the present moment and hope this letter will find all the same. Well I have not much to say, I thought you would like a line as I remember you asked me to drop a line. Of course you know I met Eric the first morning I dropped here, but Eric has gone away since sick he had bad legs, not serious, I expect him back any time.

I didn't meet dear old Ted any where, I don't think many of the drivers came here with the gunners, but I hope to meet him sometime again if God spares me long enough.....



As you already know all the boys seem very happy and jolly, we have fairly good times in our trenches, old John Turk don't trouble us much as he knows when he is well off. I get plenty of news from home, you can tell mother I get her letters regular and parcels, I hope she doesn't worry still and she is in the best of health and all at home. ... I'm sorry I could not write sooner we have not had much time for writing a lot, I have not had much writing paper but I had a parcel from home yesterday. I got a writing tablet so I'm fixed up for writing now. I like writing when I can sit down and tell all I know, but it is so [hawked] here I don't think I can say any more this time. Remember me to Teddy when you write him again, tell him we're right in it here and wish he was here with me, I know he wanted to get here bad. Remember me to all at home, tell mum you had a line from me. Goodbye, for a time, I remain yours truly, Norman.'

Having missed the front line action at Gallipoli with his best mates, Ted later experienced all the excitement and horror of war at the battles for Pozieres, Messines, Ypres, Amiens and finally across northern France where he was fatally wounded on 11th August, 1918.

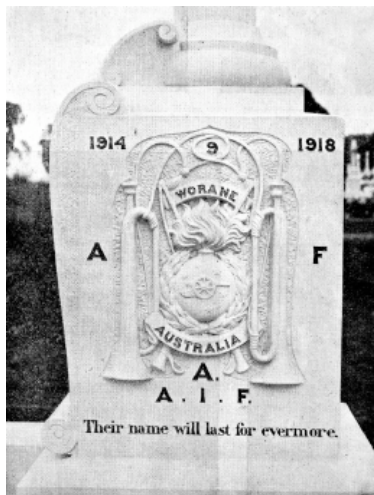
On 23rd August, 1918, the Rev. H. B. Atkinson, rector at Holy Trinity Church received a telegram from the Officer in Charge, Anglesea Barracks, asking him to inform the family of the death of Edward Richard Sweeney at the 53rd Casualty Station, France from a gunshot wound to the head.

The Tasmanian Mail published the following letter on 19th December, 1918, written by Major R.S. Gee, D.S.O. to Mrs Sweeney, Arthur Street, Hobart. The letter describes Ted's final hours:

'Dear Mrs Sweeney. In case a letter which I wrote you from France on 11th August last may have failed to reach you, I am just sending a few lines to give you particulars of your son's death, and also of the very excellent work he did during his four years service with the 9th Battery.

.... On the 8th August last, the 9th Battery was in the forefront of the advance through the German lines, and continued following up the retreating enemy, who fought hard as they were driven back. About 6 p.m. on the 10th August, I was taking the battery through Harbonnieres, a French village near the Somme, which had been captured the previous day, and when almost through the village was shelled by heavy German guns. Your son was driving in a gun team, when a shell burst almost under his horses, and he was fatally wounded in the head and side. Three other men with him were also badly hit. My battery captain (Captain Faulkner) had the wounded men carried into a dressing station where they received every possible attention, but your son was beyond aid, and died either that night or the next morning. The doctors told me that he was unconscious, and felt no pain at all.

... He has probably been laid to rest in a military cemetery at Harbonnieres, where he was killed. His grave will, of course, be registered and marked with a cross. Personally, I felt his loss very keenly, for during all his services with the battery he always did his duty faithfully ad well, and because he was so reliable I selected him for my own personal mounted orderly and trumpeter. He was with me in this capacity until I went away wounded from Messines, when he was made a driver. 'Ted' as he was called, was a general favourite with all, and was very much missed by his comrades, several of whom wrote to his father and yourself.



I know it is very hard for you to lose him, but you must remember that you and Mr. Sweeney have every reason to be proud of having given such a splendid son to the great cause, more especially as the sacrifice has not been in vain. Knowing Ted as I did, I am certain he would not have begrudged giving his life to help gain the glorious victory which now is ours; a victory which we had to win if the world was to be habitable by decent people. We have reason also to be thankful that he suffered no pain.'

By 1920 this memorial (pictured at left) had been erected at Cornelian Bay Cemetery by his parents to the memory of Edward 'Ted' Richard Sweeney.

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This would in time become the family plot and has memorials to his parents and grandfather Edward Sweeney.



Notes: Ted's cousin Walter Alfred Hurst (Walter's mother Lavinia was Oceana Sweeney's sister) also enlisted and was killed in action 18/9/1918 near Jeancourt and is commemorated by Tree #147. Rev H B Atkinson of Holy Trinity was the brother of 2 Lt Edward Huon Atkinson 12th Light Horse (Tree#463) who died at the rectory on 23/7/1918.

Ted Sweeney's tree was planted on February 15th 1919 in the second major planting on the

Avenue. The family, like the Hurst's, placed their own ornate tree guard and nameplate at the site. The Reserves Committee Minutes of 6th January 1920 note *"The Chairman drew attention to the fact that in the Soldiers' Memorial Avenue several tree guards had been erected which were not in keeping with those provided by the Council, and specially to some kerbing that had been placed around one of the tree guards. Decided that Mr Lipscombe be instructed to inform person concerned that kerbing must be removed, and in the cases of the others that the Council reserved the right to order the removal of their tree guards."*

Crossroads Redevelopment Underway



On Monday January 14 work began at the Crossroads with the removal of the honey myrtles bordering the main Oval followed on Tuesday by the removal of the stumps. All wood was mulched and this will be used at the Oval and other sites around the city. This marks the commencement of Stage 1 of the project with the initial work being done by Hobart City Council with Green Corps coming on site in the next month. Signs explaining the project have been installed by HCC by both Ovals. These feature the planned layout, background information about the Avenue and images (supplied by FOSMA) of the early

Avenue, an aerial photo from 1947 and pictures of Gnr Reg Escott and an Escott family photo of the tree (these were supplied by the Panton family). A full list of trees scheduled for plaques scheduled for April and August will be published in the next newsletter. The layout of the area will also be included (this was released in an earlier newsletter but has been amended slightly after a survey of soccer fields conducted just before Christmas. The Avenue will be mown in the next few weeks.



Thanks to Duncan Kerr MHR, Member for Denison and his staff for producing this newsletter

Friends of Soldiers Memorial Avenue Inc. Membership Form

Name:

Postal Address:
.....

Email Address:

Telephone (home): (work/mobile):

Newsletter Delivery Preference (please tick): **Via Post** **Via Email**

Subscriptions: Annual Membership is on a financial year basis from 1 July to 30 June: \$10.00
Membership Paid for Life is a once off payment: \$200.00

Membership type (please tick): **New** **Renewal** **Membership Paid for Life**

Do you wish to make a donation with this membership? (please tick): **General** **Plaque**

Total Amount included with this form (membership plus any donation): \$.....

Payments can be made by cheque or postal order posted to: FOSMA, GPO Box 1867, Hobart 7001. Or via direct deposit (you must include your name in the details/ comments box and send an email advising us):

Bank: Westpac Bank
Name of account: Friends of Soldiers Memorial Avenue Inc.
BSB number: 037-001
Account Number: 356809

Do you wish to nominate a Soldier of Interest commemorated on the Avenue? If so, please indicate below:

Soldiers Name: **Tree Number**

(Note: You must inform FOSMA if you wish to change any of the above details)

<p style="text-align: center;">Friends of Soldiers Memorial Avenue Inc. GPO Box 1867, HOBART TAS 7001 E-mail: info@soldierswalk.org.au</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Patron: His Excellency William Cox AC RFD ED Governor of Tasmania President: J Wadsley Ph. 6248 7294, Secretary: A Gerrard Ph.6228 0543</p>
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