



NATIONAL BOER WAR MEMORIAL

Patrons

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC
Governor – General of the Commonwealth of Australia
Air Chief Marshall Angus Houston AO, AFC
Chief of Defence Force



MONUMENTALLY SPEAKING

- Queensland Edition -

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Quarterly Newsletter of the Boer War Memorial Project Committee – Queensland

Queensland Chairman's Report

Welcome to the first Queensland National Boer War Memorial Newsletter. I am Ron McElwaine Chairman of the Queensland Committee and in each newsletter I will provide a brief overview of what is happening with the project. The Queensland Committee first met in September 2007 and since then has been meeting monthly. We numbered 8 initially but the present 5 have remained unchanged since early 2008.

We are all descendants of Boer War Veterans and hence our interest and dedication is driven by our links to the past.

Why a Queensland Newsletter? When the conflict first started, Colonial Troops volunteered on a State by State basis and it was not until early 1902 that Commonwealth troops were sent to South Africa. So we are following history in the commencement of the newsletter as a Queensland communiqué.

Achievements to date:-

Management: Committees have been formed in all states and territories with a national committee formed in Sydney.

Site Procurement: A site has been set aside in Canberra on ANZAC Parade adjacent to the NZ Memorial. This site was formally dedicated in a ceremony in Canberra on the 31st May 2008.

Project Design: A Project Brief is being prepared and will shortly be forwarded to the National Construction Authority Canberra.

The Process: A National Design Competition must be carried out to determine a winning design. The winner will be determined by committee including the Prime Minister. Moves are in progress to have representatives from the 5 Corps, who fought in the Boer War, to be part of the above committee.

A Project Manager will be appointed in the near future to run the project.

Funding: National Funding has reached \$120,000.

Indicative Costing: The total cost of a project of this size and complexity is in the order of \$3m.

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AFC, Chief of Defence Force.

I have approached our Lord Mayor Campbell Newman to be the Queensland Patron

Backing: We have the backing of the National Office of the RSL and the State Office of the Queensland RSL.

Why Have a Memorial to the Boer War

This was the first conflict where Australia fought as a nation. There are numerous memorials around Australia but none in Canberra. By the time the War Memorial was built the Boer War was over shadowed by the horrific events of WW1.

It is a vital part of our history and as such should be remembered.

Government Involvement

The Federal Government has promised financial assistance if we can prove the public is behind such a project. We can prove this by our Descendants Register. So please tell your acquaintances about the project and encourage them to join if they are eligible, or to consider making a donation.

Functions Past & Future

On the 18th Feb. 09 we held a ceremony to commemorate the Boer War at the Sherwood Cemetery. Our main speaker was the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Campbell Newman.

On the 15th August 09 we will be conducting an afternoon at the Sherwood-Indooroopilly Sub Branch RSL. It will commence at 2:00pm and will consist of two Power Point Presentations, covering the conflict in general and the Battle of Onverwacht Hills in detail. Afternoon tea will be provided and a small entry fee will be charged.

I am looking forward to meeting you in the future.



Ron McElwaine
Chairman Queensland Team

Introducing the Queensland Team



I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the Queensland BWM team. Pictured left to right, sporting their BWM polo shirts: Jack Chipman (Committee Member); Bill Cross (Secretary/Treasurer); Colleen O'Leary (National Descendants Registration Coordinator); Ron McElwaine [Chairman]; Bob Hagerty (Committee Member).

We look forward to keeping you informed of our progress on both a state & national level.

Colleen O'Leary
Editor

The Site for the Proposed Boer War Memorial



On 31st May last year, the site for the proposed Boer War Memorial on Anzac Parade, Canberra, was dedicated. The National Committee is now preparing a design competition brief for approval by the federal government.

"It is a matter of principle that those who served in South Africa are not forgotten"

Col John Haynes [ret] OAM National Boer War Memorial Chairman



The Queensland Boer War Memorial Committee would like to extend their thanks to Col John Haynes [ret] and the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association (RAACA) for initiating the project to have a Boer War memorial erected in Canberra.

John Haynes [pictured above], attended the 2008 dedication of the Anzac Parade site on 31st May 2008 in his capacity as the President of the RAACA and Chairman of the National Boer War Memorial Committee.

RAACA publishes its magazine "Armour", and John has ensured that every edition includes articles about the Boer War Memorial project.

Merchandise

Polo Shirts

Available from the Qld Branch.

Ranging in sizes from Small to 4XL, shirts are \$30 each [+ postage]



Badges

Produced by the NSW Branch, these badges are available at \$5 each [+ postage].



Badges & Polo Shirts may be purchased from Colleen O'Leary.

[e] colleen.oleary@bwm.org.au

P.O. Box 6161, Mitchelton Q 4053

Donation by Queensland RSL



In October 2008, the Queensland RSL made a significant contribution to the BWM Project, donating \$10,000. Pictured above is Queensland BWM Committee Chairman Ron McElwaine receiving the cheque from Queensland RSL President Doug Formby.

The Queensland RSL continues to support our Committee, by providing the venue for our monthly meetings.

Can You Help?

If you know anyone who is interested in our project, who may wish to register their ancestor, or who may be prepared to make a donation [Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible – ABN 49 709 547 198] – we can be contacted at:

BWM Project, P.O. Box 165,
Fortitude Valley Q 4006

Feature Article**Colonel Percy Ralph Ricardo, C.B.
“The Father of QMI”**

Colonel Percy Ralph Ricardo, C.B., was the son of the late Henry Ricardo, of Weston Bath, England, and was educated at Cheltenham College. When little more than a boy he enlisted in the Royal Horse Artillery, and went out as a driver in Lord Wolseley's Red River expedition to Canada in 1870. Lord Wolseley had four six-pounder steel rifle-guns, and two of these he used as a field battery under Lieutenant J. Alleyne. Young Ricardo was one of Lieutenant Alleyne's best drivers. He returned to England, and obtained his discharge. Then, after a few years spent near Bath, mostly occupied in hunting and driving – for he was an equally fine horseman and whip – he came to Australia to seek his fortune.

On arrival in Australia he worked for some time at a variety of occupations. He was a superb axeman, and in fact was a master of all kinds of manual work. Woodcarving and carpentry were always his hobbies, but he was an

equally fine blacksmith. It was no doubt during these early years in Australia that he made himself expert in so many different vocations. He had been taught to draw at school, and was all his life a fine draughtsman. For a time in Sydney he practiced as an architect, and several of Sydney's buildings were erected on his designs.

But he soon tired of city life, and went off to the Queensland cattle country. There he obtained colonial experience as a jackeroo, and soon rose to be manager of Franklinvale Station. But the long drought of the early eighties drove him out of this, and he became manager of the City Ice Works, in Brisbane. It was while there that he organized the Queensland Mounted Infantry.

It is by this body – known all over Australia and South Africa as the Q.M.I. – that Colonel Ricardo will be longest remembered. It was his own creation. The first corps was formed in Brisbane, and was 130 strong. That was February, 1885, and on February 24 that year Mr. Ricardo was gazetted as Lieutenant. He was made a Captain on June 16, 1888, and in the following April raised to the rank of Major.

The Q.M.I. by this time had increased to two full regiments, and became an important branch of the service, with Colonel Patterson as commanding officer. It was about 1889 that Major Ricardo went to England for a year. He went at his own expense, but became attached to a mounted regiment at home, and amassed a lot of useful information, to be used for the benefit of his mounted infantry when he returned.

When the South African War broke out the Queensland Mounted Infantry were the first troops offered to the British Government, and it was at the suggestion of Lieut-Colonel Ricardo – he had got his step on March 8, 1897 –

that this offer was made. He led the first contingent of Queensland Mounted Infantry to Africa, and they were the first Australian troops to get into action. That was at Sunnyside, and the Prince of Wales, who is now King, telegraphed his congratulations to Lieut-Colonel Ricardo. After the war he was appointed military commandant of Western Australia, and given the temporary rank of Colonel. In 1905 he was given the post of Military Commandant of Victoria.

Colonel Ricardo was always liked by his men. The cattlemen and the boundary riders, who made up the bulk of the Queensland Mounted Infantry, were amongst his most enthusiastic admirers, and the news of his death will bring sorrow to many a bush hut and station barracks in the cattle country.

The late commandant was twice married. By his first wife he had two children – a daughter, who is herself married, and a son now doing an engineering course in London. His second wife, who survives him, is a daughter of Colonel Thompson, principal medical officer of Queensland. She has two daughters.



Registered Descendant: David Feez

[Source: www.diggerhistory.info/pages-heroes/ricadro.htm]

“Thank You”

The Queensland Committee would like to acknowledge the assistance given by the New South Wales Committee to some sections of this Newsletter.

Next Edition

Our next edition will be in September 2009. The feature article will document Lieutenant T.W Glasgow (Later Major General Sir William Glasgow KCB, DSO, CB, CMG) of 1st Queensland Mounted Infantry.



Major General Sir (Thomas) William Glasgow KCB, CB, CMG

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