



Anzac Square ceremony commemorates Melrose House peace treaty



The Queensland Boer War Memorial Committee held its annual commemoration of the Melrose House Peace Accords on Friday the 31st of May. Lt-Col. (Rtd) Miles Farmer gave an address on the peace process that led to the Treaty of Vereeniging which was signed by the parties at Melrose House, Pretoria at 2305hrs on the 31st of May 1902 leading to the official cessation of hostilities exactly 55 minutes later.

The Queensland President of the Committee Mr Ron McElwaine OAM.RFD, ED then made a presentation of a lithograph, depicting the arrival of Lord Kitchener at Waterloo Station in 1902 and being greeted by King Edward VII, to the 2/14th LH QMI Museum curator Captain Adele



National Boer War Memorial Association Patron in Chief

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

National Patron

General David Hurley AC, DSC
Chief of the Defence Force

Queensland Patron

The Hon Campbell Newman
Premier of Queensland

Catts.

The service was attended by RSL State President Mr Terry Meehan as well as the Qld Deputy Commissioner for the Department of Veteran Affairs, Ms Alison Stanley.

At the conclusion of the ceremony a morning tea was held for those attending at the United Service Club.

THE SIEGE OF ELANDS RIVER POST SOUTH AFRICA 4-16 AUGUST 1900 AN EPIC STORY OF THE THIRD QLD MOUNTED INFANTRY (& other Colonial units)

Join us to hear the story of the Siege and more on SATURDAY 3 AUGUST 2013 at 1.30pm at the Sherwood Indooroopilly RSL's Harry Dalziel VC Centre, Cnr Clewley & Browne Streets, Corinda; just off Oxley Rd and at the Corinda Rail Station.

The story of Eland's River will be presented by Miles Farmer using a power point presentation courtesy of Colleen O'Leary. Miles has visited the site on several occasions, and will be supported by Miss Pixie Annat MBE OAM whose grandfather was killed during the siege. Pixie visited the site in 2001 for the dedication of a plaque honouring the late Lt Annat.

The epic ballad "Elands River" by George Essex Evans, late of Toowoomba will be recited by Will Stanfield, the bushie, holder of several Australian Bush Poetry awards. Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes stories, was a war correspondent in South Africa and visited the Siege after its relief by Lord Kitchener. He said "When the ballad writers of Australia are looking for a topic, there will be none finer than the Siege of Elands River".

Another draw card will be a presentation by Dick Cijffers "The Boer War from a Boer perspective". Many of you will know Dick who runs 'Journeys World Wide', and is from Bloemfontein, South Africa where he served in the SA Army. He returns to South Africa on a regular basis and will be most interesting.

A gold coin donation towards afternoon tea will be appreciated.

RSVP 32786 786

Queensland Chairman's Report

Welcome to the fifteenth Queensland National Boer War Memorial Association newsletter.

National News

Progress with our Memorial

Design Progress

The Commonwealth Government donated the site in the national remembrance precinct of ANZAC Parade, Canberra. The design process involved a design competition with a substantial monetary prize. The successful design was presented to Canberra National Memorials Committee chaired by the PM.

The design was approved in 2012. It must be noted that we funded this design process including the engagement of a Project Mgr. without any Federal Support.

Construction Process

We have now contracted our brilliant Melbourne sculptor, **Louis Laumen**, to commence work on the first horseman, and are meeting with **Group GSA** and **Jane Cavanough** (Artlandish) in Sydney to plan the landscaping and other details of the overall memorial as approved by the Canberra National Memorials Committee.

We have a dedicated Project Manager in Maj. Steve Bain with financial support from Dept. of Defence.

Army is also considering support in carrying out some of the civil works.

Model of the Monument

Background

Initiated by the ACT Committee; to promote the NBWM, the intent was to undertake a display and presentation at Parliament House, in June 2013 when both houses were sitting. The key was to have a suitable model of the memorial to show people. Liaison included talks with Warren Snowdon's staff who assisted with the venue in Parliament House.

The model **dimensions** are approximately 80cm x 90cm x 40cm high, weighing approximately 20kg.

Current Status

The model has been completed and was delivered to BWM offices on the 14th June 13.

Finance

In June we were to receive a seeding grant of \$200,000 from the Dept. of Veteran Affairs. This will be greatly appreciated and will demonstrate that both major political parties support the justice of a National Boer War IMF Memorial.

Nationally we have raised in the order of \$0.5m with Qld. raising in excess of \$50,000.

We have recently engaged a firm of professional fund raisers to advise us if there is funding available.

We now must raise the balance of \$4m to build the memorial. You, our supporters, have been very generous with your help. Descendants of Boer War veterans are about 30% of our current supporters and donors. There are only about 150 sons and daughters of Boer War soldiers and nurses still alive and they strongly desire to see the memorial completed before they join their parents. We estimate that there must be at least 200,000 descendants throughout the nation. Many don't know that they are and are not aware of the part Australians played in the Boer War.

Queensland News

National Boer War Day to Commemorate the Signing of the Peace Treaty

ANZAC Day Parade Brisbane. The Qld. Boer War Banner was carried up the front in the ANZAC Day March in Brisbane.

On 31st May 2013 we held a Commemoration Ceremony in ANZAC Square Brisbane, at the base of the Boer War Memorial, to commemorate the signing of the Peace Treaty in Melrose House Pretoria in 1902. This year's ceremony was a much smaller scale than for 2012.

In ANZAC Square on the day we had a crowd of descendants and supporters including the State President of the RSL Mr. Terry Meehan, Mrs. Jane Prentice the Federal Member for Ryan with representatives from local Govt. and numerous historical associations, local high schools and the general public.

A National BWM Commemoration was held at Ingham. See elsewhere for a report of the day.

We all realize that the annual commemoration of Boer War Day must be continued and the general public made aware of the importance of building the memorial in Canberra to complete our military history from the date when Federation was proclaimed.

From P2

Future Events

Presentation re Eland's River Siege at Harry Dalziel Centre Corinda on 3rd August. I would like to have an indication from those who will be attending for catering purposes..

We have now completed the design stage and have commenced the construction phase and we are now chasing funding. We have engaged professional fund raisers to survey if funds can be raised from the commercial businesses but we still need more help in the way of descendant registration and donations. Your support is vital to the success of the project which will fill a great gap in our military history.

A donation form is included in this newsletter.

Ron McElwaine OAM, RFD, ED.



Chairman Qld Committee of
NBWMA

Address by Miles Farmer at Anzac Square Brisbane on 31st May

Today we commemorate the end of the Anglo Boer War which had begun on 11 November 1899 and ended on 31 May 1902 with the signing of the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging. It had been a bitter and tragic war, fought by the British mainly to establish their supremacy in South Africa. Whereas for people of the South African Republic, or the Transvaal as it is commonly referred, and the Republic of the Orange Free State it was a fight for their freedom and independence. Both of these traits were embedded in their nature, developed over several generations as they trekked north in hostile country to escape the officialdom of first the Dutch, and then the British based in Cape Town.

the war was virtually over, and returned to England in October 1900, leaving Lord Kitchener as Commander-in-Chief. He was so wrong! Despite some early spectacular successes, and sieges of Ladysmith, Kimberley, and Mafeking the British prevailed and Field Marshall Lord Roberts VC lead his victorious army into Bloemfontein, capital of the Orange Free State on 13 March 1900, and then on 5 June 1900 into Pretoria, capital of the Transvaal. Conventional warfare continued for a short while after the fall of Pretoria, famously at Diamond Hill to the North East.

This is where the Australian and New Zealand High Commissions based in Pretoria commemorate Anzac Day each year. Roberts thought that the war was virtually over, and returned to England in October 1900, leaving Lord Kitchener as Commander-in-Chief. He was so wrong!

The Boers of the two republics, led by Commandants General Louis Botha of the Transvaal and Christian de Wet of the Orange Free State agreed on a policy of guerrilla warfare. This was to their advantage. They were much more mobile than the large British Divisions and knew the countryside intimately.

Kitchener was determined to bring the war to an end. He adopted a scorched earth policy with concentration camps set up to house the displaced families, both black and white. He built hundreds of 'block houses' linked by wire and fire to protect key points and to restrict the movement of the Boer commandos. These measures took their toll on the 'Bitter Enders' who were still in the field, and so early in April 1902 the two Boer governments met to review their position.

Yes, despite the ravages of war, the two republics had kept a mobile nucleus of their governments in the field. They narrowly escaped capture on many occasions. Paul Kruger, President of the Transvaal, who had bought on the war, had long since escaped to Europe.

Early in 1900 peace feelers had been put out but nothing significant was achieved. With the changed conditions a meeting was held between representatives of the two Republics and the British from 12 April 1902 at Melrose House, Pretoria, and Kitchener's Head Quarters. The British Government flatly rejected the Boer's terms for peace and presented their own terms.

Arrangements were then made for these terms to be brought to the commandos in the field. Thirty representatives from each Republic were elected and they were given safe passage to meet at Vereeniging, some miles South of Johannesburg on 15 May. This was no mean feat. General Smuts was with his commando on the West coast of the Cape Colony. He had to travel by boat, train and horse to get there.

A commission of five was then chosen to negotiate with the British in Pretoria. They returned to Vereeniging on 27 May with the negotiated conditions for peace and a request by the British that they responded before midnight on 31 May. The debate amongst the commandos at Vereeniging would have been heated and vigorous, with the bitter-enders wanting to fight on.

(Cont. p7)



Western Australia Chairman's Report By Maurice Kissane

The Perth ANZAC Day service was again well attended as were those in the sub-branches. The approaching ANZAC centennial sets a deadline to complete the National Boer War Memorial. Designated Gift Recipient or DGR status is a vital element in encouraging the corporate sector to give.

Graham Edwards AM, the new RSL (WA) State President is supportive and will attend Perth's 111th Boer War Commemoration to lay a wreath.

BRIG Phil White AM will deliver the keynote address. HMAS Stirling will provide a Naval catafalque. Perth's Boer War Memorial contains six motifs including Naval Brigade Gunners engaging at Ladysmith.

The Royal Navy is sending a Lt Commander to lay the British wreath. Canadian, New Zealand, South African and Rhodesian veterans also lay wreaths. SAMVOA will place the Boer reconciliation wreath. The inaugural Emily Hobhouse wreath is laid by a Boer Vrou with a child.

The Boer War Nurses wreath is laid by the RAANC Association. The Committee believes it is important to acknowledge indigenous veterans. They attended a grave side dedication service at Karrakatta cemetery on 20th April 2013 for No 9 Private Robert Searle 4WAMI.

Robert Searle was born in Albany, Western Australian in 1869 and served in the Boer War in 4th Western Australian Mounted Infantry. 4WAMI was commanded by a West Australian, Major James Rose. Private Searle was a proud indigenous man who later died in 1942.



Robert Searle



Grave of Pte Robert Searle



NBWMA WA Committee Members who attended the indigenous service. L to R Chairman WA Committee, Maurice Kissane (BW veteran descendant), Boer Combatant sub-committee, Brian Ross, (BW veteran descendant – Boer Commandant) Historian and Public Relations, John Sweetman, Services Liaison Officer, Kevin 'kiwi' Bovill (Vietnam Veteran) , Alan Ratcliffe (Vietnam Veteran and BW descendant)



Historian John Sweetman delivering oration at Private Searle's service.

H.I.W.G. President John Schnaars, an indigenous veteran, is in centre.

Perth's 111th Boer War Commemoration will include an indigenous wreath. The service will be held on Western Australia Day eve being 2nd June 2013.

Perth's Boer War Memorial is officially called South African War Memorial. This memorial lists the names of Officers and men from Western Australian contingents who died in the 2nd Anglo-Boer War. The Foundation stone for this memorial was laid down during the actual conflict in 1900 by HRH The Duke of Cornwall and York. HRH subsequently ascended to the Throne as King George V in 1910. That year Lord Kitchener and Lord Forrest visited to rededicate the completed Boer War Memorial.

Erratum

In the last edition of Monumentally Speaking your editor made an in error in the 1910 Kings Park Photo caption. The man next to Lord Kitchener (Light Jacket) is Lord Forrest not Lord Roberts....sorry Twiggy.



Speech by Mrs Jane Prentice Member for Ryan (Qld) to Federal Parliament

"Anzac Day has a significant place in the hearts and minds of all Australians. It is an opportunity to take the time to pause and remember those who have given their lives so that we can enjoy the freedoms today that we so often take for granted. Anzac Day is always a special time for the residents of Ryan, particularly for those who have friends and family based at the Gallipoli Barracks at Enoggera. Thousands of local residents attended dawn services, ceremonies and marches across the electorate on Anzac Day to pay tribute to the service men and women who have served overseas. As the daughter of a serviceman and the mother of a soldier who was serving overseas—he returned home early this morning—I was honoured to be invited to take part in and attend a number of local services. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many schools, veterans organisations, aged-care homes and especially the RSLs in the electorate who held such special ceremonies this year.

Anzac Day is a particularly important day for so many Australians and our military history would not be complete without remembering the veterans of the Boer War. The Boer War was fought between 1899 and 1902 and ranks third behind the two world wars for the most Australian casualties. Sadly, to this day, there is still no national memorial to honour those who fought so courageously in this battle which marks the birth of the Australian Defence Force, which has served this country so well these past 110 years.

As a member of parliament, I regularly receive petitions on a range of subjects. However, I must confess that last Tuesday, 14 May, was the first time that a petition was delivered to me on horseback. My colleague Senator Ronaldson, the shadow minister for veterans' affairs, and I were the recipients of a petition with 10,200 signatures calling on the federal government to support a national Boer War Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra to honour the 23,000 men and women of Australia who served our country in the Boer War, some 1,000 of whom gave their lives. I particularly want to pay tribute to the Vietnam veteran and Boer War veteran descendant, retired Lieutenant Colonel Miles Farmer OAM from Queensland and Captain Mike Fitzgerald, in Boer War mounted light horse uniform, and his horse, Boy, who came from Sydney especially to present the petition. Like many other families, I have a special interest as my great uncle, Major Edmund Righetti, volunteered as a private to join the Victorian first contingent to go to the Boer War in 1899. He was severely wounded, invalided home and after convalescence returned to South Africa and rose through the ranks. The men and women involved in this conflict deserve to be remembered with a lasting and fitting memorial, and I urge everyone to support this project."

A STREET NAMED PLUMER by Miles Farmer

Many people who live in the suburb of Sherwood, Brisbane will know this street which runs from Oxley Road towards Oxley Creek. How many will know that it was named after:

FIELD-MARSHALL THE VISCOUNT PLUMER OF MESSINES FRIEND OF AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS IN THE BOER WAR AND THE GREAT WAR

Herbert Plumer was born in 1857, and commissioned into the 65th Regiment of Foot, which later became the York and Lancaster Regiment (Y&LR). He served with the 1st Battalion of the Y & LR in India, and then in 1884 as Captain Adjutant in Aden. From Aden his Battalion saw action in the Sudan. This gave him his first experience of action at the sharp end, and he was mentioned in despatches.

In 1893 he went with the 2nd Battalion of the Y & LR to South Africa. He was there in 1896 at the time of the infamous and ill-fated Jameson raid. As a consequence he was sent via Mafeking to Bulawayo, the capital of Matabeleland to disarm the Chartered Company, the baby of Cecil Rhodes.

He then raised the Matabeleland Relief Force (MFR) to quell the rebellion of the Matabele. His skill in organisation, administration and training came to the fore in this campaign. Care of his men was always of paramount importance to Plumer, a trait which he maintained throughout his life, and endeared himself to his men.

He had two years back in England before returning to South Africa in 1899 as a Special Service Officer. In anticipation of war with the Boer Republics he was sent to Rhodesia, where he raised the Rhodesia Regiment and the Bechuanaland Protectorate Regiment, both irregular mounted infantry.

War broke out on 11 October 1899, and Mafeking was soon under siege, not being relieved until 17 May 1900. Plumer, with a mixed force of Rhodesians, British South Africa Police, Royal Canadian Artillery, and 3rd Qld Mounted Infantry took part in the relief.

Throughout the remainder of the war Canadian, Australian and New Zealand troops served under Plumer on many occasions, and developed a sound relationship which carried through to World War 1. By the end of the war Brigadier Plumer was regarded as the most successful Column Commander.

.5th Qld Imperial Bushmen (5QIB), part of Plumer's Column took part in an action at Mokari Drift on the Caledon River South East of Bloemfontein. Lieutenants Caskey and Pooley, and Troopers Milner and White lost their lives. Several others were wounded. Thomas McElwaine, grandfather of our Chairman, was taken prisoner but later released.

On 4 January 1902, 5QIB were part of the Vanguard of

Plumer's Column. The Vanguard was ambushed on the Onverwacht Hills, East of Ermelo by an overwhelming force of Boer Commandos. Of 5QIB eleven men lost their lives, seventeen were wounded, two dying a few days later. All the dead, including the British and the Boers were buried the following morning with the service being conducted by Brigadier Plumer.

Sgt Robert Berry and Corporal John Macfarlane of the Sherwood District were killed that day, and honoured by friends and relatives with a magnificent memorial in the Anglican Cemetery, Sherwood. It was built in 1902 several short months after news of their deaths had arrived. A service commemorating the battle of Onverwacht is held at the memorial on 4 February every year.

Given the connection of Brigadier Plumer with the men of the Sherwood District it is little wonder that a street nearby is named Plumer Street!

In March 1902 Plumer's column was broken up, and he returned to England, reverting to his rank of Colonel. The years leading to World War 1 saw Plumer progress in rank, culminating in his command of V Corps as part of Second Army on the Western Front just before Christmas 1914. At first French was in command of the British Army until replaced by Haig. All three had served in the Boer War, French and Haig were cavalry officers. Plumer was basically an infantry officer.

By 8 July 1916 Australian and New Zealand troops arrived on the Western front and became part of Plumer's Second Army. This was seven months after the withdrawal from Gallipoli. Lt Gen Godley wrote to the King's secretary expressing "his troops pleasure at having gone to Plumer's Army, as he had much to do with the Australian and New Zealanders in South Africa, and knows them and likes them and they know him and like him." Space does not allow an account of Plumer's distinguished service in World War 1. After the war he served until 1924 as a most successful Governor and Commander in Chief of Malta.

Then in 1925 he was appointed High Commissioner of the Mandated Territory of Palestine, something of a 'poisoned chalice'. So much for the Balfour Declaration. "The insuperable problem for a just man such as Plumer was to reconcile Zionism with the rights of the Arabs whom the Jews were attempting to displace. However during his three years at the helm Jews and Arabs performed in peace their lawful occupations. For it was he who gave them peace." (*The Soldier's General by Geoffrey Powell*)

Plumer died in England 16 July 1932.

Sister Francis Emma Hines

Born in 1864, Frances Hines, known to her friends as Fanny, was the fourth daughter of Patrick and Eleanor Hines.¹ A trained nurse she embarked on the *Euryalus* in March 1900, as one of a group of ten Victorian nursing sisters, accompanying the Third Bushmen's Contingent²

By the end of April the nurses were in Salisbury, Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), after an eventful trip by train and truck. Sister Annie Thomson's letter describing the journey and the various acts of kindness shown them, was printed on 5 June 1900 in the Melbourne *Argus*. Whilst accommodations offered in the towns were for the most part acceptable, the nursing conditions in most places were extremely primitive. A New South Wales Nursing Sister, Annie Matchett, based in Bloemfontein, wrote of the hardships faced by nurses:

*Candles are very scarce; wood and coal are scarce also. It is most difficult to get hot water at night. We all have spirit lamps, but no methylated spirit is to be had in town. All the shops are empty. There are a great many deaths here. We counted 20 funerals in one day. They have no coffins, the dead are merely stitched up in grey blankets and carried to the cemetery on stretchers, with the Union Jack thrown over. For an officer's funeral they have a gun carriage. All day long a fatigue party is kept working in the cemetery.*³

Sisters Anderson, Rawson, Walter and Thomson, were also based with Sister Hines in Rhodesia. In Sister Ellen Walter's letter of 15 July 1900 she wrote

*Sister Frances Hines is at Enkeldoorn but we expect her here soon. She has been a long time alone there.*⁴

On 7 August 1900, following a severe case of pneumonia, Fanny Hines died at the Memorial Hospital, Bulawayo. Her friend, Sister Julia Anderson wrote that Fanny Hines:

*... died of an attack of pneumonia contracted in devotion to duty. She was quite alone with as many as twenty-six patients at one time, no possibility of assistance or relief and without sufficient nourishment.*⁵

She was buried with full military honours in Bulawayo cemetery. Her headstone was erected by the Victorian nurses and Bushmen.



Grave of Sister Francis Hines—Bulawayo

(**Address by Miles Farmer** Continued from p 3)

Louis Botha would have been a strong advocate for peace, with Christian de Wet the leader of the bitter-enders. It lasted three days, before a vote was taken on the morning of 31 May—54 voted in favour, and 6 against accepting the peace conditions which meant loss of independence.

A delegation of 10 Boer leaders then rode to Melrose House, Pretoria, and at 5 minutes past 11pm signed the treaty, which took effect one hour later on 1 June 1902.

The bloodiest war ever fought on South African soil thus ended.

The two Republics were incorporated into the British Empire as Crown Colonies. Then, eight years later on 31 May 1910 the Union of South Africa was formed, with Louis Botha as Prime Minister.

The troubles of South Africa were never really over, but that is a story for another day.

Resignation of Colleen O'Leary

Colleen O'Leary, the former editor of Monumentally Speaking, has resigned from the Queensland Committee of the Boer War Memorial Association. On behalf of you all, the Committee thanks Colleen for all the many hours of hard and diligent work she has put, in over many years, to help bring the construction of a Boer War Memorial in Canberra to reality. She has played a leading role in compiling our Descendant and Supporters lists. Her contribution will be missed and we wish her our very best."

Colleen has been succeeded as Editor of Monumentally Speaking by fellow Committee Member, Kevin Alcock.

MONUMENTALLY SPEAKING - QLD EDITION
Memorabilia for sale



Queen Victoria Chocolate tin: Slouch Hats
\$25 per tin+ postage. Allow 3-4 weeks delivery



Boer War Service Plaques
\$60 + P & H

To Purchase contact: Pamela Hore– Victorian Committee Member

pamelah5@bigpond.com

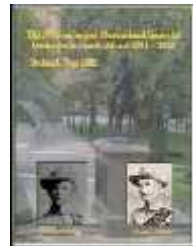
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NATIONAL BOER WAR MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

National Treasurer
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Building 96
Victoria Barracks
Paddington NSW 2021

DONATION FORM

I would like to contribute to the National Boer War Memorial Fund for \$5m to build our memorial in ANZAC Pde, Canberra with a **tax deductible** donation of:

\$5,000 _____ \$2,000 _____ \$1,000 _____ \$500 _____ \$250 _____ \$100 _____ Other _____

Title: _____ First Name: _____ Surname: _____

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- direct bank transfer to the Defence Bank - **National Boer War Memorial Account BSB 803 205 – AC 2035 8376**. *Please include your surname & initials.*

Please post this Donation Form to the Treasurer at the Paddington address above so that a receipt can then be forwarded to you.

Signature: _____ Date _____

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