

Mackay North State High School Lest We Forget Commemorative Project

Mackay North High's Lest We Forget Project is an ongoing project of commemoration undertaken by Senior History students at the school.

The aim of the project is to commemorate and further publicise the sacrifices made by Australians in war and to make practical and respectful tributes to those Australians who have died for our country.

The project revolves around overseas pilgrimages to the battlefields, cemeteries and memorials where Australians have fought and died.

These tours involve the search for individual graves and names and the honouring of these fallen soldiers on behalf of relatives in Australia. Photographs of the graves and names are taken and presented to relatives on each group's return.

The school has so far undertaken 6 commemorative tours - in 1999, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008 & 2010. In that time 148 students have travelled to Gallipoli, the Somme and Flanders, Thailand and Singapore and have honoured 576 men and 33 nurses buried or commemorated in these areas.

"My final thoughts as I watched the silent headstones was that we have to live the life these soldiers gave us we have to live our lives to the fullest, love our friends and family to the utmost. It's the least we can do - live the life that these men never got."



For more information on the Lest We Forget Project

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(or Google - 'Mackay North Lest We Forget')

The Lest We Forget Project



Securing our future by respecting our past

Mackay North State High School



Anzac 2010

Commemorative Tour

Street Memorial Project



Dear Bagley St Resident

My name is Camille Botto and I am a member of the Mackay North SHS Anzac 2010 Commemorative Tour Group.

Our group has recently returned from a 3 week overseas pilgrimage to the past Australian battlefields, cemeteries and memorials of Gallipoli, France, Belgium and Singapore.

One aspect of our research and commemoration centred around undertaking a local history study of Mackay streets which were named in honour of fallen Mackay soldiers.

Each student 'adopted' a street and the relevant soldier and, in the lead up to the tour, we researched the war service of "our" soldiers and learnt about the circumstances surrounding each man's death.

On the tour, we visited the graves or the memorials where each of these soldiers is buried or commemorated. At each site, we undertook a service which included the delivery of a eulogy, a recital of The Ode and the observance of a minute silence. We then photographed the grave or memorial name to bring this record back to Mackay.

I was honoured to have researched and commemorated the soldier after whom Bagley St is named. So as to provide you with a little history of your street, please find over information related to this soldier. I hope you find it interesting.

Bagley Street, South Mackay

Named in honour of:

Pte Herbert Bagley

Service No. 2137

47th Battalion AIF

Killed in Action in Belgium on 7 June, 1917

Aged 25

Herbert, or Bert, was the son of Annie and the late Thomas Bagley and he grew up in Eton. At the time of his enlistment on 20 February, 1916, he was working as a stockman and horse breaker.



He was allotted to the 4th Reinforcements to the 47th Battalion and embarked Australia with this contingent on 16 August, 1916. He joined the 47th in France on 6 February, 1917 and suffered a shrapnel wound to his face and arms nine days later, on 15 February. After recovering from this wound, Bert spent further time in hospital with dermatitis before re-joining the 47th on 18 May.

Bert was killed in action only three weeks later on 7 June during the Battle of Messines as the 47th attacked the German lines on the right flank of the main attack. There are no records describing how he was killed, however the 47th came up against numerous German machine gun posts and many men were killed whilst trying to capture these positions.

Bert's service record does indicate that his body was given a battlefield burial 750 yards east of Messines. However, in an all too common set of circumstances, this grave was subsequently destroyed or lost and the whereabouts of his body has become a mystery. He either still lies in his original battlefield grave or his unidentifiable body may have been recovered after the war and buried as an unknown soldier in a nearby cemetery.

Today, Bert's name is commemorated on the Menin Gate Memorial in Belgium.



The Menin Gate Memorial is situated in the famous Belgian town of Ieper (Ypres). It records the names of 54 391 Commonwealth soldiers killed in the Ypres Salient during WW1 who have no known grave. 6176 of these names are Australians.

Bert's Commemoration

I was honoured to commemorate Bert at a special group service at the Menin Gate Memorial on 26 September this year during our overseas pilgrimage. Part of the eulogy I delivered for Bert reads:

Herbert is honoured here at the Menin Gate and also in his home town of Mackay, where his name remains forever as a street of the town. Bert, you did your country proud and I will always remember you. I hope you now feel closer to home.

