

Mackay North State High School Lest We Forget Commemorative Project

Mackay North High's Lest We Forget Project is an on-going 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 7 commemorative tours - in 1999, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010 & 2012. In that time 181 students have travelled to Gallipoli, the Somme and Flanders, Thailand and Singapore and have honoured 669 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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The Lest We Forget Project



Securing our future by respecting our past

Mackay North State High School



Footsteps of Honour

2012

Commemorative Tour



Street Memorial Project

Dear Garraway St Resident

Our names are Samantha Cridland and Sarah Belton and we are members of the Mackay North SHS Footsteps of Honour 2012 Tour Group.

This year, our group embarked on 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.

In pairs, we all '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.

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

Garraway St, West Mackay

Named in honour of:
Gunner Alan Garraway
Service No. 3843

9th Battery 3rd Brigade Australian Field Artillery
Killed in Action in France on 27 May, 1918
Aged 20

Alan was born in Towsville & was the son of Roland & Jenny Garraway. After moving to Mackay with his family, he was educated at Mackay Technical College before becoming an engineer apprentice at Palm Mill in Mackay.

He was a bugler in the Mackay Mounted Cadets & enlisted at the age of 19 & 7 months on 1 March, 1917, being allotted to the 10th Reinforcements to the 4th Pioneer Battalion. He embarked Australian on 14 June & arrived in England on 28 August. He was then transferred from the 4th Pioneers to the 9th Battery of the 3rd AFA & joined his new artillery unit in France on 6 Dec.

Alan served until he was mortally wounded on 27 May, 1918 as his battery operated north of Villers Bretonneux. He was admitted to the 6th Aust. Field Ambulance but died the same day of his wounds, which were most likely caused by counter battery fire from German artillery (three men were wounded at the same time). He was the only person from his battery killed during the month & he was buried in the nearby Franvillers Communal Cemetery Extension, where he lies today.

In an interesting postscript to Alan's burial, his comrades erected a private memorial over his grave, which was described as, "A very fine ornamental iron cross, on it is the figure in tinted marble of the crucified and attached a heart in copper bearing the name & date & number & all securely chained & held by stanchions round the grave." In letters to Alan's parents, the army indicated that the War Graves Services would allow the memorial to remain. However, it seems that Jenny Garraway was later informed that the memorial would be removed, to which she replied to the army, "Speaking as this does of the love of brave men I cannot express how I should resent its removal from the grave."

There is no trace of the private memorial in the cemetery today.

Franvillers Communal Cemetery Extension lies on the southern outskirts of the village of Franvillers, which is situated a few kilometres north of the Somme River.

The cemetery contains the burials of 248 Commonwealth soldiers, with Alan being buried in Plot 1, Row C, grave 19.



Alan's Commemoration

We were honoured to commemorate Alan at his gravesite in Franvillers Communal Cemetery Extension on 4 October.



The epitaph on Alan's headstone

Sarah (left) and Samantha at Charles' grave.

