

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

Contact: Mr Mike Goodwin

Mackay North SHS – PO Box 8333

Mt Pleasant Qld 4740

Phone: 49 631729

Fax: 49 631600

Email: mickg@mackay.net.au

Website: www.macknortshs.qld.edu.au/ANZAC/index.html
(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 Morley St Resident

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

This year, our group undertook 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 Morley St is named. So as to provide you with a little history of your street, please find over information related to the soldier. I hope you find it interesting.

Morley Street, South Mackay

Named in honour of:

Pte Rupert Morley

Service No. 937

25th Battalion AIF

Killed in Action at Gallipoli on 30 September, 1915

Aged 23

Rupert lived in Peel St, Mackay and, after having served a three year apprenticeship as a pastry cook, was working as a carter when he enlisted on 8 March, 1915.

He embarked Australia on 7 August, 1915 as an original member of D Company, 25th Battalion. The battalion arrived at Gallipoli on 4 September and was ordered to take over trenches on Cheshire Ridge, which is situated to the north of Anzac below Chunik Bair.



It was a relatively quiet time, although there were still dangers, as the battalion history points out: *“During this period there was little heavy fighting, but shrapnel and machine gun and rifle fire could strike down men almost anywhere at any time.”*

Rupert was the victim of this rifle fire and was the third man killed in the battalion. He died on 30 Sept., with his service record stating, *“KILLED. BULLET WOUND IN HEAD”*. It is likely that he fell victim to the many Turkish snipers who dominated the Cheshire Ridge area.

Rupert was buried below the battalion’s trenches by Chaplain W. Smith. His body was later recovered from this isolated grave and re-interred into Embarkation Pier Cemetery, where he lies today.

Embarkation Pier Cemetery is situated about 2km north of Anzac Cove and is a concentration of graves from many smaller burial sites around the area. It contains the remains of, and commemorates, 926 soldiers from New Zealand, Australia and Britain. The vast majority of the graves are unknown.

Rupert is buried in the very front row of the cemetery, just to the left of the entry gate.



Ruperts’s Commemoration

I was honoured to commemorated William at his grave site in Embarkation Pier Cemetery on 20 September during our overseas pilgrimage. Even though I am not related to Rupert, it was a very emotional experience, particularly when I spoke directly to him. Part of the eulogy I delivered for Rupert reads:

*“Rupert, while you may have only been here for a month or so, you witnessed so many horrors, you lost so much and yet you still fought on. For me. For us. For our country. And for that sacrifice we will be forever grateful.
Thank you Rupert.”*

