

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 Graffunder St Resident

My name is Milly Beere 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 Graffunder 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.

Graffunder St, Mackay

Named in honour of:
Corporal Albert Graffunder
No. 462
2nd Australian Light Horse AIF
Killed in Action at Gallipoli on 14 May, 1915
Aged 24

Albert was born in Te Kowai, near Mackay on 21 July, 1890 to parents Julius and Sylvia Graffunder. He acquired a selection at Koliyo (near Calen) in 1912 and spent the next few years clearing his land for farming. Albert was one of the first men to enlist in the district, on 21 August, 1914 and he was allotted to C Squadron of the 2nd Australian Light Horse Regiment. He clearly had leadership ability, as he was promoted to Corporal only two weeks later. He left Brisbane with the 2nd Light Horse on 24 September, 1914 and, after training in Egypt, he arrived with his unit at Gallipoli as dismounted infantry on 12 May, 1915. The 2nd LHR immediately took over trenches at the infamous Quinn's Post, which was the most dangerous position at Gallipoli.

Plans were drawn up for an attack on the Turkish trenches opposite Quinn's and, on the night of 14 /15 May, Albert's unit undertook what would be an unsuccessful and costly assault. Albert was killed in this action and official records state that he died on 14 May. His body was recovered and he was buried by Chaplain G. Green in Pope's Hill Cemetery, which was situated in Monash Valley below the firing line. Albert's role in the action led to him being recommended for the Medaille Militaire for, "*Gallantry in the charge from Quinn's Post.*" No details are given, however numerous reports in the Nth Qld Register about Albert and his death shed more light on to his actions and character. A report in the paper on 15 June, 1915, stated, "... *then again comes the news of the fall of Corporal Graffunder, whose untimely end we deplore. The Corporal was well known to this this scribe as of sterling worth and one of our most determined Australian soldiers.*" A further story of 23 October reported on a recruitment speech by Shoemith Henman, who had recently returned from Egypt. He told the audience that Albert had the muscles of his arm shot away and that he was ordered out of the fight to have his arm dressed. According to Henman, his reply was, "*No, I'm good enough for a few of the's yet.*" Henman went on to explain that, "... *as he turned around a machine gun got him & he fell with four bullets in his chest.*" With both official & unofficial reports it is clear that Albert fought gallantly in what was his first action. After the war, his body was moved from Pope's Hill Cemetery and he was re-interred into Quinn's Post Cemetery, where he lies today.

Quinn's Post Cemetery

Is situated along the Second Ridge at Gallipoli. There are now 473 Commonwealth soldiers of the First World War buried or commemorated in the cemetery. 294 of the burials are unidentified. Special memorials record the names of 64 soldiers, most of them Australian, who were known or believed to have been buried in Quinn's Post Cemetery or Pope's Hill Cemetery. Albert's grave is situated in Row D, Grave 2.



Albert's Commemoration



I was honoured to commemorate Albert at his gravesite in Quinn's Post Cemetery at Gallipoli on 21 September this year during our overseas pilgrimage. I found it a very emotional experience and the final part of my eulogy read:

"Albert was a true leader from start to finish. He was an honest, strong willed and able soldier who was highly respected by all the men serving with him. Albert Graffunder, it has been a pleasure getting to know you and your brave story. May you rest in peace in this land so far away from home."

