

# 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](mailto:mickg@mackay.net.au)

**Website:** [www.macknortshs.qld.edu.au/ANZAC/index.html](http://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 Hucker St Resident

My name is Kate Turner and I am a member of the Mackay North SHS Anzac 2010 Commemorative 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.

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 Hucker 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.

## Hucker St, South Mackay

Named in honour of:

Pte Albert Hucker  
Service No. 5688  
26th Battalion AIF

Killed in Action in Belgium on 9 October, 1917  
Aged 22

Albert was the only child of Arthur and Alice Hucker of Shakespeare St, Mackay. He was a carpenter by trade and was also a long serving member of the Mackay Army Cadets. He enlisted on 14 February, 1916 as a reinforcement to the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion but was transferred to the 26<sup>th</sup> Battalion in November, 1916 after he arrived in France.

He then spent two months in hospital with influenza and rejoined his unit in late February, 1917, only to suffer a severe gunshot wound to the right arm at Lagnicourt in France on 26 March. He spent another three months in hospital recovering from his wound (the photo was taken after he had been released from hospital) and he was sent back to his unit in July.



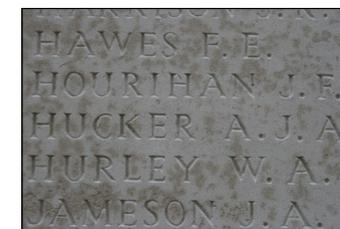
Albert was killed in action on 9 October, 1917 as his battalion manned the front line trenches near Zonnebeke in Belgian Flanders. After numerous enquires by his parents, the Adjutant of the battalion wrote a report, stating that Albert was, *“killed by shell fire on the 9.10.17 along with three other members of his company, the same shell being responsible for the four casualties. It is regretted there is no record of place of burial ... and the nature of the operations at the time was such as to emphasise the probability that no burial took place.”* Albert's parents could not accept that he had no grave. A letter Alice wrote to the army in June, 1919 shows how desperate she was to have Albert's grave located. The letter reads, in part, *“I would like to ask if you have any further work in regard to the burial of my dear son (the late) Pte Albert A J Hucker ... hoping you will excuse me for troubling you, but as he was my only child you will perhaps understand my feelings, as I have seen in the papers that they intend as far as possible to place these graves in a cemetery so I am really anxious to know if they remove my dear son's body and where it may be found ...”* Despite her pleas, the army was unable to give her any news of a burial, and both Arthur and Alice were forced to live with the fact that their only child would never be formally buried.

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.



### Albert's Commemoration

I was honoured to commemorate Albert at a special group service at the Menin Gate Memorial on 26 September this year during our overseas pilgrimage.



Albert's name inscribed on the Menin Gate Memorial

Albert's death and his missing status severely affected his mother, Alice. She tried desperately to find his burial site - she states in another letter to the army: *“A mate of my sons who is in the 26<sup>th</sup> battalion stated that Albert was buried at Passchendaele Ridge, as he had attended to his grave while he was in Belgium”*. No grave was ever found by the army. After the war Albert's father, Arthur became the Mayor of Mackay. However, Arthur and Alice never recovered from their loss. Both laid a wreath each Anzac day and Alice wore only black in public from the time of Albert's death.



Left: Arthur and Alice with a wreath on Anzac Day.

Right: Alice at the Mackay Cenotaph when it was located next to the Forgan Smith bridge.

