

# Discovering Australia's Evergreen Memorials Avenues of Honour Project: 2004 - 2024

Glenn Williams

Former Director of TREENET and the Avenues of Honour Project

## Abstract

The twenty-year anniversary of the national Avenues of Honour project has occurred, and it is worth reflecting upon its history and taking stock of the project's achievements, since its launch in September 2004.

Its ambitious target was to first identify and document original Avenues of Honour, planted to commemorate the service and sacrifice of Australians at war since the Boer War conflict. Simultaneously was the need to engage with the community, to promote and encourage the recovery and/or reinstatement of these living memorials and where possible promote the planting of new avenues, so that at least every serviceman or servicewoman who had paid the ultimate sacrifice, would be honoured by a tree.

With the centenary of ANZAC commemorations ten years ahead, the Project aspired to lay a solid foundation for ongoing activity. This ambition was reflected in the project's early title: "Avenues of Honour 1915 – 2015".

This paper summarises the history and documents a series of milestones, marking the evolution and progress of the Avenues of Honour project to date.



## Introduction

*"A National project which aims to honour with a tree the memory of every individual who has made the supreme sacrifice on behalf of all Australians, by documenting, preserving and reinstating the original and establishing new Avenues of Honour by the Centenary of Anzac in 2015."*

The origins, aims and sentiment inspiring the establishment of the Avenues of Honour project, is well-documented in the annals of TREENET's published resources, early research papers and Symposia presentations.

What follows is a synopsis of the first decade's key highlights and challenges. The balance of discussion is to reveal the most recent decade's progress and key achievements.

## History 2000 – 2014

### 2000

Dr Greg Moore OAM delivers the keynote address at TREENET's inaugural Street Tree Symposium in Adelaide. His presentation is inspirational, underscoring the need for establishing TREENET as a collaborative network, to empower the broad range of influencers seeking or needing to seek better management of the nation's urban forest.

With an insistence there must be more trees in the landscape; and there must be more avenues and boulevards, not fewer, Greg promoted the need to understand trees as major community assets – and therefore to be properly valued and managed.

Greg explored the many values of long-lived trees and their contribution to all urban landscapes, highlighting

*"... trees can be very long lived they span not only the years, but often human generations as well. They are a part of our heritage and are a living link between the present generation and those which have preceded and those which will follow. This may explain why people become so attached to particular trees, especially at the local community level. Such attachment seems to be rarely appreciated by politicians and bureaucrats. This generation has benefited from the foresight of earlier generations, and surely it has the responsibility to leave a worthy heritage for the generations to come."* (Moore, G., 2000)

Of the ensuing questions about threats to culturally significant and heritage trees, citing an example of those trees planted for war service and sacrifice, Greg posed a particular question, "Where are all the avenues?"

This rhetorical question could well have been a ‘throw-away’ illustration, as there are many instances of culturally significant and heritage trees at risk in the landscape; trees significant for their scientific, social, historic and aesthetic values, totally unrelated to those planted to honour Australians at war.

But the question stuck in the mind of one of the Symposium attendees, who was to worry this question like a dog with a bone for the next three years. It was of course David Lawry OAM, co-founder of TREENET with Dr Jennifer Gardner OAM, back in 1997. During the year 2000, David becomes TREENET’s first operational manager, as volunteer Research and Education Coordinator.



## 2004

David has kindled the idea with the TREENET Management Committee, of creating a project to conserve, protect and establish more memorial trees in the landscape, through an honoured tradition of commemorating war service and sacrifice in a tangible, visible way, as had blossomed in Australia, during and after World War One.

“As an Australian born on the 33rd anniversary of the Gallipoli landing I have been blessed with a public holiday on my birthday and the gentle reminder of the occasion to my family in the immortal invocation “Lest we forget”. Not a particularly honourable attitude! I hope that somehow my small contribution over the next decade will make amends for that. We have all been touched by war somehow at a personal level. I will never forget the grief and sadness of my mother as she would recall the knock on the door of the family home at 15 Gladstone Street Parkside, by the military police at the end of WW1. Her dear and only brother had died of wounds sustained after he had volunteered to stay back to train the Americans. He died in France on October 4th, 1918, just 5 weeks before Armistice. As a 10-year-old she suffered not only the immediate grief of the moment but saw her parent’s spirits crushed. Her father never recovered from the loss and was plunged into depression that lasted a lifetime. It is my fervent hope to see Walter Claude Sheldon 48th Bn. AIF honoured with a tree planted in one of the many Avenues, and I wish to dedicate my efforts to his memory.” (Lawry, D., 2004)

With the TREENET Management Committee’s approval, the project gets underway and is formally launched at the 5<sup>th</sup> National Street Tree Symposium in September.



As planned, Rosemary bushes propagated from material whose pedigree originated from ANZAC Cove in 1915, specimens David had first collected as a nurseryman in 1988 from the grounds of the Daw Park Repatriation Hospital in Adelaide, were ceremonially planted by Symposium delegates, at the Waite Campus of the University of Adelaide.

Early promotions through print media, radio and television coverage, seeks to garner information and support from the wider public.

In the absence of no national, centralised database for avenues of honour information, TREENET took on the responsibility of creating one.

In a volunteer capacity, Sarah Cockerell, a university student in Adelaide, was secured by David Lawry to accelerate his initial research into Australia’s memorial avenues.

“The problem has been as time passed the avenues were forgotten and no complete record of the avenues has ever been made. So we are left with the question of where are all the avenues, what has happened to them and how can we restore Australia’s memory? It was clear that before death and change claims the avenues and their history it needs to be recorded and shared. Thus, the idea of conducting a National Survey of Avenues of Honour was born.” (Cockerell, S., 2004)

Through David and Sarah’s initial online research sources, a few intrastate and interstate site visits and an expanding list of network contacts through Local Government Areas, Returned Services League Sub-branches and local history groups, 184 avenues are identified.

Sarah then compiles and dispatches a preliminary survey to capture a broader nationwide response to reveal the whereabouts and other salient details for Australia’s memorial avenues, identifying a further 101 avenues, bringing the tally to 285.

The compilation of a more comprehensive National List of living memorials has begun.

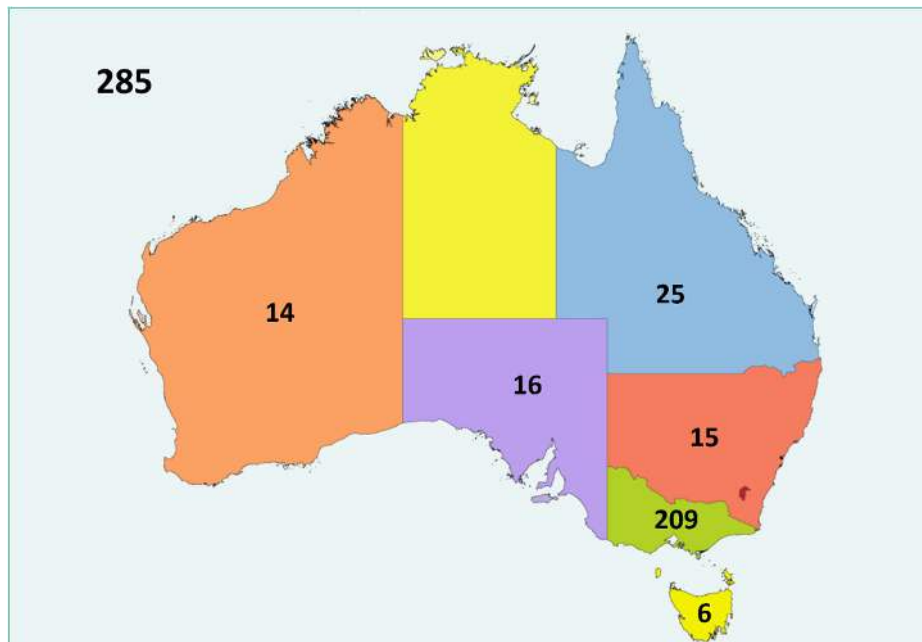


Fig 1: Record of Living Memorial Sites by State, 2004

## 2005

It is clear the action of seeking broader public support is a vital mechanism in discovering more avenues.

By September, over 350 potential living memorial sites, have been identified.

TREENET sends information and letters seeking support from federal Members of Parliament. Although the encouraging responses are not comprehensive, the Project's appeal is broadly confirmed.

Plans to develop a dedicated website (nominally, [www.avenuesofhonour.org](http://www.avenuesofhonour.org)) is underway. It is hoped this technology will provide a central database for Avenues of Honour information, to be publicly accessible as well as a tool for researchers, schools and managing authorities.

TREENET's aspirations for what the Project wants to achieve by the Centenary of ANZAC Day, are reinforced.

## 2006

Sarah Cockerell is now embedded in TREENET's project, being awarded a PhD studentship to research Australia's living memorials in earnest.

A fresh round of print, radio and television media, helps to promote the aims of the Project.

Ben Kenyon (Homewood Consulting, Victoria) develops a sample, geospatial database structure, to assist the capture of information about Avenues of Honour. It aims to catalogue the location, condition of tree and any associated plaque or signage, capture imagery and where possible personal information about the service person honoured.



Sarah Cockerell, Avenue of Honour, Prescott Terrace, Rose Park, Adelaide

Ben's approach to the types of information to be collected, underpinned by the desire to link to a publicly accessible and searchable database, lays the foundation to progress "Avenues of Honour 1915 – 2015."



Ben Kenyon

Fundamentally, the asset management-based design and strong arboricultural focus, is to provide substance, awareness and support for managing authorities (principally Local Government), having responsibility for ongoing care and maintenance for living memorial trees (and for the establishment of new commemorative plantings).

A critical concept is to provide capacity to enable anyone to collect information about specific avenues of honour, via a questionnaire style form. The data can then to be entered into an electronic spreadsheet or relational database eg MS Excel or MS Access, MapInfo, ARCGIS.

An analysis of survey results will contribute to the drafting of Sarah’s PhD thesis. It also establishes the foundation for TREENET’s ongoing Avenues of Honour database and the basis for further research.

Since 1988 when David Lawry retrieved Gallipoli Rosemary material from the Daw Park Repatriation Hospital (Adelaide) and proceeded to grow another generation of pedigree plants originating from ANZAC Cove, his desire was to preserve its history and legacy and another essential link to Australians and commemoration.

Fast forward, and a notion to promote Gallipoli Rosemary as a worthwhile symbol and source of funding for the Project, had obviously been percolating in David’s mind to coincide with the launch of the Avenues of Honour 1915 – 2015 project in 2004.

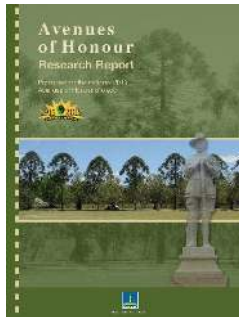
After successful negotiations with the nursery industry, the national release of Gallipoli Rosemary is kickstarted on the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2006, when a Victorian nursery acquires 41,500 pot labels; to be followed up with the purchase of a further 13,000 pot labels in April 2007 (Norwood Industries Pty Ltd). At a return of 50 cents per pot/label sold, the Project receives an encouraging boost to its resources.



Gallipoli Rosemary cuttings being prepared for trial

TREENET takes advantage of Remembrance Day commemorations on 11th November 2006, to further promote the national release of Gallipoli Rosemary.

**2007**



Research from late 2005, into existing memorial plantings in the City of Brisbane region, is published in July this year. The Avenues of Honour Research Report becomes a valuable resource, guiding the promotion, protection and restoration of memorial tree planting in support of the national Project.

**2008**

Based on Ben Kenyon’s 2006 database/questionnaire design, Sarah produces a formal, more detailed six-page survey, dispatched specifically to 533 Councils nationwide. A two-page survey form is also sent to RSL Sub-branches across Australia. In addition to these hard-copy surveys, follow-up emails with an electronic version of the survey attached, are sent to Councils who have not responded within a 3-week period. Response rate is about 30%, revealing details for an extra 80 or so avenues. (Cockerell, S., 2008)

The expertise of original respondents was highly variable. Accuracy of location details, fact-checking if avenues were in fact war service memorial trees, avenue titles, accompanying historical research and related images often absent. There was clearly a need for further exploration.

## 2009

Five years has elapsed since the launch of Avenues of Honour 1915 – 2015 Project.

A review of the Project's original mission about expected progress, is faced with a stark reality check. Having embarked on the "Avenues of Honour 1915 – 2015" project, TREENET faces a series of hurdles and assumptions, which loom in the background.

One of those assumptions, was that whilst Australians value trees (or decry their existence) in various ways, it was reasonable to expect when it came to valuing trees as symbols of commemoration, the community would embrace the Project's aims. Plenty of scope for outreach.

An imperative is to make widely available as much information as possible, about the significance of these heritage avenues and trees, to alleviate ignorance and poor decisions about future management and conservation.

Introspection about so much more needing to be done to meet aspirations, whilst at first daunting, becomes a positive reflection on the many lessons learned. This is buoyed by examples of successful projects, such as the recovery of the 1918 Soldiers Memorial Avenue, Queens Domain, Hobart, Tasmania. Volunteer-based and community-driven, the tide of degradation is repelled, starting in 2002.

The aim was simple: "For every soldier a tree, for every tree a plaque."



The project successfully recovered this heritage site, ensuring all missing trees and plaques were restored – numbering about 535 trees.

*(Author's Note: Long-term management strategies and successful arboricultural practices with replacement plantings as required, has over the years, ensured this iconic Memorial Avenue remains completely intact in 2024).*



Indirectly related to TREENET's Avenues of Honour mission, David and Sarah travel to France in April, as part of the Unley Concert Band, who proudly march down the Champs Elyse as part of ANZAC Day commemoration in Paris.

Whilst Sarah will contribute to the project for the next four years and is heading towards completing her PhD thesis this year, personal circumstances eventually thwart its final submission. However, information from 7 sections of her Final Draft is widely cited.

At this time, Sarah's database compilation has potentially identified 568 living memorial sites across Australia, suggesting that about 420 actual Avenues were planted during WW1 or its aftermath – many of which remained in some form: some intact, some depleted or in poor condition.

Andrew Ensbey, Brisbane City Council, presents at TREENET's National Street Tree Symposium, outlining an approach to instituting the restoration of the war memorial heritage embedded in Brisbane's Yeronga Memorial Park. Primarily the project is for the restoration of Honour Avenue and replacement of associated name plaques; restoration of ANZAC Parade; memorial gates restoration at two key entrances; maintenance of the focal cenotaph and the installation of interpretive signage to engage with park users about the significance of the site.

The key learnings from the [Yeronga Park Project](#) is a valuable nation-wide resource for managing authorities and communities, wishing to undertake the recovery of their local, living memorials.

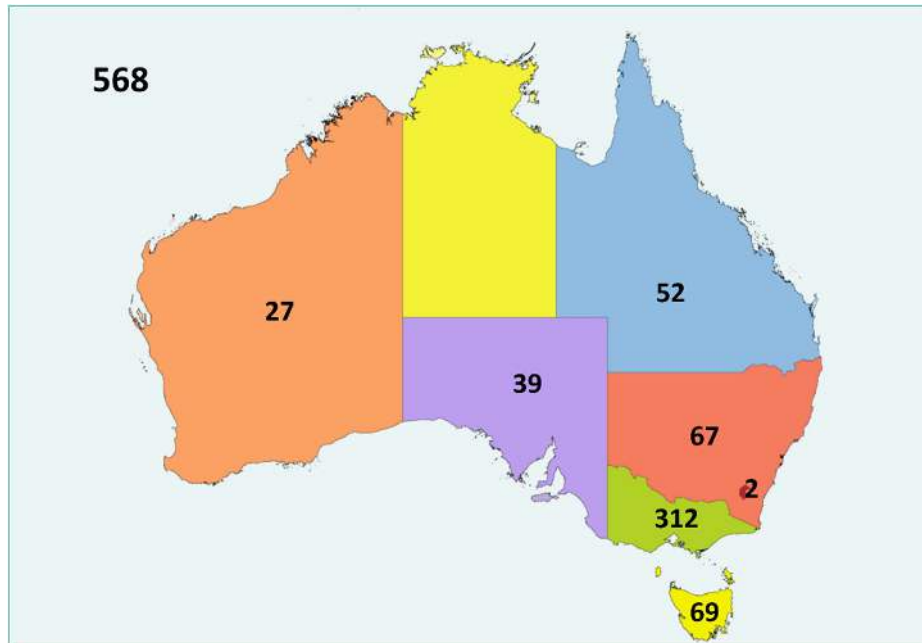


Fig 2: Record of Living Memorial Sites by State, 2009

Initially contracted as a consultant, Glenn Williams is inducted into the operations of TREENET in October 2012, as part of a plan to allow David Lawry greater freedom to pursue the aims of the Avenues of Honour 1915-2015 project. To sustain this new arrangement, David pursues additional sources of funding.

### 2013



Mark Willcocks, Active Trees

Resourced by a generous donation from Active Trees in 2012 and again in 2013, it is now possible to officially appoint Glenn as the new Director of TREENET, to support overall operational matters. This enables David, in his new role as Director, Avenues of Honour, to invest the necessary time and energy to accelerate and manage the Project's progress and garner resources.

Just prior to ANZAC Day, [ABC Gardening Australia](#) airs a segment with Sophie Thomson and Sarah Cockerell, showcasing the Avenues of Honour project.

Sociable Technology is engaged to help design a web-based solution, to improve outreach with communities, nationally. As an interactive, wiki platform, this is the first iteration of a dedicated Avenues of Honour website, allowing communities and individuals to share information in a blog format and is launched in June.

The blog integrates with GIS mapping, social media platforms and e-newsletters, to promote the Avenues project and document its progress and successes. (Lawry, D., Peacock, D., 2013) It further enhances the database structure as developed by Ben Kenyon in 2006.

Courtesy of the original, national database list compiled by Sarah Cockerell, her work is instrumental in providing 'dots on a map' to help digitally illustrate the potential or actual location of living memorial sites around Australia. It also provides a hint whereby sensible ground-truthing of the status of memorial trees might be pursued. It is adopted as a vital tool, managing the creation and sharing of information about the avenues, supporting community participation and sharing the memories of their families and communities related to those who served.



This new phase of public promotion and community engagement helps to build broader interest and engenders new information, growing the list of living memorial sites.

TREENET lists the [War Memorial Oak](#), planted in the Cresswell Gardens, Adelaide, on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 1914, with the National Trust of South Australia's *Register of Significant Trees*. It's verified as the first living memorial to be planted in Australia for WW1 service, by any of the allied nations, anywhere in the world. In collaboration with the City of Adelaide, the tree becomes a formal inclusion on the South Australian government's *Heritage Register*.

## 2014

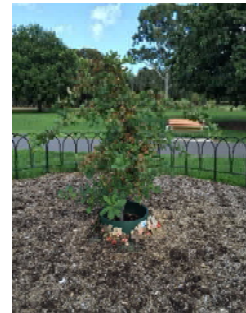
Casual, digital media content support, allows TREENET to create and populate the first Avenues of Honour social media site, posting promotional stories on the Facebook platform. However, after this casual input ceases, capacity to sustain regular posts renders the vibrancy, currency and consistency of stories inactive – breaking the golden rule of social media requiring consistent engagement with the community.

During a TREENET holiday break Director Glenn visits various living memorial sites, gathering opportunities images and other information that might contribute to the Avenues of Honour database. (This sets a precedence for most subsequent holiday breaks each year.)

With David as instigator and prime coordinator, a special event is conducted in the Cresswell Gardens on 29<sup>th</sup> August, to mark the centenary of the planting of the War Memorial Oak in Adelaide. Various dignitaries including Kate Ellis, Shadow Minister for Education, the Lord Mayor City of Adelaide, Stephen Yarwood and Keith Harrison, RSL South Australia, are in attendance. Speeches from the MP, Lord Mayor, the RSL and student captains of two primary schools, replicate the reverence associated with the original planting of the War Memorial Oak in 1914.



Piper Major Brett Tidswell leads the dignitaries, children and teachers and resident storyteller Helen Lawry (in period costume), to the site of the official planting of a Centenary War Memorial Oak, direct progeny of the 100-year-old parent.



Centenary War Memorial Oak  
2016



Kate Ellis, David Lawry OAM  
& storyteller Helen Lawry

Owing to the setbacks and prospects of long-term recovery from a serious health challenge, David's capacity to progress aspects of the Avenues of Honour project is thwarted for a significant part of this year.

Coupled with looming financial constraints, David elects to continue serving as Director, Avenues of Honour, in a purely voluntary capacity from September.

However, David's undaunted tenacity and ingenuity generates further inspiration for realising the aims of the national Avenues of Honour project. Momentum continues.

## History 2015 – 2024

### 2015

The Centenary of ANZAC year.

As a result of TREENET's original nomination to the National Trust in 2012, international recognition of Adelaide's War Memorial Oak is captured as a story (7<sup>th</sup> March) on the website of the International Oak Society along with an article published in *The Newsletter of the International Oak Society, Volume 19, No. 1, 2015*.

TREENET’s national project is an inspirational source for the creation of new avenues of honour. Three years in the making, the Samford Avenue of Honour, Queensland, dedicated to WW1 and WW2 service and sacrifice, is formally opened on the 25<sup>th</sup> April.



Initiated by TREENET in partnership with the City of Port Adelaide Enfield, the Westport Avenue of Honour is launched as a pilot project. It is designed to exemplify an approach to establish a new, living memorial from scratch. The project intends to demonstrate, through broad collaboration and partnerships, a means by which commemorative trees can be planted for individuals, and new avenues secured in the landscape.



The model reflects the patriotic symbolism, the groundswell of community sentiment and activity, surrounding the genesis of original avenues of honour during WW1 and WW2. Similarly, there’s an expectation a contribution will be forthcoming from a willing community and other voluntary endeavour, forging a sense of ownership and a deep connection to the purpose of ‘their’ memorial trees. 18 donors contribute to the first stage of the project and 58 Bottle Trees (*Brachychiton rupestris*) are planted along a linear path in the Westport Reserve.

A Lone Pine is ceremonially planted outside the Port Adelaide Football Club on Remembrance Day.



At this time there is significant investment in a National Museum for the Western Front at Villers Bretonneux and the prospects of developing a Remembrance Trail. Never short of ideas, David Lawry ponders: is it possible to establish memorial avenues honouring Australians, outside of Australia’s shores? Is there potential to establish an Avenue of Honour in France, for the 50,000 Australians killed in France and Belgium during WW1?

*(Author’s Note: A series of aligning circumstances gain traction for this vision in another three years.)*

## 2016

With the Centenary of ANZAC aspirational milestone gone and ambitious targets not yet met, the “Avenues of Honour 1915-2015” title has become redundant. A review of expectations clearly determines the Project’s progress must naturally look to a longer future.

TREENET forges an alliance with the [Virtual War Memorial Australia](#) (VWMA) in order to represent living memorial data on the VWMA website. A successful but modest DVA Grant, enables their web developer, to apply some basic modifications to the VWMA database and website interface.



Seeing value in an association with TREENET, the Queensland Family History Society requests the use of the Avenues of Honour wiki-site, 'header-branding' for their 9-month series of "Avenues" articles in their magazine.

There is a need to facilitate advanced capability for the Avenue of Honour website, beyond the original wiki-style, blog interface.

Courtesy of another philanthropic donation from Active Trees, Effortless Web is engaged to build a new, rebranded Avenue of Honour website.

### 2017

A significant amount of effort is invested in a forensic review of data, to standardise the information originally recorded as part of Sarah Cockerell's initial work.

With limited capacity, only a modest effort is made to populate the VWMA's database and website with some of the living memorial records.

### 2018

TREENET's Avenues of Honour project had previously been quietly discovered 2 years earlier, by a champion of tree conservation along roadways and parks, in France. TREENET is invited to present on the Avenues of Honour project at the first international conference about conserving trees in the landscape "Tree Avenues – from War to Peace". Held in the Vosges region, the event is scheduled to coincide with the Centenary of Armistice on 11th November.

"One of the biggest myths about Avenues of Honour is perhaps the idea that they are a uniquely Australian phenomenon. Tree memorials occur all over the world. They are not always planted as part of an avenue or to commemorate fallen soldiers, but the significance and community value of a memorial tree is not restricted to one culture." (Cockerell, S., 2008)

Prepared as part of Glenn's presentation on Day 2 of the conference, was a declaration that Australia, more than any other nation, had planted avenues of remembrance for Australians at war (almost 600 to date). This statement already long published on the Avenues of Honour website. That declaration was hastily removed after a compelling presentation on the previous day by Angelo Porta, presenting on Italian roads of remembrance.



During 1922, under dictator Benito Mussolini's fascist regime, his brother Arnaldo Mussolini, along with fellow politician Dario Lupi, appropriated the idea of honouring those killed in war with tree-lined avenues and parks, as an instrument of propaganda and to increase popular consensus for fascist ideals.

Through the Ministry of Education, school communities were charged with composing lists of dead soldiers from their municipalities and military districts, organising funding, trees and the students to plant them at appropriate locations, and civic ceremonies for inauguration of the memorial trees. By 1923, some 8,000 new avenues of honour were established in almost every small to medium Italian village. (Porta, A., 2018)

The earlier concept of planting memorial trees in France is rekindled, potentially to launch such a project as part of the international event.

Recognised for his past military service, his public role as former Governor of South Australia and as a Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, Rear Admiral The Hon Kevin Scarce AC CSC RAN (Rtd), formally accepts TREENET's invitation to become Patron of Avenue of Honour.



TREENET collects acorns from the original War Memorial Oak, with a vision of having them propagated by a French nursery in preparation for a future Avenue planting, should such a project be realised.



Largely supported by significant sponsorship, ambassadors David and Glenn travel to France for the conference, spending two weeks visiting memorial sites along the Western Front, gaining inspiration and canvassing the potential at various locations for planting a memorial avenue, but particularly focussing on an opportunity in Pozières, prior the conference.

At the conference, attended by 110 delegates from 4 continents and in the spirit of ANZAC, David and Glenn are supported by avid avenues of honour researcher, Stuart Read, Australian Garden History Society and Jo-anne Morgan, University of Canterbury, New Zealand.

The Avenues of Honour website undergoes a significant system upgrade, to better accommodate the increased data storage and a swelling images library.

TREENET adds a declaration to the front page of the Avenues of Honour website, explaining that 'Avenues of Honour' is a term used more broadly by the project, to record details about ALL war memorial trees. Not only the typical, double-row of sentinel trees lining either side of a roadway, street, or a path in a park or memorial garden, but inclusive of solitary specimens, those arranged as a single-sided row or planted as a copse or memorial grove.



WW2 Memorial Avenue, Lagoon Street, Jondaryan, QLD



WW1 Memorial Tree, Botanic Gardens, Albury, NSW



WW1 Memorial Avenue, Stone Hut, SA



WW1 Memorial Grove, Boucher Park, Avoca, TAS



Effortless Web also designs a new Avenues of Honour logo, to reflect the ongoing needs of this long-term project.

## 2019

In February, led by consultants Context and representatives from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, a workshop was convened in Melbourne to discuss the government's "Victoria's Avenues of Honour Project". Greg Moore and Glenn Williams represent TREENET's national project along with other invited expert representatives from Vic Roads, the National Trust, Returned Services League, historians, academic researchers and professional horticulturists.

The Victorian government's aim was to produce a report encompassing an audit of Avenues of Honour in Victoria and to develop a priority list for state level protection and to develop management plans for their ongoing care, conservation and maintenance.

*(Author's Note: Culminating in a Draft Report, the modest project deliverables were completed in May 2020 at an approximate cost of between \$150,000 to \$200,000. Despite petitions from TREENET and the National Trust (VIC), the Draft Report has never been released).*

In October of this year, prior to attending the Australian Garden History Society national conference in Wellington, New Zealand, Glenn and Vicki Williams canvass a few local Avenues of Honour sites across the North Island and in and around Christchurch on the South Island. (The latter accompanied by Jo-anne Morgan as a supreme guide.)



Avenue of Pin Oaks, Stockade War Memorial  
Howick, Auckland, New Zealand



WW2 Memorial Avenue of Totaras  
Tauranga Boys' College, Tauranga, New Zealand



WW2 Memorial Grove for the 19<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion  
Victoria Park, Cashmere, Christchurch, New Zealand



Jo-anne Morgan and Vicki Williams  
Christchurch, New Zealand

## 2020 – 2021

TREENET's focus is on sustaining operations, albeit remotely, during the height of the COVID-19 crisis.

TREENET delivers two successful, purely online Symposia.

An important review of TREENET's, governance structures, fiscal and operational oversight, undertaken with considerable consultation and input from its membership base and Advisory Board during this time, results in a documented *Strategic Plan 2021 – 2026*.

TREENET's core mission is unchanged, five key focus areas are confirmed:

Education; Projects; Research; Resources and Communication

With the objective of the Projects stream being *'to facilitate priority projects and programs that help build community and industry partnerships in the delivery of sustainable urban forests for all'*,<sup>1</sup> Avenues of Honour is deemed core business.

Key initiatives are to pursue two domestic projects and one international project:

- Westport Avenue of Honour, Port Adelaide, SA, commenced in 2015.
- Normanville Avenue of Honour, SA – a critical restoration project and identified as of national significance, being the very first WW1 Avenue of Honour planted in Australia.
- Appropriate placement of trees, progeny of the War Memorial Oak, grown in France and to be planted in France – as sponsored by TREENET.



After 9 years as Director of TREENET, having operational carriage of the Avenues of Honour project, Glenn Williams retires on 31<sup>st</sup> December. However, he remains on TREENET's Advisory Board and an active volunteer on behalf of the Avenues of Honour project.



## 2022

Crowd-funding resources previously secured as part of what became a failed bid to establish an avenue of honour in Pozières, is redirected with permission from donors, into finalising France-based nursery maintenance of War Memorial Oak progeny, held over from the original project concept and having them dispatched for planting in other memorial sites in France.

The coordination of a revitalised project undertaken with the bilingual assistance of Florence Masters, whose enthusiasm, critical networking capacity and organisational skills par excellence, helps to realise key memorial projects.



The first of several War Memorial Oak progeny was planted by Her Excellency, Ms Gillian Bird PSM, Ambassador to France, to commemorate the service, suffering and sacrifice of the Australian soldiers interned at the military cemetery, Etaples, France, Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May. This was part of the centennial commemoration of King George the Fifth's pilgrimage on which he visited the newly established military cemeteries in France and Belgium.

Rebecca Doyle, Director, Sir John Monash Centre, Villers Bretonneux was in attendance, along with Mr Spencer Brown and Ms Martine Brown, who were TREENET's representatives in France, for this special occasion.

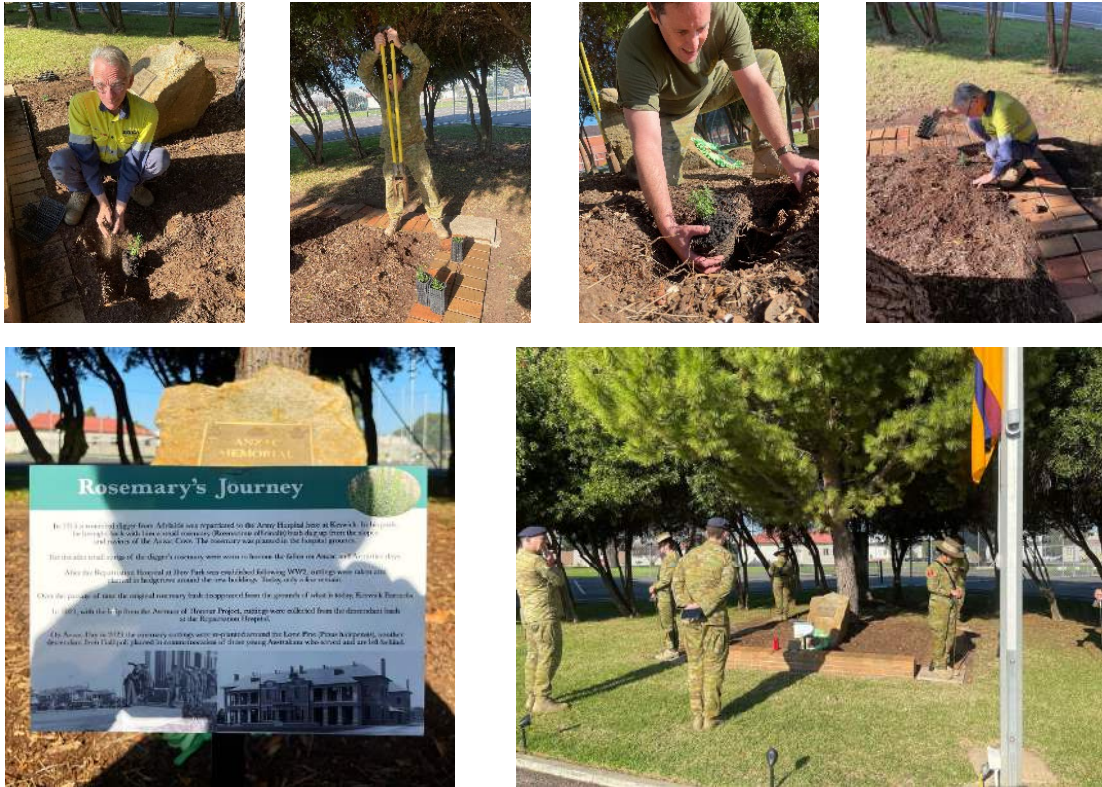


In September, as dedicated volunteers, the Williams' commence their grey-nomad travels within Australia, verifying the status of existing or lost avenues, researching history and documenting 'new' listings for the Avenues of Honour database and website as well as responding to incoming queries related to Australia's Avenues of Honour.

<sup>1</sup> TREENET Strategic Plan- the next five years 2021 – 2026

2023

On the eve of ANZAC Day commemorations, David Lawry, assisted by servicemen from the 9<sup>th</sup> Brigade, plant Gallipoli Rosemary back at the Keswick Barracks – and the journey and the story of Gallipoli Rosemary has turned full circle.



On the 24<sup>th</sup> April, more saplings that were grown from acorns collected beneath Adelaide's War Memorial Oak, are planted at Fromelles, France.



The Mayor of Fromelles, Mr J.G. Masson is assisted by visiting students from Pulteney Grammar School to plant three oaks in commemoration of their school's old scholars who paid the ultimate price at the Battle of Fromelles.



On Remembrance Day in November, a special sapling, another War Memorial Oak progeny, is planted at Sarlat La Canéda in the south-west of France.

Glenn and Vicki Williams continue travel within Australia, verifying the status of existing or lost avenues, researching history and documenting 'new' listings for the Avenues of Honour database and website.

Under the banner of Volunteer Special Projects, Glenn continues to respond to incoming queries related to Avenues of Honour, as well as informing TREENET about issues and threats to Avenues of Honour requiring urgent advocacy. Eg Vietnam Veterans Memorial Avenue Bandiana.

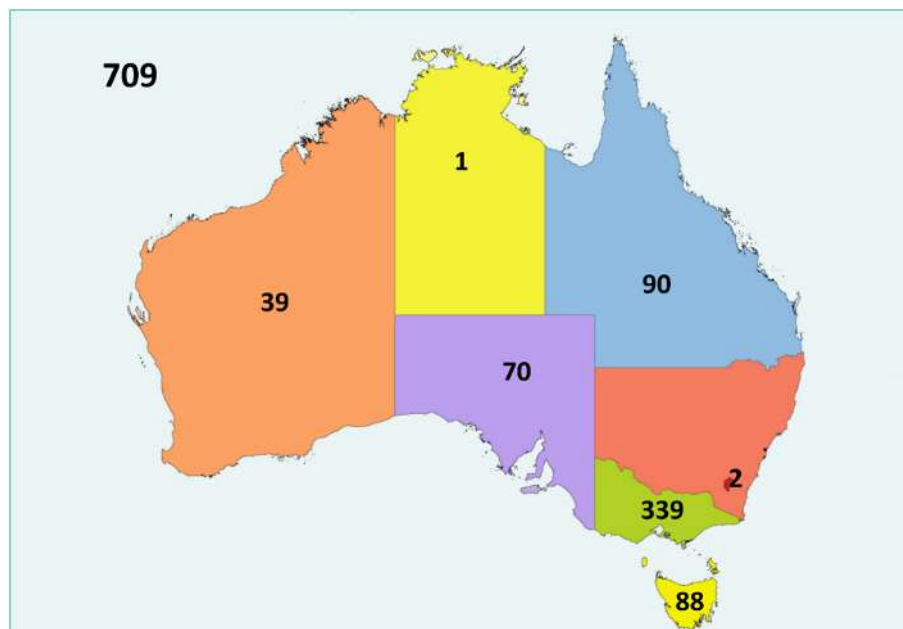
## 2024



Avenues of Honour projects cannot happen in a vacuum. Purpose must be established, communities engaged, stakeholders identified, partners and funding secured. This must have occurred for avenues to be established during and after WW1, including the selection and sourcing of trees and coordination of horticultural practices to get trees in the ground and established.

With this understanding, the "Guidelines to Developing and Sustaining an Avenue of Honour" is published, building on the inspiration from Brisbane City Council's Yeronga Memorial Park recovery project, as presented by Andrew Ensby at TREENET's 2009 Symposium.

The database accumulated records, suggest the number of verified and presumed living memorial sites in Australia, now exceeds 700.



## Discussion

This discussion is informed by the observations and musings surrounding the process of on-ground investigation, to detect the existence or former existence of living memorials. Such investigation essentially corroborates the information and conclusions evident in past academic and social research, as presented at TREENET Symposia and elsewhere. Modern challenges to the preservation and conservation of living memorials are echoes of the past.

Avenues of Honour established during the 20<sup>th</sup> century were clearly underpinned by a local community or family's grief and their need to have a tangible, living memorial, to represent the sacrifice of a loved one. But there was also an element of patriotic fervour, community competitiveness, political rivalry and vested commercial or sponsorship interest. (The latter exemplified in the story of the development of the well-known Ballarat Avenue of Honour in Victoria). (Taffe, M. J., 2018)

In recent decades, new avenues are being established, to commemorate the service, sacrifice and suffering of Australians involved in wars during the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, particularly WW1, WW2, Korea and Vietnam. Given these events occurred in the distant past, some 40 to 110 years ago, perhaps it's the emergence of patriotism and a rekindled homage to historical grief and sustained family or community connections over generations, that inspires fresh, memorial plantings. There is no doubt about the sentimental resurgence of the observation of ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day commemoration activities leading up to centenary anniversaries for WW1 and subsequent conflicts involving Australian at war, including honouring the sacrifice of Prisoners of War.

Dedicated February 6th, 2004, the Prisoner of War memorial was established to acknowledge the pain and suffering that all Prisoners of War endured during their time in captivity, to commemorate the thousands of mates left behind and to acknowledge the sacrifice of families during wartime.



Prisoner of War Memorial, Ballarat Botanical Gardens, Lake Wendouree



The war in Afghanistan is the most recent conflict inspiring the use of a time-honoured tradition to plant memorial trees, honouring 44 soldiers for their service and sacrifice during 2001 - 2014. The Yungaburra Avenue of Honour at Lake Tibooburra in Queensland, officially opened on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2013.

In all these instances and whatever provides the inspiration, a common expectation is that memorial trees will become established and thrive as intergenerational reminders of the service and sacrifice, of so many from local communities.

It's fair to say that Australia's evergreen memorials, are the forgotten Avenues of Honour. For the greatest threat to our Living Memorials, is for their significance to be 'forgotten', along with the memory of those commemorated in this fashion.

It's an over-simplification to try and bundle the threat of the many challenges and issues that erase this commemorative association. In terms of urban forest management, many TREENET Symposia presenters and papers have incessantly discussed the topics of competing values and perceptions about the role of trees in the landscape, including 'alienation from nature' and loss of connection with trees. (This also applies to other memorial tree plantings, honouring historic, civic leaders or the legacy of pioneer families, etc).

At the hub is the fact that trees are living things and will eventually senesce. Trees require vigilance, intervention as necessary and eventual replacement to perpetuate their purpose.

The idea of establishing avenues of memorial trees as township entrance statements is entirely logical, particularly as early 20<sup>th</sup> century roadsides and street verges were able to accommodate such plantings.

But it's these locations that have led to the doom of many memorial plantings over time.

"The management of urban trees has become increasingly complex and important as Australia has developed and in many cases, avenues that were planted in semi-rural environments are now in the middle of towns. This has often resulted in conflicts between the trees and the progress of modern infrastructure.

The difficulties a tree must overcome in an urbanised environment are considerable. They are competing for space in an increasingly crowded environment and have often been poorly regarded by those interested in urban infrastructure. Consequently, most urban trees regularly face one or more of the following:

- Radical pruning away from powerlines
- Soil compaction
- Root zone damage from construction and utilities
- Arid Soil Conditions
- Total removal for building or road widening
- Damage from road accidents
- Air and Soil pollution

This means that good quality management of significant trees is often not only desirable but necessary if they are to be retained." (Cockerell, S., 2008)

It is possible to characterise tree loss and memory loss associated with the purpose of commemorative trees, in terms of **population and progress**.

Both declining population and loss of community memory; as well as burgeoning population and increased infrastructure requirements.

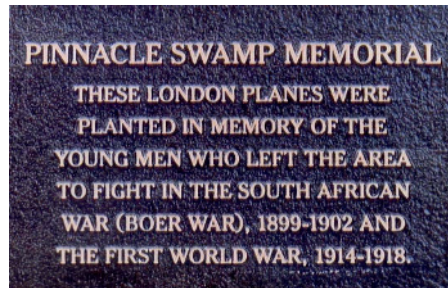
Here are examples:

In the first instance, original WW1 memorial plantings, along with the settlements and communities involved in their establishment, have diminished or completely disappeared from the landscape. The former farming settlement of Pinnacle Swamp, 2kms northwest of Rylstone, NSW, is barely representative of a bygone area.



*"In the late 1800s and early 1900s there were around 16-18 families living in Pinnacle Swamp and nearby Tong Bong area. Some of the sons went to the Boer War, but more signed up for the First World War. As a result the families got together and planted an Avenue of Remembrance. Some of the names were Bayliss, Bisley, Brown, Currie, McQuiggin and Mulholland. I only know this as my grandmother used to tell me stories when I was very small, about the people in Pinnacle Swamp. My grandmother and I put a wreath every Anzac Day down at the Avenue. This continued until my grandmother died in 1959. I kept up the wreaths for quite some years after her death but slackened off as I got older! About 5 years ago I decided that something needed to be done to keep this Avenue alive. I am 85 and there is no one left in Pinnacle swamp who knows about the*

*original Avenue. I approached the Mid-Western Regional Council to bring the Avenue up to date and to put a plaque in the area to commemorate the men who went to war. It took about two years to convince them that this was a necessary project. I was advised that they would spend \$2,500 dollars on trees and a plaque. We have had a drought this last eighteen months and not all the trees have survived but the plaque is there. The Avenue is at the end of the Pinnacle Swamp Road. The best time to see it is in spring when the news leaves are on the plane trees, as they meet across the road and form an arch as you drive along." (Pers Comm, Shirley Tunnicliff, April 2018)*



Despite the memorial avenue's ailing replacement trees, there's at least a new plaque denoting its existence.

The original Golden Cypress trees planted on the 11<sup>th</sup> August 1917, as a single-sided WW1 memorial at Waubra, 33kms northwest of Ballarat in Victoria, are long gone. They used to line the road (now redeveloped as the Sunraysia Highway), extending from the former Headmaster's House, along to the entrance to the recreation reserve. 92-year-old Waubra resident, Noel Thomas, remembers tethering horses beneath the trees, whilst remaining ignorant of the significance of the trees.



Site of the former WW1 Memorial Avenue, Sunraysia Highway, Waubra, VIC

In the instance of population growth, original WW1 memorial plantings have been subsumed by the growth of townships, such as Armadale, a fringe suburb southeast of Perth, WA. Interpretive plaques at the base of a few left out of 28 original memorial trees, denote their significance in what was formerly known as the 'Armadale Fallen Soldier's Memorial Park'.



The salvaged memorial plaques for each soldier, originally placed at the base of trees, planted by friends and family of the fallen, are now affixed to a feature wall surrounding an historic cenotaph.



25 pine trees planted in September 1918, in Upper Bagdad, TAS, were removed in the 1980s due to the age of the trees and tight planting against houses. The trees had commemorated Bagdad residents enlisting in the AIF to serve overseas in WW1. (<https://www.soldiersmemorialavenue.org.au/other-avenues> - Bagdad.)



Site of the former WW1 Memorial Avenue, Swan Street, Upper Bagdad, TAS

In some cases, historic WW1 Avenues of Honour, dodged a bullet. The Eumundi community rallied to plant the first group of twenty trees, in 1917 and 1918, in memory of 20 soldiers from the district. Out of a total of the 87 men who enlisted these 20 did not return from service overseas.

Potential pressure in these earlier post-war times, was from the development of the Bruce Highway, which first opened in 1934, passing through most of the major country towns.

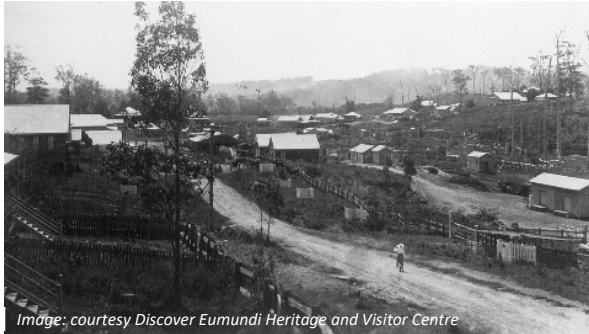


Image: courtesy Discover Eumundi Heritage and Visitor Centre

Main Street, Eumundi, Queensland, c1918  
Note the young Fig trees protected by white picket fences.

It was and still is a major highway but has now deviated away from the towns due to concerns of population and road traffic. Thankfully the Bruce Highway development bypasses Eumundi's Memorial Drive.



The main road, Memorial Drive, has been subject to many proposed civic plans in recent times, to upgrade what is now the famous Eumundi Markets precinct. Community opposition has always thwarted such plans, favouring the need to preserve the heritage precinct, dominated by the original section of their Trees of Tribute.

In some cases, there was potentially a mismatch in horticultural knowledge and practices during those early years, that would inevitably lead trees to fail, before becoming the hoped for intergenerational icons for keeping memories evergreen.

*The Inverell Times, 16th April 1930 p2*

**KURRAJONG AVENUE**  
**Returned Soldiers' Interest**  
**Dead Trees to be Replaced**

At a special meeting of the U.S. Inverell sub-branch of the R.S. and S.L.L.A., held on Monday night, it was unanimously decided to secure Kurrajong trees to replace the dead trees in Kurrajong Avenue, and generally to those from this district who made the supreme sacrifice in the Great War.

The question of erecting a tablet at the foot of each tree also discussed but a decision deferred until such time as the League has made the more pleasing to the eye.

*The West Australian, 5th June 1940 p5*

**HONOUR AVENUE**  
**Memorial Trees May be Replaced**

Concern is being felt by both the King's Park Board and the West Perth sub-branch of the Returned Soldiers' League at the condition of many trees in May and Lovelin drives, known as Honour Avenue, which were planted in memory of soldiers who fell in the Great War. The majority of the trees are oaks, which have not thrived.

The question of neglect was raised by the league, but in the course of the annual inspection of the park (Mr. J. E. Watson) drew the visitors' attention to a report which he had submitted before the King's Park Board on the subject. The league had first raised the question. This report proved disappointing and were not likely to survive for long, as the type of eucalypt be planted in the interval reached a sturdy state of growth the old ones be removed and the plaque of dedication to soldiers be transferred.

*Corryong Courier, 13th March 1919 p3*

**Soldiers' Avenue.**

A public meeting in connection with the above was held on Friday evening last, when there was a most representative attendance.

Mr Cronin was voted to the chair; the president not attending till later in the meeting.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

It was reported that most of the largest trees on the eastern end had died and would require replacing.—It was decided to replace those as once and the matter was left to the tree committee.

A motion was then moved and seconded that 50 new trees be planted and guarded. To this an amendment was tabled that only 25 trees be planted this year.

*Collie Mail, 20th July 1928 p4*

**SOLDIERS' PARK.**  
**PLANTING OF ORNAMENTAL TREES.**

The question of replacing the avenue of plain trees in the Soldiers' Park is a matter that engaged the consideration of the Council for some weeks past, and quite recently the Mayor (Mr. J. S. Jackson) and Cr. G. Bucklin were appointed as a committee to inspect the park and to hold a meeting of the civic body. At a meeting of the civic body a verbal report as the Mayor made in company with the committee in (Mr. J. Giblett). It was recommended that a number of blackwood trees be purchased to replace the present plain trees that had made such progress in the park. These would be of the evergreen variety and would provide the avenue with a much nicer appearance at all times.

Modern day attempts to establish memorial trees are not immune, as has been the case for the HMAS Sydney II Memorial Avenue, Carnarvon, WA. Originally 645 trees were planted from 2001, along with accompanying plaques for each of the seaman who perished, to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sinking of the ship.

At least three iterations of plantings with different Palm species have been trialled, since the first in 2001. The original palms failed; as did the subsequent Foxtail Palms. Courtesy of a substantial grant, the Shire of Carnarvon was able to establish a reticulated, bore-water supply, to help irrigate the Canary Island Palms as part of the last attempt to replace the avenue. Unfortunately, a decision was made at some point to cut-off that supply to the trees, due to other priorities during a time of severe drought in the region. (D. Maslen, pers comm, July 23, 2024).



Image: Rebecca Mayo, 2011



Image: mapio.net, date unknown



Image: Monument Australia, 2015

In 2024, only 142 *Phoenix canariensis* survive.



HMAS Sydney II Memorial Drive, Carnarvon. Image: Glenn Williams July 2024

Of all the key challenges that place living memorials at risk, is to perpetuate ignorance in the hearts and minds of managing authorities, local citizens and visitors to towns and cities. There are instances of lack of heritage information and key points of interest in tourist brochures, information bays, trails of interest brochures, etc.

Observations from intensive site visit travels over the past two years, reveals that current, physical identification and promotion of significant living memorials, past and present, is thwarted by a distinct and consistent *lack of signage*.



The only site clue these Jacarandas might constitute an Avenue of Honour is the street name: Memorial Avenue.

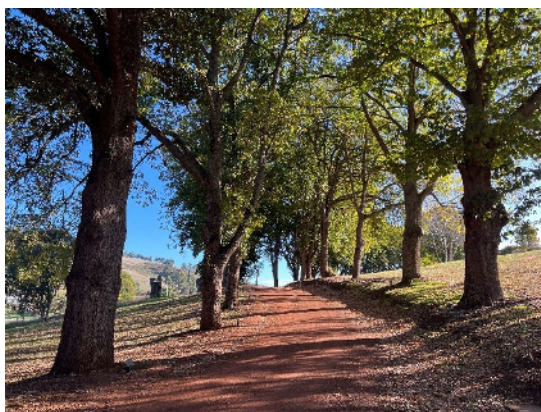
If you're lucky enough to visit the adjacent Harold Hawthorne Community Centre and poke your nose into the hallway of the rebuilt Memorial Hall, you will be attracted to a neat display of war service memorabilia. You might even notice this plaque affixed to the wall.



But you would need to do some super-sleuthing, to reveal and confirm this double row of trees, in a small, urban backstreet, is indeed a dedicated WW2 Memorial Avenue in the suburb of Carlisle, WA. Articles from the RSL Western Australia's *Listening Post* publication in July 1957 and September and December 1958 provide conclusive evidence about the funding drive in 1957 to establish an Honour Avenue in Venus Street (later renamed Memorial Drive); the involvement of children from the Carlisle State School who planted the trees in August 1958; and the 400 people who attended the Avenue's official dedication of the Carlisle Memorial Avenue on the 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1958.

The need for intensive research is never on the radar of local citizens or visitors, nor should it be, and they will otherwise remain completely ignorant of the significance of this commemorative site – all but for some minor investment in simple, interpretive signs at each end of the street.

In complete contrast, are the welcoming signs at the Birdwood Park Avenue of Honour, Balingup, WA.



WW1 Avenue of Honour, Balingup, WA

Community pride evident with interpretive entrance sign and individual soldiers' plaques at the base of each Oak tree. Several other interpretive signs are set to the side.

The only way to remain ignorant of the significance of this living memorial, is to choose to ignore the signs!



The jury is out concerning the value of having a lonely sign, indicating the former existence of memorial trees, with no obvious intention to reinstate the planting or to find a suitable, replacement location for that purpose.



After redevelopment of an area within the township of Benalla, Victoria, original WW1 memorial trees were removed along with the monument that heralded the Avenue of Honour. Simply no context at all.



About as lonely as it gets on Lady Bay Road, Southport, Tasmania, this original plaque, salvaged and placed on a new cenotaph, devoid of any replacement trees to give substance to its memorial purpose.



Trees of Tribute planting day 16<sup>th</sup> August 1940

One survivor of the original planting

Remotely located near the central-west coast of South Australia, the [Chandada Trees of Tribute](#), along with former farming community, mostly long-gone. As trees are unlikely ever to be replaced or maintained, this plaque is a welcome reminder of the original purpose and location of this memorial site.

Loss of corporate knowledge within authorities and organisations responsible for the care and control of memorial trees – local governments in particular are a revolving door for turnover of staff in this regard – points to the need for Management Plans, Inventories and Strategies, that capture the heritage significance of living memorials and detail actions for the ongoing management of special trees – and some great work has been done and is being done in this regard around the nation.



November 2001 City of Casey documents 7 Living Memorials



March 2017 Moyness Shire Council documents 9 Living Memorials



September 2024 Moorabool Shire website documents 8 Living Memorials



Courtesy of an [article](#) published in the Latrobe University's online *upstart* journalism platform (O'Brien, A., 2023), it was discovered the Moorabool Shire had developed a very detailed and strategic (albeit intergenerational) management plan, to preserve their significant WW1 Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour into the future.

Of particular note is one element of the Tree Replacement Strategy:

"Replacement trees are to be propagated from bud material collected from the existing Avenue of Honour trees. This ensures all replacement trees are true to type and have a connection to the original trees. It takes approximately 3-4 years to produce a tree ready to be planted. Council staff are to inspect the stock at the nursery and again at the time of delivery to ensure they meet the specification of a good quality tree.

All trees should be grown by reputable nurseries and inspected prior to delivery. Tree growth systems and the supplied stock are to be in accordance with AS2303-2018 *Tree Stock for Landscape Use*.<sup>2</sup>

Conversely and quite disappointing, is the lack of prescribed due diligence and homework undertaken by some authorities responsible for governance, development and planning, where heritage significance exists.

Limiting the scope of heritage assessment to almost compel ignorance by design, has led to incomplete planning overlays that would otherwise have captured detailed heritage values informing Development Application decisions. Such is the case of the former Bendigo East Primary School's Avenue of Honour, one of the early avenues planted in Victoria, June 1916.



September 2015



January 2023

Despite compelling community submissions, the door was left open by an adverse decision, following a hearing of the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT), allowing a bloody-minded developer to bulldoze the remaining, original Avenue of Honour trees in 2015. After 7 years, signs of development of the vacant site was detected during June 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Moorabool Shire Council, *The Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour Preservation Plan 2023*, p17

## Outputs and Outcomes

Just five years into TREENET's project to document and research Australia's living memorials, and to get replacement and new trees in the ground, there was a stark realisation that achieving the project's original aspirations and key targets, especially by the Centenary of ANZAC in 2015, was an impossible task. So many threads to gather and with limited capacity to sew them all together. It might be imagined as the Australian Government's current quest to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Great, crucial idea, but very daunting and seemingly out of reach.

Ignoring the original timeframes, the following table combines the critical steps requiring further effort, as documented by David Lawry OAM (Lawry, D., 2009) and an indication as to the current status of continuing achievements:

**Table 1. Critical steps for further action (2009)**

| CRITICAL STEPS   | ACHIEVED | 2024 STATUS     |
|--|----------|-----------------|
| Publish freely all information on website including searchable list of names associated with trees and locations of relevant avenues.            | 2013     | ongoing success |
| Further promotion of the project for community awareness and support.  | 2010     | ongoing success |
| Contacts network expanded, especially local community and RSL groups.  | 2010     | ongoing success |
| Record oral history and locate records of known Avenues where possible.  | 2013     | ongoing success |
| Photograph and record GIS data for existing avenues and assess the condition of trees and plaques.   | 2014     | ongoing success |
| Encourage local schools, community groups and organisations to be involved in all aspects of the project, especially restoration and replanting. | 2014     | some success    |
| Commence long term monitoring of trees and plaques.  | -        | -               |
| Determine with others appropriate strategies for commemorating all unrepresented combatants lost in service.                                     | -        | -               |
| Negotiate sites for new Avenues with State and Federal, road authorities.  | 2012     | some success    |
| Plant new Avenues for a new century and for all unrepresented combatants lost in service.  | 2015     | some success    |

## Outputs and Outcomes

Based on the collation of data from TREENET's investigations and observations over the past two decades, the following is a summary of achievements to date:

Raising Awareness of the significance of living memorials dedicated to honouring war service, sacrifice and suffering through -

### Ongoing Research

- desktop research
- on-ground site-visits to validate the existence or former existence, of memorial avenues and trees
- conversations with local government parks and garden staff, local council library or history centre staff, professional historians, members of community history and museum groups, progress associations, Returned Services League or Ex-Service Clubs, schoolteachers, local Post Office staff, local Hotel staff, etc
- oral histories - gathering knowledge and recollections of those individuals having a particular interest in their living memorials, such as Mayors, Councillors, former school pupils involved in Arbor Day/memorial plantings

### **Networking, Promotions and Communications**

- provision of a dedicated, interactive Avenues of Honour website, for convenient public access to Avenues of Honour database content
- provision of dedicated social media articles via the Avenues of Honour Facebook site
- television and radio interviews
- articles published in print or digital media, including regular updates in TREENET's e-Newsletters
- discovering community champions having a passionate interest in preserving or establishing living memorials
- conducting special events
- official attendance at designated ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies and other special events
- providing guest speakers at professional group meetings or community group meetings
- providing regular conference presentations and papers, particularly at TREENET Symposia
- publishing '*Guidelines for Developing and Sustaining an Avenue of Honour*'

### **Advocacy**

- providing official letters of support for communities seeking government or other funding, to establish, restore or upgrade avenues of honour and attendant signs and plaques

### **Collaboration and Partnerships**

- Active Trees philanthropic support
- Norwood Industries and the Australia Plant Growers - Gallipoli Rosemary production and royalty agreements
- City of Brisbane – Avenues of Honour logo appears on the signs denoting many of the living memorial sites in their LGA
- Virtual War Memorial Australia
- Australian Garden History Society - Avenues of Honour shared research undertaken by Stuart Read
- City of Port Adelaide Enfield - Westport Avenue of Honour Project
- Strong team of local and international stakeholders established, to secure sites for ceremonial, international plantings of progeny of the War Memorial Oak in France

### **Management**

- Strong leadership, governance and oversight by the TREENET Management Committee
- Avenues of Honour representation on TREENET's Advisory Board
- Patron secured for the Avenues of Honour project
- Project key initiative incorporated in TREENET's strategic planning
- Regular, roving reports provided to the TREENET Management Committee by volunteers
- Development of a significant images library as a visual record
- Improved record-keeping and data back-up via cloud-based storage

Over the past 2 years, 365 living memorial sites have been visited and verified, 146 of those have proved to be new listings for the Avenues of Honour database. Accordingly, 23 dedicated Avenue of Honour website pages have been created or updated so far.

Currently 709 listings in the Avenues of Honour database of which just over 50% have been formally reviewed/identified.

More Lone Pine plantings are now recorded as a standard feature of data collection.

TREENET confirms the first WW1 memorial tree planted in Australia is the War Memorial Oak, planted in the Cresswell Gardens, Adelaide, 29<sup>th</sup> August 1914. It is very likely the first WW1 memorial tree planted by any of the allied nations.

Courtesy of research by Ballarat-based historian, Dr Michael Taffe, Clarke's Living Memorial, Normanville, South Australia, is confirmed as the first WW1 memorial avenue established in Australia, planted on the 13<sup>th</sup> May, 1915.

A review is underway to categorise the status of memorial gardens, where although not specifically dedicated as memorial, the trees have been purposefully included in the landscape by virtue of their species as connected to the origin site of the conflict or war service location; or to mark the integral purpose of the memorial garden through their sentinel configuration. These may become a separate inventory feature for database collection.

A number of listings from the original 2006 survey have either been 'parked', pending future research, or removed entirely due to the fact they were conclusively verified as NOT being planted as war service memorials.

No records have been kept for the modest number of direct emails or phone calls to TREENET. However, the number of enquiries received via the Avenues of Honour website Contact Form has averaged 4 per month for the past two years.

## Conclusion

TREENET's mission to document Australia's living memorials over the past twenty years reveals the project's key aspirations are being met and with support will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. It also reveals consistent challenges for the ongoing care, conservation and management of existing, original memorial trees as well as lessons for future establishment of Avenues of Honour.

It would be fair to say the aspirations for the Avenues of Honour project have been reshaped, according to more achievable outcomes, operating within capacity, including time, people and financial resources.

The current focus has been to continue important advocacy on behalf of threatened avenues; responding to community queries; expanding the network of contacts and community champions; further update the research and verified content for the national integrity of Avenues of Honour website, so that it, along with the Project, remains a valued, accurate and trusted resource.

The rewarding journey of discovery continues.

## Acknowledgements

David Lawry OAM for his inspiration and dedication.

TREENET Management Committee for their valued encouragement and oversight.

Dr Tim Johnson who shares an addiction for Avenues of Honour discoveries.

Amy Cotton who cheerily supports my administrative requests for my post-retirement obsession.

Mark Willcocks for his enduring encouragement, philanthropy and shared values for the project.

Vicki Williams for her dedication, research skills, mission planning and being determined not to become an 'avenue of honour widow'.

[Monument Australia](#) for graciously sharing their Avenues of Honour database list as a cross-reference for TREENET's research, prior to the cessation of their now archived records on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

## Appendices

### *Summary of TREENET Avenues of Honour Presentations and/or Papers*

| Year | Presenter                      | Title   | Organisation  |
|------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| 2004 | John Dargavel                  | Memorial Avenues:<br>A Historical Perspective   | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
|      | Sarah Cockerell                | 2004 TREENET Avenues of Honour Survey   | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2005 | Adrian Howard                  | The Soldiers Memorial Avenue,<br>Queens Domain  | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2006 | Ben Kenyon                     | Development of a Standard for Avenues of<br>Honour Database   | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
|      | Greg Moore                     | Avenues of Honour 1915-2015 Progress<br>Report  | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2007 | Neridah Parke,<br>Lyndal Plant | Avenues of Honour – Brisbane City Council<br>Progress   | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2008 | Sarah Cockerell                | Avenues of Honour: Location assessment and<br>management of war memorial tree avenues<br>in Australia | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2009 | David Lawry                    | Half Time in the TREENET Avenues of Honour<br>1915-2015 Project                                       | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2012 | Andrew Ensbey                  | Yeronga Memorial Park Project   | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2013 | David Lawry, Darren<br>Peacock | The Avenues of Honour 1915 Centenary<br>Project, contemporary web-based<br>technologies               | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2014 | Greg Moore                     | The Avenues of Honour Project 1915-2015   | XXIX International Horticultural<br>Congress Conference, Brisbane                       |
| 2015 | Glenn Williams                 | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project   | Adelaide Hills VIEW Club, Mount<br>Barker   |
|      | Glenn Williams                 | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project   | Cultural Connections Program,<br>Urrbrae House, Waite Campus,<br>University of Adelaide |
|      | Sarah Cockerell                | TREENET Avenues of Honour Project 1915-<br>2015 – Progress Report                                     | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
|      | David Lawry                    | TREENET Avenues of Honour 1915-2015<br>Project  | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
|      | David Lawry, Darren<br>Peacock | The Avenues of Honour 1915-2015 Project   | Arboriculture Australia National<br>Conference, Adelaide                                |
| 2017 | Glenn Williams                 | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project   | Active Trees National Conference,<br>Victor Harbor, SA                                  |
| 2017 | Bob Kearney OAM                | A Call to Action – The Virtual War Memorial<br>& TREENET  | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2018 | Glenn Williams                 | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project   | Urrbrae TAFE, Adelaide  |
|      | Stuart Read                    | Avenues of Honour in the Landscape –<br>Australia's Living Memorials                                  | TREENET Symposium, Adelaide   |
| 2018 | Glenn Williams,<br>David Lawry | Avenues of Honour Down Under  | "Tree Avenues – from War to<br>Peace" International Conference,<br>France               |
| 2020 | Michael Taffe                  | Australia's Avenues of Honour: A Neglected<br>Story   | TREENET Symposium   |
| 2021 | Glenn Williams                 | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project   | Australian Scouting Support Group,<br>Stirling, Adelaide Hills                          |

| Year | Presenter      | Title   | Organisation  |
|------|----------------|---|---|
| 2021 | Glenn Williams | Update for TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project                | Adelaide Hills VIEW Club, Mount Barker, SA  |
|      | Glenn Williams | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project                           | Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens, Adelaide  |
|      | Glenn Williams | Avenues of Honour Project & the First WW1 Avenue, Normanville | Special Community Meeting with reps from the District Council, Lions Club, RSL, local History Group, Yankalilla, SA |
|      | Glenn Williams | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project                           | City of Burnside Urban Forest Group, Adelaide   |
|      | Glenn Williams | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project                           | Strathalbyn Garden Club, SA   |
|      | Glenn Williams | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project                           | Aldgate Ladies Probus Club, Adelaide Hills  |
| 2022 | Glenn Williams | TREENET's Avenues of Honour Project                           | Strathalbyn Combined Probus Club, Strathalbyn, SA   |
| 2023 | Glenn Williams | Australia's Living War Memorials                              | Tasmania Arboriculture Organisation Field Day, Hobart   |

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