



#TimeWarpTuesday – 6 August 2024

We are pleased to report this #TimeWarpTuesday, that we have solved the question about Memorial Avenue in Carlisle, and why it was so named.

THE MEANING BEHIND THE NAME OF MEMORIAL AVENUE, CARLISLE

In 1957, the then Carlisle Sub-Branch of the Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia (W.A. Branch) was celebrating its 25th anniversary and one way they chose to celebrate was to establish an honour avenue of trees.

The Carlisle Sub-Branch was based at 72 Jupiter Street, Carlisle, but given the position of the Bickford Soldiers Memorial Hall in what was then called Venus Street, the Sub-Branch decided that Venus Street would be a fitting place to plant the trees.

As early as July 1957 the Sub-Branch was in discussions with the City of Perth in regards the provision of trees and had spoken to the families of soldiers, sons of Carlisle, that had fallen in both World Wars. They were given great support for the project from both the families of the fallen and the local community.

The Listening Post, the official journal of the RSL reported on the project in the September 1957 issue:

"CHILDREN PLANT TREES IN HONOUR AVENUE

"The first phase of the Carlisle sub-branch's honour avenue project-announced earlier this year-was completed early in August when children of the Carlisle State School planted jacaranda trees in Venus-street under the guidance of the officers of the City Gardener's Department.

"The children assembled with their headmaster (Mr Phillips) and a member of his teaching staff at the Bickford Soldiers' Memorial Hall, where the Union Jack was flying at full mast.

"Addressing them Cr. W. R. Read, of the Perth City Council, said the trees would create an honour avenue that in the course of time would add to the beautification of the district and remain a memorial to the men of Carlisle who gave their lives in the two world wars.

"The children listened attentively when the sub-branch president (Mr. W. W. Geary) said he felt sure that as the years passed by they would come to regard the trees they had planted as a memorial with pride.

"He expressed the belief that the scouts, and indeed all the children, would do all they could to prevent vandalism to the trees.

"The children then placed themselves in pairs at the planting-pegs set up by a working-bee of sub-branch members the previous Sunday, and planted the trees.

"To end the proceedings the president thanked those present for their interest and expressed appreciation of the co-operation of the City Council..." (1).

THE HONOUR (MEMORIAL) AVENUE IS DEDICATED

At the time that the trees were planted to establish the Carlisle Memorial Avenue (as it was commonly referred to), the street in which they were lining was called Venus Street. With the official dedication of the Carlisle Memorial Avenue of trees in Late 1958, the idea of changing the name of the street to highlight and to act as a reminder of the avenue's meaning, was starting to simmer with the Carlisle Sub-Branch and the community:

"CARLISLE MEMORIAL AVENUE DEDICATED

"Over 400 people witnessed the dedication – by the Rev. E. A. Gundry – of the Carlisle Memorial Avenue honouring the dead of two world wars on Sunday, November 9.

"The ceremony brought to fruition a plan evolved in April, 1957, by the sub-branch secretary (Mr. Alf Newick) and put into immediate action by the members.

"Parade Marshal Fred Suckling assembled a column which, headed by the Y.A.L. [Young Australians League] Band, marched to Memorial Avenue and halted before the dais, where the Rev. Gundry was received by vice-president Bill Gilsenan in the regrettable absence of president Jack Shepherd who was seriously ill in hospital.

"Two plaques were unveiled-one, commemorating the project, by the State President (Mr. W. S. Lonnie) and the other, bearing the names of deceased servicemen by Mr Gilsenan.

"Blinded ex-servicemen from the Braille Home, Victoria Park, were transported to the ceremony by Red Cross cars, and that organisation also had an ambulance on call.

"Mr Lonnie, who inspected sub-branch members—among whom was Mr Frank Nye. D.C.M., a veteran of the Boer War and the 1914-18 war—congratulated them on a very fine achievement.

"The parade and ceremony were filmed in colour to provide a pictorial record of the service.

"Jacaranda trees planted in the street, and the rose beds constructed by members of the sub-branch in June this year, combine to form the Carlisle Memorial Avenue which in the course of time will produce a hallowed place of beauty in the City of Perth.

"Children of the Carlisle Government School planted the trees last year and rose bushes were donated by residents and the Perth City Council.

"At the end of the service a special flagstaff made by sub-branch members was handed over to the 1st Carlisle Scout Troup as a gesture of appreciation for the service given by the scouts who have been appointed wardens of the memorial.

"The assembly then adjourned to the Memorial Hall where afternoon tea was served by members of the women's auxiliary." (2).

This article mentions two plaques that were presented at the dedication ceremony on Sunday, 9 November 1958 and happily these two plaques have been and are hanging still in the foyer of the building now known as the Harold Hawthorne Community Centre Hall.

The plaques have stood testimony to the meaning of the trees, whilst sadly over time, amidst the closure of the Carlisle Sub-Branch of the RSL and other events, the trees have not been remembered as memorials.

Sadly, it has long been thought that the trees were just jacaranda trees and not planted for any special reason.

Sadly, it has not been remembered why the street is called Memorial Avenue.

It has long been thought that the name of the street on which these trees stand sentinel to remembrance was named 'Memorial Avenue' because of the Bickford Soldiers Memorial Hall. The said hall stood on the street from 1920, but at the time it was built, by local volunteers and returned soldiers, the street was named 'Venus Street'.

VENUS STREET BECOMES MEMORIAL AVENUE

Archival records kept by the City of Perth and now in the custody of the State Records Office of Western Australia document the change of name of this humble little street in Carlisle.

Named Venus Street, presumably by the land developer and sales company, Peet and Co when they were opening up the suburb of Carlisle (first known as Bickford). The Carlisle Sub-Branch of the Returned Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia gathered the support of the local Carlisle community in the form of a petition and sent this along with their recommendation to the City of Perth in late 1958, proposing that the name of Venus Street, Carlisle be changed to Memorial Avenue.

The recommendation was supported by the City of Perth but the Nomenclature Advisory Committee of the Department of Lands and Surveys (now known as Landgate) was hesitant at first. This hesitancy surrounded the difficulty inherent in a long name being suggested for a short street, and the ability for the name to be fully legible on ordinary road maps etc. Another consideration for the Department was again the shortness of the street and short streets not usually justifying the suffix of 'Avenue'. It was however decided that if the City of Perth would confirm their support, the Department of Lands and Surveys would also accept the use of the suffix as "the position was rather unusual in view of the fact that an avenue of trees had been planted etc." (3). Having received confirmation from the City of Perth of their support of the use of the suffix 'Avenue' in this case, the Nomenclature Advisory Committee approved the name change at a meeting on the 12 May 1959. Official approval, via the signing off of the Undersecretary of Lands took place followed by notice being posted in the Government Gazette of Western Australia on 31 July 1959.

THE CORRELATION OF PLAQUES AND TREES IS RESTABLISHED

Thanks to the diligence of a volunteer named Glenn Williams, who being in charge of the Avenues of Honour Project, contacted the Local History Coordinator at the Library recently to try to find out more. We now know the answer and an unknown wrong has been righted. Glenn had just two vague references to an honour avenue planted in Carlisle with a rose garden, to honour the fallen of Carlisle from both world wars. Glenn thought the references he had might have been referring to our Memorial Avenue in Carlisle, and I am pleased to report that upon further research by the Local History Coordinator, we can now proudly reconnect the two plaques that hang to this day in the foyer of the Harold Hawthorne Community Centre Hall to the trees that line the street outside the hall's doors.

It would appear that perhaps only one or two of the original trees remain but over time any missing trees have been replaced with jacarandas, so the Carlisle Memorial Avenue still stands intact.

The fallen sons of Carlisle whose memory and sacrifice are honoured by the honour avenue of jacaranda trees on either side of Memorial Avenue, Carlisle are:

Harold Henry ABBOTT
Sylvester Leonard ANDREWS
Leonard James AUBREY
Thomas Martin BARRON
Glyn Norman BURY
John Mitchell BUZZA
Herbert William John BOUCHER
Donald Ernest EWERS
A. EARLE
Lionel Wilfred FLOHM
Arthur Coombs GODDARD
Hubert Keane HITCHCOCK
R. V. INGHAM
Francis Bernard KEENAN
Edward Henry FIENNES-CLINTON
T. K. KROENER
Desmond Aloysius LALLY
Albert Bernard LANGE
T. MANNERS
Frank Ernest Rushton McDONALD
Arthur POLLITT
Wilfred Harold RAMSDEN (DCM, MM)
Arthur SPOONER
Jack Andrew STRANG
F. C. WARD
William George STRANG
Philip TUCKETT
G. J. WALKER
Albert Edward RAMSDEN

So when next you stroll, meander, skip or drive down Memorial Avenue, Carlisle, please take a moment to contemplate and remember the ultimate sacrifice made by these sons of Carlisle.

Lest We Forget

We are making enquiries with the archives section of the RSL to see if any photographs or footage remains from the dedication of the avenue in November 1958, as footage is alluded to in both in articles and in the City of Perth archive file. We will keep you posted when more information comes to hand. In the meantime, as usual, please reach out if you have stories, photographs, memorabilia or any other item that you can share with us relating to the Carlisle Memorial Avenue.

#LoveVicPark

References:

- (1) 1957, 'Children Plant Trees in Honour Avenue', in *The Listening Post*, September 1957, p. 16.
- (2) 1958, 'Carlisle Memorial Avenue Dedicated', in *The Listening Post*, December 1958, p. 10.
- (3) 1959, 'Actg. Superintendent of Mapping', in Item 1958/03973 – Town Clerk – Perth, Venus St. Change of name to Memorial Avenue, Carlisle, State Records Office of Western Australia, p. 8.

Special Drive At Carlisle

The Carlisle sub-branch is making a special drive to capture the interest of members this year, in which it will celebrate its 25th anniversary.

Matters now in hand by the Committee are:

- Entering the Newdegate Cup competition. (This will definitely need support by members.)

- Arrangements for a family night social at the B.S.M. Hall, with the idea of making a regular feature.

- The President's and Secretary's Honour Board in the hall.

- The establishment of an Honour Avenue in Venus-street. Provision of trees has been taken up with the Perth City Council, and each tree is to be dedicated to a fallen comrade. Next-of-kin have already been contacted and are wholeheartedly in accordance with the idea.

The local Scout troop has volunteered to act as sub-wardens for the guarding and maintenance of trees and lawns.

This project is progressing smoothly under the guidance of Alf Newick.

The women's auxiliary birthday-night was an undoubted success. The hall was packed, visitors being led by the two State Presidents, Mrs. Stockmin (Women's Auxiliary) and Mr. Lonnie.

Source: *The Listening Post*,
July 1957, p. 9

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The children then placed themselves in pairs at the planting-pegs set up by a working-bee of sub-branch

members the previous Sunday, and planted the trees.

To end the proceedings the president thanked those present for their interest and expressed appreciation of the co-operation of the City Council.

He also paid a tribute to the headmaster and pupils of the Carlisle school for the thought which had prompted the laying of a wreath from the school on Anzac Day at the memorial hall.

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Carlisle Memorial Avenue Dedicated -
The Listening Post -
December 1958, p.

10

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PH00205-01 Title Honour Board WWI & WWII - from Bickford Soldiers Memorial Hall, now hanging in the foyer of the Harold Hawthorne Community Centre Hall
Local History Collection, Town of Victoria Park Library Service



PH00205-02 Honour Board WWI & WWII - from Bickford Soldiers Memorial Hall, now hanging on the same site, in the foyer of the Harold Hawthorne Community Centre Hall. Local History Collection, Town of Victoria Park Library Service.



PH00204-01 Memorial Avenue (street sign), Carlisle
Local History Collection, Town of Victoria Park Library Service



PH00204-03 Looking down Memorial Avenue, Carlisle from the intersection with Raleigh Street. Local History Collection, Town of Victoria Park Library Service.



PH00204-08 Close-up of one of the Jacaranda trees planted in honour of a fallen son of Carlisle, Memorial Avenue, Carlisle.

Local History Collection, Town of Victoria Park Library Service.