



1st Ermington Scout Group

Greater Western Sydney Region



ANZAC Memorial

Hyde Park

June 2013



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On Thursday 27th June the Scouts from 1st Ermington had the opportunity to visit the ANAZ Memorial at Hyde Park in the city.

We caught the train from Eastwood station for the journey into Sydney - alighting from the train at Town Hall station.

Fortunately the weather was kind and we had a nice walk up to the memorial through Hyde park. Although it was early evening and dark the memorial looked terrific.

The curator for the evening introduced himself to the troop and there was much interest in his background as he was both a Vietnam veteran and a former scout.

The evening started with a short video and the scouts were surprised at the footage of the opening because at the time the memorial was the tallest building in the city and the opening was attended by 100,000 people.

We were given a tour of the different parts of the memorial (inside and out). Learning about the different parts of the memorial was extremely interesting.

The Scouts were invited to release a Commemorative star representing an Australian service man or woman killed while serving their country or since deceased - a very humbling experience

Another highlight of the evening was the Scouts being able to see a banner signed by Baden Powell.

We departed the memorial at 8:20 for our return trip, arriving back into Eastwood at 9:10pm. A big thank you to the Scouts and Leaders that were able to participate in this activity.



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The **ANZAC War Memorial**, completed in 1934, is the main commemorative military monument of Sydney, Australia. It was designed by C. Bruce Dellit, with the exterior adorned with monumental figural reliefs and sculptures by Rayner Hoff.

The memorial is located at the southern extremity of Hyde Park on the eastern edge of Sydney's central business district, and it is the focus of commemoration ceremonies on Anzac Day, Armistice Day and other important occasions.

It was built as a memorial to the Australian Imperial Force of World War I. Fund raising for a memorial began on 25 April 1916, the first anniversary of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) landing at Anzac Cove for the Battle of Gallipoli.

It was opened on 24 November 1934 by His Royal Highness Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester



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A competition for the design of the memorial was commissioned in July 1929 and a month later the prize-winning entries were announced by the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Philip Game. Third prize was awarded to Peter Kaad, second prize to John D. Moore and the winner was Bruce Dellit. The successful contractors for the building works were Kell & Rigby.

The building is constructed of concrete, with an exterior cladding of pink granite, and consists of a massed square superstructure with typically Art Deco setbacks and buttresses, punctuated on each side by a large arched window of yellow stained glass, and crowned with a ziggurat-inspired stepped roof. It is positioned atop a cruciform pedestal within which are located administrative offices and a small museum.

The interior is largely faced in white marble, and features a domed ceiling adorned with 120,000 gold stars - one for each of New South Wales' military volunteers during World War I. Access to the main hall is provided via broad stairways on each side of the building's north-south axis, while ground-level doorways on the east and west sides offer entry to the lower section.

The main focus of the interior is Rayner Hoff's monumental bronze sculpture of a deceased youth, representing a soldier, held aloft on his shield by a caryatid - three female figures, representing his mother, sister and wife.



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These two sculptures illustrate the functions and activities of elements of the Australian Imperial Force overseas



A ten-metre-long bronze relief, over the west door by Rayner Hoff.



The other ten-metre-long bronze relief, over the east door



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Sacrifice

This is the central motif of the Memorial's design. It comprises 'the recumbent form of an Anzac whose soul has passed to the Great Beyond, and whose body, borne aloft on a shield by his best beloved - mother, sister, wife and child - is laid there as a symbol of that spirit which inspired him in life, the spirit of Courage, Endurance and Sacrifice'. Hoff's sculpture addresses the issue of an Australian identity based on its (and his) experience of war, a virile and modern nation prepared to sacrifice its best in an appalling but necessary cause - the survival of the country/race.

'Thousands of women, although not directly engaged in war activities, lost all that was dear them - sons they has borne and reared, husbands, fathers of their children, friends, lovers.

There was no acknowledgement of them in casualty lists of wounded, maimed and killed. They endured all men's sacrifice quietly'.

'In this spirit I have shown them, carrying their load, the sacrifice of their menfolk.'

Sacrifice is a shift away from the rhetoric of honour, glory and manly deeds manifested in earlier memorials - Hoff had seen too much of war to glorify it. He constructs a code of meaning through the eroticised relationship of male and female. Viewing from above in the Hall of Memory, one bows ones head to see the corpse of the dead soldier dominating. From the side the image of the three women and the infant is pre-eminent. Sacrifice deals with the unnatural force of death unleashed by the Great War, a force which destroys the man-female unity so insistently proclaimed in the sculpture



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Stars of Memory

Rising above you to a height of 26 metres is the dome of the Hall of Memory. The 120,000 golden stars covering the ceiling honour the men and women from New South Wales who enlisted for service in First World War. From this number, 21,000 were killed, or died later from their wounds, and 50,000 were wounded. Many others were left with the after effects of war, including mental scarring.

When the ANZAC Memorial was constructed between 1932 and 1934 there was a shortage of funds due to the effects of the Great Depression. In order to complete the building, the Trustees accepted a proposal that members of the public could contribute by purchasing a star for two shillings (20 cents) each. While not all of the stars were sold, sufficient funds were raised to enable the completion of the Memorial. The stars are made from plaster covered with gold paint and glued into position. It is not known why the density of the stars increases towards the top of the dome.



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A Personal Tribute

In keeping with the original intention of the stars lining the ceiling of the Hall of Memory, visitors are invited to release a commemorative star representing an Australian service man or woman killed while serving their country or since deceased. Stars can be released into the Well of Contemplation from the viewing area in the Hall of Memory any time the Memorial is open.

Stars are available at no charge from the reception desk in the exhibition area. You are welcome to write a specific name on the back of your star or to release one that has been pre-printed with the details of an Australian who has been killed in service of their country. If you would like to write on your star the name of an Australian service man or woman with whom you have some connection, staff will be glad to assist you in finding relevant service details if necessary.

Stars released into the Well are collected each week and will be kept onsite. All stars will then be burnt and the ashes carried on biannual pilgrimages by the Premier's ANZAC Memorial Scholars to key battlefield sites at Gallipoli, on the Western Front and throughout the Middle East and Asia.

The Scouts were fortunate enough to be invited to release a Commemorative star representing an Australian service man or woman killed while serving their country or since deceased.



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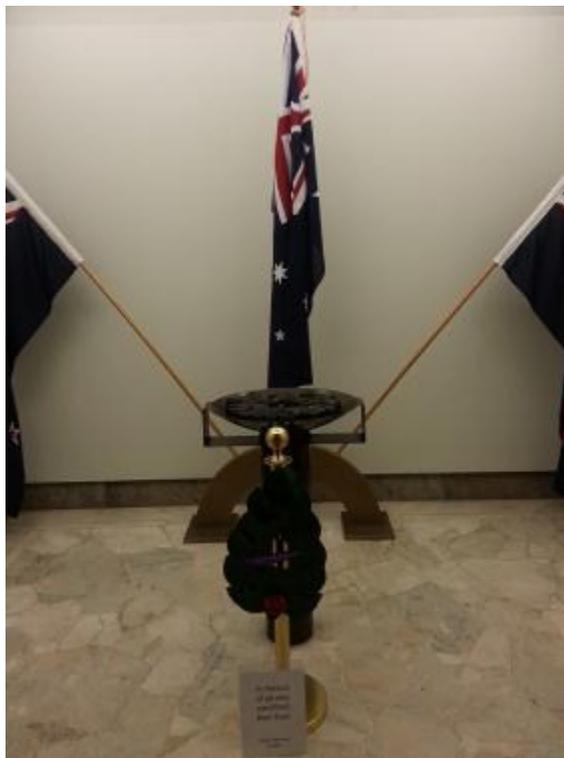


The Flame Room

This small area is accessed from the eastern side of the Hall of Memory. Dellit's original plan had this space as the Archives room, where might be placed 'suitably bound volumes of the official history of Australia's part in the Great War'. Lack of funds meant that it was not completed as such. In the 1990s the room was completed in its current function as the Flame Room.

The Australian Gas Light Company (AGL Energy from 2006) donated and installed an Eternal Flame; a flame is widely accepted as a symbol of eternal life, an eternal flame at a war memorial symbolizes a nation's perpetual gratitude towards, and remembrance of, its war dead. The flame is now kept lit only during the Memorial's opening hours and is now known as the Flame of Remembrance.

In addition to the flame, the room serves as a repository for the flags of Australia, New Zealand and the State of New South Wales



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