

Friends of the Avenue

DECEMBER 2015

Newsletter



From the Executive



Message from the Outgoing President

As I indicated at the 2014 AGM, my tenure as President of the AAoH Association would end at the 2015 AGM in July. It has been a privilege to lead the Association during its first two years and I wish to thank all members of the Association for their support and assistance during this time. I look forward to continuing my involvement with the Association as an ordinary member.

Ray Byrnes

The Avenue would like to thank Ray for his extraordinary contribution to the establishment of the memorial and ongoing dedication to the committee.

Message from the President

Hello everyone, we have finally reached the end of another busy year for the Avenue of Honour and I think I can speak for all on the committee and all of the hard working volunteers when I say that we are all looking forward to a well-earned break.

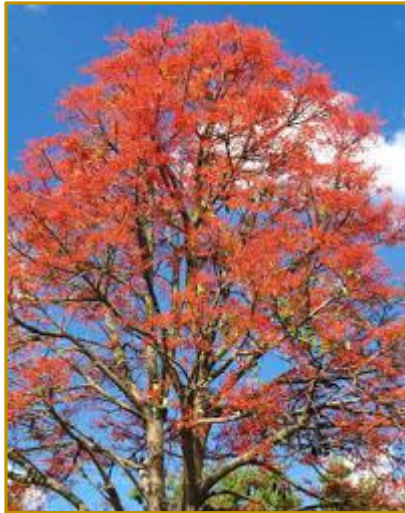
I know that all the hard work and sweat that has been put in has been worth it - our visitor numbers, positive social media comments, attendance at memorial services and the word of mouth reports that we constantly get are proof that this memorial is doing its part to keep alive the memory of those on our wall.

I know from the times I have been at the Avenue working and have met veterans, family members and friends of the fallen that it is for many the first step at putting themselves back together and I know that many of the volunteers have had the same



experience and for some it is this that drives them. The Avenue would not be the place it is without you, thank you.

What is also pleasing to see is the effect the Avenue has on the local community and although there is no way to prove that the memorial brings business to Yungaburra one would have to assume from our visitor numbers and events like the Soldier On Triathlon, that it has made some difference and that can only be a good thing in the long term.



We have already commenced planning for ANZAC Day 2016 to ensure we deliver a service befitting a memorial of national significance, stay posted for more information.

I would like to thank everyone who has donated to the Avenue throughout the year, we rely on your financial generosity to keep the Avenue in top shape and to the volunteers once again thank you.

I must take this opportunity to thank the hard working executive committee, Secretary Karina Gibson, Treasurer David Osborne and Vice President Rod Marti who do so much behind the scenes and in my absence, thank you for all of your efforts.

Finally on behalf of our committee and all the volunteers I would like to wish you all a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year, I look forward to next year when maybe we will see our first flowers in November... fingers crossed!

Craig Reedman

Message from the Vice President

It has been a privilege to serve of this Committee since its beginnings in 2012. As a Councillor, I have considerable exposure to community in a range of ways, however the experience with the Avenue stands alone in terms of community resonance. Community reach extends far beyond the Tablelands and North Queensland, its reach is truly national. This reminds us how dear the Australian people hold both the sacrifice and memory of those who served in Afghanistan. Serving on the Committee and attending to various events and tasks at the Avenue is always a humbling experience. Today, the community of Yungaburra and the Tablelands has a wonderful asset of national significance and all those who serve on the Committee or assist in managing it in some way should be both thankful and proud.

Councillor Rod Marti

Message from the Treasurer

Collections through the donations box at the Avenue continue to be steady. The generosity of visitors to the Avenue even after two years is still remarkable and combined with the consistently glowing comments in the Visitors Book, affirms the purpose and benefit of the memorial. Receipts for the Avenue come from limited sources, the donations box above is a consistent contributor, also the efforts of fundraisers and in particular the sales of merchandise and raffles by Terry and John are significant and always welcomed. The contribution from these sales and tickets are a valuable part of the Avenue's longevity.

David Osborne

Message from the Secretary

Hello everyone.....I'm Karina Gibson, the new Secretary of the AAOHA. I was born and raised in Cairns, and three years ago decided to make the move with my young family to the Tablelands. I have been lucky enough to step into a role that has been well cultivated by previous secretaries and for that I thank them all, as it has been an incredibly busy couple of months for the Avenue committee. The Avenue is a remarkable national tribute and something for our community to take great pride in. I am pleased to be able to play a part in it and have enjoyed meeting a lot of new locals and visitors. I look forward to providing you with updates on the Avenue and hopefully meeting a few more of you at upcoming events.

Karina Gibson



This amazing aerial picture of the Avenue was taken via drone during the 2015 Soldier On Yungaburra Triathlon.

Thanks to *Damo Wakeboarding* for sharing his image with us on Facebook

VISITORS TO THE AVENUE



LEE KERNAGHAN

In August Lee Kernaghan visited to Afghanistan Avenue of Honour to film footage for the music video clip (and big screen footage for his national tour) of his newly released song "I will always be with you". The Avenue is beautifully captured both lyrically "Along the Barron River, up on the Tablelands, by the waters of lake Tinaroo, where the flame trees stand....." and visually in the film clip. A moving tribute to not only those who were lost but those who have been left behind. Lest We Forget.

PATRIOTS RIDE

On Saturday 20 June, the Avenue welcomed the Cairns Chapter of the military motorcycle club the Patriots. More than 120 rode from Cairns via Mareeba and Tolga to the Avenue arriving just after 4pm. Since the opening of the Avenue in 2013, the Patriots have made the pilgrimage to the Avenue to commemorate its birthday and to honour the fallen. A short service was held at the Memorial and Honour Board, and a donation of \$4050 was presented. The Patriots stayed the night in Yungaburra and enjoyed the hospitality of the Lake Eacham Hotel. The continued support and presence of the Patriots is appreciated.



WALK OF HONOUR

Mates 4 Mates Ambassador and paratriathlete Mark Urquhart completed a ride from Townsville to Ingham then up the range to Yungaburra to finish at the Afghanistan Avenue of Honour – a total of over 350kms. Mark was injured in a parachute jump with 3RAR that left him with permanent injuries, confined to a wheelchair and with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The road trip has been a journey of discovery – of storytelling, of remembrance and healing - filmed for a documentary 'Off The Edge' by Creative Regions. Well done to everyone involved

VISITORS TO THE AVENUE

YOUNG VETERANS

Committee members Tim Webster-Young and Karina Gibson welcomed Chris and the team from Young Veterans to the Avenue on the 28th of October. They are spreading their message as they travel from the southernmost point of Australia in their ex-army Land Rovers, to the northern most point of Australia. The Young Veterans aim is “to provide a means for veterans, ex-defence and current defence members to access welfare service provided by the RSL and associated welfare services through a non-conventional setting.” For more information on the group head to: <http://youngveterans.com.au/>



MICHAEL LYDDIARD

As part of the Yungaburra Triathlon, the Avenue committee hosted a welcome function on the evening of Friday 13th November at the Lake Eacham Hotel. Michael Lyddiard (pictured with Rod Marti and Craig Reedman), Yungaburra Triathlon Ambassador and Soldier On Ambassador wowed the crowd with his moving speech about his military experience and his training as a professional athlete. On Sunday, Michael competed in the male ‘sprint’ division of the triathlon and placed 18th out of 82 competitors. Thank you to all who attended and the fundraising helpers.



VISITOR BOOKS

Completed Visitor books are now housed at the Yungaburra Visitor Information Centre.



EVENTS AT THE AVENUE

1RAR Band – Public Performance in Yungaburra



Fantastic feedback from this event - 1RAR band from Lavarack Barracks came to Maude Kehoe Park on the 20th June, Saturday afternoon. As a guest of the Afghanistan Avenue of Honour committee, 1RAR performed for approximately two hours from 3pm. The free concert was a thank you to the community of Yungaburra for its

support of the Avenue over the last two years. It was greatly enjoyed by all.

Toro Function/Donation

A morning tea was held on Wednesday 23rd September 2015 at the Avenue to thank Jim and Robyn Grimshaw from Tableland Pump and Irrigation Repairs and Service and TORO Australia for their recent major in-kind donation of a new automated irrigation system. The donation included the design, all system components and installation of the system. It will help maintain the Avenue to a high standard, consistent with that expected of a national memorial.

Jim and Robyn are to be congratulated for bringing this project from concept to reality. TORO Australia has replicated at the Avenue the significant donation that TORO makes internationally – donating all equipment to American battle memorials worldwide. Jeff Harrison (Area Manager, North Queensland) and Patrick O'Shannessy (Regional Manager, Central/North) represented TORO Australia at the morning tea and received a tour of the Avenue.



Canakkale. Gallipoli. Lest we Forget – Performance



Jan Wositzky performed at the Avenue on Wednesday 21st October as part of the 2015 Tableland Folk Festival. Thank you Michael and Bronwyn Hodgkins from TFF for bringing this

performance to the Avenue and to the helpers who assisted in setting up and dismantling the necessary items for this production and to Rod Marti for coordinating with the Folk Festival. Despite the chill in the air, a good time was had.

EVENTS AT THE AVENUE

Avenue Maintenance – November Working Bee

A working bee was held on Sunday 8th November to spruce up the Avenue for two of its biggest events of the year – Remembrance Day and Yungaburra Triathlon. Thank you to all the helpers and to Diane for the delicious morning tea of sandwiches and scones. The next working bee will be held just prior to the 2016 ANZAC Day Service. Many hands make light work, so if you can spare an hour or so to come down and help out please come along.



Yungaburra Triathlon



said Rod. The popularity of the triathlon has increased, with more than 550 participants competing across five race categories. While it was very hot, the weather was stunning and the Avenue received great publicity. In 2016 the event will be held on the 12th and 13th of November

The Avenue's Vice-President Rod Marti also doubles as the Chairman of the Yungaburra Triathlon, which supports the Soldier On charity. "It's only our second year, but this particular weekend is now a marquee event here in the Tablelands. It continues to be well supported by a lot of people right across the region"



EVENTS AT THE AVENUE

Updated Plaque - Explosive Detection Dogs (EDD) and Special Operations Military Working Dogs (SOMWD)

As part of the Remembrance Day Memorial Service, a replacement plaque was unveiled by EDD Handler's SPR Daniel Somerville (with EDD Jemma) & SPR Sean Weston (with EDD PJ) from 3 Combat Engineer Regiment, Lavarack Barracks Townsville. The dogs were a great hit with the crowd, especially for the children who were able to pat and interact with them.

After the service, the handlers presented two framed photographic collages of the 6 EDD and 4 SOMWD that were killed in Afghanistan to Yungaburra Hotel publicans Alf and Margaret Zeller (pictured below with SPR Daniel Somerville, SPR Sean Weston and Craig Reedman). Alf and Margaret will display them in the hotel. Special mention must go to Avenue Committee Member John Hardy for organising the plaque and the attendance of the dogs and handlers.



*I question not your commands
I follow faithfully wherever you go
I pledge my loyalty no matter what
I share the danger of your domain
and will readily lay down my life for
yours.....for in this moment we are as one*



EVENTS AT THE AVENUE

Remembrance Day Memorial Service

The Avenue once again provided a spectacular back drop for the Remembrance Day Memorial Service. The service was conducted on Wednesday 11 November 2015 to commemorate the end of World War I and remember all Australians who have died as a result of war. The military and public support was once again fantastic, with crowd numbers increased on last year. The unveiling of the updated Military Working Dog plaque provided another special element to the service. Thank you to all those who travelled and/or contributed to the service, in particular – Craig Reedman (MC), Major Clare O'Neill (Commemorative Address), WO2 Daniel Bell (The Ode), Bishop Tony Hall-Matthews (Prayer/Requiem), Kylie Akers (Lament), Kane McElligott (Bugler), Yungaburra State School (Poem), 3RAR, 3CER and the Defence Indigenous Development Program.



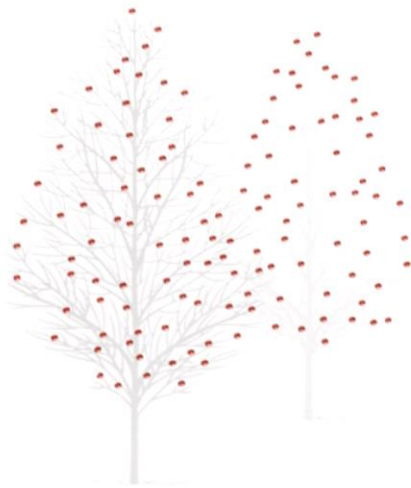
Yungaburra State School Students



*L-R Committee Members Rod Marti, John Hardy,
Karina Gibson, Barbi Reedman, Craig Reedman*



Catapalque Party – 3RAR



SEASON'S
greetings