

Mittagong War Memorial

UNVEILING CEREMONY.

The unveiling of the War Memorial at Mittagong on Saturday afternoon last, together with the sports and sale of goods at the lake grounds, was an unqualified success. The State Governor, Sir Walter Davidson, sent an apology stating that prior engagements prevented his attendance and expressing his appreciation of the efforts of the residents of Mittagong and district to perpetuate the memory of those who had answered the call for service in the late war.

At the commencement of the unveiling ceremony the Mayor of Mittagong (Alderman Harvey) read apologies from many of the invited guests, amongst them being Sir George Fuller, Messrs Davies and Cleary, M's.L.A., Mr Lazarini, M.H.R., Sir Charles Rosenthal, Colonel Chaplain Green, the Minister for Public Works, the Under-Secretary for Local Government, and Messrs H Richardson and E E Row, of Moss Vale.

Before calling upon Mr McDonald, the president of the Returned Soldiers' League, to unveil the memorial tablets, Ald Harvey briefly referred to the efforts of the Mittagong people to erect a suitable memorial in the town to the memory of those who had made the supreme sacrifice in the great war, and also of all those who had obeyed the call for service. In this connection they had to thank Mr W B Hudson, of the Railway Construction Department, for the plans which they had adopted, their only difficulty being in financing the undertaking. However, the people of Mittagong and district had worked hard to provide the funds, and he believed that that afternoon they would raise sufficient to clear off all their liabilities.

Mr McDonald, on rising to speak, was greeted with hearty cheers. He said he wished to sincerely thank the Mayor and the people of Mittagong for the privilege of unveiling their splendid memorial, also the President of the Nattai Shire (Councillor G Kell) and the Mayors of Bowral and Moss Vale (Aldermen Pickard and Hawkins) for being present. This showed that they had their hearts in the movement for the recognition of those who had fought for them. The element of friendship was enshrined on the battlefields amongst the men of the A.I.F. The men who had returned appreciated the efforts of the people of Australia and of the Government to rejoice them in civil life. The work of the A.I.F. was not fruitless. They were a volunteer army, and it was to this fact that Australia owed so much to-day. He hoped that the people of Australia would never at any future time look upon that as a base memorial. He had much pleasure in unveiling the memorial as a record of the deeds of the men of the A.I.F.

The Mayor then introduced Brigadier-General Onslow, who, he said, would present the 1914-15 Star and Medals.

Brigadier-General Onslow said that he was presenting the medals by order of the Governor-General, as it was the usual course for a senior officer to do so. The Star was first given to those who had taken part in the retreat from Mons, and then to the Anzacs, afterwards being extended to those who had enlisted in 1914-15. General Onslow then pinned the medals on the breasts of the following returned men:—Private Hodkies, Private Rutherford, Private W B Marrow, Private W H Jones, Private Lumin. In presenting the Star and Medal to Mrs Percy he asked all to stand and remove their hats in honour of one who had given his life for his country. Mrs Styles, of Hill Top, was also presented with a medal for her son, who was unable to be present. Several other returned soldiers were in attendance, but their medals had not arrived, and this fact was explained to them, the General regretting their non-arrival.

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Rev. E Heffernan (Mittagong) said it was often forgotten what sacrifices had been made by those who had given their sons to the service of their country. The clergy were brought more closely into contact with this when delivering the messages which told of the death of their loved ones. The men of the A.I.F. scorned to save themselves, but they saved us. He was proud to say he had one son amongst them. He would have had three had they been accepted.

Ald. Hawkins (Moss Vale) briefly congratulated the people of Mittagong on the completion of their memorial and for their invitation to him to be present at its unveiling.

Ald. Pickard, on behalf of the people of Bowral, also congratulated them on the completion of their splendid structure. He said, as chairman of the local Repatriation Committee, they had up to the present met all the requests of the returned men, and he hoped they would continue to do so. This work was not completed, and he hoped that if any further demands were made upon them that they would rally and respond to the call.

Ald. Harvey then called for three cheers for General Onslow and Mr McDonald, and also thanked the public for their support.

The band played the National Anthem at the commencement and end of the proceedings.

At the conclusion of the unveiling ceremony the people adjourned to the lake grounds, where the ladies of Mittagong had erected many impromptu structures, which were well stocked with tempting goods. These found a ready sale, as the stall returns give ample evidence, and at the close of the afternoon these ladies returned home tired but happy. Their rivalry in the several larger stalls practically resulted in a dead heat for first place in actual sale returns. This ending conduces to general good feeling, and abates that local jealousy which sometimes is in evidence in small country towns.

The following ladies were in charge of the various stalls:—Refreshment stall: Mesdames Chester Smith, A. M. Smith, Roberts, Houston, Percy, Murray, Helmes, K. Smith, Theo. Horton, Boswell, McLean, W. South, Misses D Smith, Downs and Egger. Paddy's Market stall: Mesdames C. N. Lee, Robinson, Peirson and Dobson, Misses Vance (2), and Madame Tasker (clairvoyant). Produce stall: Mesdames Rainbow, Drabble, Hedger, Aeber, Andrews, Fullford, and Miss Blanche Hunter. Sweets stall: Misses Farrar, Fitter, Shimmels, Lawson and Hagan. Ice cream and soft drinks stall: Misses Ivy Smith, Peggy Smith, Coffey and Nichols.

Messrs. Robinson and A. Beaumont very efficiently carried out the duties of gate-keepers.

The several sporting events resulted as follow:—

Walking the Greasy Pole. Prize, the pig at the end, given by Mr. A. M. Smith.—Bert Webb, 35 entries.

Swimming Event. All Comers' Scratch Race, 1st 30s, 2nd 10s. Prizes contributed by Capt. Fauley, Messrs. Carnegie, Neal, Gray, and Roberts and Lippiatt.—Hauber 1, Flood 2. Seven entries. A good contest. A foot would have covered the lot at the finish.

The takings up to Saturday evening were: Gate money £13 19s 9d, sweets stall £7 14s 11d, ice cream £7 10s, refreshment stall £17 13s 8d, refreshment donations £28 8s, Paddy's market stall takings £28 1s 6d, Paddy's market stall donations £1 10s, produce stall £23 14s 6d, sale of post cards £1 12s 8d, proceeds of sports £3 3s, sheep (Mr Webb) £5, general donations £9 12s 6d; sheep (Mr Harvey) £2 10s.—Total £142 16s 2d.

Donations collected by Miss B Hunter and credited to produce stall:—Mr Callan 4s 6d

Donations collected by Miss B Hunter and credited to produce stall:—Mr Callan 4s 6d, Misses Barr 5s, Mr B Humphrey 2s, Mrs Goodfellow 2s; total £1 9s

It is anticipated that the net result will be at least £135. Deducting £82 balance due on clock as per previous statement there will be a surplus of about £50 to meet expenses of construction of path and provision of lighting. This will be more than sufficient, and as there are a fair number of articles still unsold the ladies are suggesting that the council consider installing a set of chimes in the clock.