

# Bendemeer Memorial Gates.

## Official Opening

The Bendemeer War Memorial Committee had the extreme pleasure on Anzac Day of at last witnessing the culmination of its efforts towards erecting a memorial to the men of the district who served the colours in the Great War.

As mentioned by the Secretary great delay occurred in the committee's negotiations with the Central Committee; but at long last the plans of the gates decided upon as the form of the memorial were adopted and the work was put in hand.

With characteristic energy, the members of the committee worked with a will under the skilful direction of Mr Hamilton, and soon the gates were completed.

They provide a main entrance to the park on the right bank of the Macdonald River and facing the Great Northern Road. It is an ideal spot, one frequented by the people, both visitors and local residents, and its natural beauties, what with river, and tall she-oaks and sloping swards, with the picturesque bridge close by, have been further hallowed by this memorial to the sacrifices of the district's young manhood in the Great War.

Here, in the years to come, the memorial will give mute testimony of a great crisis that found the district's young men willing, aye, and ready, to brave the Great Unknown in the cause of their country. Their deeds will be recalled, and they will be honored more and yet more as the years speed on.

The gates will be a heritage to the community, which, more particularly, will assemble there each Anzac Day for the purpose of singing the praises of its soldiers and holding silent communion with the spirits of those who have given their all for their country.

### THE CEREMONY.

Glorious weather prevailed for the official opening ceremony on Anzac Day. Here between the hills, Old Sol poured down his warmth from a bright blue sky, unobscured by clouds.

Sol poured down his warmth from a bright blue sky unflecked by cloud. Occasionally a zephyr gently waved the flags bedecking the Memorial Gates. In this setting, the ceremony was witnessed by a large number of local residents and visitors from Tamworth, Uralla and Walcha districts.

In the absence of the President of Cockburn Shire Council, Mr. Arn. J. Osborne presided, and was supported by Mr W. O. Murray and Mr R. D. Dixon (Secretary).

Proceedings commenced with the singing of the National Anthem, after which the Chairman briefly addressed the assemblage. He gave the public a cordial welcome to what he termed the most important event in the history of Bendemeer. In the Memorial Gates the people had something in which they could well take a deep pride, and it was appropriate that this day, the twelfth anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli, should be set apart for such a ceremony. As they cast their minds back to that wonderful day it seemed incredible that twelve years had passed; but they recalled vividly the wonderful deeds of their boys. Time was softening the memory of the losses of their young manhood in the Great War, but there were still aching hearts among their small community as well as throughout Australia, although it was solacing to those who mourned their dead to know that they died that the Australian nation might live.

The Gates as they stood cost £140, said the Chairman, which he thought was a fine tribute to the men who had helped by voluntary labour, thus saving much expense. In this connection he wanted to particularly mention Messrs A. C. Doring, A. Edwards and Brett. He also wanted to thank the Cockburn Shire Council, and particularly the Clerk, for help and advice given in connection with the movement.

At this stage the Chairman read apologies from Mr W. Park and Mr R. J. McKieran, and then called on the Secretary, to whom the lion's share of praise was due for the final success of the movement.

Mr Dixon said the movement was first mooted on 13th October 1923, when it decided at a public meeting

when it decided at a public meeting that it was the duty of Bendemeer and district to make some tangible expressions of its gratitude to the men of the district who fought in the Great war. Three and a half years had elapsed since the movement was first mooted, but many things prevented the committee going ahead as quickly as it could have wished. Great delay had been occasioned in its dealings with the War Memorials Board. In the first plans received from the Board wooden gates were provided for, which he thought was a downright deliberate insult to the people of Bendemeer. As one member of the committee remarked, they didn't want to put up anything to feed white ants, and they there and then decided to have iron gates. Their proposal was submitted to the Board, and eight months then elapsed before the completed plans were received by the committee. He thought the completed work was as substantial a job as they could find. The young people present that day would be old men before signs of decay appeared in it, and he felt that in the years to come they would feel a higher gratitude to those whose names were perpetuated on the marble tablets of the pillars of the gates. Personally he felt a deep sense of gratitude at being spared to take part in this day's proceedings, and as Secretary of the movement he felt he had only done his small part in acknowledging the great deeds of the boys who fought for their home and country. Had it not been for them where would Australia have been? Here the speaker harked back to the days of the Franco-Prussian War and the heavy indemnity demanded of the French by the victors. Had Germany won the Great War, her legions would have come to Australia. Perhaps Turkish soldiers would have patrolled our country, and wouldn't that have been nice? The children were too young to know of the dark days of the Great War, but he hoped they would live to remember the day of the opening of these Memorial Gates as a red letter day in their lives, and honor the memory of the boys whose names they perpetuated. Personally he had reached the 79th mile stone, and he felt that he had not long to

and he felt that he had not long to go; but he could assure them that while he lived he would take every care of the gates. (Applause).

Many beautiful wreaths adorned the gates, and their source were then publicly acknowledged by Mrs Jas. Ryan on behalf of the Bendemeer Red Cross; Mrs R. Smith, on behalf

## Large Gathering

of the G.P.L.; Mrs C. Fisher, on behalf of the Lest We Forget League; and Lorna Osborne, on behalf of the school girls.

Mr W. Carlon (Uralla), then being called upon, offered his hearty congratulations to the good people of Bendemeer upon erecting such a beautiful memorial. The memorial was a thing of beauty that would always serve as a reminder of the boys who had done so much. On that day twelve years ago the young Australians did more for the name of the nation that all others had done all their lives. The Australians had distinguished themselves as the best fighters on the face of the earth, and he felt that there was not one wasted life amongst all who had fallen in the great cause—the only wasted life was that of the one who went his way without thought of others. The glorious Anzacs would live for ever, and their deeds will be remembered as long as there are Australians alive. Personally he wanted also to mention the great credit due to the women of Australia, whose grand sustained work during the war helped to win the extraordinary distinction that had come to Australia.

Mr Hamilton, who said that Gates were a credit to the citizens and the district, then called for three cheers for the returned soldiers of Bendemeer, and later, his invitation to cheer the committee was again echoed down the valley of the river.

Mr Jas. Ryan, speaking on behalf of the returned soldiers, said it gave them pleasure in thanking the people of Bendemeer for the fine memorial. He mentioned the numerous memorials met with in Europe, and instanced how the natives always poin-

stanced how the natives always pointed them out with pride and honor. He felt that the people in the years to come would grow to honor the Bendemeer Memorial Gates more and more.

The Chairman then presented a silver key to Mr Murray, at the same time asking him to officially open the gates.

Mr Murray undraped the tablets and opened the gates. In doing so he said: I declare these Memorial Gates duly open and dedicate them to the honour and glory of the men of Bendemeer who fought in the Great War.

Mr Murray thanked the Chairman for the honor and said he would deeply treasure the silver key, handing it down as one of the heirlooms of the family.

The committee then walked through the gates, followed by the people, this concluding the ceremony.

## THE MEMORIAL.

The iron gates are swung between four substantial pillars of brick standing on concrete, 12ft between each pillar. In addition to the main gate in the centre, on the left a gate for foot passengers is provided. Marble tablets are built in the two centre pillars, on which the following names are inscribed:

x D. C. Murray	J. Skewes
x G. T. Reid	J. R. Skewes
x E. Anderson	W. Skewes
x J. H. Riordan	O. L. Smith
x H. C. Hine	A. C. Smith
x C. Holledge	G. Phillips
x G. Burlinson	H. Gibson
x R. Adamson	W. Day
x W. A. McGinty	F. Albertson
x P. Murray	C. G. Park
F. J. McGinty	J. Ryan
F. S. McGinty	W. Southward
L. R. McGinty	L. Berman
J. H. Murray	C. F. Sisson
S. T. Murray	B. K. Osborne
L. Murray	A. West
J. Murray	J. Knight
P. O. Murray	G. Gregson
W. E. Riordan	G. Fitzgerald
G. D. Riordan	T. Adamson
H. V. Riordan	F. Knight
E. Brereton	e W. Haines
H. Brett	e G. Blair
C. Brett	e T. L. O'Toole
B. Schalk	e J. McGinty
A. Reid	e Enlisted

**A. Reid**  
x Killed  
\* Died

e Enlisted

The wreaths adorning the Memorial were artistically prepared, and tied with Battalion or Regimental colours. The Lest We Forget League offered such tributes to the memory of the following:—

Private G. T. Reid, 3rd Batt., killed in France April 9, 1917.

Cpl. D. C. Murray, M.M., 33rd Batt., killed 23rd July 1917.

Private J. H. Riordan, 18th Batt., killed 16th January 1916.

Private G. Burlinson, 33rd Batt., killed.

Private R. Adamson, 35th Batt., killed 7th June 1917.

Private H. Hines, 1st Batt., killed  
Trooper D. A. McGinty, 12th L.H., died 28th April 1918.

Trooper R. C. Holledge, 2nd L.H., killed Aug. 11th 1917.

Private E. Anderson

The Memorial Committee comprised: Messrs Phil Dixon, John Dixon, Albert Osborne, A. Murray, J. Dielick, A. J. Osborne and R. D. Dixon (Secretary).

#### AMBULANCE SPORTS.

Sports, organised in aid of the Tamworth Ambulance, filled in the afternoon. A very live committee started the lengthy programme at 2 o'clock sharp, and kept it moving throughout. Horse, pedestrian and miscellaneous events were decided in quick succession, and the public was very well satisfied.

Keen interest was taken in the horse events, which were just as keenly contested.

Results are:

Bending race: B. Sweeney.

Musical chairs: R. Smith 1, K. Corbett 2.

Saddling horse race: K. Corbett 1, R. Smith 2.

Flag race: R. Smith 1, B. Sweeney 2.

Throwing at wicket (boys), Col. Hazlewood.

Guessing weight of yoll, Mrs B. Osborne and Arthur Blair divide.

Three-legged race, C. Bayliss and G. O'Toole.

Throwing broom, ladies, Mrs C. Osborne

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Nail driving, ladies, Mrs F. Doring  
Fat sheep counted by Mr H. H. Witts, P. O'Toole.

Fat sheep donated by Mr J. T. Osborne, C. Farreil.

Fat sheep donated by Mr F. Doring, W. Fisher.

Rescuing wounded soldier, A. Sweeney.

Donkey race, R. Smith.

Carry-your-shum once, K. Corbett and A. Sweeney.

Stepping distance, men, J. Hazlewood.

Stepping distance, ladies, Mrs W. Wright.