

IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY AT OAKBANK FOR UNVEILING OF WORLD-WAR II HONOR ROLL

"The loss of those noble fathers, and of those young men who would have been fathers but for the war, has left the world a poorer place in which to live. Perhaps it is because of the loss of the influence of these noble men and their children that the world is so perturbed today," said Mr. E. W. Mattner in unveiling Oakbank's honor roll.

On Friday evening last residents of Oakbank, relatives and friends gathered by invitation of the Oakbank Soldiers' Memorial hall, to honor the men and women who served in the armed forces from Oakbank. It was also the 21st anniversary of the opening of the hall on June 11, 1927 by Lt. Col. W. F. J. McCann, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C.

Although invited the same gentleman was unable to perform the ceremony of unveiling the honor roll, owing to bereavement of his wife. Mr. E. W. Mattner, of Balhannah, a returned soldier of 1st and 2nd World Wars, having gained many distinctions, performed the ceremony.

Guests were received by the chairman and secretary and the hall with its new curtains, chromium hand rails, and stage decorated in white irises and autumn oak foliage and the Australian and Union Jack flags made a splash of color on the blue draw-curtains, where at the base and centre of the stage the Cross of Remembrance was draped by the Union Jack and illuminated and the Ritual recited at 9 p.m. Life-sized portraits of Their Majesties, the King and Queen are draped on the right-hand side wall, and a portrait of General Sir John Monash. A unique record photo of the first chairman-trustees, Messrs. A. Peacock (dec.), W. H. Pike (dec.), E. Marks (dec.), E. E. Pike and G. T. Edwards, also the honor roll of 1914-18, on the left side, a portrait of Winston Churchill, Landing Anzacs, and the new honor roll 1939-45.

The chairman, Mr. G. T. Edwards,

The chairman, Mr. G. T. Edwards, welcomed all present and apologised for Lt.-Col. McCann's absence. The hon. secretary, Mr. Leo Mattner apologised for the Premier's absence. He said the committee had decided to have an honor roll similar to that of the previous war. It is hand-beaten bronze base, with brass tablets of individual names, mounted on a lovely blackwood baseboard. The laurel wreath is on top and immediately beneath this are the Australian flag and Union Jack with the inscription "Oakbank. Those who Served."

Messrs. Harry Mumme, Withers, Lewis, Morphett and Smith contributed to the programme, which was fully appreciated. At 8.45 two verses of O Vallant Hearts were sung by those assembled.

"May all who enter the hall look upon this Honor Roll as a sacred emblem on which are inscribed the names of those who offered their lives bravely for the preservation of their native land," Mr. E. W. Mattner said in a moving address prior to unveiling the Honor Roll.

Mr. Mattner said he had a difficult task in taking Lt.-Col. McCann's place but was conscious of a deep sense

of pride and pleasure at being requested to do so. The men and women who served in the 1939-45 war voyaged over many seas, traversed many lands and flew over vast continents, he said, yet wherever their duty called them, their thoughts always turned to their birthplace; in many cases this was Oakbank. It was this indissoluble attachment to their own country that

Oakbank. It was this indissoluble attachment to their own country that inspired men and women to defend their kith and kin, and preserve their homeland, and those whom they honored that night were either born or lived within a stone-throw of the hall, and loved every tree, every bramble that was to them home.

"Epictetus said 'Every burden has

two handles, one by which it can be carried, and one by which it cannot be carried; the wise man finds the handle by which he can carry his burden.' Our men found that handle," Mr. Mattner said. The greatest tragedy of men lost in war is not the dead body but the loss of those unborn generations which that man had the right to bring into the world.

"We are too close to the 1939-45 war to realise what the loss of these men and their children meant to the world, but we are experiencing today the loss of our men in the 1914-18 war. When we realise, as we will in the next 10 to 15 years, what the loss of the 1939-45 war meant to our country, surely we will strive for peace in the world, if we desire civilisation to remain," Mr. Mattner said.

A fitting and timely thought was given by the speaker when he said: "It must be a source of pride and satisfaction to you all to see the returned men and women make a success in life. **LET US HELP THEM —A KIND WORD, A GRACIOUS ACT, AND AN UNDERSTANDING HEART.**"

Mr. Mattner then unveiled the honor roll as the Oakbank district's tribute to their courageous men and women.