



"Bunk"

"History is more or less bunk"-
HENRY FORD, Chicago Tribune, 1916

Diary Dates 2016

Museum Open
10am to noon
Monday to Friday

Meetings at Museum
22 Alexandra Street
Hunters Hill

Thursday 23 June
WINTER LUNCH AT THE
HUNTERS HILL CLUB
12:30 for 1pm
There will be no general
business
Speaker:
Graham Percival
Hunters Hill Historical
Plaques

SPECIAL EVENT
Wednesday 27 July
Tour of CLIFTON
7 Woolwich Road
Morning Tea and
Inspection of House and
Garden
BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL
PLACES ARE LIMITED
Phone Tony Saunders
98171432
or Museum 98799443
Meet at the museum at
10am

Army small ships link with Woolwich

In the early 1950s, a new threat of communism was developing in SE Asia. Because of this threat, National Service was introduced and Australia purchased Centurion tanks from Britain. However once they had been delivered to Puckapunyal in Victoria, due to their size and weight, our nation lacked the means to move them north to counter the

Army purchased the then semi derelict and overgrown Mort's Dock property. Operating from Woolwich, these ships and their soldier crews moved everything from oil drilling rigs to stud cattle around our north and in the New Guinea area native troops, trucks and road building plant into inaccessible areas. In 1966 the Army Small Ships were committed to warlike operations again with heavy lifts to South Vietnam. This year is the 50th anniversary of this deployment. All four of our LSMs served in South Vietnamese waters, operating between Woolwich Dock and Vung Tau, and at least one vessel always remained on station from 1966 to 1971. Two vessels sustained damaged from enemy fire and rockets while operating on the Mekong.



perceived threat. The Corps of Engineers was challenged to find a solution to the problem, which resulted in the purchase of four Landing Ships Medium or LSMs from the US Navy. These vessels were ocean-going landing ships. They had seen service in the Second World War and were mothballed in Japan, having been out of commission for some 12 to 14 years. Australian Army crews were flown to Japan to re-activate the vessels and steam them back to Sydney.

The LSMs were 62 metres in length, with a beam of 10.5 metres and a normal carrying capacity of 300 to 400 tonnes. They carried a working crew of 38 soldiers. Primarily designed to carry tanks, they could also transport heavy bulldozers, cranes, combat troops and of course general cargo such as trucks and ammunition. They had a unique beaching capability, needing just one metre of water forward and two metres aft, which generally meant an almost dry landing for their cargo.

Due to these ships being larger than any previously operated by our soldiers there were problems in finding a home for them. In 1963, the

After completing our withdrawal from Vietnam, the ships had begun to show their age. Ships that suffered the stresses of running up onto beaches to load and discharge cargo as well as the stresses encountered in heavy seas with vessels of such a shallow draft had taken their toll and in the early 70s they were all disposed of. Thus ended a close relationship between the Army Mariners and Hunters Hill but the qualities of the original Anzacs - service, comradeship, loyalty and bravery - are remembered by all who served with or had close contact with this unusual group of soldiers.

At the Anzac Service on 22 April at Hunters Hill, Colonel Ken Duncan (Ret'd), Patron of the 32 Small Ship Squadron, gave this history of the squadron, and its connection with Mort's Dock at Woolwich.

Picture: AV 1354 Brudenell White (Broody Hen), named after the Chief of Staff to Major John Monash during WWI and Chief of Army Staff during WWII. He was killed in the RAAF plane crash near Canberra in August 1940.

HUNTERS HILL HISTORICAL
SOCIETY INC

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When did the First World War end?

The War Memorial outside Hunters Hill Town Hall is worth looking at carefully because it reveals an interesting fact...the dates of the First World War are given as 1914-1919.

This is in contrast to most modern sources which give the dates as 1914-1918.

On researching the evidence, I find the question of whether the war finished in 1918 or 1919 is a matter of debate.

The facts are these:

On 11 November 1918 an armistice was signed by the Allies with Germany in a railway carriage at Compiegne in France and an immediate ceasefire came into effect "at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month".

However the actual official ending of hostilities came with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June, 1919.

So what is correct – 1918 or 1919?

Obviously those who erected the War Memorial, in 1927, were much closer to that fateful period in history and thus chose the date which signified to them that the "war to end all wars" was finally over.

The War Memorial is also worth examining

for another reason – the scars that blemish the granite monolith.

When the War Memorial, "To the Brave" who enlisted from Hunters Hill", was unveiled at a ceremony, attended by 2000 people, its location was at the intersection of Ferry Street and Woolwich Road.

I understand it was moved to its present site because it became something of a traffic hazard with automobiles crashing into it and causing damage.

In the early days the War Memorial's peak was fixed a bronze lantern which was supposed to glow every night.

However this light was extinguished long ago; the reason for which is unclear.

The Mayor of Hunters Hill at the time, Alderman L.A. Myers, presided at the unveiling ceremony and the guest of honour was the Governor General, Lord Stonehaven.

In his address, the Governor General commented on the large attendance: "I am glad also to see this guard of honour of young men who are being trained to do the same honour to the Empire, if need should arise". Little did he know how prophetic his words would be! **Chris Schofield**

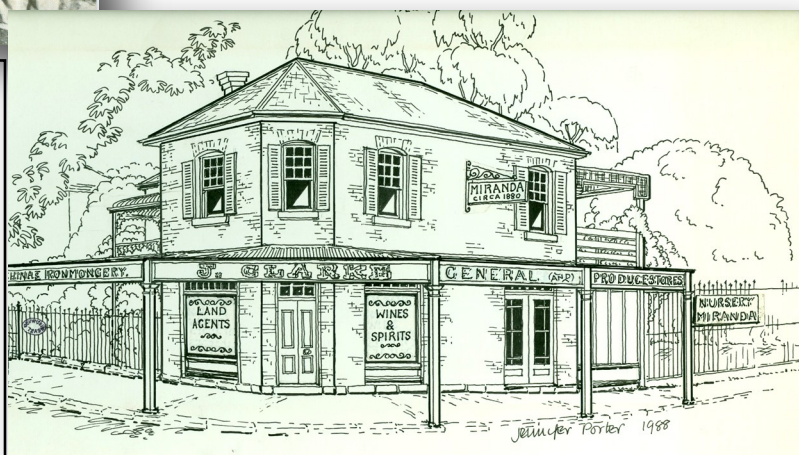
These pictures were loaned to the Historical Society by Betty Prott. Right: Nurses ready to depart for South Africa 1900. Below: Internees, 1915.



RECOGNISE THIS BUILDING?

Yes, it's 39 Alexandra Street, on the corner of Ferry Street, built about 1890. It is believed to have been named *Miranda*. The land was part of a Crown Grant of 32 acres to William Morgan in 1834. From 1867 to 1892 the land and several blocks adjacent to it, down to Martha Street, formed part of Cuneo's Recreation Ground. It has been a corner shop and grocer, antique shop, furniture showroom, art gallery and real estate agencies.

When was the awning removed?



Sketch by Jennifer Porter 1988