

Annual Report: 7TH Light Horse Regiment AIF, Menangle Historical Troop June 2018,

Len Carter, AFSM EFO, President/CO.

Time goes by so quickly with yet another year passing since we first re-formed our Living Memorial Historical Troop four years ago. During that period much has been achieved with the past twelve months seeing the culmination, building and final dedication of two Light Horse Memorials. The first being a Monument dedicated to **All Regiments involved in the Desert Column in 1917**, commemorating the Charge of Beersheba, together with the re-naming of Racecourse Rd to become **Beersheba Parade**. We participated in the ceremony both mounted and un-mounted. We are all very appreciative of the generosity of Cambelltown City Council, Councillors and Staff for their support in creating such an excellent designed and developed sculpture. The Second memorial was erected by Club Menangle in **Memory of the thirty One (31) Troopers from the 4th and 12th Light Horse AIF Regiments that fell during the Charge of Beersheba**. That un-veiling was prior to our Memorial Beersheba Breakfast sponsored by Club Menangle 31/10/2017, with Mounted Troopers in the Presence of NSW Governor; His Excellency, General David Hurley AC.DSC. (Retd), The Chief of the Defence Force; Air Chief Marshal, Mark Binskin AC. Both those memorial un-veilings were most satisfying to all the members and supporters of our troop, as you are aware both Steve Wisbey and I, have close family connections with the Light Horse during that period in WW1. Additionally the support that the 7TH Light horse Regiment has received since re-forming of the Regiment, from Camden RSL Sub-Branch, Club Menangle, Camden, and Campbelltown City Councils, together with help from many of our personal friends, has assisted greatly in establishing this living memorial of Mounted Troopers a reality. I have received many emails from friends and acquaintances throughout the world that have seen the Beersheba Parade Memorial, together with our Troop as shown and depicted on Public Media, expressing praise on all we have achieved.

The next project was the purchasing and bringing into commission the **Side Loading three Horse Float** that was purchased with major assistance from Club Menangle, financial help from Camden City Community Grants Program, and the manufacturer of TUZA Trailers. We have trialled the trailer attending a number of parades with success; however we felt there was a need for some attention in sign writing to attract public notice on who we were by the addition of art works depicting Light Horse activity. After continued study of various art work presentations, and the good work by Phill and Fiona, assisted by Steve with his numerous contacts, a final selection was decided upon in a painting by Ian Coate titled "The Charge". Artist Ian Coate was most gracious in waiving all royalties of his Light Horse Painting collection in whatever we chose, subsequently again with the help of Club Menangle and the generosity in costings from Townsend Signs of Smeaton Grange, the work was finalised and commenced. We had our first display of the completed mural on the trailer when we attended a Regimental Anzac Day Church Parade at St James Anglican Church Menangle, on 22nd April. Phill & Fiona rode their horses, presenting outside the

Church entry prior to the Service that was a pleasant surprise to the Congregation. Following the Church Service, all gathered at the Memorial Wall/Gate entry to the Church grounds, where a wreath laying ceremony, playing of the Last Post, and reciting of the Ode was conducted.

The next event involving the Regiment was attending the Anzac Day Service at Carrington Village 10-00 hours 24/04/2018. Three un-mounted Troopers attended, with Camden RSL Sub-Branch Member, Light Horse President, Lt Len Carter reading a dedication poem on behalf of the Sub- Branch to the memory of departed much loved Member, Laurie Giles MBE. The balance of that afternoon kept both Phill and I, fully involved in erecting the display for the Anzac Dawn Service. This year we again erected the operations command post tent but with the addition of Sand Bags to apply a more authentic approach in what would have been the situation during WW1 Operations. The display again included weapons of, a Sabre, SMLE 303 Rifles, Light Horse Saddle with Regiment Saddle Cloth, Combination Halter/Bridle as used by the Light Horse WW1, Bandolier, Two original, and one Replica Water bottles, One WW1 Morse Code set, Original Gas Mask in carry bag. Original Vickers Machine Gun Ammunition Box, feeder belt with Dummy ammunition, together with a number of Historical Photographs. Phill and Fiona also supplied Hurricane Lanterns that were alight during the dawn service giving an authentic original glow to our display. In addition timber holding yards constructed by Phill were used to erect marshalling yards for our three horses, Aladdin, Max and Jessica. Phill and Fiona rode Max and Jessica at the rear of the assembled during the service. The Regiment Battle Honours Guidon with Australian Flag and Regiment Pennant Marker were also on display on the left hand side of the rostrum remaining un-covered and unfurled during the service. Thank you Phill & Fiona for all the help you gave prior to, and during this Anzac Day Commerations.

The morning parade through Camden was a success with the parade being led by three Troopers with their Horses. President Len Carter, in Staff Sergeant Uniform led favourite horse Aladdin as *The Riderless Horse, with Boots reversed, and weapons in full Battle Order, followed by Corporal Phillip Oliver on Max, and Lance Corporal Fiona Oliver on Felicity, also in full battle order.* The attending crowd were impressed with our presentation judging by the parents and children who clapped, and who later attended the portable stables to meet the horses and Troopers to have their picture taken with them. We were very thankful for the assistance given to us by RSL Club Member John Kelly, (Vietnam Vet) and Fiona's Mother Mrs Williams. Both attended the display while the Troop was involved in other activities. Special mention to Fiona's Mum who collected donations from appreciative members of the attending public at the static display. We received many favourable comments about the graphic art work by Ian Coate displayed on the rear of our Horse Float that was parked adjoining the Operations Bell Tent.

On the 29th of April (Anzac week) The Troop were invited to attend Club Menangle to participate in a Memorial Ceremony for the clubs ANZAC Track Meet. RSL Club President Lain, read the Ode with the playing of Last Post, Thence Reveille, with Lt Len Carter taking the salute at the lowering and raising of the National Flag, and singing of Australian and NZ National Anthems. Phill & Fiona rode their mounts (in full battle order dress) onto the track carrying The National Flag, & Regiment Red & Black Marker Pennant. Following the Memorial Service we were all invited to attend the chairman's Lounge for dinner where a relaxed and enjoyable meal completed the evening activities.

One project that I have taken upon myself during 2018 was the re-furbishing of the Memorial Gates to Onslow Park (generally known entry to Camden Show Ground). I became interested in this project following our involvement during 2017 with the Pollie Pedal event where Camden RSL Sub-Branch, with 7th Light Horse Regiment members assisted in marshalling and meeting the cycling crew with afternoon tea at Onslow Park, and Camden RSL President, Lain Richard Evan presented a cheque for *Soldier On Charity*. During that event I was most surprised in noticing the poor condition of the Show Ground Memorial Gates. Subsequently I decided to inquire what could be done about the situation, being the re-formed 7th Light Horse AIF Regiment Historical Troop we do have a vested interest in the original Dedication service where mention was made of 7th Light Horse Regiment and its Officers. The gates were dedicated in 1933 to the memory of 7th Light Horse founding Commander, Brigadier General George Macleay Macarthur Onslow CMG, DSO, VD, who died in 1931 at the early age of 56. There is a Brass Plaque mounted on the left side of the gate wall to that effect. On the right hand side wall there is another plaque in memory of the late Sir William Macarthur and Mrs Elizabeth Macarthur Onslow who in 1882 made a gift to the Camden Community of Onslow Park (that included Camden Show Ground complex). As a consequence I wrote to The Camden Agricultural Society, Camden City Council Mayor, Ward Councillors and Memorials Australia. That correspondence resulted in confirmation the Memorial Gates were the responsibility of Camden City Council, to maintain the condition of that community memorial. Further research enabled me to obtain relative documents to assist Mayor Lara Symkowiak in that task including transcripts, with an original Photograph of the completed Memorial Gates, Architectural graphics, and a full newspaper report contained in THE CAMDEN NEWS, on the dedication ceremony of The Memorial Gates by NSW Governor; His Excellency Sir Phillip Game on 2nd March 1933. Anzac Day 2018, Mayor Lara Symkowiak thanked me for the documents and bringing the matter to her attention. Mayor Symkowiak accepted it was council's responsibility for the repair of the gates and she is waiting for a final report on the repair works. Irrespective Mayor Symkowiak assured me the repair will be done to bring the gates back to their original condition. I would also like to thank Mr John Wrigley OAM, of Camden Historical Society who supplied me copy of the original Photograph taken following the dedication in 1933.

Earlier this year, Vice President Michael Brown, Campbelltown Councillor Warren Morrison and myself, were interviewed by Good Morning Macarthur in relation to another project being promoted by Warren in consultation with Campbelltown City Council. That project is to propose the establishment of a Military Memorial Precinct in the vicinity of the Silos on the old Vardy Property at Menangle. *Club Menangle, Michael, Steve and I, with Regiment members and supporters are in support of this project. It is envisaged the Silos could be restored and painted with WW1 Graphics of Light Horse Mounted Troopers, Army Nursing Corps, etc., similar to that already existing in parts of Victoria. I am informed Campbelltown Council are continuing discussion with the Developers of the property to consider those suggestions made during our Facebook presentation.*

Over the past four years we have seen major change in our local districts ***with Camden, Menangle Park, Campbelltown City, and Menangle Village all becoming ever closer together.*** This was most noticeable during our various discussions in commencement of the two major Beersheba Memorials now completed. Additionally the obtaining of Local Government Grants, meetings with various Local Government Executive, the detailed discussions and agreements, reminded me of the *past history of the original Macarthur Agricultural Farming District.* It is with that same concept of community involvement and mateship, together with reading and understanding of the past 150 year's history of the Macarthur area that ***The 7TH Light Horse Regiment AIF was re-established four years ago, and continues in that original concept today. The 7th Light Horse AIF Regiment represents "The Macarthur Agricultural District as it existed when formed in 1914", un-affected by Political Electoral Boundaries, but covering those varied, but still existing Local and Federal Government areas, from Liverpool through to Goulburn.***

In completion of this long annual report, I would be remiss not to mention those persons who continue to give their valuable support to make this Living Light Horse Historical Troop the success it has been: ***The Regiments; Senior Executive members; Steve Wisbey Secretary Treasurer, Vice President Michael Brown, Bruce Christison CEO Club Menangle, & Trust Account EO. Together with our Operation Executive Members, Phill and Fiona Oliver, and Robert Lowe.*** The personal cooperation I receive from Phill and Fiona, who readily supply additional equipment and gear, who are always free with their time, stables and support services. Both Phill and Fiona are true horse lovers with the same spirit that nurtured and became legend WW1, The Anzac Spirit of The Australian Light Horse AIF. With their continued dedication I am sure they would not mind my mentioning they have recently purchased two additional young horses for their stables that are to be floated to Tamworth later this year for breaking into Saddle & Rein, before returning those mounts to Camden for their personal, as well as Regimental Parade use.

In closing and referencing those many activities over the past year, it is without doubt we could not have achieved all we have without the support from *Camden RSL Sub-Branch Members, and Executive, The President Lain Richard Evan, Treasurer Ray Herbert, who are always most supportive in all we do, THANK YOU,!* It has been an exciting journey over the past four years. **The establishing of the living memorial of The 7TH Light Horse Regiment AIF, Historical Troop**, originally formed in October 1914, who trained at Menangle and dedicated to the memory of all our fallen comrades in the many wars that have followed.

Yours Sincerely,

Len Carter. President/CO.