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The Granville Guardian

Patron Laurie Ferguson M.P. B.Ec.(Syd) M.A.(Syd)

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The next general meeting of the Granville Historical Society will be held at 2.00 pm on Saturday 25 March 2017 At our Research Centre 62 Railway Parade Granville

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TO CONTACT US

Write to

P.O. Box 320

Granville NSW 2142

Phone:

9682 1290 (Wed. only)

9631 0216

(Barry & June Bullivant)

Email:

granvillehistorical@bigpond.com

Website

www.granvillehistorical.org.au

Heritage Watch NSW

Website

www.heritagewatchnsw.org.au

Friends of Mays Hill Cemetery

www.mayshillcemetery.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GranvilleHistoricalIetyIncNswAustralia?ref=hl>

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Granville Historical Society

“A Place where heritage & culture are valued & celebrated.”

June and I attended Liverpool Library and presented *Demolished Houses* to U3A. They had a marvellous time, and thanked us for our efforts.

Members! The winds of change are upon Granville, big time! If you ask Mr Google about development in Granville you will be overwhelmed by what comes up. This ramped up when the forced council amalgamations took place. However some of it is not all bad. June and I have been to many meetings concerning the branding of the new council; Arthur Naylor covered the Granville end, while we kept our eye on the Holroyd end. June and I attended a meeting at Diggers with members of Council staff last week, Council is looking at redeveloping the old Granville Bowling Club.

The development has an artist's impression which is not the final outlook. It is supposed to include the Granville Library, the Youth Centre, and an art space etc. This development will not interfere with the Granville Cenotaph, or the green space in front, but will enhance it. We are monitoring it and providing historical information. We need to monitor and record the changes, as Granville will not be the same after this redevelopment.

June and I met with Barry Gracey from the Men of Pozières a couple of weeks ago. He was taken aback by the Society's donation of 10 bricks, as well as Arthur Naylor's sponsorship of Walter Longford (one of the oldest men to serve), Susan Russell sponsored her father Abney Charles Hopton and June and I sponsored Cyril Easterbrook.

Thank you to the members who participated, anyone who would like to participate I suggest that you contact the man directly at

<http://www.pozieresremembered.com.au/pozieres-memorial-park/in-memory-of-those-who-served-3/>

I believe that Granville citizens are very mindful of the men and women who fought to keep our country safe. We as a society have always honoured them. One of our projects was to record the members of the Granville RSL from the early club; I might let you know that a data entry person approached us to offer her services, she started in October of last year and is up to "Q", using an excel spread sheet. We would like to thank her for her services.

Arthur Naylor has been on the list of honour boards in the Parramatta LGA (the one prior to amalgamations) but we need to establish the best format for publishing. June Bullivant has written up two grants, and I will let you know if we are successful - one a volunteers grant for assistance with equipment and amenities for our volunteers, the other a telling stories grant that will tell the story of the Scott Sisters who lived in Granville. A lot has been done on their history as artists of the Flora and Fauna of Australia, and it will be included in a tour for school children from another Granville school

There will be no speaker this month, but we will watch a video called "Banished"

Barry G Bullivant OAM

POZIERES

Pozières, a small village in the Somme valley in France, was an important German defensive position in World War 1. In the 1st Battle of the Somme in late July 1916 it was the scene of bitter and costly fighting for the 1st, 2nd and 4th Australian Divisions. This clash between the Australians and the German defenders was remarkable for its ferocity, and the intensity of the continuous enemy artillery bombardment

At this stage of the war, the British strategy focused on the seizure of the ridge east of Pozières village from where an attack could be mounted on German strongholds further north at Thiepval which had not fallen to British attack on the opening day of the battle, 1 July 1916. By the time the Australians entered the Somme battle the operation had become a series of attacks aimed not so much at a break-through of the German lines as the capture of key positions and the wearing down of the enemy.



Pozières British Cemetery

Between 23 July and 5 August 1916, the Australian 1st and 2nd Divisions captured Pozières village and Pozières Heights, a ridge 500 metres east of the village. The initial attack began at 12.30 am on Sunday 23 July when the 1st Division seized the German front line and in the following hour reached the main road through Pozières. At dawn the Germans counter-attacked but the Australians held on. The rest of Pozières fell on the night of 23–24 July and further gains were made on the night of 24–25 July. The Germans reacted to the seizure of Pozières by concentrating the bulk of their artillery on the Australians. Constant barrages were directed onto the village and the narrow approaches creating a nightmarish situation for troops forming up and attacking in the dark.



John Douglas Black

There were casualties even before the Pozières battle began – including Granville district men. On 23 July, Lance Corporal John Douglas Black of the 4th Battalion was killed when a German shell exploded in a trench in the 1st Division's support positions. Twenty-three-year-old Frank Hessel Pickering of the 3rd Battalion, from Auburn, was reported missing that day, also a victim of the shelling. Sapper Ralph Granville Irons of Granville died at a casualty clearing station a day after the battle began.

By 27 July, the 2nd Division had taken over in Pozières. But there were still enemy troops in uncaptured positions. Sergeant William Dawson Fisk of the 20th Battalion from Guildford was killed in a raid on one of those positions. A Granville man, Private Warrick James McLeod of the 17th Battalion, was also killed in the fighting on 27 July.

The 2nd Division was ordered to take Pozières Heights. The attack commenced at 12.15 am on 29 July but the Germans were ready and the attack failed at a cost of 3,500 Australian casualties. The Australian commander of the 2nd Division asked that his men might attack again rather than be withdrawn after failure. Following an intense bombardment on 4 August 1916, the Australians seized Pozières Heights.



Private Henry Whittemore

Two Granville men, Privates Oliver James Harmon and Henry Whittemore from the 4th Pioneer Battalion, were victims of heavy shelling on 6 August. Corporal Cecil James Norris of the 45th Battalion died a day later as the 4th Division suffered one thousand casualties in repelling an enemy counter-attack.

The exhausted 2nd Division was now rested and the 4th Division took up positions on the Pozières Heights. Attacking north along the ridge, the Australians in ten days of continuous action reached Mouquet Farm. The 4th Division was now relieved. The farm resisted capture until 26

September 1916, the day after the commencement of a major British offensive.

During the 1st Division advance on Pozières Heights, Private Edward Colin Banks of Clyde was killed on 16 August when the 4th Battalion suffered heavy casualties. Private Andrew Duncan Hotchkies, of Granville, was killed on 17 August in fighting involving the 3rd Battalion in the same area. Another Granville man, Private Albert Amos Howes, died in the Mouquet Farm fighting on 29 August, while German shelling took the life of Private Joseph Dolan of Granville, a member of the 4th Pioneer Battalion, the same day.

In less than seven weeks in the fighting at Pozières and Mouquet Farm three Australian divisions suffered 23,000 casualties. Of these, 6,800 men were killed or died of wounds. It was a loss comparable with the casualties sustained by the Australians over eight months at Gallipoli in 1915.

[Australian War Memorial <https://www.awm.gov.au/military-event;>

GHS Resource Files]