



Caterpillar Valley | Longueval

EPSOM ANZAC SERVICE



11:00 am, Saturday 25th April 2026
Marivare Reserve
Corner Manukau & Ranfurly Roads, Epsom



WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Introduction		Barry Stafford
Entry March		PA System - Tim Woolfield
Placing of Colours		Epsom District Girl Guides St George's Scout Group
Welcome / Events		Barry Stafford
National Anthem	E Ihowa Atua O ngā iwi mātou rā Āta whakarongona: Me aroha noa Kia hua ko te pai; Kia tau tō atawhai Manaakitia mai Aotearoa	God of Nations at Thy feet In the bonds of love we meet Hear our voices we entreat God defend our free land Guard Pacific's triple star From the shafts of strife and war Make her praises heard afar God defend New Zealand.
Courage Has Many Resting Places		Gail Romano – Curator War History Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira
Hymn		The Reverend - Jeremy Woods

Abide with Me

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens: Lord, with me abide;
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness;
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;
Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies;
Heaven's morning breaks and earth's vain shadows flee;
In life, in death, O Lord abide with me.

St Andrew's Choir

*Neil Shroff – Descant
Stanley Jackson – Organist*

Courage Has Many Resting Places

Gail Romano

Curator War History Auckland War Memorial Museum Tāmaki Paenga Hira

E ngā mana, e ngā reo, e ngā waka

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa

Greetings to you all.

I welcome and thank you for coming here this morning on a day when we remember those who have been lost to us through armed conflict, and honour those who served and returned home forever scarred, whether physically, psychically or morally. The Marivare Arch commemorates 28 young men for whom war was their last experience. We acknowledge them for what they gave and for holding the space for all the sons of Epsom who went to war never to return.

Auckland War Memorial Museum's Online Cenotaph names 1298 men and women with Epsom connections who are known to have served in overseas conflicts ranging from the South African War 1899-1902 through Vietnam. Of those, 142 (11%) died during or as a result of their service.

2026 is the 110th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme in northern France, less well-known in New Zealand but a brutal experience. At least four of the men named here on the Arch lost their lives over the three weeks the New Zealand Division spent on the Somme.

Sadly, I don't yet know specific and unique experiences of any of these men. So let me tell you instead a story of two other young men, a story that reflects on the nature of history and remembrance. Tall Donald Melville Wood Brown, who lived only a few kms from here in Newton Rd, enlisted in October 1915 in the Auckland Infantry Regiment. Donald Forrester Brown was a farmer from Oamaru when he enlisted in November 1915 in the Otago Infantry Regiment. Both men sailed for the war as privates with the 9th Reinforcements on 8th January 1916 on Transport 37, the SS *Maunganui*.

Did they meet each other? With 2,400 men in the 9th Reinforcements, it's likely they did not, although the coincidence as namesakes may have been enough to throw them together at some stage.

Family responsibilities seem to have been front of mind for Donald from Auckland. His father had died in 1912, and Donald allotted three shillings a day from his pay to his mother who was left with three other young children at home. He wrote to her from the troopship about his plans to apply for a piece of 'Bill Massey's land' when he returned. That's the land that parliament had just declared would be available for soldier resettlement.

The 9th Reinforcements arrived in Egypt in February where Donald from Auckland bought souvenir cloths at a bazaar and had them embroidered, one for his mother and one for his toddler sister, and Donald from Otago was promoted to Sergeant around the time the Division left for Europe.

In France Donald from Auckland had a brief attachment with the Australian Tunnelling Company and saw enough action to quickly change his mind about being there, noting he was a damn fool and adding 'whichever way the game goes I hope God spares me to get home to NZ again.'

Whatever their respective experiences during the few months they were on the continent, both young men found themselves on the Somme on the morning of 15 September 1916 as part of a renewed allied offensive. The Otago men were to the left of the Aucklanders, both waiting to go 'over the top' at 6.20am in what was to be known as the Battle of Flers-Courcelette.

Two German machinegun nests were decimating the Otagos from the edge of a shattered wood. Sergeant Brown took two of his men and silenced the guns, receiving the Victoria Cross (VC) for this bravery, the first New Zealand VC on the Western Front. He took similarly courageous action two weeks later on 1 October but was killed shortly after, just a few days before New Zealand was withdrawn from the Somme. Sergeant Donald Brown was 26.

15 September was a day for firsts. Besides Sergeant Brown's VC, this day marked the beginning of New Zealand's first major action on the Western Front, and the bloodiest day in New Zealand's history until Passchendaele one year later.

15 September also marked the first day that the new British war technology, the tank, rolled out on the field, four attached to the New Zealand Division, albeit not that successfully for their first trial, and the first offensive in which New Zealand's artillery fired poison gas shells.

Alas, 15 September was also a day for lasts. By day's end 600 New Zealanders had died and nearly double that number were wounded or missing, among them Donald Brown of Auckland. He had been lost in the first few hours of the attack, but his body was not found for several days. We recognise his fate was as sad as that of any others who have lost their life in orchestrated conflict. But perhaps sadder when we understand that Donald was killed just 26 days after his 16th birthday. He was born in 1900 but disguised his age when he enlisted.

By the time New Zealand troops were withdrawn from the Somme after just over three weeks in the unrelieved hell of constant shellfire, gas, deteriorating weather, impossibly churned earth and thick, deep mud, 2000 men were dead (more than half of whom have no known grave), and 6000 had been wounded.

The deaths of Private Donald Brown and Sergeant Donald Brown effectively book-end New Zealand's experience on the Somme. Official history remembers one but not the other. But the bravery of both young men, and that of all who have been lost to war over the years bears remembering and reminds us that courage wears many faces. He toa taumata rau.

History is life and it is part of who we are. Let us take these moments, when war again rages elsewhere in the world, to reflect on the loss of men and women whose lives each held promise and whose presence was a light in someone else's life. With love and care we remember them all and take them with us into the future. And let us remind ourselves to always, *always*, (in the words of a prominent New Zealander) 'value the living and hold fast to hope' for that future.



Donald Melville Wood Brown
Auckland
Auckland Infantry Regiment



Source

<https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C1725>



Donald Forrester Brown
Otago
Otago Infantry Regiment

Source

<https://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/c1726>

Source: Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum Online Cenotaph
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Reflection	The Reverend - Jeremy Woods
Laying of Wreaths	Kendyl Smith Albert – Eden Local Board
Roll of Honour	Cmdr. Robin Hulford RNZN (retd)

*(As the Roll of Honour is read you are invited
to place a poppy or other flower at the foot of the crosses)*

The Ode of Remembrance	Trevor Mosley
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*E kore rātou e kaumātuatia
Pēnei i a tātou kua mahue nei
E kore hoki rātou e ngoikore
Ahakoa pēhea I ngā āhuetanga o te wā
I te hekenga atu o te rā
Tae noa ki te aranga mai te ata
Ka maumahara tonu tātou ki a rātou
Ka maumahara tonu tātou ki a rātou*

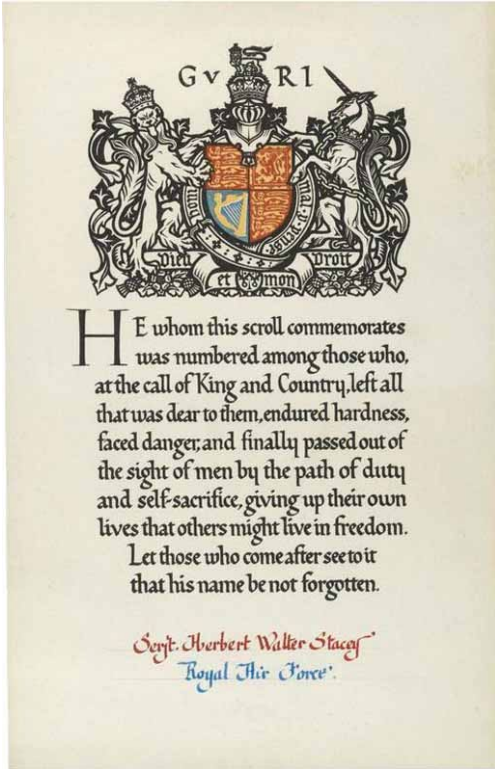
They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.
We will remember them

*Laurence Binyon
'For the Fallen'*

Silence	
Last Post	Hamish Butterworth-Snell
Retrieval of Colours	Epsom District Girl Guides St George's Scout Group
Blessing	The Reverend – Jeremy Woods

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Memorial Scroll WWI



Next of Kin Memorial Scroll

Production of the Plaques and (King George) Scrolls began in 1919 with around 1,150,000 issued to next of kin of those who fell between 4th August 1914, to 10th January 1920 (for Home, Western Europe, and Dominions) or 30th April 1920 (for others).

The first a family would know of the death of a family member was the arrival of a telegram from the War Office



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The Rotary Club of Maungakiekie acknowledge and thank all who have supported this Service since it was established in 2014.

- ❖ In particular, Mavis and Louis Fenelon, whose interest, commitment and dedication created this Service and ensured it has become an essential part of Epsom life.
- ❖ The Epsom Memorial Archway Trust which supported Mavis and Louis in the gaining of Heritage status for the Archway and the Reserve.
- ❖ Kirsty Hutley, Linda Nelson, and the Ranfurly Care Society for their provision of printing services and support.
- ❖ Tim Woolfield for his advice and management of the sound system.
- ❖ Edwards Sound Systems Ltd for their generous and ongoing donation of the use of their sound equipment.
- ❖ Ian Hair for his assistance with the Community Notice Board placements.
- ❖ The Albert-Eden Local Board for their continuing support of this Service.
- ❖ The following local businesses and other organisations for their continued support:

Ranfurly Road Business

Toni and Co. Ltd.

Barfoot and Thompson

Epsom Library

Greenwoods Corner Businesses

Epsom District Girl Guides

St George/Epsom Scout Group

St George's Epsom Church

St Andrew's Epsom Church

Epsom Community Centre

We thank all those who have gathered here today and gratefully acknowledge those named in the Service Sheet for their loyal support and much appreciated contributions.