

Office of Australian War Graves

Commemorating the Fallen



Sir Fabian Ware

- ***The Commonwealth War Graves Commission owes its existence to the vision and determination of one man***
- Neither a soldier nor a politician.
- At 45 he was too old to fight but he became the commander of a mobile unit of the British Red Cross.
- By 1915, their work was given official recognition by the War Office and incorporated into the British Army as the Graves Registration Commission.
- By 1917 The Imperial War Graves Commission was established by Royal Charter.



The Commonwealth War Graves Commission cares for the graves and memorials of almost

1.7m

servicemen and women who died in the two world wars

23,000
LOCATIONS



MORE THAN
150
COUNTRIES &
TERRITORIES

14

Youngest
casualty of
World War I

67

Oldest
casualty of
World War I

994

FOOTBALL PITCHES
The equivalent of ground
area controlled by CWGC



850
GARDENERS



12,000

People buried at the
Commission's largest cemetery -
Tyne Cot in Belgium

4

at Ocracoke
Island - the
smallest



Western Australia

2 x War Cemeteries:

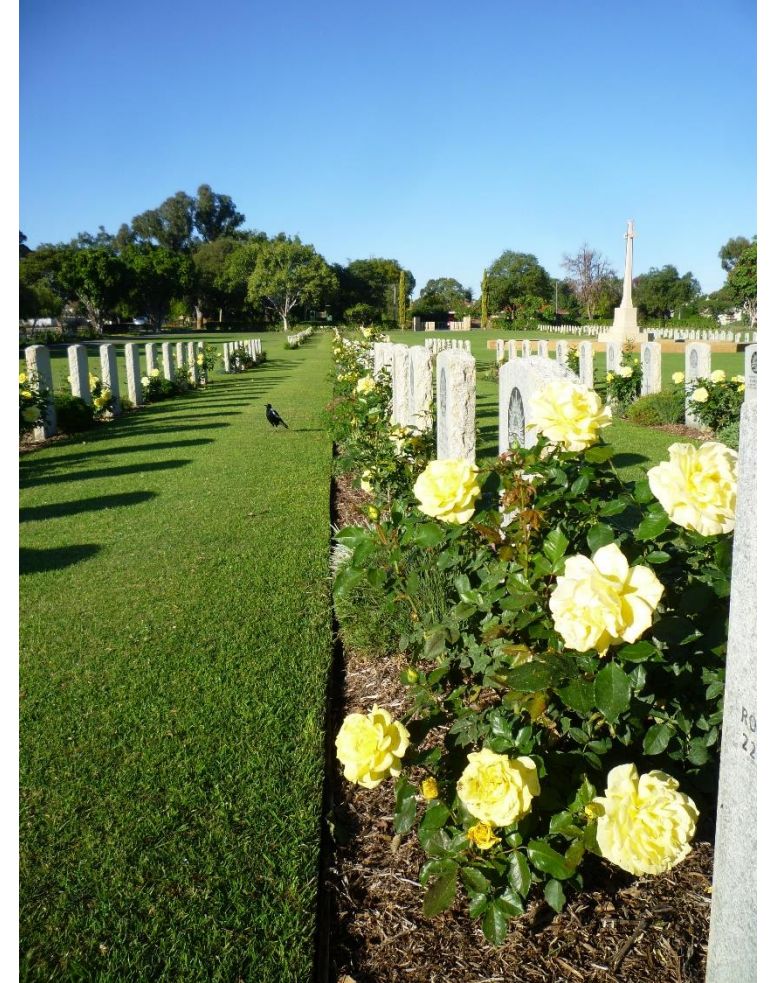
- Perth 515 graves
- Geraldton 84 graves

1 Garden of Remembrance in which 16 228 people are remembered

- 165 Locations – Cemeteries, Church yards, farmers field
 - 354 War Dead WWI
 - 272 War Dead WWII
 - 72 War Dead other conflicts
 - 6900 Official post war commemorations

OAWG also maintains:

- 1 Prime Minister's Grave – John Curtin
- 1 Governor General's Grave - Sir Paul Hasluck
- 9 Victorian Cross recipient commemorations
- 1 George Cross recipient commemoration



Battlefield War Cemetery



Battlefield War Cemetery



Perth War Cemetery circa 1943



Perth War Cemetery 2015



The Architects

- Sir Edward Lutyens
- Sir Herbert Baker
- Sir Reginald Blomfield



Frederic Kenyon



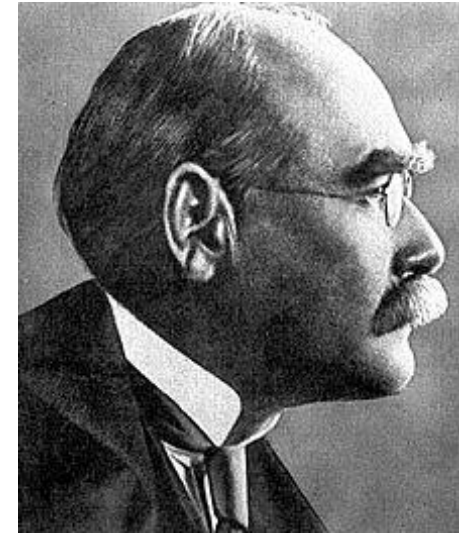
Gertrude Jekyll

- Born 1843
- One of the 20th Centuries most important British Landscape designers & writers.
- Help to popularise less formal gardens
- Gertrude formed one half of the most influential partnerships of the Arts & Craft movement - the other was Sir Edwin Lutyens



Rudyard Kipling

- English poet, short story writer and novelist
- Literary advisor to the Commission
 - “Their Name Liveth for Evermore”
 - “Known Unto God”
 - “So be it”
 - “For God, King and Country”





"In the erection of memorials on the graves there should be no distinction between officers and men."

General Macready, November 1917



Cemetery Layouts

Sir Frederic Kenyon summed up his vision in 1918 :

- The general appearance will be that of an enclosure with plots of grass or flowers or both separated by paths of varying sizes
- Orderly rows of headstones uniform in height and width
- The graves, wherever possible, will face towards the east

Cemetery Layouts continued

- At the Eastern end of the cemetery will be a great altar stone raised upon broad steps and bearing some brief and appropriate phrase or text
- Either over the stone or somewhere else in the cemetery, there will be a small building where visitors may gather for shelter or for worship and where the register of graves will be kept

Stone of Remembrance



Sydney War Cemetery

- Designed by Lutyens
- Commemorate those of all faiths and those of none
- Based on the Parthenon
- Avoid shapes associated with particular religions

Cemetery Layouts cont.

- At some prominent spot will rise the Cross as the symbol of the Christian faith and the self sacrifice of the men who now lie beneath its shadow.



The World Wars and Australian War Dead



- Lives of some 12 thousand Australians ended here in their home country.
- 3005 First World War dead
 - Almost all have private memorials
 - Only two repatriated to Australia (Major General W.T Bridges and the Unknown Soldier – both located in Canberra)
- 72 Commonwealth War Cemeteries and plots in Australia
- 3 Commonwealth War Cemeteries in Papua New Guinea

Australian War Cemeteries

- There are no specific WWI war cemeteries in Australia
- Most of our cemeteries were established by the Department of Army circa 1942
- Anzac Agency was established in **1947** taking over from the Australian Army War Graves Service
- Circa 1949 Australia cemeteries are incorporated into the CWGC

Australian War Cemeteries cont.

- A formal agreement between Australia and the Commission in 1975 ensured the continuing care of the Commission's responsibilities in Australia and the Pacific region
- No two cemeteries are the same
- Follow the design and structural features as outlined in 1918:
 - The individual cemeteries have great character and beauty responding to the local environment
 - Cemeteries are ambivalent- leaving interpretation open.

Centennial Park War Cemetery -Adelaide



Port Moresby (Bomana) War Cemetery



OAWG Responsibilities

- Maintain CWGC war cemeteries and plots, individual war graves, memorials and official post-war commemorations
- Processing of new official post-war commemorations
- Provision of information services for official commemorations
- Provide and maintain national memorials at sites significant to Australia's military history throughout the world

Post-War Commemoration

- In 1922 the Australian Government extended official commemoration to include those veterans who died post-war of causes related to their service in war/conflict
- Extended again after WWII
- Not all veterans are eligible
- Eligibility criteria must be met before official commemoration provided

Post-War Commemoration-Eligibility criteria

- Deaths accepted as being due to war service by the Repatriation Commission
- Those in receipt of a Special Rate Pension (TPI, TSR INT) or Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA) where the veteran has seen war service
- Multiple amputees on Section 27.1 maximum pension rate where war service has been proven
- Ex-prisoners of war
- Victoria Cross (VC) recipients

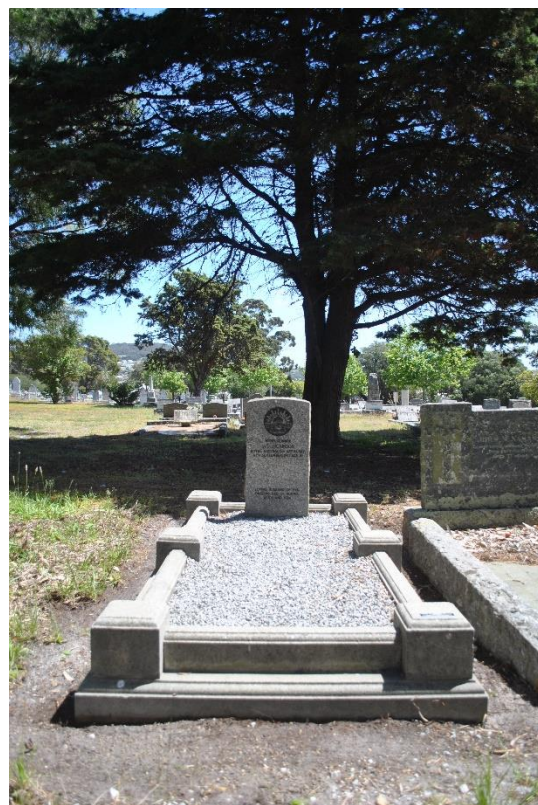
OFFICIAL COMMEMORATION PROCESS

- The relevant DVA state offices determine eligibility and notifies OAWG
- Once notified, OAWG sends out forms automatically to the next of kin
- 3 options are given to the families so they may choose 1 form of official commemoration

Official Commemoration

Three options are:

- Memorial in a cemetery
- Placement of Ashes (Crematorium or consecrated ground)
- Plaque in a OAWG Garden of Remembrance



Placement of Ashes

- This option applies to families who wish to place the ashes in a niche wall or garden bed
- OAWG will purchase a single niche, and provide the plaque OR
- If a garden placement is chosen OAWG will contribute an amount equal to the cost of a niche wall placement within the same crematorium/cemetery
- Any additional costs are the responsibility of the family

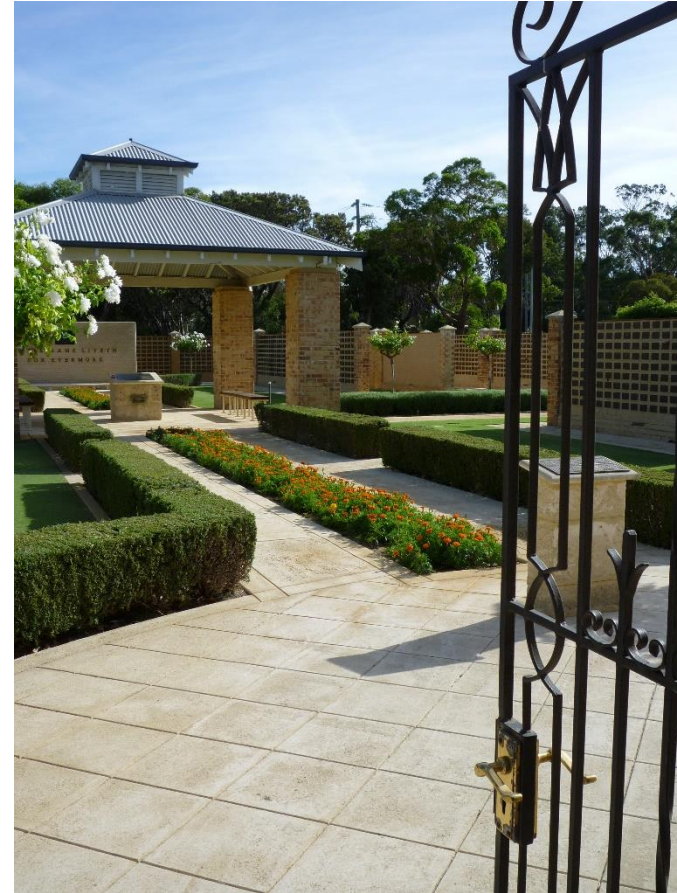


OAWG Garden of Remembrance

This form of commemoration applies to families who:

- Have already arranged something privately at a gravesite or crematorium OR
- Who have scattered the ashes
- The Gardens are landscaped and contain a series of walls upon which the memorial plaques are placed
- Follow the same principles of the Commission

West Australian - Garden of Remembrance

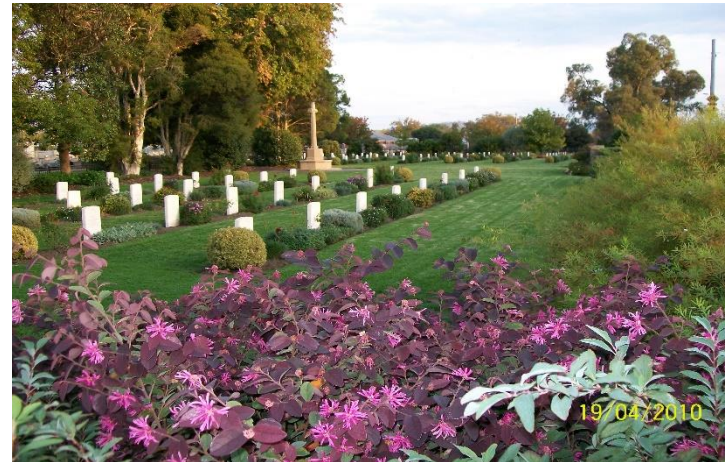


Re-opening of Graves

- OAWG does not, in most cases own the grave – only the memorial on top of it
- Cemetery authorities will advise whether a grave has provision for further burials
- OAWG's memorial must not be altered
- Commemoration for further burial/s to be in centre or at foot of grave on infill area, subject to Cemetery regulations
- Advise OAWG memorial has been re-opened so restoration can be arranged

The future

- Holds many challenges
- An unchanging job in a changing world
- Need to communicate the value and meaning of our cemeteries & memorials
- OAWG is committed to meeting the challenge!





"There is no reason why cemeteries should be places of gloom."

Sir Frederic Kenyon, How the Cemeteries Abroad Will Be Designed, 1918.