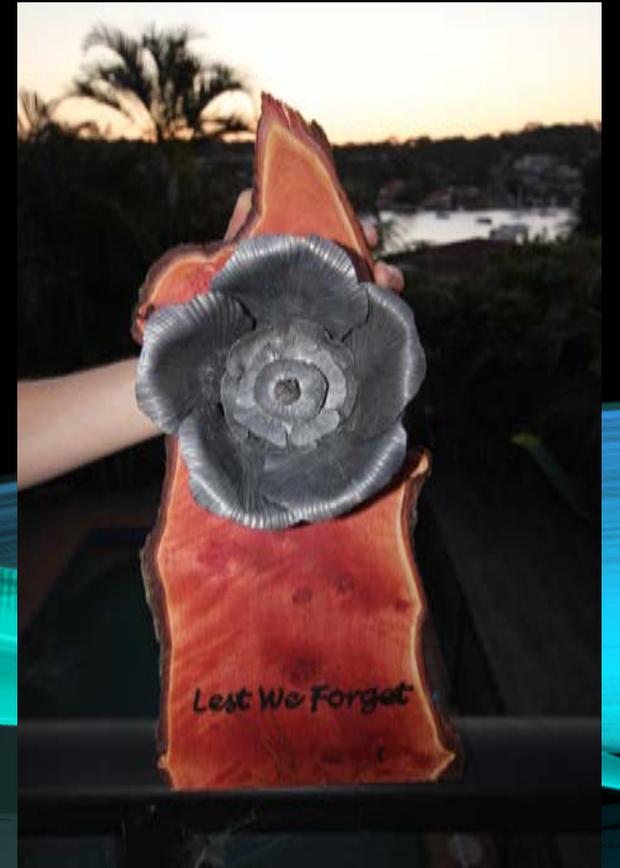


GALLIPOLI CENTENARY 2015

Alex Witherden, Cronulla high school.



THE ANZAC LEGEND

- This sculpture I have constructed is a personal interpretation of the endurance of the Anzac legend and spirit.
- The Great War and Gallipoli campaign where the first conflicts engaged by Australian Imperial Forces since federation in 1901.
- The first world war has strong sentimental value in my family as I have ancestors who fought bravely and where rewarded for their courage.

PERSONAL INTEREST

- Sgt David William Witherden was my great uncle who fought throughout the western front during the first world war. His actions led to multiple promotions and in particular the awarding of the Distinguished Conduct Medal, Military Medal, British War Medal and the Victory Medal. He was additionally nominated for the Victoria Cross for his actions on the 1st of September 1918, during the attack on Mt. St. Quentin. He acted as a “Pillar of strength” and remained until the last of his company withdrew from the battle as he operated the Lewis gun single handily with such effective covering fire that the company evacuated with few casualties. “He has exhibited sterling qualities and at all times set a magnificent example to all around him.”
- As a fourth generation member of the Australian Defence Force, this project and opportunity is one that is very important to me and would very much like to be given the chance to represent the school, Australia and my family at the 2015 Centenary of Gallipoli tour.

SYMBOLISM, LEAD.

- The poppy is one of the most iconic flowers of remembrance in relation to great conflicts such as the first world war. My sculpture is a replica poppy built from sheet lead and smithed myself. The lead has been chosen for its properties to withstand time, and acts as a metaphor for the enduring spirit of the Anzacs.
- I figured it appropriate as lead is commonly associated with war, and in a rough fashion represents samples of trench art created by soldiers that I have seen during visits of the Australian War Memorial.



A sample of trench art.

SYMBOLISM, POPPY.

- A poppy may wilt and wither in nature as time continues, however the remnants of war such as bullets, helmets and other objects will last for a great length of time. This relates to the Anzac spirit and the enduring efforts of those who fought and died in war. My poppy will not wilt, nor wither and stands as a symbol of remembrance for those who shall not grow old.



SYMBOLISM, TIMBER.

- The timber I have used in my project was hand sourced, cut and oiled. It came from an Australian native tree and its singularity represents the famous battle of lone pine in Gallipoli. I chose to oil the wood as it has brought out the colour of the grain which also is a representation of the trenches and the rough bark on the outer edges is symbolic of the harsh Turkish coastline where so many young Australians loyally fought without question.



MYSELF.

- As I mentioned earlier this opportunity is very close to the heart for me, not only on the grounds of family but also to represent the school. My high school experience has given me so much and as a senior student I would be enthusiastic to be an ambassador for the school if chosen. As a student I would like to raise awareness and highlight the great things we can do at the school like going on this tour, in addition to recognising the achievements of those before us who bravely sacrificed themselves for this great country. My grandfather served as a member of the RAAF as air crew during WW2 and has always reminded me of how lucky we are to have the privileged of living in such a wondrous country of opportunity.



SERVICE.

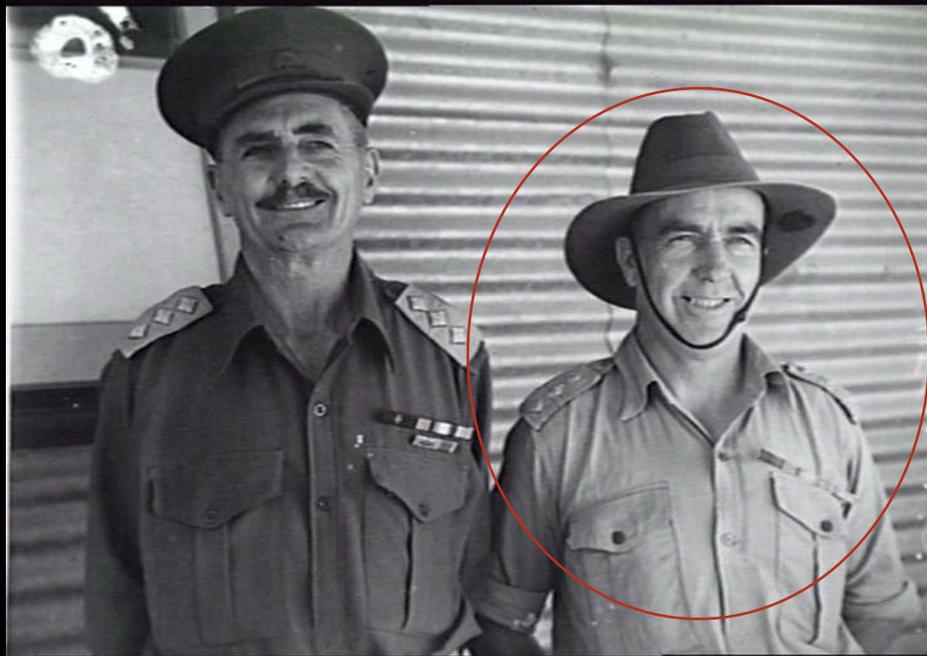
- Since Primary school I have been involved in Scouts, and have attended many Anzac day services, including the national service at the Australian War Memorial.
- During my experience in Army Cadets I was a member of the colour party for the 2012 annual Anzac day game at Sydney Football Stadium.
- 100 years after my Great Uncle's enlistment I will be in the position of completing my secondary school education much of which I must owe to the forefathers of our country



Anzac Day game, flag party 2012 with 213 ACU

PHOTOS.

Me carrying the flag of New Zealand for the ceremony of the 2012 Anzac day game (far right)



SGT David Witherden (right) during WW2 as part of internment camp guard unit.

