

The Boer War Commemorative Day

Heralding remembrance of those Tasmanians who served in South Africa (1899-1902)



Patrons:

Dr. Frank Madill AM and Mr John Wise



From left John Presser, Kelvin Daley, Reg Watson and Derek Millhouse

About the Boer War

The War (1899-1901) has often been termed the 'forgotten war'. In an attempt to address this sad situation, Tasmanian historian and author, Reg. A. Watson, with help from enthusiasts, such as members of the T17 SSAA Militaria Collectors Tasmania, work to do so.

It should be remembered that nearly 900 Tasmanians (and their horses) served in the South African War, all volunteers, and that nearly 41 of our sons were either killed or died of disease. All, except for two (Privates Cundy and Hodgman), are buried in that far off land.

It was also the war where our nurses served and that they made their way to South Africa and after their service, return to Tasmania at their own expense, without government financial help.

In relation to the number of Australians who served (up to 20,000) and those who died (600+) and the time length of the war, it equates to being the largest conflict Australians have served in, outside the two World Wars.

There are many memorials around the State erected to the memory of those who served. Two impressive ones are situated on the Hobart Domain and in the Launceston City Park.

The Day

Ceremonies on the day are held at the beautiful Boer War Memorial on the Hobart Domain and in Launceston at the City Park. There is an opportunity for interested parties, family descendants and members of the public to place a wreath or flowers at the monument.

The Purpose of the Boer War Commemorative Day

The philosophy behind the DAY is simple. "It is to honour those Tasmanians who served and who died."

Therefore, the aim is to keep it solely for that purpose. There is no committee, no budget, government grants or private sponsorships are not sought after, so that the DAY may be truly independent of any influence, political or commercial, which may result. All who participate do so voluntarily.

THE BOER WAR COMMEMORATIVE DAY HAS NOW BECOME AN ANNUAL EVENT.

For further reading on the Tasmanian participation in The Anglo-Boer War see:

- ***Heroes All – Tasmanian Casualties in the Anglo-Boer War*** by Reg. A. Watson. (1995) ISBN 646 190033 4
- ***Tasmanians in the Transvaal War*** by John Bufton. (1905) Long out of print but available at Reference Library, Hobart.

- ***They Served with Distinction*** - a compendium of Tasmanian Military History by Reg. A. Watson. (2009)



Private Ernest Evan (died – South Africa) - But one of the nearly 40 Tasmanian boys who did not return