

Ron Rathbone Junior Local History Prize 2018

World War One

(1914-1918)

An insight to how WWI impacted the Bayside community



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About World War One

World War I also known as the Great War (abbreviated as WW1 or WWI) was a global war originating in Europe that lasted from 28 July 1914 to 11 November 1918. It was one of the deadliest conflicts in history with huge losses of lives while only gaining little ground.

Fought mostly in trenches, World War I saw an estimated 10 million deaths and another 20 million wounded.

The war broke out when Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife were assassinated. He was heir to the Austria-Hungary throne and was shot by a Serbian nationalist. This triggered Austria-Hungary to declare war on Serbia triggering a complex web of alliances declaring war on each other. The powerhouse countries involved in the war soon formed two main alliances: the 'Allies' and the 'Central Powers.' The allies consisted of France, Britain, Ireland, and Russia. The central powers were Austria-Hungary, and Germany. After a long battle, the allies came out top and won the war.

Introduction

World War I was an enormously destructive conflict which had deeply traumatized the modern world. Australia's first involvement in the Great War began in 1915, meant changes to the lives of people from all walks of life, out on the battlefields and even back home in Australia. The impact on ultimately all aspects of Australian society, however, did not end when the guns fell silent in November 1918. Instead, it sustained for years when the tens of thousands of soldiers returned with their problems as a result of the war which made its effect on Australian life more apparent.

We will look at some of attitudes and impacts the Bayside community had before, during and after WWI to gain a better understanding of what the community went through.

Before the War

- **Attitude towards war**

The attitude people had towards war before World War I was very different to what's expected now. Before the war, young men looked forward to joining the war as Australia have yet to experience the brutal realities of war. Instead, young men were naive to think that war is a great place where you gain fame and glory.

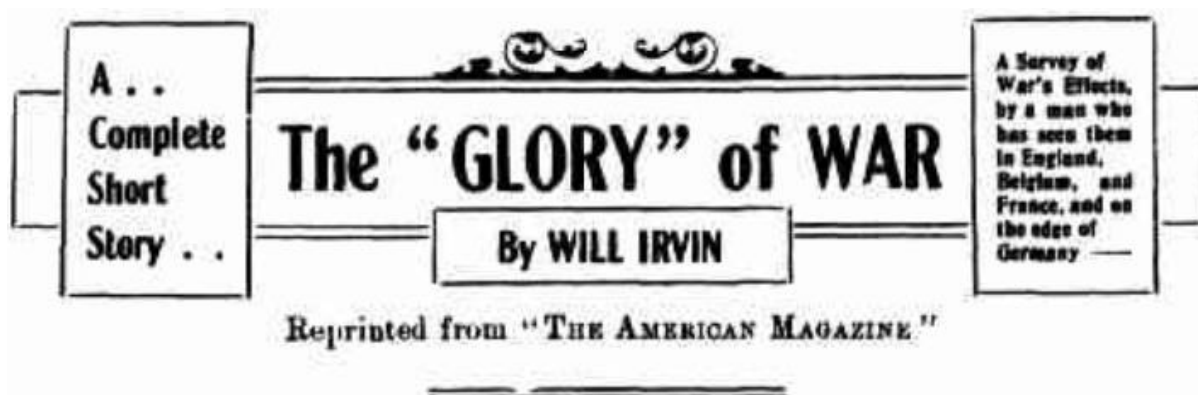
Articles during December 1914 painted the glories of war with titles such as "A BIG HIT IN WAR PICTURES" where portraits of Generals were gloried and for sale as gifts and for framing. Rosy life during times of war were conveyed with the title "HOW SOLDIERS' WIVES LIVES" where tones of excitement were clearly evident. Advice to maintain income for the ladies via silk-culture or fishing.

There was even an article in the St George Call on Boxing Day 1914 celebrating the youngest Australians joining the war titled "TWO YOUNG SOLDIERS" where the articles describes Kenneth Burgis, 15 years of age along with his 16 year-old cousin Harold Ross Henderson both from Kogarah leaving for war only after a fortnight of training at Holsworthy.

During the war

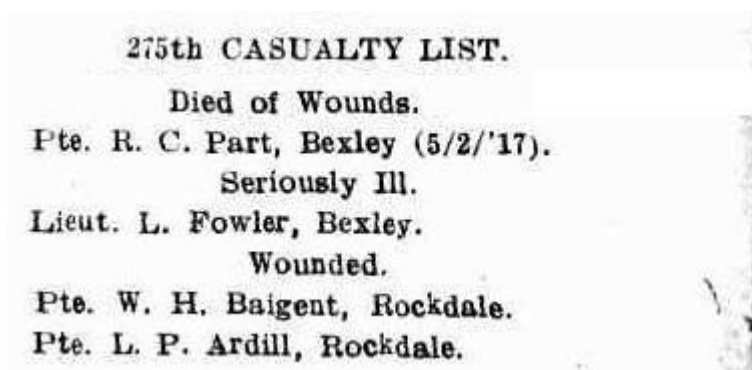
- **Attitude towards war**

People's attitudes gradually shifted, after soldiers witnessed vivid accounts of their friends getting killed and them constantly having the fear that they were going to die. Back home, when lists of casualties were shown in the newspapers, everyone realised that the colonial view of war did not match the realities of modern warfare.



The "GLORY" of WAR shown above was the title of an early full page personal account published on the January 2 1915 where horrors of war were first exposed to residents of Bayside. In the article the author vividly describes personal interactions, accounts of devastation, mental toll on those involved and death of acquaintances.

It was collaborated by a flurry of CASUALTY LISTS where the residences of Bayside saw the horrors of the Great War. The St George Call frequently published details of local soldiers who were killed in action, ill or wounded.



These casualty lists were lists that nearly everyone read to check and pray for name of a loved one not to be found.

• Women

While most able men enlisted in the war, women were left in Australia to carry out daily routine. Although their usual work role was focused in the home, women's contribution in the workforce increased from 24 percent to 37 percent in 1914 and the following four years. This rise was only seen in the traditional areas that women worked in such as clothing, footwear, food and printing but there was also a slight rise in office occupations and shop assistants.

Unions were originally hesitant to hire women to replace the men's role in the workforce as they predicted that the outcome would be bleak and undesirable. However, even with this obstacle, women did not just sit back, they attempted to do as much as they could to assist in the war. Women earned jobs as stretch bearers, car drivers and interpreters.

Numerous women organisations were established and became actively involved in the war. Some of these organisations included the Australian Women's National League, the Australian Red Cross, the Voluntary Aid Detachment, the Australian Women's Service Corps, the Women's Peace Army and the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

This advancement in women's workplace was a rare positive impact of the war. As women established themselves worthy and capable of working.

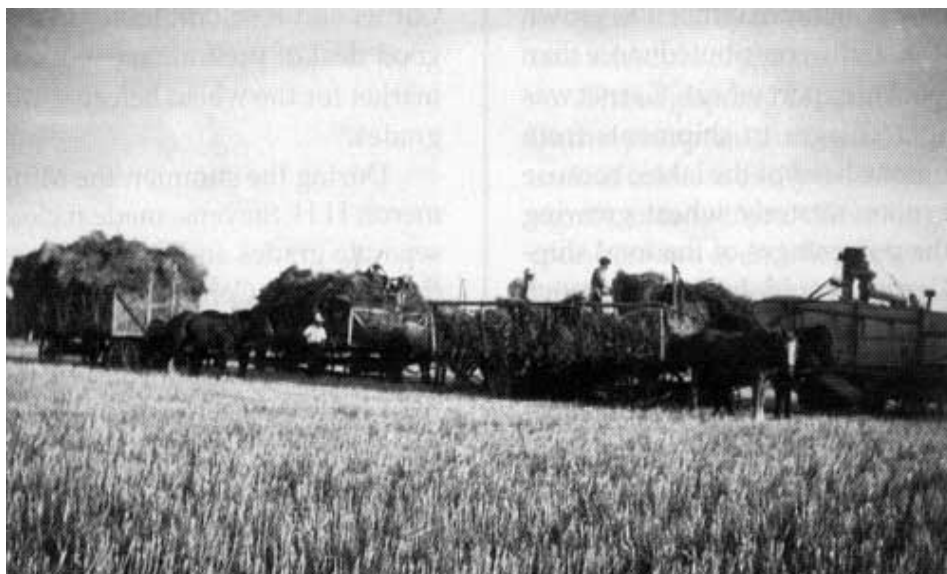


An image of the 'Australian Red Cross' asking for donations of spare clothes and wanting volunteer helpers.

• Economy

The Australian economy was impacted in various ways by World War I, however, it avoided the economic devastation that some countries faced such as France and Belgium. This was because Australia was situated away from the battlefields. The impact of the First World War was felt through all sections of the Australian economy.

Export industries were hit by the closing of markets and disruption of shipping, capital inflow slowed sharply, and vital



An image of the production of wheat after the war when production rates slowly increased again.

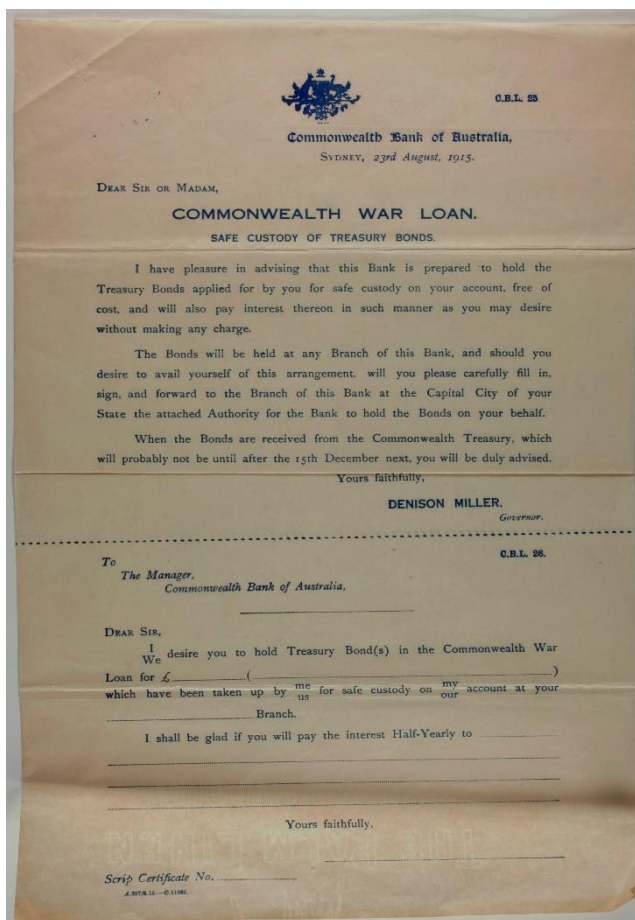
imports were cut off. This was made worse when there was a drought. Millions of stock died and wheat production fell from 100 million bushels (35.2L) in 1913-1914 to less than 25 million bushels in 1914-1915. Production of wool, meat and dairy products also fell. For the first time in decades, there were no exportable leftovers.

Another effect of the war was that since the government was so keen to make sure that Australian wheat, wool and meat reached Britain to assist in the war, the people back home would not have enough causing a rise of price in goods.

To finance the war the Commonwealth had a series of war loans, and then peace loans. All were over-subscribed. This seemed to some to be further evidence of the inequality of sacrifice in the war - those with money to spare could actually profit from the war, while others were suffering economic loss and decline.

The war provided a form of protection to Australian industries by removing competition. By the end of the war, over 400 products were being produced in Australia which had not been produced here before the war.

The economy was also heavily impacted the Bayside area in many construction projects but the Rocky Point Road from Kogarah Road to Taren Point construction work was affected quite badly. In order to finance this and a few other construction works, the rate was raised and this caused protests as citizens had to pay far too much tax. The only people who were back in Australia were mainly women and since they did not have well-paying jobs, it was even more difficult to pay the tax.



An image of the Commonwealth War Loan in 1915.

After the war

VICTORY CELEBRATION AT ARNCLIFFE.

The residents of the Avenal Estate held a celebration in honour of the signing of the armistice in the School Grounds, Rocky Point-road, Arncliffe, on Monday afternoon. The procession started in Rocky Point-road, the assembly present singing the National Anthem then marching down Spring-street to West Botany-street and up Terry-street, all the route being well decorated with bunting and flags. On the arrival at the grounds, Mr. Stead, in most eulogistic terms, spoke of the many qualities the flag represented and what the gathering was assembled for. The children present, which numbered over 500 sang patriotic songs, amidst great applause. Cheers were then called for the Allies, the Boys at the Front, and General Foch, and the enthusiasm in which they were given could be heard far and wide. Sports were then commenced, consisting of races for all the children and prizes presented to the successful competitors. Refreshments were provided and heartily appreciated by the assembly present. The function was a great success and a credit to the energetic workers that arranged all the details. It terminated at 5.30 p.m., every one thoroughly enjoying themselves. The children again gave three cheers for the Allies and Peace.

- Celebrations

The end of the war marked a huge celebratory event. Celebrations were held in across the local community such as Arncliffe, Bexley and Rockdale. These included singing the national anthem, marching through the streets, and the singing of patriotic songs and cheers for the 'Allies'.

There were also sport events for children to compete in and refreshments for everyone to enjoy.

The war had caused so much pain and suffering but now with its end, the residents celebrated and enjoyed this moment in their life.

• Pneumonic Flu

The celebration was short lived, as soon after the celebrations, the Pneumonic Flu epidemic broke out in December 1918. It is believed to have been brought back from the battlefields via the returning soldiers.

The disease spread so quickly that within months of its appearance, thousands of people were afflicted and dozens of people died. The

following February, councils in the St George region began to deal with precautionary measures. Plans were made to convert Rockdale School into a temporary hospital if things really got out of hand. The Rockdale, Arncliffe and Sans Souci Red Cross were alerted and the St George Motor Ambulance and the Bexley V.A.D's were put on standby.



What the people in the Bayside community did to try and prevent themselves from catching the disease.

THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC.

The influenza epidemic has taken such a serious turn this week that little attention can be devoted to anything else. Quite a large list of cases are being treated at St. George District Hospital and some of the cases, unfortunately, have proved fatal. Large numbers of other cases are waiting entrance, and others are being treated privately. The local hospital is having a very serious and strenuous time, some of the nurses even collapsing through overwork. Relieving assistance is urgently required and even male attendants would be welcome. The following are the local cases treated :—

Jack Grant, returned home.
John Cameron, doing well.
John O'Brien, doing well.
Oscar Shaw, convalescent.
Francis Munro, convalescent.
Thomas Dix, progressing favorably.
Fred Bush, no improvement.
Jack Pestle, no improvement.
Arthur Gilbert, very serious.
Annie Moore, doing well.
Emily Draper, doing well.
May Crealy, doing well.
Sister Morrison, serious.
Florence Harrison, doing well.
Nurse Fox, doing well.
Anderson, serious.
The following are the fatal cases :—
Richard Southey.
Frank Cody.
C. Bayliss.
Miss Franks.
Mrs. Eggerton.
Preston.
Bissett.

Inhalation Chambers have been established for the use of the public at the Council Chambers, Kogarah, and also at the Kogarah School of Arts. There is also an inhalatorium in the science room of the Kogarah Public School and the pupils are sprayed daily.

The Red Cross Society have been delivering SOS cards, and food orders to the contacts. Mr. G. Thomas has kindly lent his pony and sulky for the use of the Red Cross ladies delivering

supplies sent his pony and sulky for the use of the Red Cross ladies delivering the orders. Members should report to Mrs. Stuart, at Council Chambers, at 10 o'clock each morning.

Work at the depots is proceeding, and cases of emergency are quickly attended to. Cases needing attention should phone :—Kogarah Council Chambers, 24 Kog.; Bexley Council Chambers, 116 Kog.; Hurstville Council Chambers, 31 Kog.; Rockdale Town Hall, 80 Kog.

Matron Cameron desires us to state that she is highly indignant at the rumours being circulated round the district in reference to one of the patients who died at the hospital and whose interment, so the rumour says, was neglected. The Matron states that outside arrangements have nothing to do with the hospital, and yet, notwithstanding the arduous duties imposed upon the staff in such a trying time, on this occasion, she did everything that was possible. The Committee in their usual quiet way, are doing all that is possible to cope with the situation.

We have been requested to state that visitors will not be admitted to the Hospital during the prevailing epidemic except in urgent cases.

The public are requested to refrain from telephoning to the Hospital except in very urgent cases.

The many friends of Dr. James McLeod, of Hurstville, will be sorry to hear that he is at present an inmate of the Coast Hospital, suffering from the prevailing epidemic. We are pleased to say that the attack is of a mild form. On enquiry this afternoon we ascertain he was progressing favourably.

Despite all the preventative efforts, by April, an emergency depot had been set up at the Rockdale Town Hall under Mr E. E. Broome, headmaster of Rockdale School, with the Mayor's room as headquarters.

The old Moorefield Hotel was converted into a hospital for flu cases and a 24 hour emergency service was introduced.

To the left is an article from the St George Call written on April 5, 1919 that provides information about the pneumonic flu. A key exact is outlined below:

"The local hospital is having a very serious and strenuous time, some of the nurses even collapsing through overwork. Relieving assistance is urgently required and even male attendants would be welcome."

The severity of the situation can't be overstated and something that would be difficult to resolve even during normal circumstances, let alone at a time where resources and expertise were stretched from the after-effects of the war.

Call out for assistance ranged far and wide. Even high-school children were called upon to join the Junior Red Cross to assist with the efforts to contain the diseases.

• More Casualties and Trauma

On April 5th 1919, the 462nd casualty list was released for the Bayside community.

This was 5 months after the war and even then are there more deaths of the wounded and ill.

It is apparent to the community, while the allies were victorious at a moment in time, the after effects were felt way after the war and will be for generations.

The returning soldiers were not only physically wounded but they were also mentally affected. These soldiers are facing

what we call today post-traumatic stress disorder. These soldiers cannot forget the horrifying picture of war as they are haunted by it every day.

Even the soldiers who fared relatively well, were affected. Repatriation funds were setup to compensate reduced income apprentices who abandoned their apprenticeships to join the military to ensure they and their family are no worse-off, while they resume their apprenticeships which would have otherwise been long completed.

Even though the family members of the soldiers have not experienced war, they are also traumatised when they learn that the important male in their life has died. Not only does this mentally affect family members but it also means that that family does not have a male to earn the household's main income.

462nd CASUALTY LIST.

Died.	Other causes.
Sgt. Geo. Wallace Macalpine, Miranda (illness).	
Ill.	
Lieut. Eric Garnett, M.C., Port Hack- ing.	
Spr. Henry Ashley, Arncliffe.	
Pte. Leopold Victor Bushell, Hurst'vle	
Spr. Hunter Chapman, Kogarah.	
Dvr. Clarence Wilfred Fahy, Banksia.	
Pte. Geo. Jas. Fyvie, Carlton.	
Spr. John Robert Hall, Kogarah.	
Pte. Philip Herzog, Kogarah.	
Dvr. Roland Watkin Hines, Arncliffe.	
T.-Sgt. Garnet Tregoning Jennings, Hurstville.	
Spr. Chas. Hy. Johnson, Kogarah.	
Spr. Regld. Horace Mackay, H'ville.	
Pte. George Mackrell, Sutherland.	
Pte. Henry Stewart Miller, H'ville.	
Dvr. Arthur Douglas Patterson, Arn.	
Dvr. Ernest Geo. Shea, Arncliffe.	
Dvr. David Darling Sinclair, Arncliffe.	
Spr. William Chas. Thomas, Kogarah.	
Dvr. Harold Gladstone Tuffy, Sans Souci.	
Spr. Audley Thos. Wardrop, BRIGHT- on-le-Sands.	

Interesting Impacts

- St George District band

The First World War has definitely impacted the local area which is now known as the Bayside community. Entertainment was largely affected by the war as the St George District band were not able to fulfil its engagements. This was due to a large number of its members enlisting in the war. After the war, an Official Peace celebration was to be held but due to the flu epidemic, it had to be postponed. When the newly scheduled peace celebration occurred, the band failed to turn up which humiliated the council badly.

- Kogarah Motor Car Owners

The article written in December 7, 1918 explains that the Red Cross Society in the Kogarah Branch is asking for people to donate their cars to take the wounded and sick soldiers for an outing. This is a very unique way of returning the favour of fighting in the war as it allows soldiers who perhaps cannot move by themselves to view the area of where they grew up.

AN APPEAL TO KOGARAH MOTOR CAR OWNERS.

The Secretary of the Kogarah Branch of the Red Cross Society will be glad to hear from any car owner who will be willing to place his or her car at the disposal of the Branch (say one day a month) for the purpose of taking our returned sick and wounded soldiers for an outing.

The Secretary has been told by those in constant attendance on the men, that of all the kindnesses extended to the men there is none they appreciate like a motor trip, and she feels sure the car owners of Kogarah will, if possible, show this small kindness to the brave men who have suffered so much for us all.

Address: The Secretary, Kogarah Red Cross, "Clifton," Garden-street, Kogarah.

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