

Tannymorel Avenue of Honour



Southern Downs Regional Council Cultural Heritage Study – Inventory of Surveyed Places (7 November 1996)



Susan Hill (2012)



The Avenue of Honour beginning on Tannymorel Road in the west, and running northeast along to Kurrajong Street, turning southeast on Oak Street, and to corner of the Tannymorel–Mt Colliery Road. Tannymorel Memorial Hall is circled, and obelisk is marked with a star (Google Earth 2009 image)

Tannymorel and district history

Originally named Farm Creek (or Lower Farm Creek), Tannymorel developed around the timber industry and a sawmill established during the 1870s. Coal mining brought a second boom with the opening of nearby Mount Colliery in 1896. In c. 1906 a tramway between Mount Colliery and Tannymorel opened and by 1912 the mine employed 56 underground and six surface workers. The major customer for Mt Colliery coal was Queensland Railways but when the railways began to move to diesel power, the days of the mine were numbered. It finally closed in October 1967, beginning the decline of the town into its current status as mainly a dormitory settlement for Warwick.¹

¹ Ian Fairweather, *From Good Country and Timber to a Parish*, Killarney, 1999, pp. 51–52; *Queenslander*, 26 January 1933; Maurice French & Duncan Waterson, *The Darling Downs: A Pictorial History 1850–1950*, Darling Downs Institute Press, Toowoomba, 1982, pp. 88, 105; Queensland Environmental Protection Agency, *Heritage Trails of the Great South East*, Brisbane, 2000, p. 110; “Southern Downs & Granite Belt Heritage & Historic Building Trails”, www.southerndownsholidays.com.au, n.d., accessed 30 July 2014.

Avenues of Honour in Queensland

Memorial trees and avenues have been planted in many centres across Queensland. Some of the best-known avenues include Memorial Drive in Eumundi, the Heroes' Avenue bottle trees in Roma, at Tennyson in Brisbane, and Anzac Avenue stretching from Redcliffe to Kallangur.²

Heroes' Avenue in Roma, planted over a period of two decades, originally comprised 94 bottle trees (*Brachychiton*) planted in memory of the local fallen. Each tree bore an engraved copper tag with the name of the person memorialised, but by 1995 all tags except one had disappeared.³

Tannymorel memorials

After the First World War monuments and memorial halls quickly sprang up in many country towns including across the Darling Downs.⁴

The Tannymorel memorials comprise a stone obelisk on the corner of Oak Street and Tannymorel–Mt Colliery Road, the Memorial Hall in Oak Street, and the avenue of plane trees.



The First and Second World Wars memorial, corner of Oak Street and Tannymorel–Mt Colliery Road (J. Nissen, 8 September 2014)



Honour Roll in Tannymorel Memorial Hall, Oak Street (J. Nissen, 12 September 2014)

The stone war memorial has four plaques around the base, one commemorating the eight local servicemen killed during the First World War, and the other three listing a further 51 who served in that War. A plaque on the obelisk lists ten soldiers killed during the Second World War, and two in the Korean War. Fundraising for the obelisk had begun by 1921, when Mr Con Ryan, the Honorary

² Shirley & Trevor McIvor, *Salute the Brave: A Pictorial Record of Queensland War Memorials*, USQ Press, Toowoomba, 1994, pp. 247–248; Leith Barter, *Pioneering the Pine: A Short History of the Pine Rivers Shire*, Pine Rivers Shire Council, 2005, p. 56; Queensland Environmental Protection Agency, *Heritage Trails of the Great South East*, Brisbane, 2000, pp. 127, 139; Main Roads Board, *Annual Report 1923*, p. 4; Main Roads Commission, *Annual Report, 1927*, p. 7.

³ Peter Keegan, "A Study of the Condition of the Roma Heroes' Avenue of Bottle Trees", 1995, held in EPA Cultural Heritage Limited Access Collection.

⁴ Maurice French & Duncan Waterson, *The Darling Downs: A Pictorial History 1850–1950*, Darling Downs Institute Press, Toowoomba, 1982, p. 220.

Secretary of the Tannymorel Honour Memorial Committee, wrote to Glengallan Shire Council requesting a donation to supplement the £80 already raised, and also permission to erect a memorial stone in a position on the road where it would not interfere with traffic.⁵ The stone, with its First World War marble plaques, was in place by 1933 when a *Queenslander* pictorial feature on Tannymorel showed the stone standing on the corner where it remains today.⁶

An Honour Board in the Hall lists those killed during the Second World War and the Korean War, and those who served during the Second World War.

History of the avenue

Local informants state that the avenue was planted after the Second World War, variously suggesting between 1946 and 1948, or the very late 1940s to early 1950s, probably under the aegis of the local Returned Services League sub-Branch, now disbanded.⁷

While little documentary evidence has been found to identify the people or organisations responsible for undertaking the planting, it is clear that this avenue of trees was planted as a memorial.

In 1947 the Women's Auxiliary of the local Returned Sailor's, Soldier's and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia (RSSAILA) reported that they had written to the Glengallan Shire Council "in connection with the memorial avenue". The Council advised that it had raised the matter with the Main Roads Commission. By the end of April 1947 £3/13/- in donations had been raised towards the planting of trees.⁸ The 1948 Anzac Day service conducted at the obelisk included the unveiling of brass name plates, reported the *Warwick Daily News*:

Mr D. Tart unveiled eight brass plates on which were inscribed the names of local fallen soldiers of World War II (these brass plates are later to be fixed to trees planted through the main street).⁹

The report did not mention whether the trees had already been planted and these brass name plates were additional to those already installed, or whether the tree planting scheme was still in the planning stages.

From 1933 the Main Roads Commission (later Department) pursued a policy of planting trees along roads and highways. This activity was halted in 1941 with the beginning of the war in the Pacific, but recommenced in 1946. Main Roads even established its own sawmill at Staplyton to provide timber for tree guards.¹⁰ Some of the tree planting schemes were initiated by requests from Shire Councils, the numbers of trees being planted under this scheme increasing markedly during the immediate post-war years. The Main Roads Commissioner reported in 1949:

Many Local Authorities now realise that with their areas in many cases well served by good roads the time has come to improve the bare look of roads, hamlets, and small towns ... On the Darling Downs many avenues of fine trees have been established.

Four permanent tree maintenance gangs had been established, including one operating out of Allora. Each gang worked full time on the maintenance of these roadside trees which already numbered over 20,000 across southeast Queensland alone. The Commissioner commented that "the tree maintenance men take a keen interest in their job"; another four-man gang was engaged full time on new schemes of roadside planting. By 1950 the Main Roads Commission was operating its own nursery, at Lagoon Creek near Caboolture.¹¹

The most likely sequence of events is that the local community approached Glengallan Shire Council in or around 1947 to have a memorial avenue planted, to recognise residents who served

⁵ Letters 6 July & 8 September 1921, Committee of the Tannymorel Honour Memorial to Glengallan Shire Council in QSA Item ID 17412, Glengallan Shire Council, General correspondence file, 1921.

⁶ *Queenslander*, 26 January 1933, p. 26.

⁷ Anecdotal information collected by Sandy Morris, Tannymorel.

⁸ *Warwick Daily News*, 30 April 1947, p. 5.

⁹ *Warwick Daily News*, 29 April 1948, p. 2. Given that the Honour Board lists ten locals as killed serving in the Second World War, it is not known whether the newspaper report was incorrect, and if it should have referred to brass plates for the eight soldiers killed in the First World War (as per those listed on the war memorial).

¹⁰ Main Roads Commission, *Annual Report*, 30 June 1947, p. 13.

¹¹ Main Roads Commission, *Annual Report*, 30 June 1949, p. 16; *Annual Report*, 30 June 1950, image #4 (between pp. 2 & 3).

during both World Wars. The Shire then approached Main Roads under that Commission's prevailing road landscaping scheme, and Main Roads then planted the trees during the late 1940s or early 1950s.

The avenue was included in the inventory of the 2010 Southern Downs Regional Council Cultural Heritage Study, but has not been included in the Council's Local Heritage Register. It was identified as having significance for its aesthetic value, and for its potential local historical association with commemorative planting. Nothing more was written about the commemorative aspects of the plantings.¹²

<p>Plaque and cross embedded in tree trunk. Lettering legible: "Pte. J. D". Presumably this is Private J. Danaher listed on a Second World War tablet on the stone war memorial (J. Nissen, 8 September 2014)</p>	<p>One of three tablets listing those who served in, and returned from, the First World War. (J. Nissen, 8 September 2014)</p>

Description

Over a length of approximately 500 metres, a total of 61 Plane trees (*Platanus x hispanica* c.v. *Acerifolia*)¹³ border the roads, beginning at the northern corner of Oak Street and the Tannymorel–Mt Colliery Road, heading northwest along Oak street, the length of Kurrajong Street (running southwest), and approximately 200 metres south-westerly along Tannymorel Road (a continuation of Kurrajong Street). Most are mature trees, but four are evidently young trees, or regrowth from stumps.

The trees are mostly closely spaced but there are several gaps along Kurrajong Street and Tannymorel Road. There may have been an additional dozen or so trees planted, depending on whether the original spacing was consistent along the length of the plantings, and whether any were planted in front of the former Post office and Tannymorel Memorial Hall (for example gaps may have allowed for traffic access and parking) and also on the curve at the junction of Oak and Kurrajong Streets (possibly to allow access to the hotel and Tannymorel Railway Station, both now demolished but formerly sited on each side of that corner).

¹² Memorial Avenue, Yangan–Killarney Road Emu Vale (Survey #226), in Mark Baker Town Planning Consultant Pty Ltd in association with Ivan McDonald Architects Pty Ltd, Southern Downs Regional Council Cultural Heritage Study – Inventory of Surveyed Places, January 2010.

¹³ Letter Queensland Herbarium to Judith Nissen, 17 September 2014, identifying specimen collected 10 September 2014 from an avenue tree.

Crosses and plaques were attached to or placed next to at least some of the trees – one cross and plaque embedded in a tree is still partially legible; on another tree the tip of a cross protrudes from the trunk.¹⁴

Sources

Thanks must go to Sandy Morris of 19 Kurrajong Street, Tannymorel (07 4664 4149) who collected anecdotal information about the avenue and, along with Mark Knudsen, photographed the trees and sent information to the Avenues of Honour website. *Please note that Ms Morris' contact details are not for publication.*

References

- Avenues of Honour website, <http://www.avenuesofhonour.org/avenue-stories/tannymorel-queensland/>, accessed 17 July 2014
- Barter, Leith, *Pioneering the Pine: A Short History of the Pine Rivers Shire*, Pine Rivers Shire Council, 2005
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Attachments

See images in Dropbox folder: "AGHS: Tannymorel"

¹⁴ Avenues of Honour website, <http://www.avenuesofhonour.org/avenue-stories/tannymorel-queensland/>, accessed 17 July 2014. See also Mark Knudsen photographs at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/avenuesofhonour/sets/72157635049322142> (all taken 11 June 2013).