



COOKS HILL

LIFE SAVING & SURF CLUB

PO Box 3262
Merewether, NSW 2291

Tel: (02) 4925 2828
ABN: 17 023 819 760

History of Cooks Hill Life Saving & Surf Club

War Memorial Relocation

1918-1919

Cooks Hill LS & SC paid entirely for the Obelisk and its erection (£70) as well as decided on its own design and organised and conducted its dedication ceremony (2 unveilings 1918 & 1919).

They originally obtained permission to place the monument in a public place without any leasing requirement by the Council. It was shifted to Empire Park (1920) by the Council without any leasing requirement again on new dedicated ground to allow Memorial Drive to be built (A large number of memorials were shifted to parks because of traffic conditions eg Taree.)

The Cook's Hill perpetual monument therefore is a Public one because of its site placement (but private owned and financed by the Club, as at Manly and Newcastle beside the Post Office). Therefore, it came originally under the 1921 Act. In recent times RSL Sub-Branches have taken over the advisory role of the Act – especially in restoration support.

2015

The centenary of the Gallipoli landings on April 25 1915 were remembered as part of Cooks Hill LS & SC annual ANZAC Day service. This 2015 service was significant for not only the centenary of the Gallipoli landings. After many years of planning and fundraising the club War Memorial was relocated from Empire Park across to the east of Memorial Drive. It now forms part of the Bathers Way to once again overlook Bar Beach near to where it was originally located when dedicated in 1918.

The construction of Memorial Drive in the late 1920s necessitated that the Memorial be relocated to Empire Park. An initiative commenced in 2010 with an aim to relocate the Memorial back to its original location where the life ring on the modest granite obelisk would once again overlook Bar Beach. Life member Mr Jack Saunders proposed and worked tirelessly for the successful relocation. This included great effort in planning and gaining the relevant approvals along with significant fundraising.

The relocation of the Memorial required it to be rededicated at its new location at the commencement of the ceremony. Army chaplain Father Greg Clarke presided over the formal rededication and blessing. The service commenced with an opening address by Club President Richard Hermens and the formal address was delivered by Captain Christine Clark of the Royal Australian Navy. There were several club members who participated in the service including Eliza Darney, Reed van Huisstede, Abby Clifford and John Mayo.



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The bugler, Ms Lisa Thomas (nee Carratt) sounded the last post and wreaths were laid by Mr Richard Hermens and Mr Jack Saunders on behalf of the Cooks Hill LS & SC, Captain Christine Clark on behalf of the Australian Defence Force, Mr Henry and Ms Rhonda Scruton on behalf of the Hunter Surf Life Saving Branch, The Hon Sharon Claydon, Federal Member for Newcastle, The Hon Tim Crakanthorp, State Member for Newcastle and Ms Nuatali Nelmes Lord Mayor of Newcastle. There were also several other tributes placed at the memorial. The annual ANZAC ceremony at the Club Memorial continues to grow in size and has developed into a larger community commemoration. There were estimates that in excess of 500 people gathered around the newly relocated and rededicated Memorial on ANZAC Day morning 2015.

The morning concluded with a breakfast for all who attended in the club function room. The service was organised by club member David Knight (retired senior naval officer) who was assisted by a large number of club members who volunteered to undertake a huge variety of tasks to enable the ceremony to run efficiently.

John Mayo
CHSLSC