

# AVENUES OF HONOUR 1915-2015 PROGRESS REPORT

## DAVID LAWRY

“A National project which aims to honour with a tree the memory of every individual who has made the supreme sacrifice on behalf of all Australians, by documenting, preserving and reinstating the original and establishing new Avenues of Honour by the Centenary of Anzac in 2015.”

### BACKGROUND:

The inspiration for this project came from a challenging question embedded in the presentation by Dr Greg Moore at the inaugural TREENET Street Tree Symposium at the Waite Institute in 2000.

“Where are all the avenues of trees in Australia?”

The author was in the business of growing and planting trees for State and Local Government projects at the time and was aware that the contemporary standards of project design and implementation for tree planting were based on a relatively short term vision of the amenity value of trees on the renovated or new roadway in question. It was fairly evident that the common criteria and specifications for main road contacts around Australia would result, at best, in only a modest useful life expectancy for trees that had the capability of being in the landscape for 100 rather than 40 years. Such projects were therefore unlikely to produce the sort of iconic avenues suggested in the presentation by Dr Moore.

The idea of replacing trees once or twice in a human lifespan makes a lot of sense in an urban environment. Constant redevelopment and management constraints such as those outlined elsewhere in these proceedings reasonably preclude the kind of long term commitment needed to provide avenues spanning more than one generation, let alone the several that would be necessary to rate them as heritage avenues on age criteria alone.

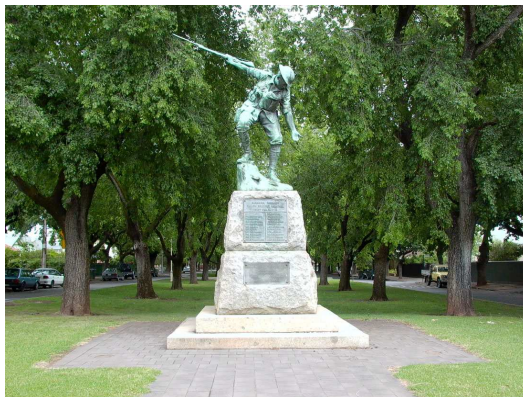
We need other reasons for planting and maintaining enduring avenues.

The cultural significance of the many commemorative roadside trees planted after WW1 should have been sufficient to ensure the survival and maintenance of hundreds of significant Avenues of Honour, but sadly this is not the case. Most had disappeared from the landscape after 50 years and the many reasons have been well documented by others over the past 20 or so years. There is a great sense of loss of these avenues and a widespread interest in reinstating them.

The strong personal interest in commemoration shared by thousands of younger Australians and the imminent celebration of the centenary of the Gallipoli landing have produced a unique opportunity to do just that.

Our rapidly improving understanding of the science and practice of arboriculture will be vital elements in the success of the project.

For these reasons TREENET has initiated and has committed to coordinate the “Avenues of Honour 1915-2015” project. Our success will be measured by others as they assess the avenues in 2115.



## MILESTONES

### 2004

- Project initiated by Director of Treenet and approved by Management Committee.
- Site visits to ACT, NSW, Vic, and WA.
- AoH project launched at the 5<sup>th</sup> National Street Tree Symposium at the Waite Arboretum. Keynote presentations made to 200 delegates and 100 rosemary bushes propagated from material originating from Anzac Cove in 1915 planted in RSL sanctioned ceremony.
- Website [www.avenuesofhonour.org](http://www.avenuesofhonour.org) commenced.
- Survey of Avenues Nationwide commenced. Over 100 councils contacted.
- Relationships with key stakeholders established.



### 2005

- Promotion of project via radio, newspaper and magazine articles and commencement of community feedback
- Funding sought (\$75k) from Dept of Vet affairs for appointment of full time project officer and IT support for the project. No response during the year.
- Letters written to all Federal politicians outlining project and asking for help in making appropriate contacts in each electorate. Over 40 positive responses received including personal response from PM.(2) and Leader of Opposition.
- Network expanded, especially local community and RSL groups.
- Rosemary cuttings from Gallipoli Rosemary hedge planted at 2004 Symposium distributed to Greenhills Propagation Nursery in Vic and Aitken and Newman in Queensland. Intention is to release plants for sale to public in 2006 in order to raise funds for the project.



## 2006

- Response from Dept Vet Affairs received. Standard application form for \$3k offered. No action pursued for further direct funding.
- Application to Dept of Vet Affairs for permission to use "Anzac" in the naming of the Gallipoli rosemary.
- Sarah Cockerell (Treenet) awarded Phd studentship to study Avenues of Honour.
- Ben Kenyon (Treenet Advisory Board) volunteers to produce draft standards for recording Avenues of Honour.
- ABC 2 runs segment on Australia Wide on Anzac day promoting project and rosemary.
- A number of journals run stories on the project.
- Successful negotiations with nursery industry leading to national release of Gallipoli Rosemary on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2006. Treenet to receive 50cents per plant sold to support project.
- To date 350 sites around Australia under investigation.

