

# New Zealand Avenues of Honour

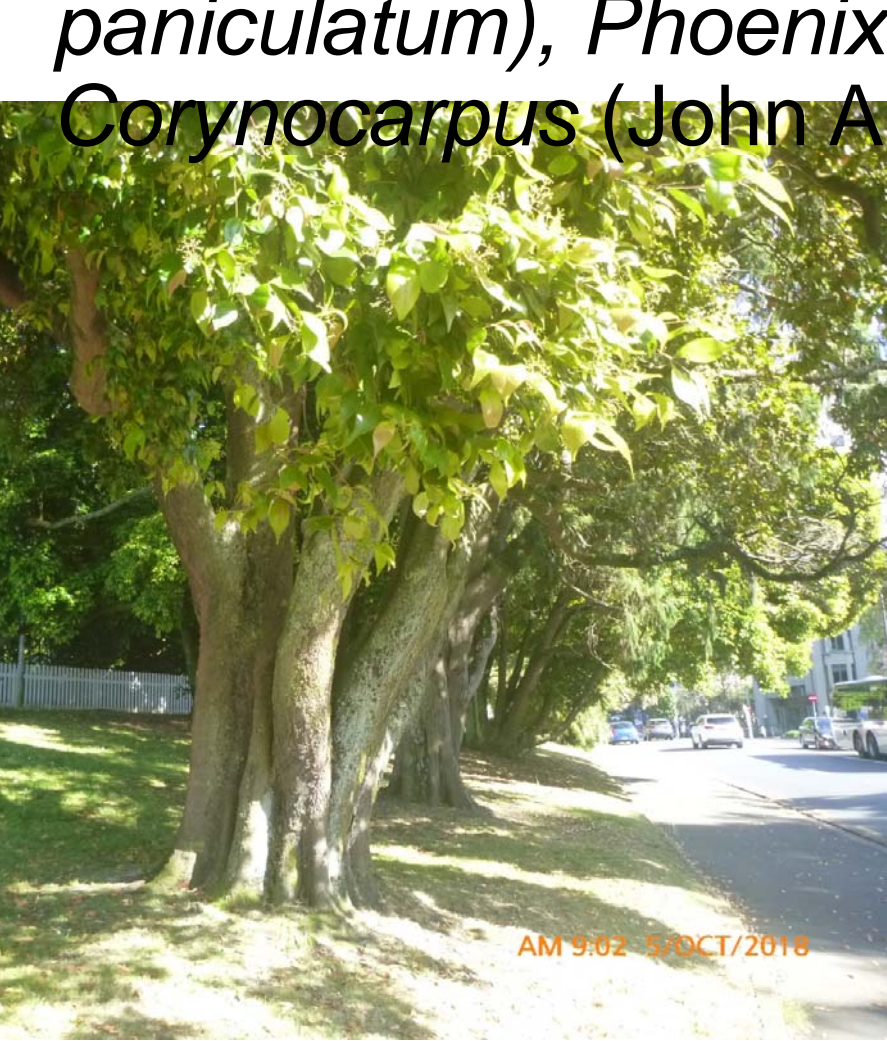
Stuart Read  
11/2018



## NZ population in 1914: 1 million

- **10%** of the population went to WW1, c103,000 in all
- Troops and nurses
- Some 18,277 died
- Some 41, 317 (?65,000) were wounded
- Another 1000 died within 5 years i.e. by 1923
  
- **Huge impact** on a small country; towns, villages, farms

NORTH ISLAND, AUCKLAND, ANZAC AVENUE,  
20/9/1918, mixed species: *lily pilly* (*Syzygium  
paniculatum*), *Phoenix*, *Vitex*, *Cupressus*, *Podocarpus*,  
*Corynocarpus* (John Adam)



# Triggers and advocates for avenues

- Beautifying Societies in cities, towns and districts
- Arbor Day plantings, often in primary schools and reserves
- Local and national newspapers
- Agricultural & Pastoral Association showgrounds
- Scenery Preservation Movement
- Progressive era groups: Women's Societies, the Maori Welfare League, Civic Leagues
- Some Municipal, Borough and County Councils



Non-avenues are more common:

South Island:  
Ashburton,  
Hampstead,  
*Friedlander Park, Peace Oak,*  
19/7/1919  
(Mike Roche)



Lone oak:

Ashburton

Domain:

*Victory*

*Oak,*

21/7/1919

3 sons dead  
of 5

serving...

(Mike Roche)



NZ's largest avenue: South Island,  
Oamaru, 8/1918 Memorial oak avenues  
(multiple): *Q.robur*, *Q.cerris* (SR)

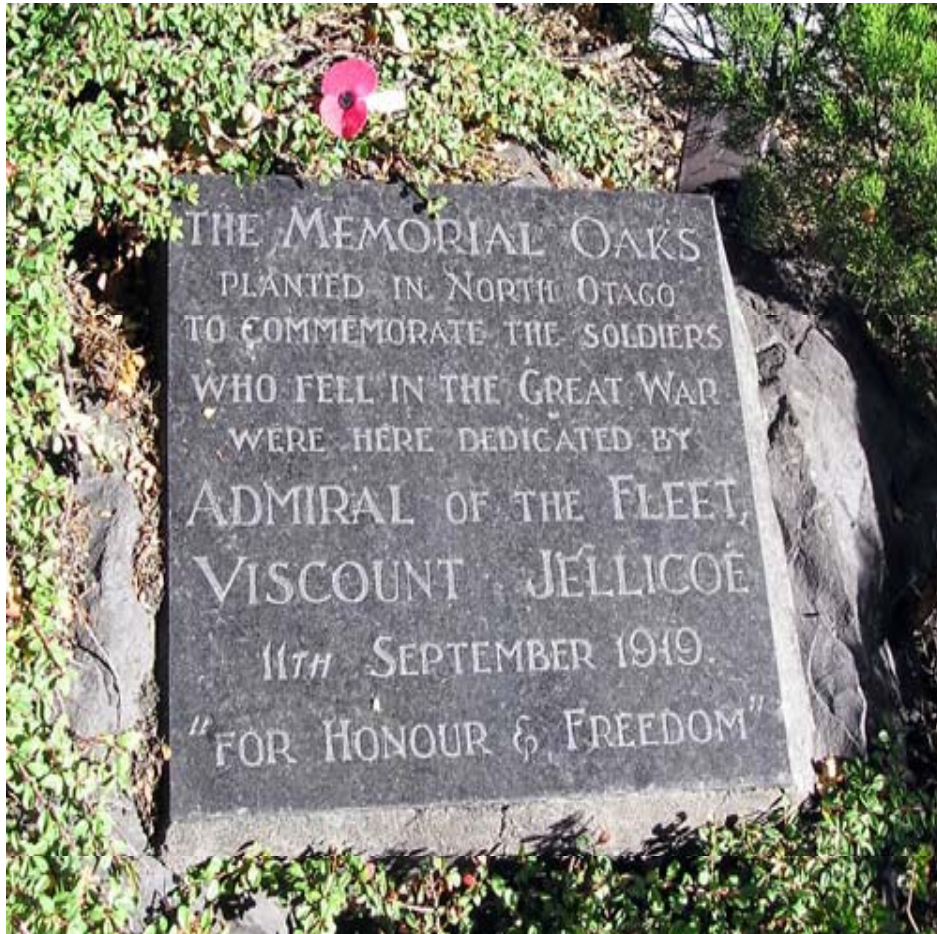


*Oamaru  
memorial  
oaks –  
the  
pivotal  
'hub' tree,  
dedication  
plaque*

<https://teara.govt.nz/files/p-22916-enz.jpg>



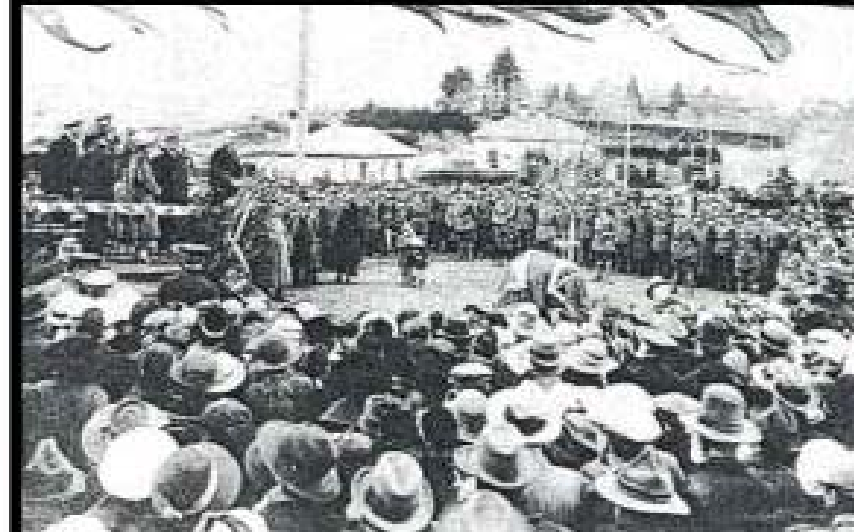
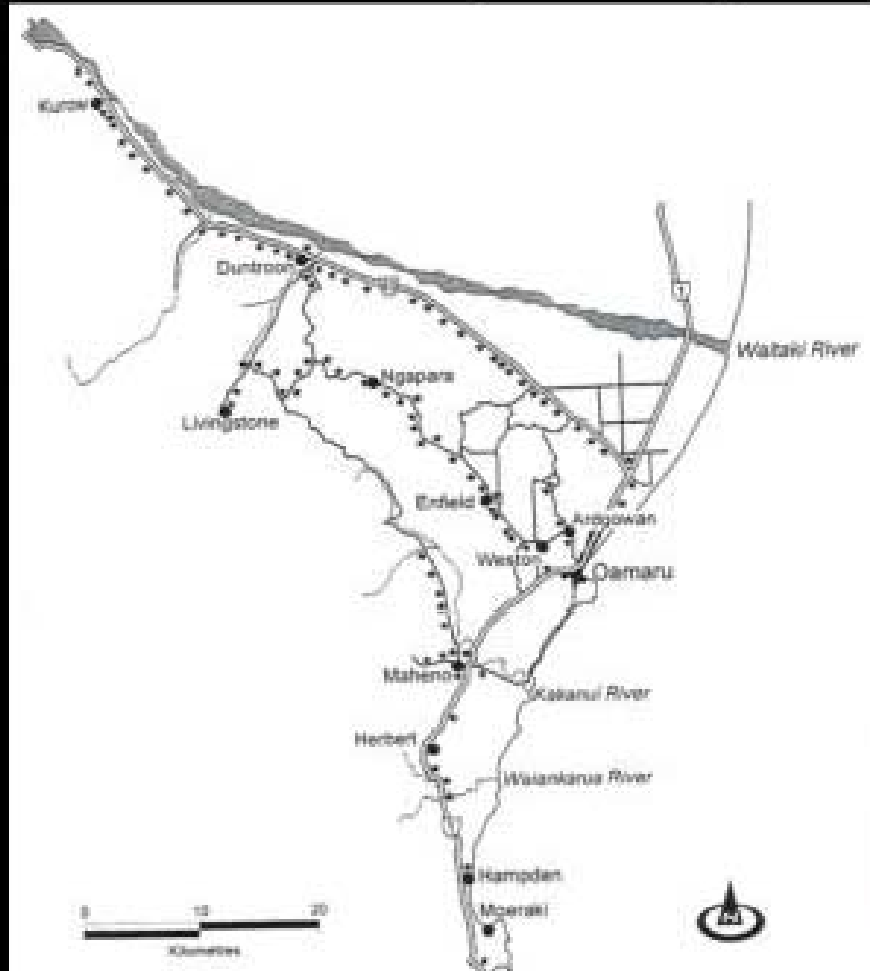
# Oamaru 1919 dedication plaque: intriguing choice of both European & Turkish oaks – for Gallipoli?(SR)



<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/>

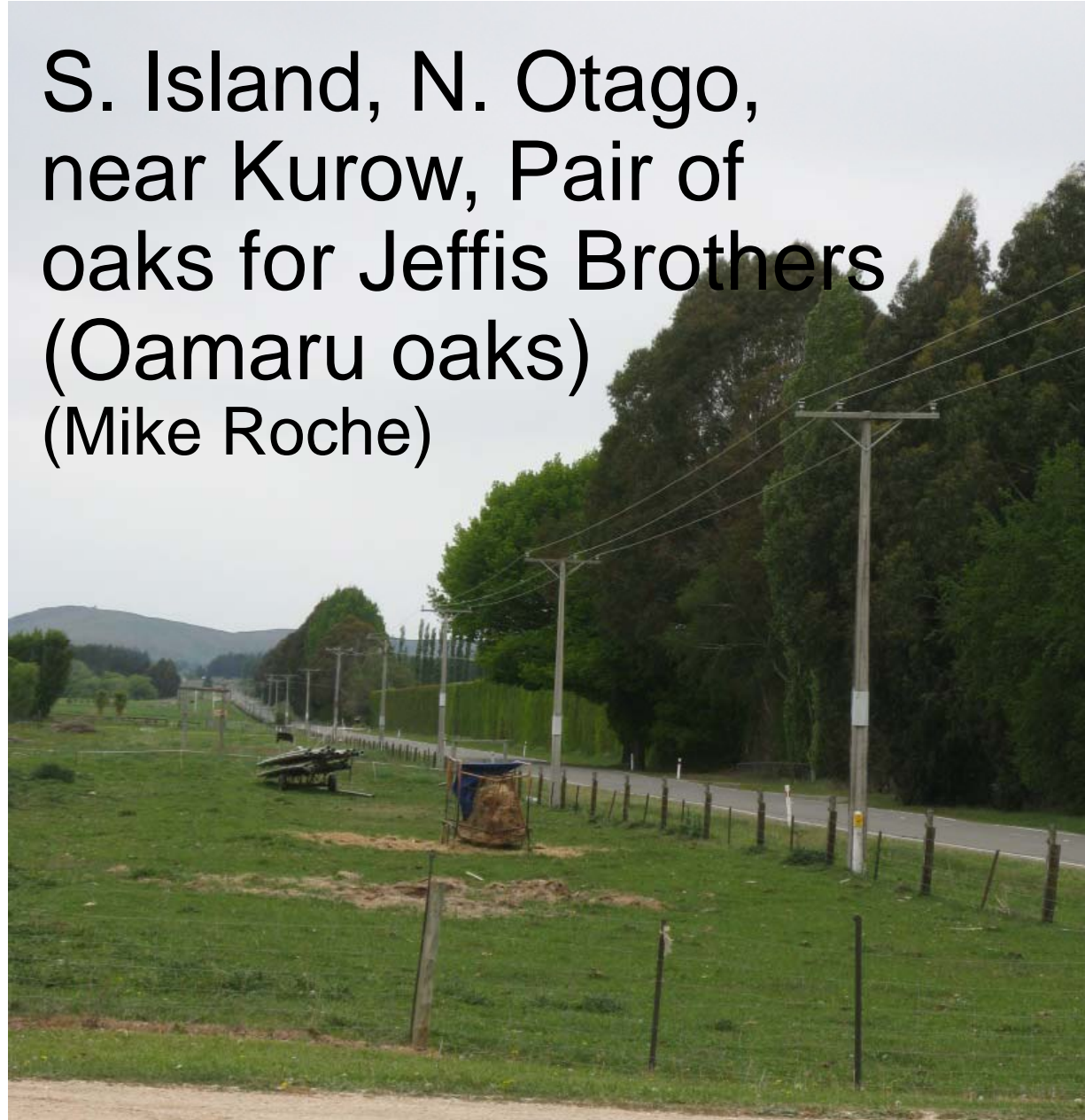


# Oamaru Memorial oaks – radiating roads & highway: 1918 dedication (Pawson 2004 map; Nth.Otago Museum photos)





S. Island, N. Otago,  
near Kurow, Pair of  
oaks for Jeffis Brothers  
(Oamaru oaks)  
(Mike Roche)





<https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/>

Oamaru: replacement  
1990s concrete crosses

# Exhibition based on Oamaru memorial oaks (Chris Betteridge)



S. Island, Waitaki,  
*Fairlie Peace Avenue*  
c.1922 European  
oaks



<https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/11459/fairlies-peace-avenue>

*Fairlie Peace Avenue* – some 500 oaks in all  
– no plaques: significant as an avenue  
([www.nzhistory.org.nz](http://www.nzhistory.org.nz))



# N. Island: Whangarei, Onerahi 1921 Memorial Oak Grove 10 soldiers remembered as a group (non-avenue)

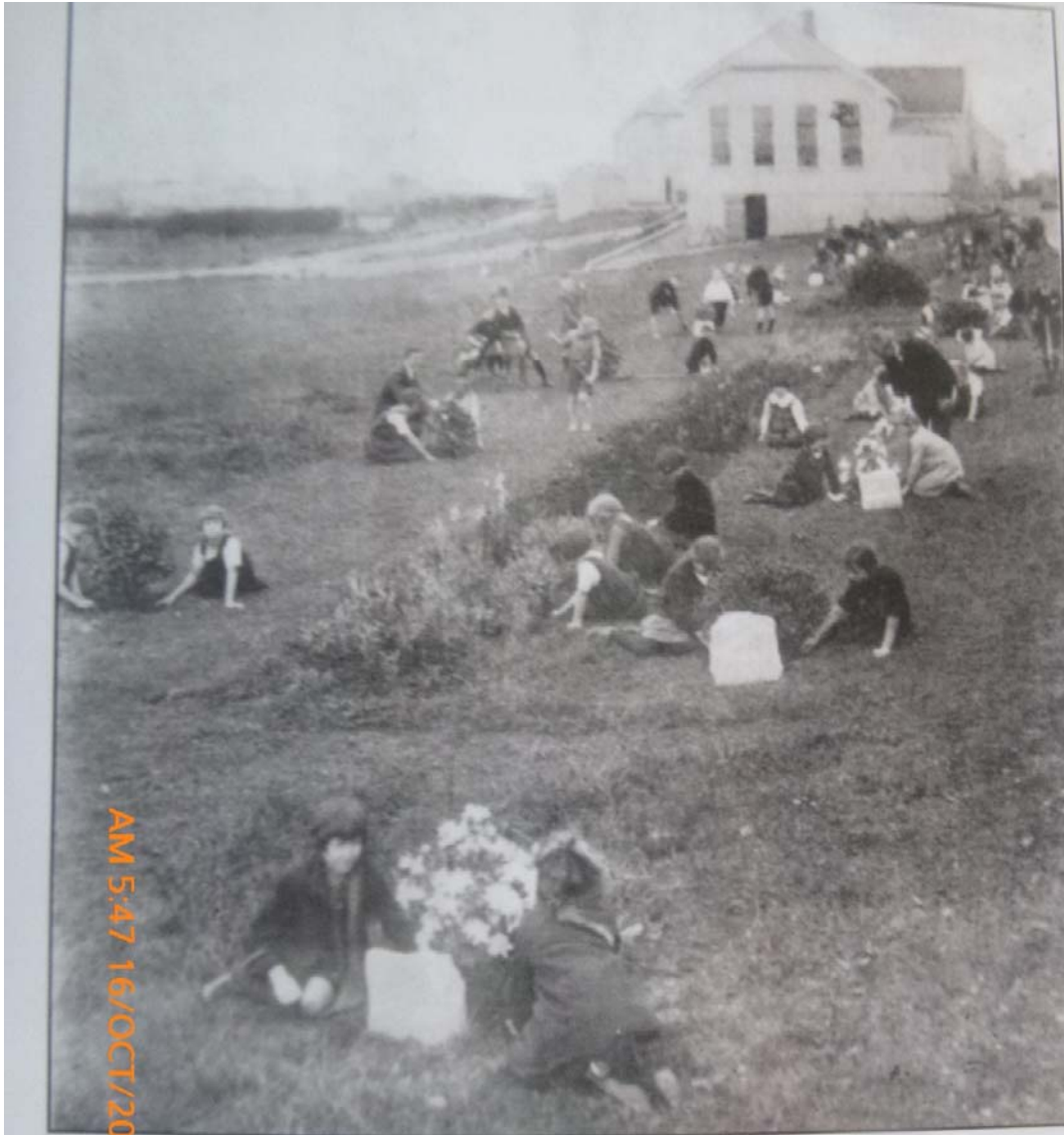
(Bruce Ringer)





# S. Island, Canterbury, Timaru, 1922, ash (Mike Roche)





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Pukekohe Public School, 1924, 27 camellias, planted by school children (L: c 1931; R: Google earth)



AM 5:47 16/OCT/2018

Students tending the memorial stones circa 1931  
Source: Centennial of Primary Education in Pukekohe (Part 1)



S. Island, Dunedin, *Anzac Avenue*,  
1925, oaks, elms and horse chestnuts (Mike  
Roche)

Auckland Domain: War Memorial Museum landscape scheme (unrealised), 11/5/1934 scheme (NZ Herald, c/o John Adam)



"...The general lay-out of the approaches to the Auckland War Memorial Museum showing the central avenue and sweeping drives which are to be lined with pohutukawa trees." Note the fountain. Source: *New Zealand Herald*, 11 May, 1934. Page 6.

# Debates on **native v exotic**: pohutukawa /cedar?

- Symbolism and **nationalism** – maturing ‘sense of self’
- Issue of **hardiness** in exposed, open settings (parks, schools, street verges)
- Lack of **knowledge** of needs of various tree species
- Issues of **erratic maintenance** and follow-up post-planting
- Issues of **faltering memory**, translocation, loss



S. Island:  
*Hanmer*  
*Memorial*  
*Avenue, NZ*  
State Forest  
Service (photo c/o  
Mike Roche)

## TREE MEMORIALS

### ISLAND-WIDE SCHEME

#### CAIRN UNVEILED

(By Telegraph—Press Association.)

WANGANUI, February 20.

A cairn of shell rock, inlaid with black battalion patches done in ebony, was unveiled at Wanganui today as a memorial to the New Zealand Rifle Brigade unit of the New Zealand Division. Formed during the war, the unit served with great distinction and was disbanded immediately after.

The memorial is the only one of its kind to the brigade in the Dominion, and forms part of an island-wide scheme to plant the main north road from Wellington to Auckland with trees on one side in commemoration of the silver jubilee of King George V and on the other to commemorate deeds and tradi-

## TREE MEMORIALS

EVENING POST, VOLUME CXXV, ISSUE 43,  
FEBRUARY 1938

Using This Item

21/2/1938 *Evening Post* article - 20 miles of trees planted, S.H.1 Wanganui-Waitotora: part of a scheme to link Auckland-Wellington...

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N. Island, Wairarapa, Gladstone, 36 scarlet  
oaks  
1940s-50s



<https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/19711/memorial-oaks>



WW2: Devonport, Auckland: *Araucaria heterophylla*  
& *Metrosideros excelsa* 1952 planted by school kids



(Chris  
Betteridge)



A kind of 'avenue of forest / bushland'  
2018: Waitakere Ranges (W of Auckland)  
Relocated War Memorial and newly-created  
Soldiers' Memorial Walkway (c/o John Adam)

The New Zealand Herald, 17/10/2018

NZ school children are planting 'fields of crosses' in run up to 11/11/2018

A14  www.nzherald.co.nz The New Zealand Herald Wednesday, October 17, 2018

# Crosses for WWI centenary at schools

Interest shown by schoolchildren one of striking features

Kurt Bayer

**T**housands of white crosses, symbolising the 18,277 Kiwis who died during World War I have been donated to every school and playcentre across New Zealand as preparations for the 100th anniversary of the armistice – on November 11 – marking the end of the war ramp up.

The interest by schoolchildren and youngsters in learning more about the sacrifices made by men and women during the Great War 1914-18 has been one of the more striking features of the centenary commemorations which have been going over the past four years.

The Fields of Remembrance Trust, set up by the Paschendale Society, the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association (RNZRSA) and the Auckland RSA, formed in 2012 to "honour those who served and fought for our country" during WWI, in a joint venture with the Ministry of Education, nearly 80,000 white crosses have been supplied to 2531 primary and secondary schools, and 4600 early childhood centres.

Each cross features the names and service details of servicemen or women from the respective region. Along with community activities, it's estimated that more than 100,000 young people have been involved in remembrance activities over the past four years.

Fields of Remembrance chairman Graham Gibson raised the response of young people to the centenary commemorations.

"It's a reflection on us as a nation, and more about service and sacrifice. We've had over 30,000 New Zealanders in all the wars give the ultimate sacrifice, give their life for our country. And if you go to Anzac Day events around the country, it's the young ones that are driving it and pushing it, and that's why we have incredible numbers because the young ones want to come out and do it."

and more than 18,200 killed and a further 41,300 wounded. The white crosses and fields of remembrance are a way for modern-day Kiwis, and especially schoolchildren, to appreciate the staggering scale of the loss and heartbreak that affected every community. A cross for every one of the 18,277 New Zealanders who died during the war will be remembered with a named cross at Auckland.

crosses from the Fields of Remembrance Trust. They've been memorial fields for past wars and held "powerful" messages. Acting principal Beth... the initiative has helped... the horrors and scars... "For our children, we bring it home how touched everybody? We have all cultures



White crosses in the grounds of the Auckland War Memorial Museum in preparation for Armistice Day.

Photo: [unreadable]

# **Special thanks to colleagues:**

- Co-author John P. Adam, garden historian
- Bruce Ringer, Librarian, Manukau / Auckland Ccl.
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- Chris Betteridge & Gwenda Sheridan (Australia).