

Tallong Twitterings

The story of Fred and his Military Medal...

The focus at Tallong's ANZAC day ceremony this year will be on the Second World War after last year's celebrations featured the centenary of the Gallipoli landings.

A display highlighting the activities of those Tallong residents who served in WW11 is planned. One particular person who will be remembered is Tallong's winner of the Military Medal Lance Bombardier Frederick Ronald Wombey, service number N270852. Fred was a member of the 14th Heavy Anti-aircraft Battery, a famous unit that called itself the 'suicide squad' with an unofficial flag of skull and crossbones!

The unit was equipped with both modern 3.7-inch anti aircraft artillery and First World War-vintage Lewis light machine guns.

Fred won his MM for his service in Darwin at the height of the Japanese bombing raids in February 1942. (see photo)

His citation reads: 'On two occasions at least during attacks on oil tanks at Darwin by enemy dive-bombers and machinegun fire from the air he ordered the gun crew to take cover while he waited for the attacking plane to be sufficiently near to be a good target. His action was partly responsible for the failure of the enemy to dive-bomb the vital area he was defending.'

But in spite of his heroic efforts, a huge amount of damage was done. The port was destroyed, 14 ships were bombed and 21 wharf labourers were killed.

The family of the 18-year-old Fred, the third eldest, had an apple orchard five kilometres out of Tallong. There were seven children in all, with the two eldest boys in uniform in the Middle East. Their father recalled: "After the other boys went, Fred, who helped me in the orchard, used to nag and nag about enlisting. I thought two in the AIF was a fair thing, and at last I gave my consent for Fred to enlist for home defence."

Fred's son is planning to be in Tallong for ANZAC Day with his father's medals and it's hoped that more than twenty other descendants of those who served in WW11 will also be there.

Memorial Funds...

Just in time for ANZAC Day, the Department of Veterans' Affairs has awarded the Tallong Community Focus Group a grant of \$4000 to revamp and repair the local war memorial. New plaques remembering all the men and women from Tallong who served in two world wars have been made in Goulburn.

The grant was assisted by a supporting letter from local MHR Angus Taylor. The money has been lodged in the bank and the new plaques are expected to be in place next month. (see photo)

Apple Day volunteers...

It is that time of the year when we are seeking volunteers to help at this year's Tallong Apple Day Festival on Sunday, May 1. Your assistance for a few hours on this morning would be greatly appreciated.

This is Tallong's main fund raising activity for community organisations in the district. Please contact Geoff Clark, Volunteers co-ordinator, on 4841 0577 or by email at geoff_run@hotmail.com.

And on another Apple note, newcomers to the district with a business might like to think about becoming involved with Apple Day by sponsoring an event. The Festival is a good opportunity to promote local businesses and gain good publicity. Anybody interested should contact Christine Wursten (Ph 0418 648 610).

Diary Date...

Next Sunday March 6, Clean-Up Australia Day, if you can help, please meet at 9am at the Memorial Hall.