

## **PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF WAR MEMORIALS: A STUDY IN BALLARAT**

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**ABSTRACT:** A quantitative survey of the Ballarat and district community provided a relatively well educated, older sample, having a high personal connection with the remembrance of war. People whose family had served or who acted as their family history custodian had stronger views on most aspects of war remembrance than those without such connection. Thoughts about Australia were felt with equal strength by people with and without familial connection. People grouped a range of memorial forms into those that were Monuments which included more active and socially experienced activities and those that could be described as Artefacts which were more passively and individually experienced. Similar views were held with respect to the importance of each type of memorial in remembrance. The most important purpose of war memorials was for commemoration while education was seen as having slightly lesser importance.

**KEY WORDS:** war memorials; education; family; nation; Ballarat

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Many Australian traditions for the remembrance of war were developed during and in the two decades following the First World War (1914-1918), when public war memorials, most of which incorporated dedications to individuals who had served, were built across the landscape. Inglis (2005, p. 128) states that “The making of the Great War memorials in Australia was a quest for the right way, materially and spiritually, to honour the soldiers.” The memorials that were built in regional areas to commemorate men and women from local towns were completed well before the larger state and national memorials, which in the main, were not opened until the 1930s. In many cases the names of Second World War service men and women were added to the memorials that had been built for the First World War, and some argue that the dead of 1914-18 remain the symbolic focus (Heffernan, 1995).

By the 1960s it was generally expected that the First World War ceremonies and the memory of the Anzacs would fade away and the war memorials would be forgotten (Inglis, 2005). Donaghue and Tranter

(2013) argue that the heroic image of the Anzacs was undermined in the 1960s and 1970s by the negative images associated with the Vietnam War peace movement. Despite these past trends, a reinvigoration of interest in Australia's military history has occurred, resulting in increasing visitation to battlefields and attendance at commemorative ceremonies. This interest has occurred through the mass media's portrayal of soldiers as heroic, through the actions of political leaders and various cultural and technological pursuits such as the internet, cinema, television and popular novels (Donaghue and Tranter, 2013; Fabiansson, 2004; Todman, 2005). A recent survey of public perceptions of Australian heritage found that the Australian War Memorial is one of the top two most visited sites (the other being the Sydney Opera House) (McDonald, 2011). Over 835 000 people visited the Australian War Memorial in Canberra in 2011/12, with 39 500 attending the 2011 Anzac Day ceremonies, and an estimated 8-10 000 people attend the Dawn Service at Gallipoli (Australian War Memorial, 2012; Basarin and Hall, 2008). In response to increasing interest, a visitor centre was constructed at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne with visitation rising from 270 000 in 2002/2003, to nearly 580 000 in 2011/2012 (Shrine of Remembrance Trustees, 2003; 2012).

War memorials articulate social memory, and because they are coded with the values and memories of a particular generation their original meaning is, arguably, limited in time (Winter, 1995). Inglis (2005) found that about 60% of First World War memorials are monumental forms such as obelisk, column, arches, temple and statues of soldiers; 20% are utilitarian such as schools, halls and hospitals and 18% are a combination of functional and monumental forms. Many other kinds of war memorials were set up by groups such as private companies, government departments, churches, schools and sports clubs (Inglis, 2005). Relatively little is understood about how current generations interpret these memorials from older conflicts, especially those from the two world wars (Dyer, 1994; Walter, 2009; Winter, 1995). Most of the research about war and remembrance provides rich and detailed information about historical and personal experiences for example, but is not designed to provide a broad understanding of the community's views.

In the lead up to the First World War centenary in 2014, the Australian Government proposes to use the opportunity to commemorate all of the nation's historic involvement in war and peacekeeping missions from the Boer War to the present day (Australian Government, 2013). The Australian Government has accepted the Anzac Centenary Advisory

Board's proposal to group the commemorative activity into three programs. The Education and Research program intends to "help improve knowledge, awareness and understanding of Australia's military history and the experience of Australians at war," the program of Commemoration hopes to "maximise the opportunity for Australians to participate personally in services and observances," and the Artistic and Cultural program aims to "engage Australians with the Anzac Centenary" (Australian Government, 2013, p. 2).

Not everyone will be able to travel to the sites at which the major commemorations will be held: attendance at Gallipoli will be strictly limited and controlled, travel to Europe is costly and even a visit to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra can be a challenge for regional residents. Local memorials and remembrance can be expected to play a prominent role in the centenary, and the government is encouraging rural and regional areas to generate their own commemorative activity (Australian Government, 2013).

The overall study, of which this paper forms part, used a quantitative survey method to explore some aspects of remembrance practice in the Victorian regional city of Ballarat and district. This paper concerns the questions relating to the kinds of memorial that hold the most meaning for commemoration, and their purposes. The study also measured personal connection to the remembrance of war through family and analysed the effect this had on the perceptions of memorials' meaning and purpose.

### ***The Social Memory of War***

One of the essential criteria for the retention of a memory is that it is called to mind, or 'rehearsed' on a regular basis (Baddeley, 1999; Winter, 2006). In addition it is a part of the nature of a social memory that public processes will be developed to secure its retention and transmission through time (Halbwachs, 1992). War memorials, of which there are many kinds, are commonly the sites at which rehearsal takes place. 'Remembrance' refers to the activities that are designed to maintain memories, and war memorials function only when the memory for which they stand is rehearsed and made meaningful by those who visit them (Winter, 2006). As Inglis (2005, p. 319) states "Memory is a faculty, memories may be stored, remembrance is an activity." Remembrance of war is enshrined in rituals of symbolic, formalized and regular ceremonial practice such as laying wreaths, marches, recitation of poetry, hymns and bugle calls. Foote and Azaryahu (2007, p. 126) comment that "memory

pertains to the actualization of the past in some form of contemporary experience” and in this they include the creation of new memorials and other events including literary ones as well as site visits. In Australia however, the long journey involved in visiting overseas battlefields is beyond the resources of many people, and war memorials in Australia are of great importance because they have had to accommodate multiple needs, particularly the expression of grief in the absence of graves (Inglis, 2005; Ziino, 2007). Local memorials, of which Inglis (2005) estimated there are about 4 000 in Australia, are particularly poignant because it is there that the names of men and (although not always) women who left to go to war, are listed.

Each generation has its own perspective on the past, and therefore has a unique interpretation of a war memorial. This is not to say that older meanings are discarded, rather that they may be modified and new memories added which better suit the needs of the contemporary society. Schwarz (1982) for example showed how the iconography of the United States Capitol building was added to, creating layers of meaning over the years in response to new needs. As Johnson (1995) argues, war memorials offer a lens through which we can examine how current generations perceive their national history.

### ***Connections with War Memorials***

People can be connected with a war memorial in a number of ways and it is known that personal connection tends to increase the strength of visitors’ motivations and experiences for a site (Biran et al., 2011; Poria et al., 2009; Winter, 2012). Commonly, national and/or personal, familial links have generated stronger motivations and experiences, but it has also been shown that people with no connection to a memorial site can have a deep and meaningful experience (Gatewood and Cameron, 2004). McDonald (2011) confirmed that people can become connected to a memorial as the result of an existing personal reason, or where their visit to a place engenders a new connection. Once connected to a site, people are then more likely to take an interest and to re-visit.

In Australia, as in other countries, the large loss of life in the two world wars necessitated that the state (in the form of the present day Commonwealth War Graves Commission) took responsibility for care of the dead. This has had the effect of creating a two-fold ownership and connection with war dead, through the nation and families (Scates, 2006). For many nations, wars have a sacred significance because they are

linked with their beginnings (Hutchinson, 2009), and in Australia, the men who fought the First World War (the Anzacs) have been used to symbolize the national character, with the eight month campaign at Gallipoli often cited as representing the birth of the nation. The commemorative ceremonies for Anzac Day have now become symbolic of the nation's involvement in all wars and peace-keeping missions (Donaghue and Tranter, 2013). In the Second World War the campaigns in North Africa (Tobruk) and Papua New Guinea (Kokoda) were also important, but many other campaigns are not nearly so well known or remembered. In addition to public remembrance, the bereaved performed their own activities at home and at places such as at local churches (Inglis, 2005). Some argue that the bulk of remembrance and memory work is actually maintained within small groups such as families (Halbwachs, 1992; Winter, 1995). Family custodians in particular, most of whom are women, look after family history, its stories, and the artefacts that represent them. In the past 20 years, an extensive range of personal items has comprised a great deal of the published material including objects such as photographs, diaries letters, poetry, war novels and plays (Winter, 2006; Ziino, 2010).

At the same time, many personal forms of remembrance are socially shared and the widespread loss throughout society in the two world wars linked families into a pattern of collective grief and mourning (Heffernan, 1995; Hutchinson, 2009; Scates, 2006; Winter, 1995). Todman (2005) has illustrated how artefacts that are enjoyed privately, such as novels and cinema can have widespread social effect.

Socio-demographic characteristics of participants are not necessarily related to an interest in war memorials, although age is perhaps an exception because of the association between cohorts and their actual experiences of particular conflicts. In their study of Australian perceptions of the Anzacs, Donaghue and Tranter (2013) found that the influence of the Anzacs is more important for those over 45 years of age and in particular for the 55 to 64 age group (Baby Boomers), but cautioned that the weaker interest by younger age groups is not necessarily due to lack of interest or knowledge. They also found that people with less education tend to give more credence to the Anzac's part in the national character. McDonald's (2011) study of Australian heritage found only minor variation for gender, age, occupation and location.

While commemoration has formed the primary reason for the existence of war memorials, education is becoming an increasingly important role, and heritage sites in general are often regarded as places for education (Masberg and Silverman, 1996; Poria et al., 2009). The Australian War

Memorial and the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne, for example, have developed extensive visitor centres with public research facilities and extensive education programs that cater to visits by thousands of schoolchildren and other visitors each year. It is also worth noting Inglis' (2005) observation that most war memorials are devoid of explanatory information simply because the generations which built them, were well aware of their meaning and did not need descriptive signage and interpretation.

## **2. METHOD**

### ***Ballarat***

This study was conducted in the regional city of Ballarat, Australia (population of approximately 145 000). Beginning with the Eureka Stockade in 1854, the Ballarat community has a strong and enduring history of commemorating those who served during wartime. The city hosts several important memorials, many of which were developed and funded by local people and private organisations, probably reflecting the wealth that was generated from the goldfields. The 20-kilometre Avenue of Honour was created during the First World War by employees of a local manufacturer (E. Lucas & Co.), who became known as the 'Lucas Girls', and their fund-raising efforts also provided for the Arch of Victory memorial which was opened in 1920. The national Ex-Prisoner of War memorial which lists over 36 000 names from the Boer to Korean wars was built in 2004, and it too was initiated by local people and service organisations. A statue of Harold 'Pompey' Elliot, a well-known First World War battalion commander originally from Ballarat, was dedicated in 2011 with funding provided by the Tattersall's George Adams Foundation, Ballarat City Council and The Ballarat Foundation (Australian Community Philanthropy, 2011). There are numerous statues situated in Ballarat's main street (including Queen Victoria, Burke and Wills for example) as well as several war memorials, which commemorate wars since the Boer War. Their prominent location, like those in many towns, means that they are well known by most people who live in the city and surrounding region.

### **Survey Design**

To help develop the questionnaire, focus groups were conducted with 21 members of the general public recruited from advertisements posted in the Ballarat newspaper (*The Courier*). The final questionnaire was sent to ten members of the public for review, but no major changes were suggested. The following definition of a war memorial was used in the questionnaire to assist respondents.

**Public War Memorial:** can mean any number of objects that are reminders of or commemorate war and these can include: large stone or other monuments, museums, film, books, music, poetry, cemeteries, battlefields, avenues, lists of names and displays. This includes the Anzac day march and various commemorative services such as those held at the Ex-Prisoner of War memorial.

The questionnaire provided a list of ten different types of war memorial and respondents were asked to indicate how meaningful each was for remembrance. Two lists of five-point Likert scale items were used to measure items relating to the most important meaning and purpose of memorials where: 1 = not at all important, 2 = not important; 3 = neutral; 4 = somewhat important; 5 = very important. These items were developed from the focus group discussions, the literature and the researcher's prior studies. To measure personal connection to war memorials, the survey included questions relating to thoughts of those who fought, a person known to the respondent or to Australia, whether or not they or their family had military service and to indicate if they acted as the family history custodian. Research participants were asked to consider their answers in relation to conflicts preceding the Vietnam War (1962-1974).

The sample was selected using a systematic random sample from the 2009 Ballarat and District White Pages telephone directory. A total of 2 600 mail packages consisting of a questionnaire, return reply paid envelope and a letter of introduction/information sheet were posted in August 2010. Of these, 219 (8.4%) were undeliverable due to incorrect addresses and one person was deceased, thus from 2 381 deliverables, 483 completed questionnaires were returned giving an overall response rate of 20.3%. Fifty-five records were later removed because of missing responses, giving a usable data set of 428 records.

There was relatively little missing data for the Likert scaled items and so they were manually replaced with the mean. The items were checked for skewness and were found to be within acceptable limits. These items

were then analysed by exploratory factor analysis, using the Principal Components method to extract the factors and Varimax rotation to clarify the result. The items relating to the factors were recalculated as raw score means, that is, as simple means comprising the items relevant to each of the factors previously described. These scores are easy to interpret because they are scaled to the original items, but they are less sophisticated than factor means which incorporate the effects of all of the items in the scale. Some variables were recoded to form dichotomous data types. For the variable measuring *Family members or self who had served in war*, the *No* (n=71) and *Don't know* (n=14) responses were combined, for Education, levels less than tertiary were combined (Primary = 4, *Some secondary* = 60, *Completed secondary* = 69, *Trade* = 79) to provide a dichotomous variable.

### **3. RESULTS**

Overall the sample included a significant proportion of older, well educated people with a high level of personal connection to war remembrance. There were slightly more males (52.5%) than females (47.5%) in the sample compared with Ballarat population. The sample was underrepresented in the 18 to 39 years age groups and over represented in the 60-69 groups (Table 1). Almost half (49.4%) of the sample held a tertiary degree, which is substantially higher than the 24% reported in the 2011 census for the population aged 15-64 years (ABS, 2012). People in this sample had a high level of personal connection with war: 67.0% had family who served in war and a high proportion (n=155, 36.2%) were custodians for their family history.



**Table 1.** Age.

Age (Years)	Frequency	%	ABS %
18-24	3	.7	11.9
25-29	8	1.9	7.1
30-39	43	10.2	15.2
40-49	75	17.9	17.9
50-59	108	25.7	18.0
60-69	117	27.9	15.2
70-79	47	11.2	8.9
80-89	16	3.8	5.0
90+	3	.7	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2011 Census Ballarat

Table 2 shows the results for questions that asked participants to indicate the strength to which they thought of: a) people they knew; b) Australia; and c) those who fought, when they visit a war memorial. About 60% of the sample indicated they think about someone they know or about Australia and most (93%) either agreed (34.8%) or strongly agreed (58.4%) that at a war memorial, they think about those who fought.

**Table 2.** Some thoughts when visiting a war memorial.

When I am at a war memorial I think about...	Mean	SD	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
...someone I know	3.63	1.27	34 (7.9)	56 (13.1)	79 (18.5)	124 (28.9)	135 (31.5)
...Australia	3.64	1.15	34 (7.9)	30 (7)	95 (22.2)	166 (38.8)	103 (24.1)
...those who fought	4.45	.83	12 (2.8)	3 (.7)	14 (3.3)	149 (34.8)	250 (58.4)

Scale: 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = Strongly agree.

Source: the Author.

***The Meaning of Memorials for Remembrance***

The questionnaire provided a list of ten types of war memorial and respondents were asked to indicate to how meaningful each was for remembrance. The means listed in Table 3 show that the most important meaning was attributed to museums and war cemeteries and the lowest to historical records and film, books and poetry. The data were then analysed further using factor analysis (using SPSS Version 19.0). Examination of the correlations among the ten items showed all pairs were significantly and positively correlated at a level of  $p < 0.01$ , with all correlation coefficients above 0.30. Two further tests were also used and results found to be acceptable: the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was = 0.88 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant at a level of  $p < 0.01$ . The Principal Components method was used to extract the factors with a Varimax rotation to clarify the solution. In the final result two factors each with eigenvalues greater than one were extracted, accounting for 72.18% (58.89%, 13.29%) of the variance. The communality of all items exceeded 0.62. The factors were labelled according to the nature of the various memorials with Factor 1 concerned with the Monuments and Factor 2 concerned with Artefacts such as books, film and art. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the sub scales, and according to DeVellis' (1991) rating criteria the results were very good: Factor 1 (.93) and Factor 2 (.84) (See Table 3). There was no difference in the raw score means for the two factors, that is, Monuments and Artefacts were attributed with equally important meaning (mean = 3.81).

**Table 3.** Factor analysis: Public memorials with most meaning.

	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Factor 1 Monuments</b>	<b>Factor 2 Artefacts</b>
<b>Cronbachs alpha</b>			<b>.93</b>	<b>.84</b>
Commemorative services			.90	
Marches	3.90	1.19	.89	
Anzac Day Dawn service	3.80	1.25	.88	
War cemeteries	3.98	1.27	.70	.45
Stone monuments	3.89	1.16	.70	.43
Statues	3.71	1.09	.67	
Films, books, poetry	3.57	1.06		.83
Art - painting	3.82	1.04		.81
Historical records	3.26	1.09		.73
Museums	4.11	1.04		.72
<b>Raw score mean</b>			<b>3.81</b>	<b>3.81</b>

Note: Loadings below 0.40 have been suppressed. Source: the Author

### *The Purpose of a War Memorial*

Eleven items measured on a five-point Likert scale were used to measure the purpose of a war memorial (Table 4). The highest most important purposes were to honour and to show gratitude to those who fought while the lowest were to commemorate and understand war. The data were analysed using the method described above, and the correlations among the eleven items showed all pairs were significantly and positively correlated at a level of  $p < 0.00$ , with all correlation coefficients above 0.30. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value = 0.86 and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant at a level of  $p < .01$  indicating the data were suitable for factor analysis. Two factors each with eigenvalues greater than one were extracted, accounting for 62.90% (51.91%, 10.99%) of the variance, and the communality of all items exceeded 0.53 except for the item relating to commemoration (0.31). Factor 1 concerned the purposes relating to Education and Factor 2 concerned Commemoration. The Cronbach's alpha results were very good: Factor 1 (0.89) and Factor 2 (0.78). See Table 4. A paired sample t-tests on the raw score means indicated that commemoration was

significantly higher than education [ $t(427) = -2.60, p < 0.05$ ], but in practical terms, this difference was minimal. Peace loaded to education rather than to commemoration, which was somewhat unexpected, given that peace after war is celebrated by many memorials.

**Table 4.** Factor analysis: Purpose of a war memorial.

	Mean	Std. Dev	Factor 1 Education	Factor 2 Commem- oration
<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>			<b>.89</b>	<b>.78</b>
Education about war	4.04	1.01	.84	
Educate young people about war	4.08	1.01	.84	
Understand war	3.73	1.12	.79	
Learn lessons from the past	4.07	1.09	.74	
Historical information about war	4.20	.89	.69	
Celebrate peace	4.01	1.11	.65	
Honour those who fought in war	4.61	.73		.83
To express gratitude to those who fought	4.52	.82		.83
Remember a particular person who fought in war	4.02	1.09		.69
Celebrate Australia	3.78	1.20	.44	.58
Commemorate war	3.60	1.24		.55
<b>Raw score means</b>			<b>4.02</b>	<b>4.11</b>

Source: the Author.

### ***Connection to a War Memorial***

The data were then tested with some of the respondent characteristics that are commonly associated with the remembrance of war: those who are family custodians, those whose family or themselves have served in war, age, gender and educational level. The results are shown in Table 5. The t-tests indicated that custodians and people who themselves or their family have served in war, and those with less than tertiary level of education had a higher mean for all of the variables tested. That is, at memorials, they were more likely to think about people they know, about

Australia and all soldiers, and had stronger views of the meaning and purpose of memorials. There were two exceptions in that personal connection with war did not appear to influence thoughts about the nation and no significant differences were detected in relation to education for thoughts of known people. No significant differences were detected between men and women. The ANOVA tests indicated some differences for age, and although the post hoc (Tukey's) test results were not clear, it suggested that older people tended to have stronger views for thinking about someone known and for commemorative purposes, than younger people.

**Table 5.** Relative effects of memorial meaning and purpose on connection perceptions.

	n	Thought of a known person	Thought of Australia	Thought of all who fought	Monuments	Artefacts	Education	Commem- oration
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3.63</b>	<b>3.64</b>	<b>4.45</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>3.81</b>	<b>4.02</b>	<b>4.11</b>
<b>Custodian:</b>								
Yes	155	4.20**	3.88**	4.61**	4.06**	4.12**	4.25**	4.32**
No	267	3.31	3.50	4.37	3.67	3.64	3.89	3.98
<b>Family war:</b>								
Yes	334	3.83**	3.66	4.53**	3.85*	3.86*	4.08**	4.18**
No	85	2.88	3.54	4.11	3.60	3.61	3.80	3.77
<b>Sex:</b>								
Male	218	3.65	3.57	4.42	3.79	3.75	3.93	4.03
Female	197	3.60	3.71	4.47	3.81	3.86	4.12	4.17
<b>Education:</b>								
Tertiary	207	3.51	3.43	4.36	3.63	3.89	3.92	3.94
<Tertiary	212	3.75	3.83**	4.53*	3.97**	3.72*	4.12**	4.25**

\*\* =  $p < 0.01$ ; \* =  $p < 0.05$ . Source: the Author.

### *Comments on the questionnaire*

A number of people (68) made additional comments on the questionnaire, thus providing some qualitative data that expresses a range of positive and negative views about the remembrance of war and the nature of war memorials. Seven people offered critical comment, including a personal dislike for stone monuments, and a view that money should be spent on the living rather than commemorating the dead. Two people expressed quite strong opposition to the use of Anzac for the promotion of what one person labelled "false nationalism". Some veterans indicated they no longer hold an interest in attending memorials

or in reminding themselves of war. The majority of the comments were quite positive and nine people gave some details about the involvement of their family in war. A further nine people indicated that artistic forms such as television, books, film, museums and the media in general were important, for example, “to watch and read about the human face of war and how it affects people” while another thought that art and historical artefacts were “more real and interesting”.

It was also notable that five people commented that they were not personally interested in war or its commemoration, but acknowledged and accepted its importance for others. As one person stated, in relation to war memorials: “Whilst they don’t mean much to me personally, I think it’s important to have them.” Comments were also made about the need for education to ensure future generations will remember past events. Respect for “the job our soldiers in all wars have done to help Australia” and “It is important to remember the wonderful people who served our country” was also expressed. One person stated that they have a “personal quest of seeking out the war memorial in each town I visit, to take a picture and count the names recorded.”

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

The sample drawn from the Ballarat and district community for this study was somewhat older than the population and comprised a high proportion of relatively well educated people with a high level of personal connection overall with the remembrance of war. This possibly reflects a higher interest in war remembrance by older generations and by the Ballarat community in general, and in particular by the generations who lived through the Second World War, and those who were and who remain personally close to them. As noted previously, Ballarat has demonstrated a strong and enduring interest in remembrance activity through its construction of important new war memorials, such as the Ex-Prisoner of War Memorial in recent years.

This study also found little difference in the responses based on socio-demographic characteristics, but there were some notable aspects relating to age and education that support other work. Donaghue and Tranter (2013) attributed an overall lack of socio-demographic variation to the ongoing and widespread popularity of the Anzacs, but found the 55 to 64 age group (Baby Boomers) held notably stronger support. They also found those with less education tend to give more credence to the Anzac legend. In this study, those with less than tertiary education held stronger

views about the memorials, thinking of Australia, and of all soldiers who fought than those with tertiary education.

The factor analyses of the responses about the memorials with most meaning and the purposes of memorials produced clear results, which suggest that for this sample, the items used in the questionnaire were relevant and may prove useful for other towns to use as the basis for assessment of their own memorials.

Both monumental (marches, cemeteries, statues) memorials and artefacts (films, books, poetry, painting) were attributed with equal importance for remembrance. Monumental memorials, which in this study included the Anzac Day march (widely seen on television), are those with high media profiles and visibility in the landscape, and in Ballarat, public memorials, including the Arch of Victory are situated, like those in many towns, in the main street.

Artefacts on the other hand, particularly novels, poetry and histories are available at the audience's convenience and they can be very explicit in their descriptions of events and people, both real and fictional, and therefore have a capacity to evoke emotions and develop understanding of the war. Additionally, Todman's (2005) analysis illustrates how these various artistic and literary forms, especially cinema, novels and television series have had an influential and widespread social effect.

Commemoration remains the most important purpose of war memorials, and overall the expression of gratitude and honour to those who fought were the most strongly indicated. A recent survey also found that the commemoration of Australia's military history provides a sense of pride in those who have made a sacrifice and to impart a sense of national connectivity to Australia (DVA, 2011).

The statistical mean for the commemoration factor was in practical terms, only slightly higher than the mean for education. Indeed, the underlying reason for remembrance practice is the perpetuation of social memory but as the distance from war lengthens, new generations require more explicit information in order to understand the way in which the memorials were coded, and to make their own meaning from them (DVA, 2011; Winter, 1995, 2006). It is often the case today that large state memorials are accompanied by educational opportunities, which encompass commemorative areas as well as purpose built facilities for interpretation and education. This study indicates that education is also important in regional areas and attention to this aspect of remembrance may need to be given additional consideration by various local government and remembrance bodies. While the larger memorials such as the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and the Shrine of

Remembrance in Melbourne have excellent educational facilities, these places are not easily accessible for all regional residents. Some additional education at the regional level may therefore assist people to understand their local memorials, and in so doing, provide a sense of connection to them. The results here suggest that while formal interpretation of monuments is useful for conveying information, artistic formats that can help to convey meaning and understanding in other ways, such as emotion, would also be publicly supported.

The celebration of peace was associated with education rather than commemoration. Notably in Australia, Anzac Day which originally commemorated the dawn attack on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915 has become the most popular of the formal public ceremonies, while Remembrance Day which celebrates the end of the war and the peace that came with it is much smaller and more subdued. Perhaps this may reflect Donaghue and Tranter's (2013) comment that the peace movement of the Vietnam War era may have caused negative associations with public commemoration, and moved it towards education. Further research could investigate this effect.

As Winter (1995) pointed out, memorials are built by and for a specific generation, and the results of this study tend to support the idea that over time, these meanings change and can be lost to subsequent generations. However, the study showed that personal connection such as links through family, appear to help retain the meaning and importance of these memorials, but in the absence of such connection, the memorials' importance is lessened. People who have had family in war and particularly those who act as their family custodians have a direct personal connection with war memorials, and they had stronger views on several aspects of remembrance than people without family connection. The people with connection to the memorials had stronger views about their importance for meaning, for their purpose and for thinking about all soldiers and people known to them. This result reflects studies conducted at battlefield and other heritage sites (Biran et al., 2011; DVA, 2011; Poria et al., 2009; Winter, 2012). It is important to note that although the differences were statistically significant, in practical terms, they were quite small, and with one exception (remembering a known person) the mean responses were in the "agree" and above range.

Monuments are given new life by regular public ceremonies which are designed to perpetuate their memories (Halbwachs, 1992; Winter, 1995). However ceremonies at smaller memorials in local areas may occur infrequently throughout the year, and can be simple and unobtrusive



events that do not attract large numbers of people. The Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne has been able to address this, for example, through the introduction of a simulation of the *Ray of Light* which is run half hourly to provide a brief commemorative ceremony for visitors. The *Ray of Light* refers to the beam of sunlight which shines on the Stone of Remembrance at the Shrine at 11.00 am on Remembrance Day and which was originally designed to remember the end of the First World War in 1918.

However, with respect to their thoughts about Australia when visiting a memorial, people with and without family connection had similar responses, and it is perhaps with peoples' connection with their country that the memorials may also engender meaning. That said, some of the comments on the questionnaire indicated that the linkage of nation with the commemoration of war is a very sensitive area.

## 5. LIMITATIONS

The characteristics of the sample, namely that they were well educated, older and highly connected with war remembrance, were possibly an effect of the selection method given that many young people have mobile phones, the numbers for which are not listed in the White Pages directory. It may also indicate the impact of war on the regional community and the fact that close links to those who have served in war remain in rural and regional areas of Australia. It should be noted that surveys of other areas and studies that relate specifically to more recent military campaigns may produce different results.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

It is evident that the Ballarat and District community residents value a range of monuments and materials for remembrance, and that while some of these have a high profile, many other lesser known commemorative forms are also meaningful. Education is important and closely associated with remembrance activity. In regional areas such as Ballarat, the personal links of people to their war memorials appear to remain strong. The study reflects the importance to this area of the three main program fields recently adopted by the Australian government for the Anzac Centenary: Education, Commemoration and Artefacts/Cultural pursuits (Australian Government, 2013). Therefore local governments will need to consider the importance of these in their own planning for the centenary, and to be aware that while existing monumental type memorials are

important, there is a clear need to incorporate a wide range of other commemorative forms. There is also a need for greater education, and in this respect, the linkage of artistic forms of remembrance with the monumental memorials, may therefore help people to understand their meaning and relevance to the past through the emotional responses that art can evoke. Ballarat is fortunate in having a number of substantial war memorials, valued by its community that can form the basis of commemorations for the centenary and the years ahead. Given the wide range of commemoration, the centenary of the First world War also presents an opportunity for public discussion at the local level, with respect to how and what ought to be remembered from war, and perhaps new ways in which future generations can understand their past. That said, many other types of memorial including those of an artistic nature are also important, as are those that will allow people to commemorate in their own private way – for those people who wish to do so.

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