

WORLD WAR TWO



Albert Rayner,
Merchant Navy

*'I remember him as a big laughing boy
with sad eyes.'*

Aileen Archer,
Albert Rayner's sister

Albert Rayner lost his life at sea when the Japanese sank the Australian hospital ship *Centaur* on 14 May 1943. The *Centaur* was 56 kilometres off the Queensland coast when it was torpedoed by the Japanese, despite being a non-combatant hospital ship protected under the Geneva Convention. Of the 332 people on board, only 64 survived.

Albert was killed four days after his 18th birthday and almost two years to the day since he had left for war. He died a hero, having given his life jacket to a nurse before jumping overboard.

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Maribyrnong Heritage Advisory Committee

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Interpretation and Brochure Design:
SHP (Sue Hodges Productions)

FURTHER INFORMATION

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Corner Hyde and Napier Sts, Footscray
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www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

If you have information about the plaques, please contact:

Footscray Historical Society
"Ercildoune" Society Headquarters
66 Napier Street
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FOOTSCRAY MEMORIAL GARDEN



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*Footscray Park, Cnr Ballarat Road and Mills Close,
Footscray*

The Footscray Memorial Garden was opened on 18 April 2013 by Cr Catherine Cumming, Mayor of the City of Maribyrnong, The Honourable Nicola Roxon, MP and Mr Stuart Dodds, Victorian Veterans Council.



My uncle didn't come back from France. He is buried there and there used to be no place for us to visit and now there is. I think the Memorial Garden is a great honour. It is important that they are not forgotten.

Diane Sanders, niece of John Alfred ('Jack') Barclay, who was killed in action in France in 1918

Footscray Memorial Garden commemorates the 550 soldiers from Footscray who died in World Wars One and Two. Their deaths were devastating for the soldiers' families, friends and the wider Footscray community.

The plaques in this Memorial Garden were moved from the Avenue of Honour that once lined Geelong Road, Footscray. Although the original number of soldier plaques is unknown, over 225 have now been recovered. Ten other plaques are located at the RSL at 48 Geelong Road. A further 43 names are listed here, representing those soldiers to whom plaques were dedicated but not recovered. Each plaque represents one soldier's death.



1939 troop ship departing from Station Pier
Photo: Edward Cranstone, AWM collection

World Wars One and Two were responses to unique political situations. Some of Australia's enemies from these wars are our allies today. This Garden is a place of reflection for people from all nations who have lost their loved ones in armed conflicts.

The following accounts represent just two of the soldiers who lost their lives and are commemorated here at the Memorial Garden.

WORLD WAR ONE



Pte John Alfred ('Jack') Barclay,
21st Battalion

'My uncle was a Footscray boy and spent time in Footscray Park. We have his letters he sent back from the war and there are so many references to Footscray.'

Diane Sanders,
Jack Barclay's niece

Private Jack Barclay was killed at Mont Brehr, France on 5 October 1918. He was only 21. Jack was buried where he fell, with a stick marking his grave, but later reinterred at Tincourt New British Cemetery, France.

Jack had spent his school days in Hyde Street School, Footscray, and later worked at the Barnett Glass Rubber Company. He left Australia for the front in September 1915.