

Wagga War Heroes – World War I



Anzac Day is an important day for Australians, and is commemorated on the anniversary of the Allied landing at Anzac Cove in Gallipoli during World War I. You may have learned about this at school. Two of those World War I soldiers were Percival Collins and Charlie Moss.

Percival Collins

- Percival George Collins (born in 1891) enlisted a few days after the outbreak of war, on August 19 1914, in the 3rd Battalion AIF.
 - While serving in the Middle East and at Gallipoli, Percival contracted pneumonia and pleurisy and was shipped back to Australia medically unfit on May 2, 1915.
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- After a short time working for his father, Percival once again enlisted, this time under a different name, as George Percival Collins, in the 18th Battalion. After a further 257 days service, mainly in Egypt, he was once again discharged medically unfit, on September 2, 1916.
 - Percival has the rare distinction of having received two illuminated addresses at the end of the war, and is also listed twice on Wagga's Victory Memorial Arch - as GP Collins and PG Collins! Why not visit and try to find the names yourself?
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Charlie Moss

- Charles Cecil "Charlie" Moss was 19 when he enlisted to fight in World War I in 1916, joining up with the 24th Battalion (known as the Red and White Diamond)
- Charlie sailed from Sydney in October 1916 and saw action in France and Belgium. He returned home in September 1919. He was wounded twice during the war; once with a gunshot wound to his shoulder, and also suffered from illness.
- Charlie's collection of memorabilia at the Museum shows us a very personal side of life at war. He had a very close relationship to his family, and regularly wrote letters, sent them souvenirs, and carried their photographs with him.
- Charlie was later allotted a block of land at Harefield through the Government Scheme for Returned Soldiers. He died in 1969, at the age of 72.

Did you know?

When Percival Collins sailed for the Middle East he witnessed the sinking of the German battleship Emden by their escort ship HMS Sydney. His father Edward, who was then Wagga's mayor, bought the flagpole from HMS Sydney, which became the centrepiece in the planning of the Victory Memorial Gardens. It is still there today. See if you can find it!