

# Boer War Day 2012

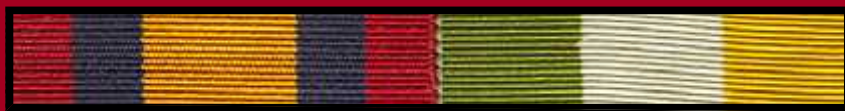
Commemoration Service  
11.50 am Sunday 27 May 2012  
Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne



*Souvenir*

## *Programme*

SOUTH AFRICA 1899–1902



Commemorating the 110th Anniversary  
of the Peace Treaty that ended hostilities and  
remembering those who did not come home



Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

**Message from Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce,  
AC CVO  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of  
Australia**

*For Boer War Day 2012*

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This year marks the 110th Anniversary of the signing of the Peace Treaty of Vereeniging – a significant event in our military history. Each year Boer War Day is commemorated right across Australia. It allows us all to pause and remember with gratitude those Australians who served our nation. We honour those who paid the supreme sacrifice - nearly 1,000 Australians who fought in South Africa did not come home.

In 2012 we also reflect on the sad loss of 43,000 horses that could not be returned to Australia due to quarantine restrictions. Those trusty steeds carried our men in battle and deserve to be included in our thoughts on this remembrance day.

I urge all Australians to honour the memory of our fallen in the Boer War and acknowledge their courage and fortitude. We will never forget what they gave for us in the name of peace.

*With warm greetings  
and kind regards,*

*Quentin Bryce*

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17.4.12.



# NATIONAL BOER WAR MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION



## Patron-In-Chief

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC  
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

## National Patron

General David Hurley AC, DSC *Chief of the Defence Force*

1899

1902

Boer War Memorial Association Committee Victoria

Mail: P.O. Box 2006, Blackburn South, Victoria 3130 - Tel: (03)98902465 - Web: [www.bwm.org.au](http://www.bwm.org.au)

The Victorian Committee of the NBWMA welcomes you all here to honour the memory of those Australians who served our country in South Africa between 1899 and 1902. We especially welcome our distinguished guests...

Colonel John Haynes OAM, President of the National Boer War Memorial Association and the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association..

Maj. General David McLachlan AO, President, Returned & Services League, Victoria

Mr Tony Charlton

Lt. Colonel Neil Smith AM Military Historian and today's Master of Ceremonies

Mr John Geary, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Veterans' Affairs, Victoria

Mr Leo Hammond, C.E.O. Department of Veterans' Affairs, Victoria

Maj. General J.E. (Jim) Barry AM MBE RFD ED, President, Defence Reserves Association

Maj General Mike O'Brien CSC

Brigadier Peter D. Alkemade RFD ADC

Dr Bryce Phillips, President, Melbourne Legacy

Brigadier Neal Bavington RFD, ED, Chairman, Reserve Forces Day Council, Victoria

Colonel John Coulson RFD ED, Shrine Governor

Major Maggie More RFD, Shrine Governor

Squadron Leader Ron Leadingham, Shrine Governor

The Hon Michael Baden-Powell

The Hon Wendy Baden-Powell

The Reverend Ken Bingham (RAAF Chaplain (Retd))

Mrs Robinette Emonson, Chief Commissioner, Girl Guides, Victoria

Mr Max Chamberlain, Boer War Historian

Mr David Jones AM, National Chairman, Scouts Australia

Mr Bob Taylor, Chief Commissioner, Scouts Australia (Victoria)

# BOER WAR DAY 2012

## ORDER OF SERVICE

11.50am Order of march from the lower end of the Shrine forecourt

Riderless horse with boots reversed

Mounted Infantry

Victoria Police Pipe Band

Boer War Banner

BWM Association & Distinguished Guests

SASA Banner

Descendants of Boer War Veterans, Supporters

Cadets, Scouts and Guides

Horses and riders  
in this ceremony  
are courtesy of the  
**Creswick Light Horse**

The march will proceed to the Eternal Flame where the service will be held.

Master of Ceremonies: Lt Colonel Neil Smith AM

Opening: Col John Haynes, OAM, President NBWMA

“We welcome all descendants of our Boer War soldiers and nurses, their families and members of the public that wish to commemorate this day. We are gathered to honour their service and all it has meant to Australia and especially to remember those who paid the supreme sacrifice”.

Messages ... Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC  
Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia

General David Hurley AC, DSC,  
Chief of the Defence Force

Premier of Victoria, The Rt Hon Edward Bailieu

Lord Mayor, City of Melbourne, Councillor Robert Doyle

(Read by the Hon Michael Baden-Powell)

### COMMEMORATION ADDRESS

Delivered by

**Colonel John Haynes OAM**

President, National Boer War Memorial Association  
President, Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association

**THE LAST PARADE'** A. B. (Banjo) Paterson

Banjo' Paterson's tribute to the 43,000 Australian Horses that carried our soldiers into battle

read by **Tony Charlton**

Royal Hymn ... 'God Save The Queen'

The Lord's Prayer ... Chaplain Ken Bingham

Wreath Laying ... (Those with wreaths to lay will be called up)

The Ode ... Major-General David McLachlan AO

' They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old.  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning'

Response 'We will remember them'

The Last Post  
(one minutes silence)

Rouse

Response ... 'Lest we forget'

Closing prayer ... 'The Soldier's Prayer' Chaplain Ken Bingham

Australian National Anthem

"Australians all let us rejoice, for we are young and free.  
We've golden soil and wealth for toil, our home is girt by sea.  
Our land abounds in nature's gifts, of beauty rich and rare.  
In history's page let every stage, Advance Australia Fair.  
In joyful strains then let us sing, Advance Australia Fair."

Cannon Salute: \* \* \* Three gun salute from the Boer War cannon

Announcements by Master of Ceremonies  
Lt Col Neil Smith AM

Dismounting of the Catafalque Party

**CLOSE OF SERVICE**



We acknowledge and are grateful for the support of the Victoria Police Pipe Band

## AUSTRALIA AT WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA

**T**he Boer War was the first full commitment of troops by all the Australian Colonies to a foreign war and with the formation of the Commonwealth on 1 January 1901 it became the Nation's first military involvement.

It is now more than 100 years since 23,000 young Australians served with distinction in the South African War. About 1,000 were killed in action or died on service—our greatest loss after the two World Wars of the 20th Century. Our Boer War dead exceeded in number the total losses in all conflicts since World War II.

The early volunteer contingents to the war were sent by the six colonies but after Federation in 1901 the first Commonwealth troops, Australian Commonwealth Horse and medical units were sent to the front. The contribution made by our fledgling Nation, of small population, was staggering

Australian contingents fought in the early engagements on the Kimberley front and rode with General French in the epic ride which lifted the siege of the diamond mining town. They were engaged in the battle of Paardeberg which forced the surrender of Boer General Cronje's army of 4,000 and cleared the way to the capture of Bloemfontein, capital of the Orange Free State. In the later guerrilla phase of the war they quickly adjusted to the tough gruelling conditions against an enemy mostly indistinguishable from civilians - so often the case in this type of campaign.

Australians, whether in our own contingents or in other colonial or irregular units were engaged in every theatre of the war and generally drew the highest praise from their commanders and the troops of our allies in the conflict.

## PEACE ATLAST

By 1902 the war was becoming an unequal struggle for the Boers as they tried to maintain an effective guerrilla campaign. At the same time fresh reinforcements were arriving from Britain and the Empire.

The British Commander in Chief, Kitchener, gave a guarantee of safe passage to the Boer leaders so they could attend a conference at Klerksdorp on 15 April 1902. This meeting decided to ask for a conditional surrender that would enable the Boers to maintain their independence. The British were not prepared to concede this but Kitchener gave the Boers more time for consideration.

Many Boer people were dying of enteric in the refugee (or 'concentration' depending on one's point of view) camps and the British were also being ravaged by enteric to which they lost more men than they lost in action. Many children in the camps were also dying of measles. There were additional dangers for the Boers from African tribes who, noting the Boer weaknesses, could settle old scores, and they sometimes did, even though the British did not condone this.

A Boer conference was held at Vereeniging which eventually decided to accept the British terms. The radicals on both the Boer and British sides failed and finally a conditional surrender was accepted by the British Government on 27 May 1902 and endorsed by the assembled Boers 54 votes to 6. The peace document was signed at Melrose House, Pretoria just before midnight on 31 May 1902.

## OURHORSES INSOUTHAFRICA

The Boer War was largely a mounted man's war, especially in the second half, and often the chances to rest were few and far between. The hard campaigning took a terrible toll, particularly of the horses, and these trusty steeds which carried our men in battle are one of the themes of the service today 27 May 2012.

When peace finally came and our troops returned home to Australia our horses had to be sold off or destroyed because of Australia's quarantine regulations. One Australian officer had the sad task of supervising the shooting of 300 horses before he returned home.

Australia sent 43,000 horses to the war in South Africa. The ships transporting them also provided an opportunity for many men, balloted out of our contingents, to get to the war as horse carers and join up in Durban or Cape Town.

Now is a good time to remember the horses that served our men so well on Campaign between 1899 and 1902.

# The Last Parade

A. B. (Banjo) Paterson

With never a sound of trumpets,  
With never a flag displayed,  
The last of the old campaigners  
Lined up for the last parade.

Weary they were and battered,  
Shoeless, and knocked about;  
From under their ragged forelocks  
Their hungry eyes looked out.

They watched their old commander  
Read out to the cheering men,  
The Nation's thanks, and the orders  
To carry them home again.

And the last of the old campaigners,  
Sinewy, lean and spare —  
He spoke for his hungry comrades:  
'Have we not done our share.'

Starving and tired and thirsty  
We limped on the blazing plain;  
And after a long night's picket  
You saddled us up again.

We froze on the wind swept kopjes  
When the frost lay snowy-white.  
Never a halt in the daytime'  
Never a rest at night!



We knew when the rifles rattled  
From the hillside bare and brown,  
And over our weary shoulders  
We felt warm blood run down.

As we turned for the stretching gallop,  
Crushed to earth with the weight;  
But we carried our riders through it-  
Sometimes, perhaps, too late.

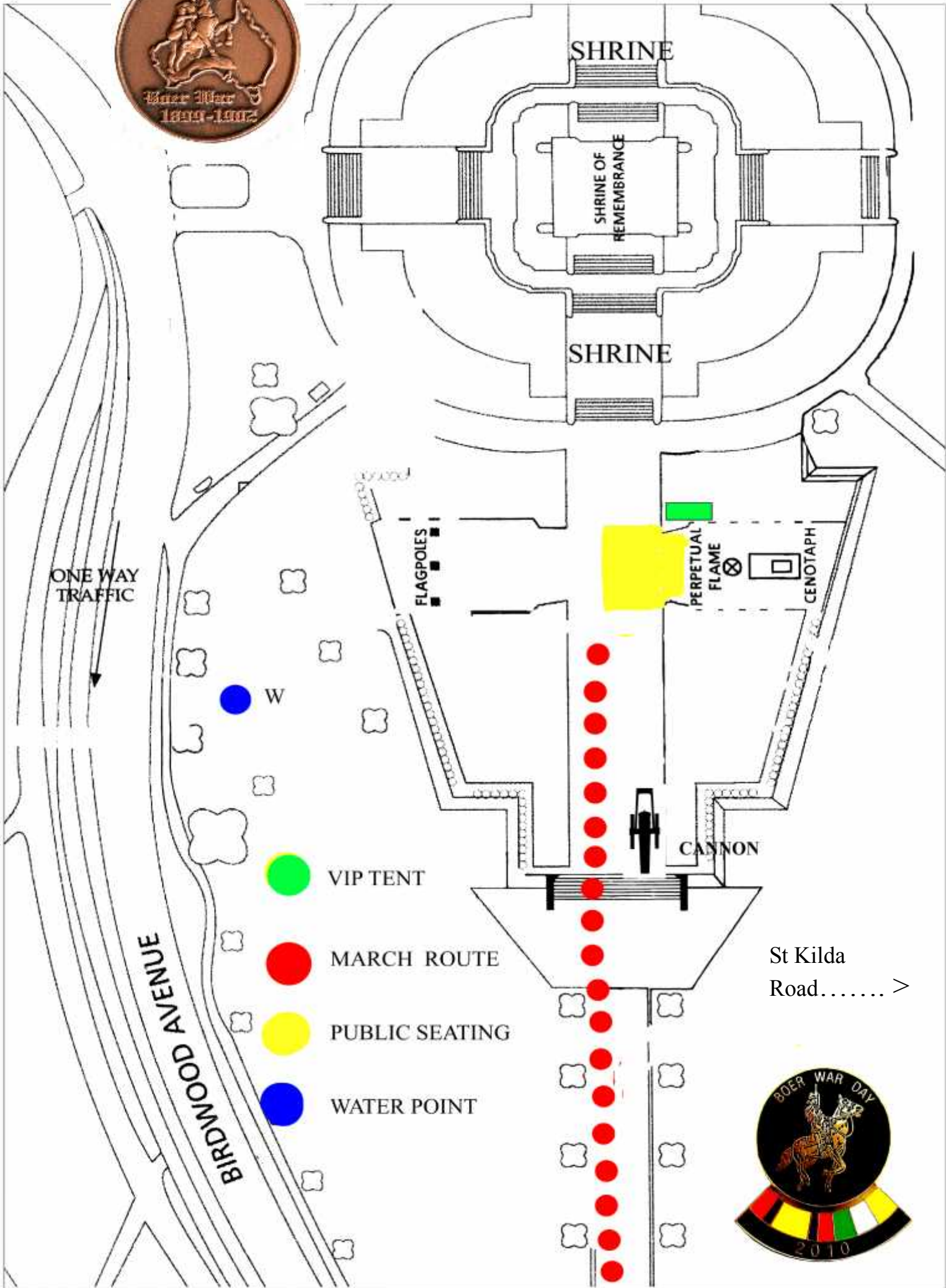
Steel! We were steel to stand it-  
We that have lasted through,  
We that are old campaigners  
Pitiful, poor, and few.

Over the sea you brought us,  
Over the leagues of foam:  
Now we have served you fairly  
Will you not take us home.

Home to the Hunter River,  
To the flats where the lucerne grows;  
Home where the Murrumbidgee  
Runs white with the melted snows.

This is a small thing surely!  
Will you not give command  
That the last of the old campaigners  
Go back to their native land.'

They looked at the grim commander,  
But never a sign he made.  
'Dismiss!' and the old campaigners  
Moved off from their last parade.



St Kilda  
Road..... >



# Boer War 1899 - 1902

MAFEKING

KIMBERLEY

LADYSMITH

ELANDS RIVER

CAPE COLONY

RHODESIA

RHENOSTER KOP



PINK HILL

TRANSVAAL

ONVERWACHT

KOSTER RIVER

WILMANSRUST

WITTEBERGEN

PIETERSBURG

**6 VICTORIA CROSSES TO AUSTRALIANS**

The two banners that are used in Victoria by Boer War interest groups. They mark our assembly points, lead marches etc and can be seen at related functions including that on ANZAC Day. The banner below is a copy of the one used by veterans after the Boer War. The original is now held at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.





Design Approved



# National Boer War Memorial



The National Boer War Memorial Association is grateful to the Veterans' Council, Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development and the Federal Department of Veterans' Affairs for assisting with funding for this event.