

Serving members of the defence forces mentioned in local history books are included in the extensive index created with the help of funding from the ANZAC Centenary Local Grants Program.

MONUMENTAL PROJECT FOR EASTERN REGIONAL LIBRARIES

A project undertaken by a group of committed volunteers is set to allow researchers to find out whether a service person's name has been recorded on a local monument or in a local history book held in the Eastern Regional Libraries (ERL) collection.

ERL provides a service to three local councils in the metropolitan east of Melbourne, including Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges. The Eastern Regional Libraries Centenary of WWI Community Database Project was undertaken by combined forces of a group of committed volunteers from the local history societies, family history groups, Home Service volunteers and a local historian who was completing an industry placement.

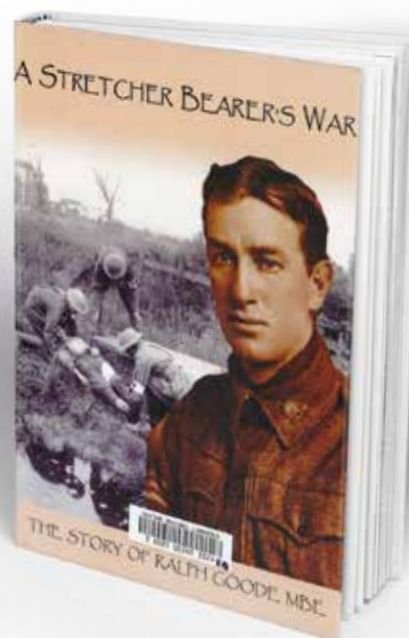
Aside from an interest in the project, project volunteers only needed to have some computer skills. We created a set of documents in Google Drive that allowed the volunteers to work from home or at one of our branches.

As of January this year, we have created an index of over 7,100 entries, including names from memorials, honour boards, local historical societies' centenary projects, local military historians' databases, newspapers and the Australian ANZACS in the Great War 1914–1918 project (bit.ly/1y3LPxQ). We also liaised with Heritage Victoria as part of the project.

Most importantly, local history books within ERL's collection have been indexed, as we particularly wanted to highlight these collections in ERL's 13 branches for family, local and military historians. Many names are duplicated as the name may be on a memorial, honour board, mentioned in local history books or obtained from other sources.

Each record lists the name of the person who served, their rank and service number (if known), whether they died on active service, where the name is mentioned, whether a photograph is available and where the source is located. Although still in beta form, the database has already helped local history societies working on their own centenary projects.

In 2013, ERL was successful in obtaining funding from the Federal government's ANZAC Centenary Local Grants Program, a somewhat complex process for us, as ERL covers four federal electorates. This funding allowed us to recruit and train a project officer who has completed the indexing, checked referencing and established links to relevant state and federal government sites.

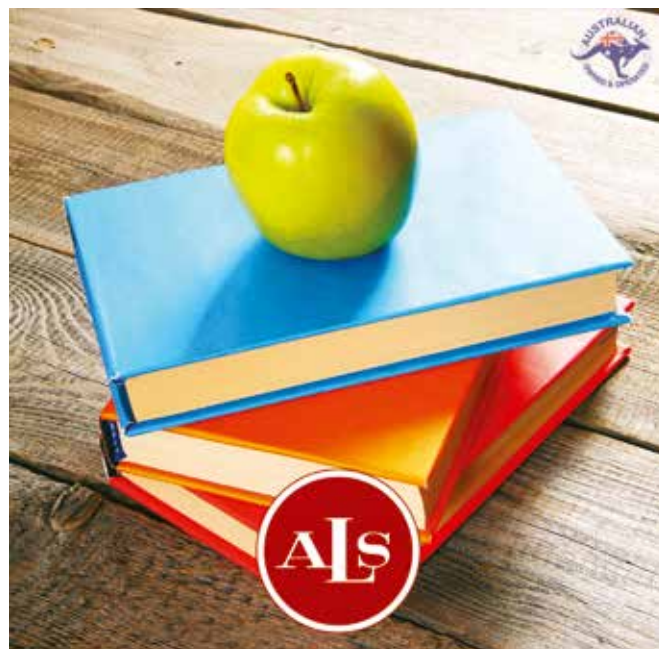


The project has worked not only on the level of providing our local and the wider community with a unique and valuable asset raising the library's profile, but also because it has given our volunteers an opportunity to develop and improve their skills.

The database will be officially launched on 17 July 2015, and then will be available on our Community Database page at www.erl.vic.gov.au.

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