

Stories from the Honour Boards

Stories of those who served and are remembered on the Honour Boards in the Merrington Anzac Memorial Peace Chapel at Saint Andrew's Uniting Church

Booklet Number 158

STANLEY JAMES SCHOOLEY 1889 - 1966



Yo Yo Park

This booklet remains the property of Saint Andrew's Uniting Church.
Please see a Guide if you would like a copy.

Cover Illustration: *Yo Yo Park, as it is today. For many years, it was owned and operated by Stan Schooley and then by his son Bill.*

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Corner Ann and Creek Streets
Brisbane QLD 4000
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Captain Stanley James Schooley

Clearly Canadian-born Stan Schooley was not afraid of new challenges. After qualifying and working as an engineer, he enlisted in the Australian Army Medical Corps and was in the No.1 Australian Casualty Clearing Station on Gallipoli. He was one of the very last of the Anzacs to leave the Peninsula in the December 1915 evacuation.

In Egypt Stan transferred to the 5th Division Signals Company and went on to serve in that unit in France. However, in October 1916 he joined the Royal Flying Corps, saw action in France as a pilot with No.54 Squadron, and reached the rank of Captain.

After the war he became a successful grazier in western Queensland, initially on Tilboroo Station and then for many years on Yo Yo Park near Morven.

Family background

Stanley James Schooley was born on 7 August 1889 in Petrolia, Ontario, Canada, the only son of Benjamin Larison Schooley and Elizabeth McLellan.

Ben Schooley (1864-1936) brought his family to Australia in 1894, and they took up residence at Chippawa in Moray Street, New Farm. Ben rose to be managing director and chairman of directors of the Intercolonial Boring Company (Oil), and he and his wife were members of the congregation at Saint Andrew's Church on the corner of Ann and Creek Streets in the Brisbane CBD. He was also a well-known figure at the New Farm Bowling Club.

Early life



Stan attended the Brisbane Grammar School February 1904-June 1907 and in addition to academic achievement, was prominent in sport. During 1906-1907 he was a member of the rugby union first XV football team – and selected for representative honours in the 1906 Inter-City rugby team – as well as playing in the cricket first XI.

Stan's cricket team captain and a fellow member of the rugby team was George Willcocks (booklet no.118), and Stan would later marry one of George's sisters, Hazel.

After leaving BGS Stan played for the Past Grammar Lacrosse team, and in 1908 represented Queensland in one game against a South Australian team.

The following year in May he left Australia to study engineering at Michigan University at Ann Arbor - completing those studies in 1912. On return to Australia, Stan worked as an engineer and played Lacrosse for the Toombul club.

Enlistment

On 18 May 1915 Stan enlisted in Brisbane and was placed as a Private in the Australian Army Medical Corps. He stood 166cms tall, weighed 59.4kgs, with a dark complexion, blue eyes, and dark brown hair. His religion was Presbyterian.

Stan embarked on the HMAT *Karoola* A63 in Brisbane on 12 June 1915 with a group of reinforcements for No.1 Australian General Hospital.

Gallipoli

After a month in Egypt, Stan was sent to Gallipoli - where on 9 September 1915 he was attached to the No.1 Australian Casualty Clearing Station (No.1 ACCS). Showing the Red Cross flag on the tents of the Clearing Station meant little in terms of protection from enemy shrapnel shells bursting over the beach area.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

P01436.002

North Beach, Gallipoli.

With tents of the 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station in the foreground

A hectic workload may have been some distraction from danger - from late August to October 1915 medical staff were under pressure dealing with high numbers suffering in the main from dysenteric diarrhoea, influenza and debility from the extreme hardships on the Peninsula.

The commanders decided to evacuate from Gallipoli, and plans were made to do this as discretely as possible, with the final movement off the Peninsula 18-20 December 1915.

However, the general expectation was that at least the rear-guard would be attacked, and planning assumed that a third would become casualties. Hence dressing stations were left standing and fully equipped, and the No.1 ACCS and the 13th British Casualty Clearing Station were nominated to be part of the rear-guard, to assist the wounded and remain with them.

As it transpired, there was no attack as the Anzacs quietly filtered away, but the tension over the final hours must have been extreme. Another on the Saint Andrew's Honour Boards who was present throughout this was Cyril Wood of the 5th Australian Light Horse Regiment (booklet no.87).

Stan was one of eight medical staff who remained to the end - leaving at 4am on 20 December in the second last boat to leave (the last left at 4.10am).

5th Division Signals

Back in Egypt Stan clashed with a senior officer. The records don't give the nature of the incident on 26 February 1916 when Stan 'refused to obey a lawful command' given by his superior officer, but we do know that he was given 18 days detention. When released after 16 days on 22 March 1916, together with EL Myers with whom he had served in the No.1 ACCS on Gallipoli, Stan immediately transferred to the 14th Field Ambulance, and then five days later to the 5th Division Signals Company ('5th Signals').

Stan and EL Myers were, for a period, listed as 'AMC detail' in the 5th Signals nominal roll, and after the 5th Division arrived in France in late June 1916, they presumably provided medical services to the 5th Signals personnel during the Battle of Fromelles on 20 July 1916.

On 27 July 1916 Stan was formally transferred to the 5th Signals and made an acting Corporal, in charge of a group of sappers. In each of the Australian Divisions the signals company was with the engineers, and as the 5th Division history notes, in a war of such intense artillery concentration few problems were more difficult than to maintain communication between different units.

Royal Flying Corps

In October 1916 Stan transferred to Royal Flying Corps (RFC) Officers Cadet Battalion and commenced at flying school. In March of the following year he was formally discharged from the AIF and commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the RFC. Graded as Flying Officer on June 1917, Stan was posted to No.62 Training Squadron, and from there went to No.54 Squadron in France in July 1917.



Australian War Memorial

POO743.007

A line of Sopwith Pup aircraft ready for flight. England c1917

Equipped with new Sopwith Pup planes, No.54 Squadron had moved to France in December 1916 as a day fighter squadron, but by the time Stan joined the Squadron it was clear that the Pup was now outclassed in air combat by new German fighters. The Squadron therefore was tasked with attacking enemy ground positions and movements – not that that was necessarily much safer given that it was done at very low altitude and significant losses can and did result from the fire of enemy ground troops. A return to fighter missions came when the Squadron was re-equipped with Sopwith Camel planes in December 1917.

Stan was made a temporary Captain and Flight Commander on 3 December 1917. However, he was hospitalised on 9 January 1918 (no available official records detail the cause) and while his rank of Captain was confirmed on 1 April 1918, he returned to Australia and relinquished his Commission.

Post war

In January 1919 Stan became engaged to Brisbane-born Hazel May Willcocks – as noted earlier she was a sister of GC Willcocks (booklet no.118) - and the couple were married on 30 July 1919 by Chaplain Colonel Dr EN Merrington (booklet no.2).

By that time Stan was the owner of Tilboroo Station, a property of 500 square miles on the Paroo River and near Cunnamulla.



The bore at Tilboroo which yields 600 000 gallons a day.

On the left - Mr Stan Schooley: on the right - Mr David Tait of Brisbane

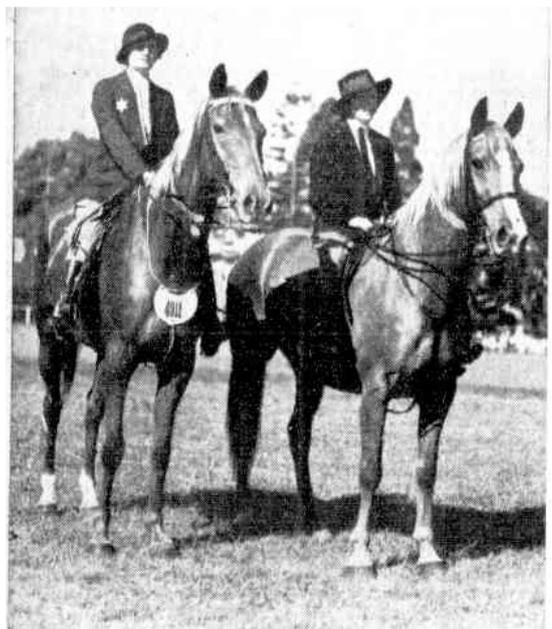
It had previously been held by 'Cattle King' Sidney Kidman, and Stan was energetic in making improvements, until he in turn sold it in 1924. A report at the time noted that it was carrying around 5,000 cattle and that:

The price paid is considered a very good one, and it is the new owners' intentions to utilise Tilboroo as a spelling and fattening property for cattle coming in from the North enroute to the South...Since the property was taken over by Mr Schooley great improvements have been made, including dog-netting and making some of the paddocks sheep-proof.

The following year Stan purchased a property of 27 000 acres, Yo Yo Park near Morven. It specialised in merino sheep but also carried some cattle. Stan remained actively engaged with Yo Yo Park for much of the rest of his life. He was also a member of the Warrego Graziers' Association executive, as well as a competitive clay shooter with the Brisbane Gun Club.

Family

Stan and Hazel had two daughters (Barbara and Joan) and one son (Blair George Stanley – 'Bill'). When the children were still relatively young Hazel died unexpectedly – she was a keen equestrian and collapsed leaving the ring after competing in the Ipswich show ring events. She died the next day (22 May 1936) and was buried in Toowong Cemetery in Brisbane with Presbyterian rites.



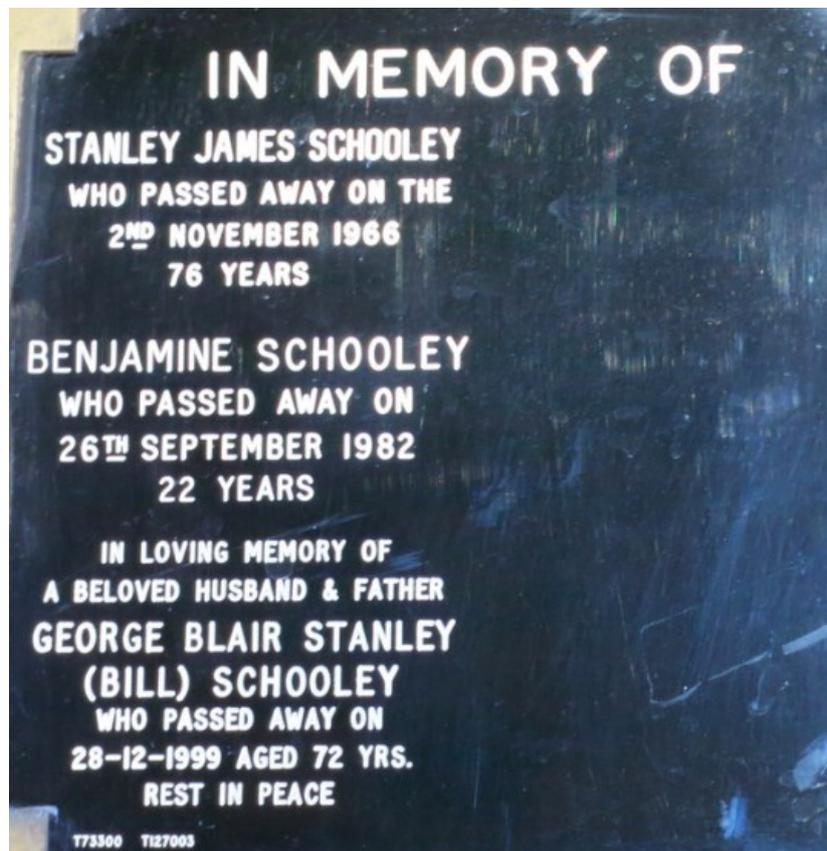
Mrs Hazel M Schooley (Salute) and Miss Shirley Lloyd (Kitty) who won first and second prizes respectively in the Maiden Hack event at Toowoomba Show.

A newspaper obituary recorded: 'Mrs Schooley had a lovable and generous nature, and did a great deal of charitable work. She was a keen horsewoman, and took a great many prizes as an amateur rider.'

Her children were also equestrians, although Barbara and Joan excelled at swimming and diving when students at the Somerville House school in Brisbane. Barbara was in the Australia Women's Army Service in at least 1946, and in 1954 was married in Saint Andrew's Church to Noel Brown from the Nive Downs station near Augathella.

Joan studied in the Agriculture and Science faculty at the University of Queensland, and son Bill managed Yo Yo Park until 1981.

Stan died on 2 November 1966, aged 77 and was cremated with Presbyterian rites at Mt Thompson, where his ashes now rest.



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Written by Ian Carnell
Buderim
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Lest we forget