



29 March 2017

Guy Barnett, Liberal Member for Lyons

Honouring Harry Murray VC, 100 Years On

A Tasmanian-born war hero – Australia’s most highly decorated soldier – was remembered today, with a centenary commemoration of his Victoria Cross.

Lieutenant Colonel Harry Murray VC was born in Evandale, growing up on the family farm and serving as a young man in the Launceston Voluntary Artillery Corps.

In the three and a half years from when he enlisted as a private at the outbreak of the First World War, he achieved the remarkable feat of rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and was awarded many medals and mentions in dispatches.

His greatest honour came in 1917 when he received the Victoria Cross – the highest decoration for bravery in the face of the enemy – for his actions at Guedecourt on the Western Front.

For many years, the service of Lieutenant Colonel Murray VC and his significance to Tasmania’s rich military heritage was overlooked.

Working as senator with the late David Von Stiglitz, the Murray Memorial Committee and the Evandale History Society, we ensured he will be remembered with the unveiling in 2006 of the Harry Murray Statue in the town of his birth.

Today, it was a fitting tribute to Lieutenant Colonel Murray VC to have as guest speaker at the centenary service Doug Baird.

Mr Baird is the father of the late Corporal Cameron Baird VC MG, Tasmania’s – and Australia’s – most recent recipient of the Victoria Cross.

Corporal Baird was one of only two Australians to receive both a Victoria Cross and a Medal for Gallantry. The other being Ben Roberts-Smith.

Honouring those who served our country – and those who epitomised the values of courage, endurance, mateship and sacrifice – is of great importance to the Liberal Government and to I as a Member of Parliament.

The service was co-organised today by the Evandale History Society, with members of the Murray family and the veteran community attending.

It was also great to have along for the service students from Evandale Primary School to recognise a great man who came from this community.