



Friday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2014

State tour partner



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An Australian War Memorial Travelling Exhibition



## Lost diggers at The State Library of South Australia

Visitors to the State Library of South Australia will have the opportunity to view the Australian War Memorial's travelling exhibition *Remember me: the lost diggers of Vignacourt* from 5<sup>th</sup> August 2014

*The 74 photographs in the exhibition are part of The Louis and Antoinette Thuillier Collection, re-discovered in 2011 after sitting undisturbed for nearly a century in the attic of a farmhouse in the French village of Vignacourt. They were photographed by an enterprising husband-and-wife team, Louis and Antoinette Thuillier, who had set up a makeshift studio in their stable yard, just off the main street of Vignacourt.*

"The enduring appeal of photographic portraits is that they enable us to imagine the characters and their life stories," said Dr Janda Gooding, the exhibition curator. "For this exhibition, we have uncovered the identities of some of these soldiers, and their personal stories are truly remarkable."

"The photographs were hand printed in the Australian War Memorial's darkrooms from the original glass-plate negatives. Objects from the battlefields reveal what the Australians experienced and endured, while the postcards included in the exhibition allow these soldiers to speak to us in their own words", said Dr Gooding

The exhibition features a selection of prints from over 800 glass-plate negatives which were generously donated to the War Memorial by Mr Kerry Stokes AC in 2012.

The life-size images spread throughout the Institute Building, as well as the provocative framed photographs, capture the Australian character and spirit we now identify with the Anzac legend. "This exhibition features images which have been identified as South Australian soldiers, providing all visitors with a strong sense of remembering our men, and brings the village of Vignacourt who treasure their relationship with the lost diggers, and Australia today, into our hearts. The exhibition is a poignant reminder that these young and courageous men also remembered their families at home, frequently sending the photographs, taken by Thuiller and reproduced as postcards" added Director of the State Library Mr Alan Smith.

Visitors to the State Library of South Australia will have the opportunity to view exclusive items from the Australian War Memorial collection such as the original trunk that stored the glass plates for over 100 years.

“The launch of this exhibition on the evening of 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of declaration of Australia’s involvement in the Great War, not only recognises this historic point in our history, but is the commencement of the Library’s 5 year -long community programs. We will continue to draw on our relationship with the Australian War Memorial, and take best advantage of items in our collections to remind the people of South Australia of the role our men and citizens committed to from 1914 to 1919” said the Director of the State Library Mr Alan Smith.

*Remember me: the lost diggers of Vignacourt* has been developed with the generous support of Mr Kerry Stokes AC, the Seven Network, and Seven Group Holdings. The Australian War Memorial’s Travelling Exhibition program is funded by the Australian Government’s Commemorations program, which honours the contribution of Australian servicemen and women.

The State Library also acknowledges the generous support of the South Australian government to make this exhibition and the supporting community programs available accessible to all South Australians.

### **Media Advisory**

Media representatives are invited to attend a **Media Preview in the Institute Room, Institute Building Corner Kintore Ave., and North Terrace on MONDAY 4 AUGUST at 9.30am .**

**Dr Janda Gooding Australian War Memorial, exhibition curator, and Mr Alan Smith, Director of the State Library available for interview.**

**Filming permitted in the galleries.**

**Hi Res Images for publication available on request**

### **Media inquiries:**

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