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Living tribute to lives lost at war



BY ANITA
McPHERSON
amcpherson@
nemediamedia.com.au

A SEEDLING grown from an acorn collected by a young Australian soldier in Gallipoli has been given pride of place, planted in the front of the school grounds at Cathedral College.

The school is one of 600 participating in the National Trust of Australia (Victoria's) Gallipoli Oaks Project which aims to create enduring, living memorials in schools across Victoria.

The seedlings are direct descendants of acorns sent in a package by Captain Winter Cooke to his uncle in Hamilton almost 100 years ago.

Students in years five and nine who have been studying Gallipoli as part of their history curriculum gathered with principal Adrian Farrer for a commemoration ceremony held this week.

They welcomed guest Lieutenant General (Ret) Ash Power, president of the Wangaratta RSL sub-branch, who spoke of Australia's war

history, the thousands who lost their lives and what the tree symbolised.

"As you grow up in our wonderful country you will be able to observe this oak tree growing," he said.

"When you see the tree

each day, I ask you to pause for a second and think not only of those veterans and

the original Anzacs, but of those who are still overseas serving today to protect the values we hold dear."

After a reading of "In Flanders Fields" by school captain Alistair Hurst, the seedling was planted in a ring of Warby Range rocks by students Cody Ward and Tully Frasca with the assistance of Jenny Kjar, who has played a pivotal role in the development of the school's landscape.

The gathering then listened to The Ode read by school captain Ella James, before observing a minute's silence and singing the national anthem to end the commemoration.



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LIVING MEMORIAL: Year five students Tully Frasca (left) and Cody Ward (right) helped Jenny Kjar (centre) plant a Gallipoli Oak in the school grounds at Cathedral College this week.

PHOTO: Emma Hillier



RESPECT: Students Archie Gemmill and Brooke Watson prepare to lay a wreath at Galen College's Anzac memorial on Monday, led by drummer Chelsea Bright, with Wangaratta RSL sub-branch president Lieutenant General (Ret) Ash Power, and Galen principal Bernard Neal part of the procession. Galen staged two services, one for years seven to nine and another for senior students (years 10 to 12), on Monday, which reinforced the importance of the day and were attended by RSL representatives.



TIME TO REMEMBER: Wangaratta High School held its traditional service on Wednesday, with involvement from the 33rd regional cadet unit, and RSL and 2/24th Infantry Battalion members. Jasmine Kinderis (above) spoke at the Anzac Day ceremony.

PHOTO: Emma Hillier