

## Mighty has fallen, but we shall not forget

By ADAM TURNER

Bacchus Marsh's Avenue of Honor lost of one its number yesterday when an ageing elm, planted in honor of a Light Horseman, was felled because of the danger it posed.



The tree, planted in the closing months of World War I in honor of Trooper T.J. Phillip, was removed after a study of the avenue identified 52 trees requiring attention.

The Avenue of Honor is not under threat, says the CEO of Moorabool Shire, Mr Chris Gillard. Maintenance should ensure the survival of many of the trees needing attention.

“The council is 100 per cent committed to the professional maintenance of the Avenue of Honor,” Mr Gillard says. “It is one of the shire's most attractive features and is guaranteed to be protected. The fact is trees don't live forever, but we've got to make sure we help them last as long as possible. If trees are removed, their plaques will be moved to trees planted in their place.”

The avenue was planted on the call of a bugle in August 1918 as a tribute to locals who had enlisted in World War I. Each of the 281 elms carries a plaque naming a soldier who served in that war.

A member of the 13th Light Horse, Trooper Phillips most likely saw action in Egypt, at Gallipoli and on the Western Front. More than 80 years since Trooper Phillips and his comrades fought for king and country, the avenue planted in their honor remains important to the people of Bacchus Marsh.

“A lot of the old families still live in the district,” says Mr Geoff Hine, 71, secretary of the Bacchus Marsh and District Historical Society. Trees in the avenue are dedicated to Mr Hine's father's cousin Arthur Hine, killed several weeks after landing at Gallipoli, and his step-great-grandfather, Alby Hine, who survived the war.

“The trees were planted three months before the end of the war, when the outcome was still unclear,” says Mr Hine. “They

went in the ground around the time of the 8 August big offensive at the Somme. General Monash was there with five Australian divisions and it helped determine the outcome of the war. It was later called Germany's blackest day."

Mr Gillard says: "We are looking for government funding to assist with maintenance."

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