

TOBRUK HOUSE TRUTH

Issue #10



A special communication from Tobruk House during exceptional times.

As most readers will be aware, there is not a great deal of activity related to our organisation due to the COVID pandemic, so we will use this communication to tell you some lesser known stories. We hope you find them interesting.

Shooting 'Tobruk'

As war correspondent Chester Wilmot said, if you want to accurately and graphically describe the actions in which troops take part, then you need to "see the ground on which they have to fight".

In any conflict, to win the hearts and minds of those at home, you need storytellers; cinematographers, photographers, and journalists, to connect the battlefield with the home front. So, throughout the Tobruk siege, The Department of Information's Photographic Unit and the ABC's Broadcast Unit were embedded with Australian troops to tell their story.

While the name 'Damien Parer' is probably familiar to many of us, photographer Frank Hurley, and the part he played in Tobruk, is perhaps a lesser known story. While recently trying to locate photographs for our exhibition which will one day be held at Tobruk House, Frank Hurley's name kept 'popping up'. His photographs recording the siege are breathtaking.



Frank Hurley and one of his amazing photographs from Mawsons' pioneering time in Antarctica

Born in 1885, Frank Hurley was a photographer and adventurer, having spent 4 years in Antarctica as official photographer for several pioneering expeditions, including that of Douglas Mawson.

In 1917, Frank Hurley became one of the first official AIF

photographers and was given the honorary rank of captain. He was well known for his ability to engage the public's imagination. Over the next few decades, he continued his adventures before returning to war photography in 1940 with the AIF in the Middle East, where he remained until 1946.

The collection of Hurley's more familiar images of Australian troops also includes evocative images of the local people continuing their everyday lives amid war.

After the war, Frank Hurley travelled, lectured, and published several photographic books. He died in Sydney on 16 January 1962, leaving a legacy of amazing photographs. On the following page is a small selection.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

013100



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

007576



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

005606



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

007495



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

005614



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

005046

If you are interested, you can find many more of Frank's pictures on the Australian War Memorial's website.

To all of the wonderful people on the front line we say Thank you.

To everyone else we say Stay at home, wash your hands and if you go out, wear a mask!

ROTA ACTIVITIES



Sadly, there will be no physical meetings at Tobruk House for the foreseeable future. As soon as it is safe to do so, we will look forward to welcoming people back, but we cannot, at this stage, guess when that will be.

AUGUST 28 Our Annual General Meeting will be held virtually using the Zoom technology. Please refer to the August THN for details.

AUGUST 30 79th Carpathian Brigade ceremony at The Shrine will be broadcast on The Shrine's Facebook page.
<https://www.shrine.org.au/commemoration-relief-tobruk-australian-ix-div-polish-carpathian-brigade>

OCTOBER 2 75th Anniversary of the establishment of the Rats of Tobruk Victoria Association.

OCTOBER 17/18 The Open Weekend planned has been postponed. A new date is yet to be decided. However, the organising committee says that development of the exhibition is progressing extremely well and will set a new standard for the telling of the story of The Siege.

THE ROTA APRON

During isolation most people have found a renewed interest in their cooking skills. There is no better way to improve your look in the kitchen than the extremely stylish ROTA apron. At \$55 + \$8 postage it's a great way to reward yourself for staying indoors. We can't guarantee it will improve your cooking, but it certainly couldn't hurt.

Despite the lockdown we are still able to fulfil merchandise orders. Please contact Graeme Clifford, our Merchandise Officer on 0418 882 323. Full details are in the August copy of the Tobruk House News.

