

War history lingers in faulty shell

12 June 2014

Best mates Tas Horler and Frank Green had a near miss with a faulty shell while serving in World War One.

Three generations later, the shell-head that landed in their tent is now a treasured family heirloom.

This year marks a century since the start of World War One and The University of Queensland and the Queensland Museum are staging a public symposium to explore the personal stories and experiences of Australians such as Tas and Frank who served in France.

The symposium, on July 11, is the second part of the [Somewhere in France, Somewhere in Australia](#) project, which began this year with a public appeal to Queenslanders to submit artefacts, souvenirs and mementos associated with Australian war service in France.

UQ student Romain Fathi, who is undertaking a PhD through the UQ's [School of History, Philosophy, Religion and Classics](#) and the Centre for History at SciencesPo in Paris, led the search for these precious objects which will be reviewed in the afternoon session of the symposium.

The session will allow members of the public to take part in discussions about their memorabilia and the context behind them.

"The stories behind these objects and the meanings they now have for the people who have inherited them will both surprise and move you," Mr Fathi said.

The morning session will give insight into the connections forged between France and Australia during the war and celebrate the strong and enduring connections that France and Australia have shared since that time.

Academics and curators will speak about artefacts such as the Queensland Museum's *Mephisto* A7V German tank retrieved at Villers-Bretonneux in 1918.

Mr Fathi will join French and Australian historians and museum curators to discuss what various artefacts reveal about the nature of the conflict and the lives of service men and women.

The shell head (pictured) was submitted for the project from Brisbane resident Bill, whose grandfather Captain Tasman James Horler served as part of the first A.I.F 40th Battalion from Tasmania.

"It came in the form of a shell head standing about 2.5 inches high. It is known as a 'fuze', that is the top part of a shell which sets off the projectile," Mr Fathi said.

"Luckily for Tas and his friend Lieutenant Frank Clifton Green, who served in the same Battalion, the fuze failed to explode when it burst through their tent and landed right between their two

stretcher beds," he said.

" Tas and Frank' s story is just one of the amazing tales that was uncovered during the project."

The *Somewhere in France, Somewhere in Australia* symposium is a free event at the Queensland Museum on 11 July 2014. Numbers are limited.

Email somewhereinfrance@gm.qld.gov.au or [click here](#) for further information or to register.

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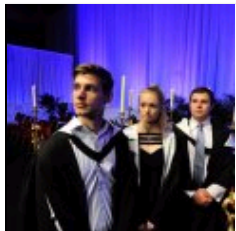
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