

The Military History Society of NSW presents



**AN AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY  
TOWN AT WAR:  
ARMIDALE 1914-18**



**A community which was keen to join in the fight against Germany & its Allies, one that was immensely proud of those of its citizens who volunteered for service in the 1<sup>st</sup> AIF ...**

**Yet it was a community which would become bitterly divided along religious and class lines over issues such as Conscription**



**Public Lecture by Dr David Martin**

**10:30AM Saturday, 6 July 2024**

**Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Sydney CBD**

Australian society of the early 20th Century had many potential fault lines. But upon the outbreak of war in August 1914, most of these disappeared from sight, as much of the nation threw its support behind the war effort. This was to be the case in Armidale in northern NSW. Yet, by 1918, this rural township would be deeply and bitterly divided. The divisions latent in most societies had emerged, often in unpleasant ways, based upon religion, race, class and status.

Nevertheless, despite the fixation of certain academics to find evidence of Australians becoming disillusioned and opposed to their country's involvement in the war, there is absolutely no evidence of the people of Armidale being so inclined. Even though the majority voted "No" in the two referenda which sought to conscript young men for overseas military service, *paradoxically there was a determination to see the defeat of Germany and its Allies*. And complementing this was *the pride the whole community took in the exploits of its AIF volunteers*. That is why, subsequently, the people of Armidale constructed a war memorial, out of *pride* for their AIF volunteers who fought overseas, initially at Gallipoli but mostly in France and Belgium.

DR DAVID MARTIN FMHSNSW is a Fellow of the Military History Society of NSW. He holds a doctorate in history from the University of New England and his interest in military history is wide ranging. He is the author of *Germany 1918-1945*, Oxford (2001). Over the years he has written a substantial number of articles and reviews of books, covering the period from the 1588 Spanish Armada up until Australia's involvement in East Timor. He grew up in Armidale and has had a life-long interest in the community's World War I experience, beginning as a child when attending an Anzac Day dawn service at the local war memorial.

**TIME AND VENUE: 10:30AM Saturday, 6 July 2024 at The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Hyde Park South, corner Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Admission is free of charge but a donation would be appreciated. For information call 0419 698 783 or email: [president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au](mailto:president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au)**