

FASCINATING FIND

MICHAEL CONDON'S ARM



This mechanical arm or prosthesis was hand made for Michael John Condon of the 42nd battalion, A.I.F. He was wounded on the western front in the town of Villers-Bretonneux, in France in 1918. Twelve hundred Australian soldiers died fighting for the town the diggers called "V-B", on April 25th, exactly three years after Gallipoli.

Michael was shipped from country to country before finally sailing home to Australia where his left arm was amputated and the prosthesis fitted. The upper arm is timber, the forearm aluminium, and the hand and fingers steel and wood. The complex design with an internal pulley system is very versatile, but apparently Michael only ever wore it twice, to attend two Anzac day parades. He was employed by the Gympie City Council as the cleaner and money taker at the public toilets at the park gates.

A school named Victoria College was built in Villers-Bretonneux in the 1920s from the penny and shilling donations of Victorian school children.

To this day above every blackboard are the words "N'oublions jamais l'Australie" Let us never forget Australia.

Michael's mechanical arm was donated by the Condon family to the Fifth Light Horse Museum.