



BATTLE AT BEERSHEBA

Remembering the Charge of Beersheba: Honouring War Animals Through Sculpture

The Historic Charge

On the late afternoon of 31 October 1917, the Australian Light Horse Brigade made history with its courageous charge at the Battle of Beersheba. The daring attack successfully captured the strategically vital town of Beersheba, breaking the Ottoman defensive line near Gaza and paving the way for British Empire forces to advance into the Levant. Beyond strategic gains, the capture of Beersheba provided essential relief for Australian soldiers and their horses, granting access to desperately needed water from the wells.

In this legendary charge, 31 Australian light horsemen made the ultimate sacrifice, and another 36 were wounded. Their bravery, alongside the courage and endurance of their horses, contributed significantly to the enduring legend of the Australian Light Horse Brigade.

Animals in the First World War

Throughout WWI, animals—particularly horses, mules, and donkeys—played a crucial role in military operations. They transported troops, hauled artillery, and moved essential supplies to and from the front lines. Tragically, over 8 million horses, mules, and donkeys perished during the conflict, many due to the appalling conditions of war, including disease, starvation, exhaustion, and severe weather, rather than direct enemy fire.

On the Western Front, animals frequently endured horrific conditions, becoming casualties of artillery shelling and machine-gun fire. While romantic notions often depict mounted cavalry charging openly across battlefields, trench warfare significantly altered these roles. Horses served primarily in logistical capacities: pulling artillery, delivering messages, reconnaissance, and emergency gap-filling. Nonetheless, toward the war's end, some mounted cavalry actions by ANZAC units did occur.



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The Essential Role of the Army Service Corps (ASC)

The Army Service Corps (ASC) heavily relied on horses and mules to transport water, food, and ammunition directly to the front lines. These journeys were perilous, often requiring animals and handlers to traverse enemy-targeted supply routes, usually under the cover of darkness. Many ASC teams faced relentless shelling, risking their lives to ensure critical supplies reached frontline troops.

At war's end, Australian horses faced uncertain futures. Those considered fit were sold as remounts to British and Indian armies; draft horses helped revive local agriculture. Tragically, some horses became food for displaced populations facing starvation. Only a fortunate few were rescued and retired to sanctuaries, thanks to the RSPCA and the Blue Cross Fund.

Honouring War Animals: AWAMO's Commitment

Recognizing the sacrifices made by animals in war, the Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation (AWAMO) has erected over 30 war animal memorials across Australia. These memorials honour the invaluable contributions and ultimate sacrifices of our four-legged heroes.

In July 2017, AWAMO commemorated war animals with the establishment of a memorial at Pozieres, France, including a statue honouring horses. Supporters can contribute to AWAMO's cause through purchasing a purple poppy—a symbols of remembrance for war animals—with proceeds directly funding memorial construction.

Continued



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Natureworks' Commemorative Sculpture: A Tribute in Bronze

In partnership with AWAMO, Natureworks has proudly created an authentic, life-size sculpture commemorating the historic Charge of Beersheba. Meticulously detailed, the sculpture depicts an Australian Light Horse soldier in full gallop, poised in an intense moment of action. The soldier, accurately outfitted in period military attire complete with a slouch hat bearing appropriate Light Horse insignia, carries a historically precise Lee-Enfield rifle and the Pattern 1908 cavalry sword.

The sculpture portrays the soldier equipped for battle, with realistic details such as the swag, metal cooking pans, cross-body satchel, and distinctive long boots. The soldier's focused grimace captures the intensity of the charge, enhancing the sculpture's dynamic authenticity.

The horse depicted mid-gallop with reins, bits, and stirrups accurately rendered, rests on a stable base designed as earth with touches of greenery, ensuring both realism and structural stability.

Natureworks offers this poignant tribute in multiple formats:

- Life-size sculpture in bronze finish
- Life-size sculpture in painted full-colour finish
- Smaller 3-foot versions in both bronze and painted finishes
- Plinth for 7ft horse and rider sculpture

This commemorative sculpture is proudly displayed at Enoggera Military Camp and is set to feature prominently as a solid bronze memorial at Pinkenba Wharf in Brisbane—the historic departure point of the Australian Light Horsemen during WWI.

Through such artistic tributes, Natureworks aims to preserve history, educate generations, and honour the brave soldiers and their steadfast animals whose sacrifices shaped our legacy.



BATTLE AT BEERSHEBA

HORSE - CHARGE AT BEERSHEBA
BRONZE



130106BZ
Charge at Beersheba -3ft
Bronze
L 100 x W 34 x H 94 - 14.7kg

130032BZ
Charge at Beersheba -7ft
Bronze
L 231 x W 86 x H 213cm - 80.3kg

Ideal
Monument for
R.S.L Clubs

Also Available with
Plinth





BATTLE AT BEERSHEBA

HORSE - CHARGE AT BEERSHEBA - COLOURED

Ideal
Monument for
R.S.L Clubs



130106
Charge at Beersheba -3ft
Painted
L 100 x W 34 x H 94 - 14.7kg



130032
Charge at Beersheba -7ft
Painted
L 231 x W 86 x H 213cm - 80.3kg



Also Available in Bronze Finish

130089
Plinth for Charge at Beersheba
- Roman Stone Finish
L 241 x W 107 x H 104cm - 148kg



BATTLE AT BEERSHEBA

Plinth - CHARGE AT BEERSHEBA Plinth for 7ft horse version

130089

Plinth for Charge at Beersheba
- Roman Stone Finish
L 241 x W 107 x H 104cm - 148kg

