

## A commemorative planting in Mangere Bridge of a Turkish red pine (*Pinus brutia*) from Gallipoli, on ANZAC DAY, 25 April 2015

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**Fig. 1.** *Pinus brutia*, War Memorial, Adelaide, 17 Nov 2013. All photos by author. The plaque reads:

This pine is a seedling related to the original Lone Pine on Gallipoli and was planted to commemorate the brave deeds and sacrifices of the ANZACS.

THE BATTLE OF LONE PINE. At 4.30 am on August 6, 1915, an officer blew a whistle and the Australians charged from their trenches into a cloud of shrapnel and a torrent of bullets. Some fell before they cleared their parapets, others within a few strides. Lone Pine was captured and reinforced, but the A.I.F. losses were extremely high. More than 2000 Australians were killed or wounded in this single engagement, most of them in hand-to-hand fighting heavier than any other in which the Australians were to take part throughout the Great War. Of the nine Victoria Crosses awarded to Australians on Gallipoli seven were won at Lone Pine.

"Their name liveth for evermore".



**Fig. 2.** *Pinus brutia*, War Memorial, Adelaide, 17 Nov 2013. The characteristic sessile cones, borne in clusters.

ANZAC Day on 25 April 2015 was a special day in New Zealand's history, marking 100 years since the landing of New Zealand and Australian troops at ANZAC Cove, Gallipoli, Turkey, during World War I. Following the landing on the beach, Australian soldiers fought their way inland, and were engaged in fierce fighting against the Turkish defending forces on 5-6 August 1915 in what became known as the battle of Lone Pine Ridge. There was tremendous loss of life on both sides, and a lone pine tree (Turkish red pine, *Pinus brutia*) on the ridge was blown to pieces by shelling.

After this battle was over, an Australian soldier, Sergeant Keith McDowall, retrieved some pine cones from the tree, and at the end of the war, took them home with him to Victoria, Australia (Wilcox & Spencer 2007). Many years later, four seedlings were raised and these were planted at war memorials in Warnambool and Melbourne in the 1930s. These trees grew on to a good size, and from them seed was in turn collected and seedlings raised for distribution and planting at RSL clubs and city war memorials such as in Adelaide (Figs. 1, 2). Some seeds also ended up in New Zealand, and a known progeny is a famous tree growing on the golf course at Paeroa (Fig. 3), planted in 1957.

In anticipation of ANZAC Day 2015, SCION (Crown Research Institute responsible for forestry research) in 2012 collected seeds from the Paeroa tree, and raised 50 seedlings in readiness for ANZAC Day 2015 throughout New Zealand. A 50 cm-tall seedling was planted on 25 April 2015 in Mangere Bridge, Auckland, during the ANZAC Day ceremony at the Mangere Bridge War Memorial Hall (Figs. 4, 5). The tree was blessed by the Revd Les Dixon.



**Fig. 3.** *Pinus brutia*, Paeroa Golf Course, 28 Feb 2003. Planted in 1957; the mother tree of the seedling planted at Mangere Bridge on 25 April 2015.



**Fig. 4.** The seedling of *Pinus brutia* in readiness for planting on ANZAC Day, 25 April 2015 at Mangere Bridge.



**Fig. 5.** The ceremonial planting completed. From left: Te Aria Jackson, Alan Corbett (born in Australia), Ofa Corbett, Tiare-Jean Koroheke, Mangere Bridge War Memorial Hall, 25 April 2015.

The tree clearly has great historical significance with its whakapapa tracing back to the Lone Pine of Gallipoli, linking Turkey, Australia, and now New Zealand. It is a Turkish tree, brought to Australia, and later New Zealand. This seedling is the latest generation of this distinguished lineage, now safely nestled in New Zealand soil at the foot of Mangere Mountain in Auckland. It is our new, living memorial to those who lost their lives at Gallipoli.

#### **Acknowledgements**

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#### **Reference**

Wilcox, M.; Spencer, D. 2007: Stand up the real Lone Pine of Gallipoli. *New Zealand Journal of Forestry* 52 (1): 3-9. (refer Google: Wilcox lone pine)