

42 For 42

Afghanistan War Memorial Garden

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<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-10-17/afghanistan-war-veterans-42for42-charity-memorial-garden/100545234>

<https://twitter.com/42for421/status/1513675615924527105/photo/1>

The Memorial was opened on 16th October 2021





Poet Rupert McCall is an ambassador for the veteran charity 42 For 42. (ABC News: Michael Lloyd)

The garden, located in Milton, is flanked by Lang Park and Christ Church, off Chippendale Street.

Veterans not-for-profit organisation 42 For 42 raised funds and designed and built the memorial to those Australian soldiers who served in Afghanistan.

"It has been five years in the making," president Sean Mulqueen said.

"It started with four of us getting together saying we wanted to build something for our mates who we lost in Afghanistan, to our mates we were losing to suicide, and to all those that have served.

"The main thing was to educate people as well [but] we wanted people to learn about Afghanistan.

"I think people are learning more about it now but at the time, we wanted to push why we went there: I guess we were sick of all the questions.

"I just wanted all the boys and women to feel pride in what they did over there."

42 For 42 was founded by veterans to assist former soldiers and their families affected by the 20-year war in Afghanistan but in order for the memorial garden to happen, the group had to raise funds to build it.

"We did a challenge at [Lang Park] where we walked 42 hours with 42 kilos to represent the 41 [personnel] that were killed in Afghanistan and the 42nd we lost to suicide, and it just grew from there," Mr Mulqueen said.

"We thought we'd raise enough money and we'd be done within six months.

"Little did we know we had to get through a lot of red tape and raise a lot of money, especially with the dream we had."

"From there, we've now made a community."

Paralympian and Afghanistan veteran Curtis McGrath was among dignitaries to officially open the garden in Milton, while 800 people watched a live stream of the service from inside Lang Park.



Veterans including Curtis McGrath (centre) and Daniel Keighran VC (left) attended the opening. (ABC News: Michael Lloyd)

Mr McGrath unveiled a specially designed statue, the centrepiece of the garden, depicting a life-size bronze casting of an Australian soldier, with their rifle to the ground, protecting an Afghan child.



Artist Wayne Strickland's bronze statue was unveiled during the opening. (ABC News: Michael Lloyd)

The garden, designed by Tanya Wood, who is married to an Afghanistan veteran, has several special features.

There is a large mural designed by well-known street artist Lee Harnden, which includes the words of The Ode, the Australian flag, and the image of a Special Forces soldier.

There is also a tribute to ADF working dogs, but it is the 42 plaques that take pride of place in the garden.

There is one for each of the 41 soldiers killed, with the 42nd plaque symbolising those veterans lost — and who will continue to be lost — in training accidents and by suicide.

"We've got a QR code where you'll be able to look at the profile of those fallen," Mr Mulqueen said.

"It has their whole life, from when they were born, so families have actually put that together for it and have really contributed to this memorial.



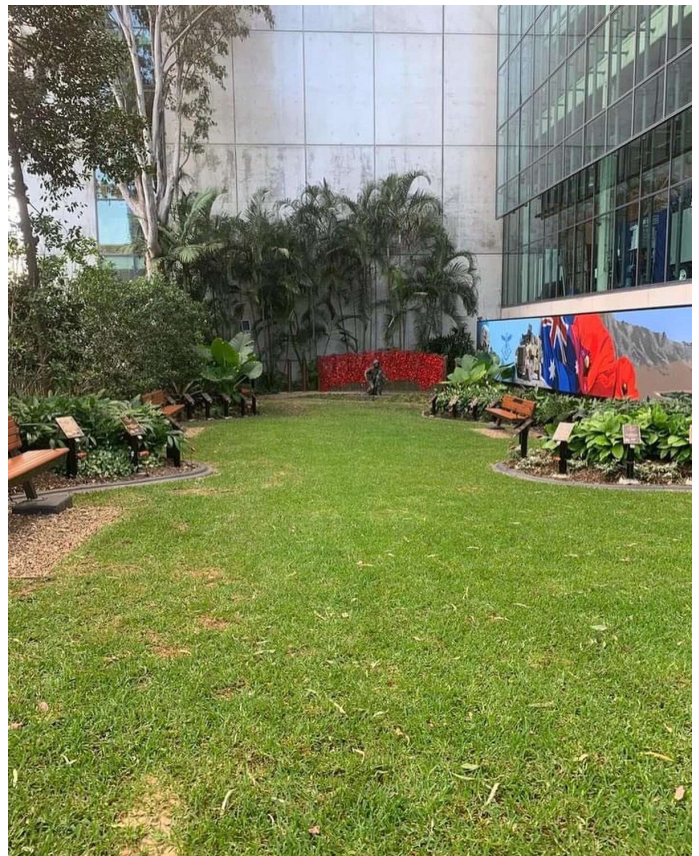
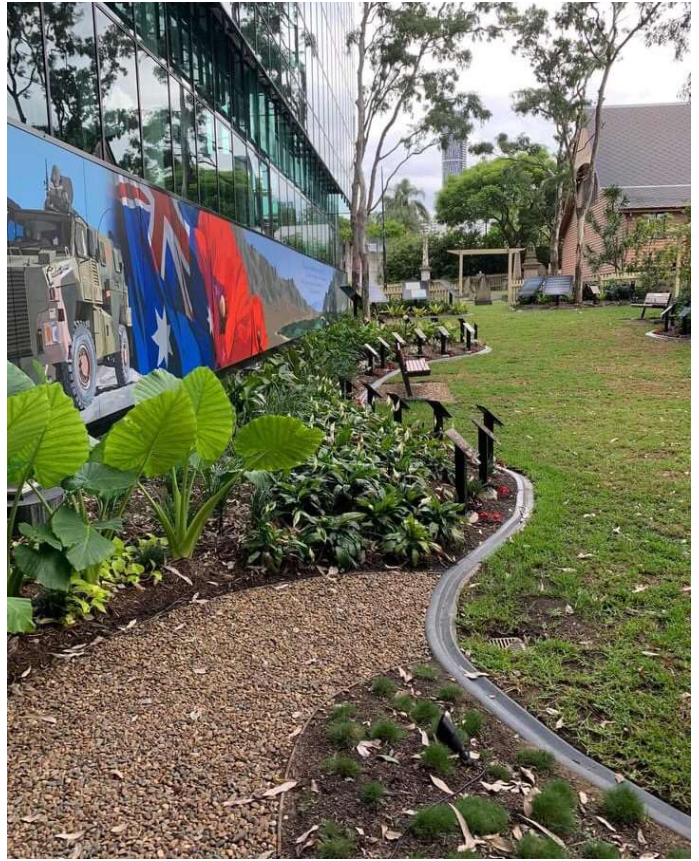
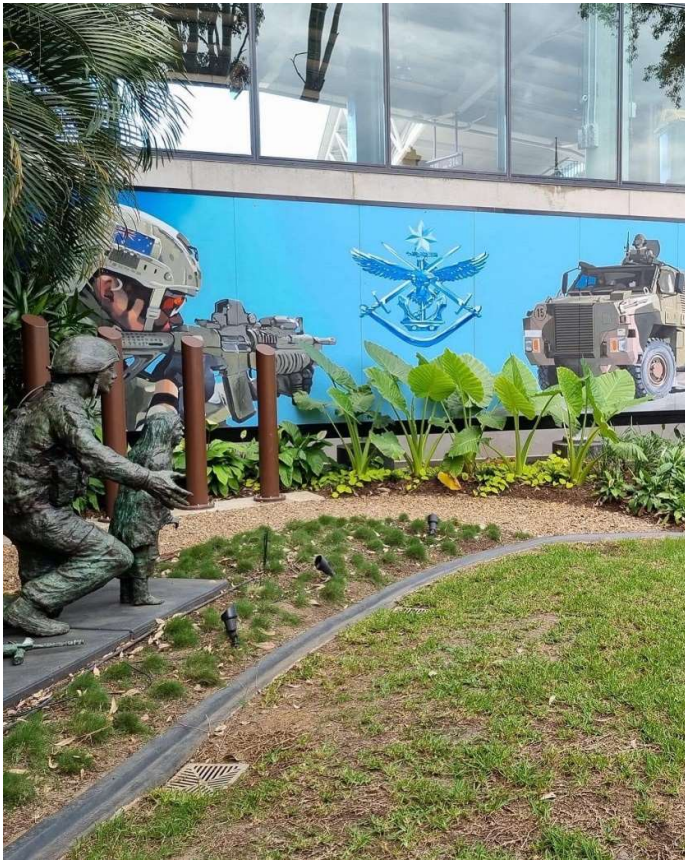
The memorial plaques have each been hand finished and feature QR codes so visitors can learn more about the person behind the plaque. (ABC News: Michael Lloyd)

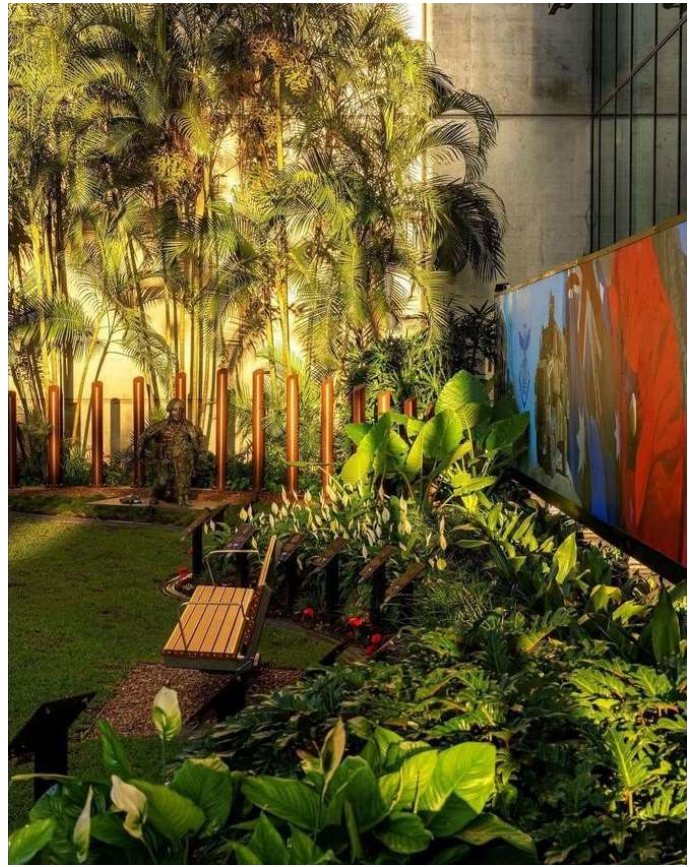
"We haven't got contractors in to build it or anything like that: it's been the family members, veterans, and our supporters have come in to build it themselves and that's the pride in it.

"Every part of the garden has a significant value."

Mr Mulqueen said the garden would now be used as a place of reflection while also helping to educate the community on the ADF's participation in the Afghanistan campaign.

Photos of the Memorial Garden





*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old;
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.*

