

Waltzing Mephisto

Battlefield Trophies of the ANZACS, Diggers & AAA Corps.



Plus Some That Got Away!

During the Great War, the 'volunteer' soldiers of the AIF (First Australian Imperial Force) gained the reputation of being very pro-active war trophy/souvenir collectors.

This Aussie 'tradition' continued during WW2, the Korean War into Vietnam the evidence of which can be seen today in unique, privately held collections & in public Museums around Australia and New Zealand.

Waltzing Mephisto - Battlefield Trophies documents the brave ANZAC & AAA Corps who risked their lives & even Court Martial to collect these monumental military artefacts. The Diggers, their tales & collectables include;

Lt. Col. James 'Redge' Robinson who, while commanding the AIF's 26th Battalion in July 1918, coordinated his soldiers under mustard gas and machine-gun attacks to salvage the German A7V tank '**Mephisto**,' now the last of its kind in the world, which has been on display at Queensland Museum since 1919.

Private John 'Barney' Hines AKA "**Wild Eyes, the souvenir king**" whose battlefield souvenir photo sent to **Kaiser Wilhelm II** after the Battle of Polygon Wood so enraged him that he put a bounty on his head, dead or alive!

Army Captain 'Charlie' Miller whilst serving in Vietnam 'purchased' the fuselage of a **US L-19 Cessna Birdog** for the extravagant price of two cartons of **Victoria Bitter**. It was rebuilt to flying condition, named **Bunny II** and in 1971 was transported to Australia by the Royal Australian Navy. It is now on display at the Museum of Australian Army Flying located at Oakey in Queensland.

Other stories include: The Flight yoke recovered from the crash site of Japanese **Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto's Mitsubishi G4M1 'Betty' 2656**, now on display at the MacArthur Museum, Brisbane. **The Red Barron's boots** and '**Big Bertha**' a German cannon, currently on display at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

Plus some that got away include the WW1 fighter plane flown by the cousin to the Kaiser **Prince Karl Frederick of Prussia**, captured by the AIF at Lagincourt in 1917 and the two German A7V tanks, Schnook & Nixe, captured by **New Zealand ANZACS** then sent to NZ via the UK but **they never made it home!**