On Saturday 25 April, Mercy College Mackay unveiled their new ANZAC Memorial.

The idea for the Memorial came from Principal Jim Ford’s realization a couple of years ago that there was a lot of history in the unremarkable looking street signs that punctuate the South Mackay area. It was a revelation to him when preparing for an ANZAC Day Commemoration some time back, when he came across the significance of Penn and Pirie Street’s names and their origin. In 2014 the College successfully applied for a Grant under the Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program.

Notable Mackay Historian, Berenice Wright, was asked to research the local street names and their connections with the soldiers who fought overseas, as this was to be the concept of the artwork ‘The Streets of South Mackay’.

Local artist Margaret Burgess was then commissioned to paint a canvas mural 6.5m long x 3m high depicting the soldiers in battle with named street signs on the ground representing the fallen diggers. The mural was then transposed onto metal tiles which will be adhered to the wall at the end of the college’s Technology Building.

As the current ANZAC memorial site at Mercy College needed to be disturbed due to the College’s additional buildings this provided the perfect opportunity to have a dedicatory wall depicting the local fallen soldiers. In addition to this, the college acquires a unique piece of public art that adds to the richness of Mercy College and local area attractions.

The ANZAC Memorial will be important as a permanent education resource and a reminder to the college and wider community of sacrifice, courage and community building.

The opening of this magnificent piece of artwork was celebrated on ANZAC Day Saturday 25 April in College grounds.