

media release



Honouring fallen Adelaide firefighter on International Firefighters Day

International Firefighters Day - Tuesday, 4 May 2021

South Australia's fire services will today mark a very special **International Firefighters Day**, honouring a fallen firefighter who lay in an unmarked grave for nearly a century.

Albert Greenman was one of three SA Fire Brigade firefighters who died battling the catastrophic City of Singapore ship fire at Port Adelaide on 26 April 1924.

More than 90 years on, former Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) firefighter Dr David Sweet discovered that Albert lay in an unmarked grave at West Terrace Cemetery.

"As a former firefighter, it troubled me that Albert had made the ultimate sacrifice, but through grief, further tragedy and the passage of time, his grave was left barren.

"I reached out to MFS connections, which led to Firefighter Albert Greenman's grave being refurbished with a proper headstone, unveiled through a Dedication Memorial Service on International Firefighters Day in 2021. Fittingly, this will mean Albert and his sacrifice will be remembered for generations to come," Dr Sweet said.

Research uncovered that tragically, Firefighter Albert Greenman never met his one and only child, an infant son named Albert who was born and died weeks after Albert Snr perished. Father and son are buried together, alongside Albert's mother-in-law Caroline Martorana.

MFS and South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS) firefighters will mark International Firefighters Day today with a Dedication Memorial Service at West Terrace Cemetery to unveil a new headstone at firefighter Albert Greenman's grave.

The two other firefighters who died battling the City of Singapore fire, George Anderson and James Hickey, are buried together with a statue memorial at Cheltenham Cemetery.

Firefighter Albert Greenman's widow Laura went on to marry Albert Greenman's best friend, Frederick Cox three years after Albert's death.

Two of Laura and Frederick's descendants are serving MFS firefighters who will participate in today's ceremony; MFS Senior Firefighter Ray Hawke and his niece, Firefighter Ailsa Enting-Hawke. Ray and Ailsa have served with the MFS for 45 years and two years respectively.

MFS Firefighter Ailsa Enting-Hawke said when her uncle Ray first enlisted as a firefighter in 1976, there was unease in the family.

"Ray was aware of his mother's discomfort at his choice of vocation. But it wasn't until more than a decade later that he discovered the full story of Firefighter Albert Greenman and he better understood her trepidation. My uncle's long and happy career with the MFS inspired me to become a firefighter as well.

"It's an honour for both of us to be part of Firefighter Albert Greenman's Dedication Memorial Service. Our family is glad to see that Albert will not lay forgotten. History has been uncovered and recorded, so that South Australians will remember him," MFS Firefighter Ailsa Enting-Hawke said.

Emergency Services Minister Vincent Tarzia said International Firefighters Day recognises and honours the sacrifices that firefighters make, worldwide.

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MFS Media Line (08) 8204 3770**

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“MFS and CFS firefighters continue to serve and protect our community, we cannot underestimate their contribution to our community’s safety and wellbeing. They protect lives, homes, businesses and infrastructure.

“It is fitting that on International Firefighters Day we are honouring Firefighter Albert Greenman, who made the ultimate sacrifice. Today we are making sure that his grave and his sacrifice are not left forgotten,” Minister Tarzia said.

MFS Chief Officer Michael Morgan and CFS Chief Officer Mark Jones will be accompanied by Minister Tarzia, MFS and CFS firefighters at Albert Greenman’s Dedication Memorial Service.

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