



# AVENUES OF FAITH

By Ian Menzies

The poignancy of Australia's Avenues of Honour is remarkable. Many, now approaching or past the 100th anniversary of their planting, are showing signs of age or decay. Some have been removed entirely, their memorial plaques relocated or lost, while others have been replanted with love and care in the hope that they will stand in silent testimony for another 100 years. Like most gardeners, those doing such replanting have an eye on the future, a vision of dappled shade and stately grandeur remarkably beyond that of the seedlings or twiggy saplings being planted.

Their intention is to honour the past, to continue the recognition of the sacrifice of lifetimes and lives of those being recalled, and echoes the intentions of those before them.

Doing so requires both faith and foresight. Trees fulfil this task so well, their majesty mutely ensuring that we are reminded of those who gave their all, as well as those who loved them. A shared and awful grief gave birth to visions of beautiful avenues stretching not only along roadsides but into a future that some knew they would never see but generously gave towards regardless.

## *Reflection:*

*The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second-best time is now. – Chinese proverb*