

'Dead man's penny' donated

A CENTURY old bronze memorial medallion given to families of men who had died serving the nation in World War I was donated to Griffith's War Memorial Museum on Monday.

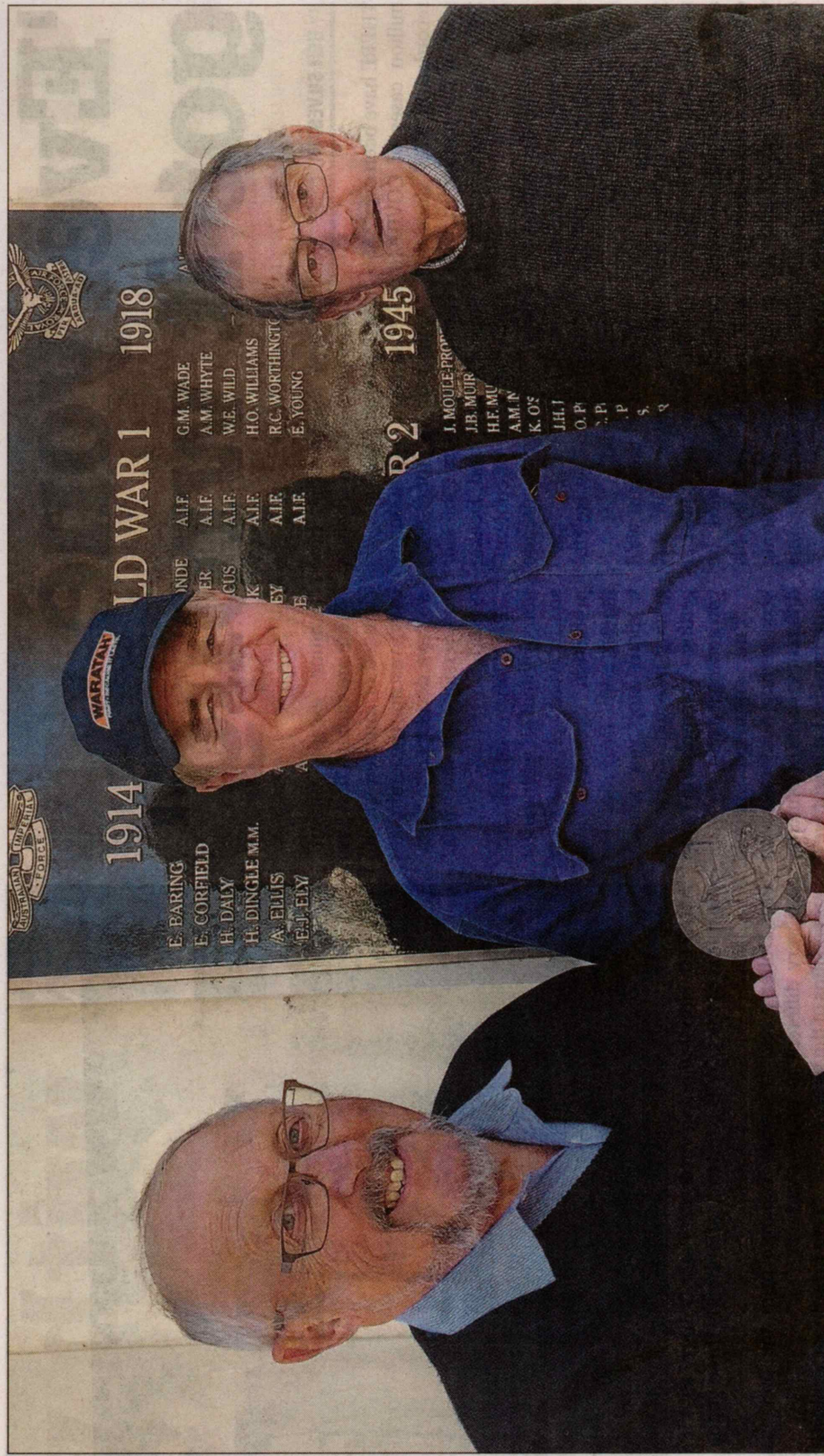
The medallion was first given to Alan McGregor Whyte's family and was later found in a scrapyard in Kurri Kurri in the Hunter region.

Paul King's family ran that scrapyard and during a clean-up found the medallion.

"I think it was brought in a collection and was then set aside as it was something unusual," he said.

Once Mr King learned what the 'dead man's penny' was for, he tried to track down Whyte's descendants and the medallion was spent some time in a drawer.

During a visit to the Shrine



RETURNED: Paul King (centre) donates the 'dead man's penny' medallion for Alan McGregor Whyte to Griffith War Memorial Museum's Theo Bollen and chairman Garry Smellie. **PHOTO: Declan Rurenga**

of Remembrance in Melbourne where Mr King's son lives, he saw other medallions which were on display.

This time, Mr King found an article in *The Area News* reporting the work by volunteers with Griffith's RSL sub-branch to memorialise

"It's a good place for it to return to," Mr King said.

Alan McGregor Whyte, from Willbriggia Siding in Carrathool parish, enlisted with the Australian Imperial Force on February 9, 1915. He was killed in action on October 8, 1917.

Mr Bollen said Whyte's medallion would be the second for the museum, with another held at Pioneer Park. He said it was an example of Griffith's history which didn't just begin in 1916 when the town was gazetted. Across the British Empire,

there were 1,355,000 bronze pennies, given to families of soldiers killed in the First World War. ■ What do you think? Visit www.areanews.com.au and click on the 'Opinion' tab to have your say.