



A stained glass story

Transcript

Hello, my name is Paul, welcome to the Australian War Memorial. I'm talking to you today from Canberra which is beautiful Ngunnawal country, and I'd like to acknowledge the Ngunnawal elders past and present, as well as the elders of the land on which you're on. Today we're going to go for a short tour to look at a place here called the Hall of Memory that has some beautiful, colourful stained glass windows. But before we do, let's find out about the man who helped design and create them. This is Napier Waller. He was a soldier who served more than 100 years ago. Here he is in his uniform, and this photo was taken in Victoria, before he left to go and serve overseas.

Napier loved to paint and draw, and even took some paints and paintbrushes away with him to war. Whenever he had the chance, he wrote, drew and painted in his diary. He often wrote about how cold and muddy it was where they were in France, and how they marched from town to town. His diary is now safely kept here at the Australian War Memorial.

While he was serving at a place called Bullecourt in France, Napier was badly wounded and the doctors needed to take away his right arm. That was the arm he used to write and draw with.

But he loved painting so much, that while he was resting in hospital in England, Napier taught himself to write and draw using his left hand. Once he'd recovered, he returned to Australia and was later asked to help design the mosaics and stained glass windows for the Hall of Memory, here at the Australian War Memorial.

It's in the Commemorative Area, just behind me. And this is a place where people can reflect and remember all those who have served our country. The Hall of Memory is this big room up the back, and we're going to head inside to take a little look around.

As we walk in, you can see large pictures on the walls that were designed by Napier, using over 6 million tiny tiles. These create a mosaic, showing an airmen, soldier, sailor, and a nurse.

You might also notice the 15 beautiful stained glass windows too, which tell us about the people who have served for Australia. Can you see the nurse in the middle?

Now up to the ceiling, it's so high! Actually 24 metres high! This section is covered in tiles too.

Moving down, past the four pillars representing the elements of life, we come to the Tomb of the Unknown Australian soldier.

Craft instructions

Now we're going to make our own version of a stained glass window. We'll need a few materials:

- Cardboard or paper
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Clear contact
- Mixed materials such as paper and cellophane (you could also find natural materials like leaves and flowers)

1. Use the width of the ruler to draw a border around the cardboard. Round off the edges on the top to draw an arch shape

2. Cut out the internal arch. It can help if you fold the cardboard gently and cut a small hole with scissors in the middle, to help get you started

3. Cut the contact into A4 sheets. Peel one of these, and stick it on top of the cardboard

4. Stick the mixed materials on the exposed contact.

5. Place another sheet of contact over the cardboard, on the side where you stuck the materials down. To avoid bubbles, stick only the top of the contact down, and press down as you continue to peel slowly

6. Trim the edges

And here we have our finished stained glass window. You might like to put this up on your window, and see some of the light coming through, and how it changes. You could think about someone who has served for Australia, like Napier.

I hope you have enjoyed making your stained glass window. Bye for now!

Images from the Memorial's collection



Napier Waller in Victoria, 1915-1916.
AWM P07038.006



Napier Waller's diary, 1916-1917,
AWM PR87/007



Leslie Bowles, Louis McCubbin, and the Modelling
Sub-section, Exhibitions building, Melbourne, *Bullecourt*,
(1930, diorama, 400 x 730 x 215 cm. AWM ART41022)



Napier Waller (right) working on the Hall of Memory mosaic with
Aldo Rossi (left) and Severino De Marco (centre), Canberra,
1955. AWM 042349



Find out more about the Hall of Memory here:
<https://www.awm.gov.au/visit/visitor-information/features/hall-of-memory>